A Survey of

EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION

Editor · First Edition

CARL L. BECKER

Late John Stambaugh Professor of History
Cornell University

Editor · Second Edition

WILLIAM L. LANGER

Coolidge Professor of History
Harvard University

A Survey of EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION

WALLACE K. FERGUSON, *Professor of History, New York University*
GEOFFREY BRUUN, *Formerly Visiting Professor of History, Cornell University*

Houghton Mifflin Company

SECOND EDITION

PART ONE: TO 1660. BY WALLACE K. FERGUSON

EUROPE

BRITISH ISLES

IRELAND

SCOTLAND

North Sea

JUTLAND

Baltic Sea

English Channel

Bay of Biscay

Strait of Gibraltar

Mediterranean Sea

Balearic Is.

CORSICA

SARDINIA

SICILY

Black Sea

Caspian Sea

TO

*John and Grace
Musser*

WITH ADMIRATION
AND AFFECTION

Editor's Introduction ★ SECOND EDITION

IN THE ORIGINAL EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION the late Professor Carl Becker set forth in his own inimitable way various ideas about the teaching of history and about the function of the present textbook in an introductory survey course. I have no desire to load the book further with front matter, and indeed have had so little to do with the plan and structure of the work that it would be presumptuous on my part to discuss it in detail.

I would like to say, however, that I have always considered this Survey of Civilization one of the best-balanced and most interestingly written books of its kind. The authors have succeeded in striking a happy balance between factual narrative and interpretative comment, and the wide use of the first edition is undoubtedly the most eloquent testimony of their success in filling a real need. They have now gone over the entire text with great care, making many corrections and emendations. Beyond that they have written additional chapters to cover the crowded events of the war period.

I am proud to be associated with this enterprise even in a slight supervisory way, and I am sure that the new edition of this Survey will be even more warmly received than the old.

<div style="text-align: right">WILLIAM L. LANGER</div>

TEACHING AND LEARNING are most effectively conjoined when an alert and informed teacher engages in informal discussion with a small group of alert and informed students. If the subject be history, the students will on their own initiative and with mounting enthusiasm (it is an ideal we are describing) spend much of their time in the library, where they will be provided with tables and the necessary books for an independent study of the subject. Once or twice a week the professor will meet his pupils. In so small a group he may dispense with lectures — those exercises in which students assemble, and amiably and passively sit while the professor, with great advantage to himself, clarifies his ideas by oral discourse. The students also will have an opportunity to clarify their ideas by oral discourse. Teaching and learning will then be conjoined, as they always must be to be any way effective: professor and pupils, each according to his talent, will be both teachers and learners. This ideal system is often realized in the graduate school — in the graduate seminary. Under such ideal conditions, there is obviously no occasion for a textbook. ·

In our undergraduate colleges, textbooks are nevertheless everywhere in use, and even the professors regard them as indispensable. There are two good reasons for this insistence on the use of textbooks. One is that many students are incapable of studying any subject on their own initiative, but, being docile, they will do what they are told to do, and the simplest thing to tell them to do is to read, on successive Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, successive chapters in a prescribed textbook. The second reason is that the facilities for studying history in the right way are commonly inadequate. If, some bright afternoon, all the students in philosophy, literature, and the social sciences should take it into their heads to invade the library in order to do what they are conventionally expected to do, there would scarcely be standing room for them, to say nothing about tables to work at; and the books and documents called for could be supplied by the distracted attendants to no more than a few of the first comers. The others would perforce turn away, sorrowing no doubt, with nothing for it but to review their lecture notes and read the prescribed chapter in the textbook. As it is, most of them save time and avoid mental anguish by not going to the library in the first place. It is not wholly their fault. There is a limit to the obstacles that anyone will cheerfully surmount in order to obtain access to books. Hence the textbook is an indispensable substitute for books.

Accepting conditions as they find them, Professors Ferguson and Bruun have prepared this survey. Frankly designed to be used as a textbook, it is provided with the customary "select bibliographies" for such further study as the requirements of the instructor, the inclination of the students, and the facilities of the average college library may make

desirable or possible. Nevertheless, knowing from experience that the textbook is likely to be the principal source of information for most students, the authors have made their book something more than a summary manual of events. Taken together, the two parts are sufficiently comprehensive to enable the students, with reasonable mastery of their contents, to obtain an intelligent grasp of the last fifteen centuries of European history. Besides presenting the essential facts with accuracy, they have correlated and interpreted the facts in such a way that the significant events, institutions, and ideas may be understood and not merely "got up" for examinations or tests. Above all, they have endeavored to make the story readable, interesting in its own right, and relevant as an explanation of the influences that have made modern civilization what it is. In short, Professors Ferguson and Bruun have attempted to write a book that has merit as a book, and not merely as a textbook. They have aimed to serve the practical requirements of teaching history in colleges, and at the same time make the student realize that a knowledge of history is an essential part of a "liberal education."

The span of time covered by this survey is commonly divided into four periods — ancient, medieval, renaissance and reformation, and modern. All the conventional labels employed by historians for dividing the history of civilization into periods are largely arbitrary, at best unrevealing, at worst positively misleading. The reason is that, being themselves by-products of the history they profess to clarify, they are easily outmoded by the increase of knowledge. The term medieval, to take but one example, means in itself nothing except a period in between an earlier and a later period. Actually, it originated in a mythical notion of human history, and was retained to indicate a supposedly "dark age" intervening between the golden age of Greek and Roman civilization, and the recovery of classical knowledge brought about by the "renaissance." It therefore took on a derogatory connotation, which it still retains: in spite of all that devoted "medievalists" can urge to the contrary, "medieval" is still in common speech a synonym for ignorance and barbarism. Applied to the period between the fifth and the fourteenth centuries, the term means either nothing at all or else something that is not true.

Since textbooks must be adapted to established courses and to conventional practices, Professors Ferguson and Bruun have not thought it wise to dispense with the conventional divisions altogether. But they have made it clear that these conventional divisions are not to be taken too seriously. They have regarded their separate tasks as related parts of a common enterprise, which is to explain the evolution of "western" civilization, and by dividing their book into "sections" which have some real relation to the successive aspects of this evolution, and in the brief introductions to the various parts, they have endeavored to correct the mistaken notions that are implied by the terms ancient, medieval, renaissance and reformation, and modern. In short, they have endeavored to make it clear that history exhibits a continuous development without sharp breaks or dramatic dislocations.

<div style="text-align: right">CARL L. BECKER</div>

Foreword

THE thirty-five chapters included in this volume form Part One of *A Survey of European Civilization: Ancient Times to the Present.* At the same time, they are designed to form a complete unit in themselves, with the purpose of surveying the development of European civilization from ancient times, through the Middle Ages and the early modern period, to the middle of the seventeenth century. The work as a whole is the product of a close and critical collaboration between the two authors, but the labor of writing was divided, Ferguson assuming responsibility for this first volume, with the exception of the first two chapters, which were written by Bruun.

To present the evolution of European civilization in a single volume, with sufficient detail and cumulative emphasis to make it a serviceable college text, is a difficult undertaking. The problems of selection, organization, and compression are unusually severe, and the demand, so insistently voiced of late, for more adequate discussion of social, economic, cultural, and technological developments has greatly increased them. Yet a unified text possesses one advantage which outweighs many disabilities. It can offer the student an unbroken account of what was, after all, an unbroken progression.

This second edition of *A Survey of European Civilization: Ancient Times to 1660* preserves intact the structure, unity, and chronological divisions of the first. A more spacious format, however, has permitted many important revisions and additions. All maps and graphs have been redesigned and their number has been doubled. The space devoted to pictures has been increased manyfold, with special emphasis upon the social, cultural, and technological elements in Western civilization. Revised reading lists, chronological charts, and suggestions on library facilities and theme writing offer further aids to the student.

To the numerous friends and co-workers whose willing assistance helped to fashion the text, the writer offers his heartfelt gratitude. The enduring influence of the original editor, Professor Carl Becker of Cornell University, is present on every page, and the knowledge that it was no longer possible to draw upon his unfailing patience and invaluable criticism has been a heavy thought throughout the work of revision. To other friends who helped to improve the earlier edition the writer renews his thanks, especially to Professor Wesley Frank Craven of New York University, who read the entire script and made many thoughtful suggestions; and to W. Carroll Ferguson, who checked and edited proof with inspired patience.

As editor of the second edition, Professor William L. Langer of Harvard University proposed some pertinent amendments in the newer material and scrutinized the whole. Designs for new maps were drawn under the direction of Professor Erwin Raisz of the Harvard Institute of Geographical Exploration. Professor Ralph Turner of Yale University contributed most generously from his experience and his archives to make the illustrations more distinctive and enlightening. Without the art, the intuition, and the infinite patience of Mrs. Myra W. Pearl, the book might never have gone to press: her handling of the illustrations was invaluable and indispensable. A separate list records our extensive debt to the Bettmann Archive, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and many other institutions. Finally, no one familiar with publishing need be assured that this volume owes more to the publishing staff than any acknowledgment, however truthfully worded, could indicate.

WALLACE K. FERGUSON

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SECTION A

The Ancient World

(c. 5000 B.C. — c. 1 B.C.)

The course of history is an unbroken stream, flowing steadily from obscure or unknown sources in that distant age when the race of mankind was young. As it enters those chronological periods for which our knowledge of events is more complete, the stream seems to broaden and deepen. It flows serenely through the open daylight of the Greek and Roman world, to dwindle into comparative obscurity as it enters that darker period that followed the barbarian conquests, and to emerge again into plainer view in the High Middle Ages, whence it flows with ever-increasing volume down to our own time. Its character changes gradually. There are no sharp breaks. There is no place where one may say: Here history changes, here an age ends and another age begins. To divide history into clear-cut periods is, therefore, in a sense meaningless and may be misleading. Yet the historian finds it convenient, indeed indispensable for purposes of discussion, to segregate and name certain large chronological periods, which seem to have a measure of unity and a character that differentiate them from the ages before and after. He must never forget, however, that his divisions are artificial and the chronological limits vague and uncertain.

The earliest sources of that broadening stream of historical development which culminates in our modern occidental civilization are to be found in the lands bordering the eastern Mediterranean. In the fertile valleys of the Nile, the Tigris and Euphrates, and in the islands of the Aegean, appeared the first evidences of civilization among the peoples of the western world thousands of years before the beginning of the Christian era. We can trace these early civilizations in their major outlines through archaeological remains and, after a time, through the writing that has been preserved. Much of their content and character seem strange and foreign to our modern ways of thinking, but as we pass on to the later Greek and Roman civilizations we enter upon a period that is more closely akin to our own. For, though we owe to the ancient eastern cultures many of our conceptions of religion and morality, we have a more direct legacy from the people of ancient Greece and Rome. The influence of their original thought in the fields of philosophy, literature, art, science, and law was of decisive importance in shaping the later culture of Western Europe and America and forms an integral part of our contemporary civilization.
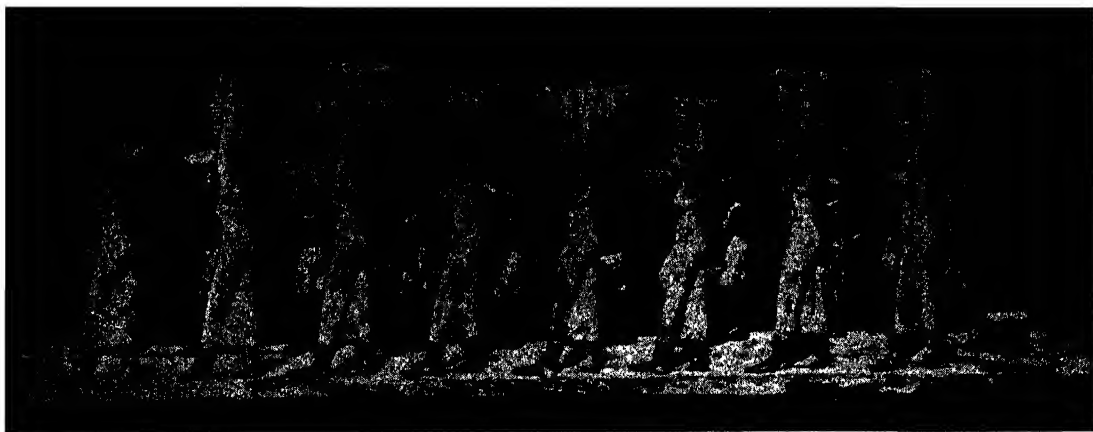
SERVANTS OF THE DEAD

Tiny carved figures representing servants were left in the tomb to wait upon their masters.
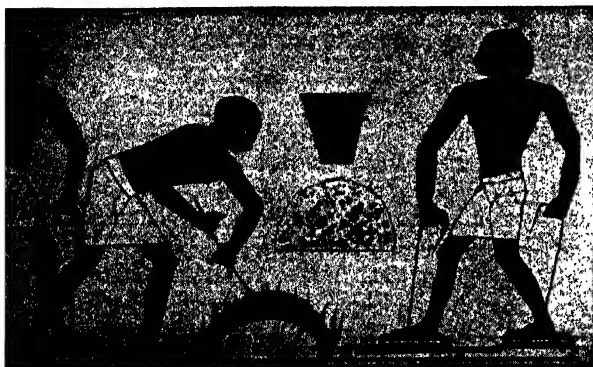
METAL SMELTING IN EGYPT, C. 2000 B.C.

*Egyptian metal-workers fanned the fire
with foot bellows to melt their copper.*
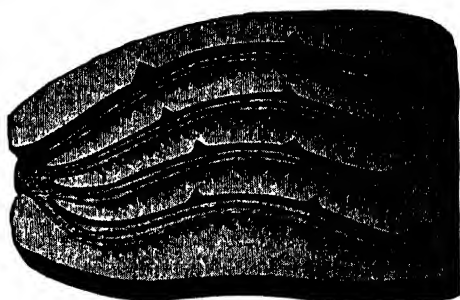
STONE MOLD FOR CASTING SAWS

*Molten bronze, poured into this mold,
made four saw blades at one time.*
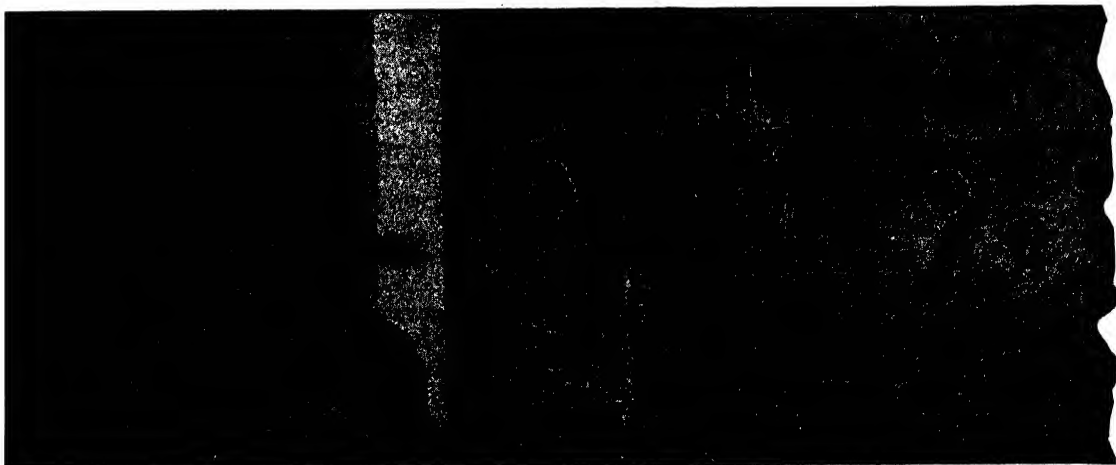
TRANSPORTING THE COLOSSAL FIGURE OF A WINGED BULL

Slave labor in ancient Assyria. Note the overseers with whips and the carts drawn by manpower.

ANCIENT WORKERS

SOLDIERS OF THE TWELFTH DYNASTY

These orderly ranks of bowmen and spearmen were Egyptian soldiers of 1900 B.C.

AN ASSYRIAN LION HUNT

An Assyrian king of the seventh century B.C. bracing himself without the aid of stirrups

ANCIENT WARRIORS AND HUNTERS

PAPYRUS ROLL WITH IDEOGRAPHIC SIGNS

*Passages from the Egyptian "Book of the Dead,"
a manual for travelers in the after world.   The
title, more correctly translated, is "Book of Going
Forth in the Day."*
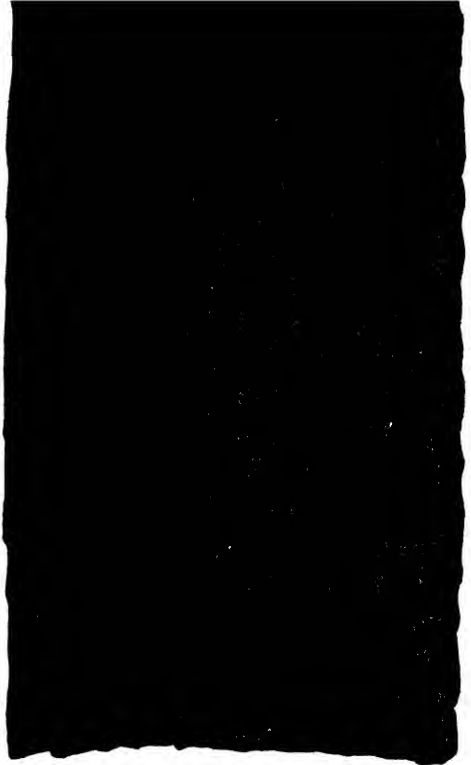
AN EARLY BUSINESS DOCUMENT

*A cuneiform tablet from the Tigris-
Euphrates Valley recording the
sale of a field about 2000 B.C.*

	Phoenician	Greek Monumental	Roman Monumental	Square Capitals	Early Uncial	Caroline Letters	Early Black Letter
A	ⴺ	A	A	λ	a	a	a
B	ⴞ	B	B	B	B	b	b
C	ⴸ	Γ	C	C	c	c	c
D	ⴰ	Δ	D	D	ծ	d	ծd
E	ⴷ	E	E	E	e	e	e
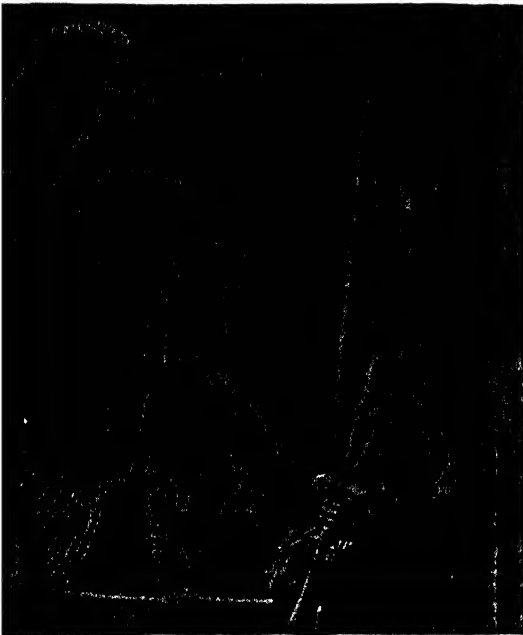
AN EGYPTIAN SCRIBE

*invention of writing enabled a single scribe, with his
ile brush and inkpot, to leave more eloquent records
the stones of the pyramids.*

FIRST FIVE LETTERS OF OUR ALPHABET

*The print which you are reading
evolved from Phoenician script.*

THE BEGINNING OF WRITTEN HISTORY

1

Prehistoric Man

"THE PROPER STUDY of mankind is man" the English poet, Alexander Pope, declared over two hundred years ago, and two thousand years before that the Greek philosopher Plato admitted that "Trees and fields tell me nothing: men are my teachers." This preoccupation with man as the central figure in Nature's drama, this *anthropocentric* interpretation of the universe, long flattered man with a sense of his own exclusive importance and distorted his conception of his place in the natural order. Through immemorial generations men found it easy to persuade themselves that the sun rose in order to bring them light, that the rain fell to moisten their crops, and that their four-footed brothers, the lower animals, had been created so that the "lords of creation" might slay them for food or harness them for labor. This egotistic attitude made it difficult for human beings to conceive of the world as existing without them, and until very recent times they held to the general belief that it had been fashioned shortly before their own appearance on the scene, and that the earth with all that it contained was no more than a few thousand years old.

1. ORIGINS

When modern scientists turned to probe the question of the antiquity of the earth **Geologic time** and of man, they found that man himself, with his conceited notions about his own origin and importance, was a prejudiced and unreliable teacher on this subject. On the other hand, they found that the "trees and fields" which Plato had ignored offered testimony of a more objective, more dependable, and more astonishing character. Throughout the past century each decade has seen fresh evidence uncovered by the geologists to substantiate their estimates of the all but incredible antiquity of this planet which we inhabit. It is not possible to enumerate here the eras, periods, and epochs into which the scientists have divided the aeons of geologic time, nor to analyze the methods by which they have calculated the ages required for the sedimentary deposits to form and harden into the rocks which they study. Their reckonings have recently been checked by delicate measurements based upon the rate at which radioactive elements like uranium disintegrate to form lead, and the figures thus obtained indicate that the earth has been circling in its particular orbit for a period in excess of two thousand million years.

During the greater number of its interminable journeys about the sun the earth appears to have been devoid of life. How the first microscopic **First living organisms** organisms were generated in its sterile lagoons the scientists cannot yet tell us with any certainty, but palaeontologists (students of fossil plants and animals) have found traces of what they believe were once living forms in rocks which they estimate at nearly one thousand million years old. How slowly these primordial organisms evolved into larger and more variegated species can be gathered from the time chart which
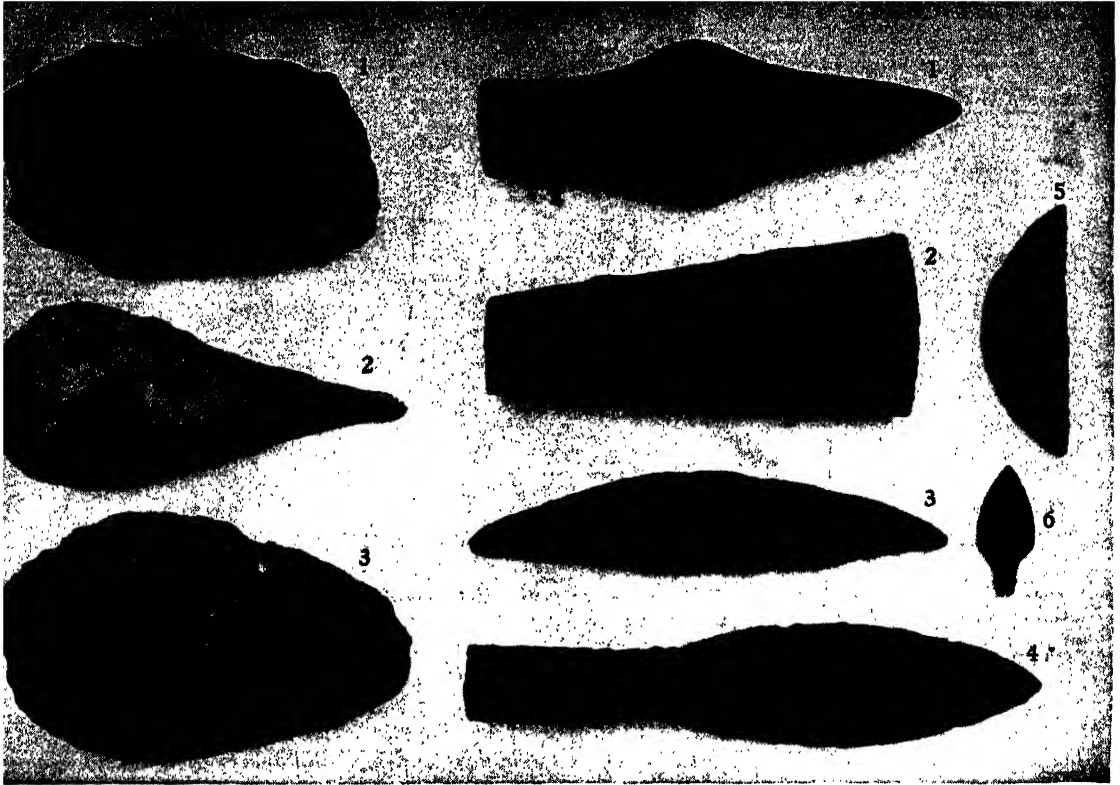
IMPLEMENTS USED BY PREHISTORIC MAN

Left: Implements typical of the Early Palaeolithic Age. 1. Hand axe. 2. Dagger or perforating tool. 3. Implement for cutting and scraping.
Right: Implements typical of the Neolithic Age. 1. Axe hammer of stone, perforated for hafting. 2. Axe of flint, partly polished. 3. Saw. 4. Dagger. 5. Knife or sickle blade. 6. Arrow point.

concludes this chapter. Perhaps half a billion years elapsed before living things passed from the sea to the land, but once there they seem to have evolved relatively more rapidly. Within another half billion years gigantic prehistoric reptiles, the skeletons of which crowd our natural history museums, had formed their long procession and departed, and the smaller, more intelligent, warm-blooded mammals, the highest class of vertebrates, were inheriting the earth. The time intervals required for these developments cannot, of course, be exactly determined, and the geologists themselves are not wholly in accord regarding the duration of the various epochs. But all leading palaeontologists concur in the conclusion that human beings were absent from the scene throughout the earlier eras and did not appear until the end of what is known as the Tertiary period. At some stage in comparatively recent times, perhaps seven or eight

million years ago, perhaps even less, the highest order of mammals, the primates, produced as an offshoot that curious terrestrial biped whom we know as man.

Man came, therefore, as a very late arrival on a planet which had managed to get along without him for aeons of unrecorded time. To appreciate how recent he and his works must appear in terms of geologic reckoning, we may for the sake of simplification represent the thousand million years during which living organisms have apparently been developing as a period of twenty-four hours. By this scale, the first vertebrate land animals appeared about seven hours ago; man, as a being distinguishable from the apes, is a product of the last ten minutes or less; and the earliest advanced civilizations that the archaeologists have unearthed, dating from the fourth or fifth millennium before Christ, are less than one second old.

Emergence of man

To put it another way, men civilized enough to form suitable subjects for the historian, men who could utilize geometry and writing, raise pyramids and temples, and transmit comprehensible records of their thoughts and aspirations, have lived on earth one second out of the twenty-four hours of our comparative scale, or less than ten thousand of the thousand million years that life has been evolving on earth.

The brevity of this period of man's ascendancy, and the almost incredible progress that he has made in the last brief span of a few thousand years, distinguish him unmistakably from his prehuman ancestors. Whether his superior understanding is thought of as a unique endowment, a soul, granted to him alone of all terrestrial beings by a benevolent Creator, or whether it is ascribed to a swift progressive stimulation of rudimentary talents, man's development, in this latest moment of geologic time, from a cowering beast in a cave to a rational architect that can bridge the seas and ride the skies, is an astonishing transformation. It seems almost to belie the ancient proverb, *Natura non facit saltum*, "Nature makes no leap," and it suggests very clearly that man, in his rapid ascent to civilization, must have discovered and made use of tools and techniques which no other animal succeeded in mastering. What some of these tools and techniques were, and how man came to acquire them, will be discussed in the following sections.

2. THE ACQUISITION OF TOOLS

How many thousands or millions of years ago men first began to use sticks and stones as tools and weapons the anthropologists cannot tell us with any exactitude. Indeed it is almost certain that this peculiarity of man, this deviation, which later came to distinguish him so markedly from the other mammals, had no "beginning" in the sense of an abrupt departure from previous habits. The first dawn man who cracked a stubborn bone with a rock the better to suck out the marrow had no notion that he was making a momentous discovery. His successors, in the same unthinking way, learned to keep a supply of small sharp-edged stones at hand, and even to carry them about, for this and similar matter-of-fact purposes. These "eoliths," however, are scarcely distinguishable from ordinary stones, and although palaeontologists have found such presumable "tools" in deposits perhaps four million years old they cannot be considered indubitable proof that prehistoric men actually used them as fist-hatchets in that remote age.

Some millions of years later, however, men had discovered not only how to use stone tools but how to *fashion* them. They found a way to chip their fist-hatchets to a sharper cutting edge, and such chipped flints can be identified much more readily than the eoliths. In Europe, where the search has been pressed most persistently, the vast numbers uncovered suggest that prehistoric men had been chipping flint hatchets and even knives for an indefinite period before the advance of the ice sheets from the north last interrupted their activities some fifty or sixty thousand years ago. These early tool makers have been named the Neanderthal men, and the million years, more or less, during which they or their predecessors in Europe (and elsewhere) pursued their crude method of chipping stone is known as the Palaeolithic or Old Stone Age.

By sifting successive layers of bones and rubbish which have lain undisturbed from the Old Stone Age, archaeologists have traced the slow improvements which the Neanderthal peoples introduced into their simple art of tool-making. When the climate of Europe turned wintry with the advancing ice, they became cave dwellers, and hunted reindeer and other arctic animals for food. Even the huge and hairy mammoths fell into their pitfalls and died beneath their spears as their skill and daring increased. Some students prefer to call this period of slow improvement and increased versatility the Middle Stone Age, for these European savages of some fifty thousand years ago learned to make stone knives and spear heads, to fasten handles to their axes, and to chip their flints to a much finer cutting edge than their precursors had achieved. The evidence from

their caves indicates that they also fashioned bone needles, and made other useful articles from reindeer horn, but these artifacts, being less durable than their stone tools, have seldom survived the abrasion of the years.

When the great ice sheet, which had pushed its way intermittently as far south as the site of New York City in America and had touched in Europe the northern sections of what is now France and Germany, retreated for the last time about thirty thousand years ago, a new type of man had appeared in Europe. The newcomers, who have been styled the Cro-Magnon men, were very probably invaders from the warmer adjacent regions of Asia and Africa, and they apparently conquered or displaced the more primitive Neanderthal men. They possessed better weapons, were probably less brutish in appearance, and have left paintings on the walls of their caves which prove that they possessed a keen sense of observation and a rough but vigorous talent for picture-making. For some fifteen or twenty thousand years these Cro-Magnon people hunted and fought in the river valleys of southern Europe, and then they too passed from the scene.

Cro-Magnon men

This appearance and disappearance of successive types of primitive man in Europe raises the question whether Europe itself was the original home, or only an outpost, of stone age culture. Many anthropologists are disposed to place the habitat of the first men somewhere in the forests of the great land mass which stretched, some ten million years ago, from the present Congo basin to the Malay Archipelago. Although the oldest tools (artifacts) so far discovered appear to be much more ancient than any human skeletons that have yet come to light, sufficient fossil bones have been recovered to demonstrate that primitive man was widely disseminated throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa as far back as half a million years ago. Archaic specimens — the erect-ape-man (*Pithecanthropus erectus*) discovered in Java, the more advanced Peking skull (*Sinanthropus*), the Rhodesian man with the brows

Fossil evidence

of a gorilla, the enigmatic Piltdown man (*Eoanthropus*) unearthed in Sussex — these and other remains suggest the wide dispersion of man's human or sub-human predecessors throughout the Old World. It is possible, of course, that none of these creatures fits into the direct ancestry of modern man; they may represent abortive offshoots of an earlier anthropoid stock which failed to evolve more fully. Anthropologists hesitate to dogmatize too strongly on such incomplete evidence. But a number of arguments, not easy for the lay reader to appreciate, support the presumption that all human beings are descended from a single humanoid stock which became separated from the anthropoids at least ten million years ago and has been dispersing and advancing as conditions permitted ever since. The present division of humanity into three varieties or races, the Negroid, Mongoloid, and Caucasoid (or white), each with distinctive features and coloring, may possibly date from comparatively recent times, if one million years ago can be called recent.

Long before the dawn of written history these three races, the black, the yellow and the white, had settled in the widely separated regions where they are still most numerous today. The Negroids occupied central and southern Africa. The Mongoloids had spread through eastern Asia and crossed over (perhaps as late as twenty thousand years ago) to America. The Caucasoids were to be found chiefly in western Asia, in northern Africa, and in Europe, so that the Mediterranean had already become for them what its name implies, a "middle" sea. How slow these scattered prehistoric peoples proved at bettering their tools or improving their living conditions has already been explained. Throughout the Old Stone Age, though pressed by necessity which is said to be the mother of invention, they did little more than repeat for thousands of generations the practices of their forbears. The conservative force of a rigid traditionalism enabled them to perpetuate their meager skills, but such unimaginative repetition was in itself inimical to progress because progress is change. Even today most people

The force of tradition

prefer to imitate rather than to invent. Primitive societies at the lowest cultural levels tend to remain stationary for an indefinite time unless the intrusion of new forces sets them better models for imitation or otherwise compels a change in the ritualistic pattern of their existence.

The rapid progress achieved by western man since the New Stone Age has been due in great measure to the increas-
Benefits of diffusion ing tendency of neighboring groups to exchange their individual tools and techniques and so augment or pool their cultural resources. Tradition had tended to preserve the benefits of new practices *in time*, but this second process, which is known as *diffusion*, extended them *in space*. The first method whereby one tribe brought its superior arms and methods to the attention of another was doubtless by conquest, but war is at best a poor conductor of culture. When neighboring peoples discovered that, instead of striving to exterminate one another, they might exchange goods to their mutual advantage, trade was born. But it was impossible to exchange goods without maintaining intertribal contacts, which in turn led to the exchange of ideas and comparisons, and the resulting diffusion of culture tended to break down the age-long insularity and blind conservatism of primitive man.

One tool acquired by prehistoric man early in his career has not yet been discussed though it was perhaps the most
Language important of all. Hatchets and spears furnished implements for his hands; *words* provided implements for his thought The first words, like the first fist-hatchets, were no doubt shapeless and blunt, a combination of grunts and snarls accompanied by gestures. Some backward peoples even today depend so extensively upon signs to supplement their speech that they find it difficult to converse in darkness. Yet with the development of words, even the simplest words, man acquired tools which enabled him to reinvoke images and past experiences, to conceive of abstract qualities, to preserve the wisdom of the tribe in proverbs and its history in legends, to contrast his subjective impression of events and experiences with the conclusions of others, and so reduce his wavering dreamlike fancies to the discipline of comparison, the logic of an objective reality.

3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF HANDICRAFTS

Palaeolithic man was primarily a hunter, and it is understandable that his unremitting quest for game should have led him first of all to develop weap-
Implements of the chase ons for the chase. A stone hatchet is more effective when it is lashed to the end of a stick, a sliver of chipped flint set in a handle of reindeer horn makes a handier knife. Spears to thrust or to fling, barbed harpoons with thongs attached, and a curved flattened stick, for throwing, which would strike down birds and small animals at a distance, were gradually added to the early hunter's arsenal. Fishhooks of wood, shell, horn, or bone were in use long before the age of metals. Precisely when or where the bow and arrow were first developed is not known, but cave paintings in Spain which probably date from twenty thousand years ago depict archers in battle. Other drawings have been found which show a mammoth floundering among the broken saplings which had disguised the pit into which he had fallen, so it would seem clear that by the close of the Glacial Age primitive man had mastered the art of preparing snares, traps, and pitfalls wherewith to capture his quarry. Even his horns and whistles, used probably to entice game or to summon scattered hunters to the kill, have been dug up in the cave deposits.

The most imperative need of prehistoric man was food; the second was shelter. When night fell the earliest humans sought refuge beneath a fallen
Mastery of fire tree or overhanging rock. Their successors learned in time to weave a protection of branches, or to enlarge a cave for their permanent habitation and guard the entrance with a wall of rocks, but in all this they were scarcely more intelligent than the animals. As homemakers their most distinctive and phenomenal advance over the four-footed tribes came with their mastery of fire. It is possible that early men learned how to transport and preserve fire long before they discovered that they could kindle

A PRIMITIVE HUNTER

CAVE DRAWING OF MAMMOTH

The mammoth, extinct now for thousands of years, was hunted by prehistoric man.
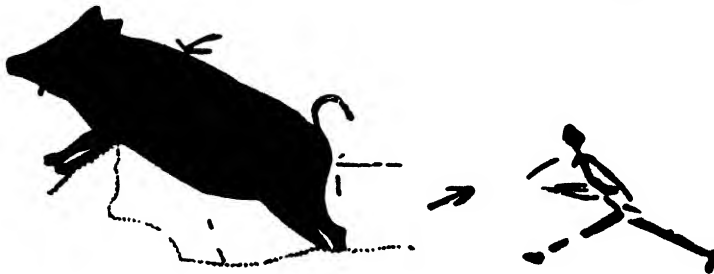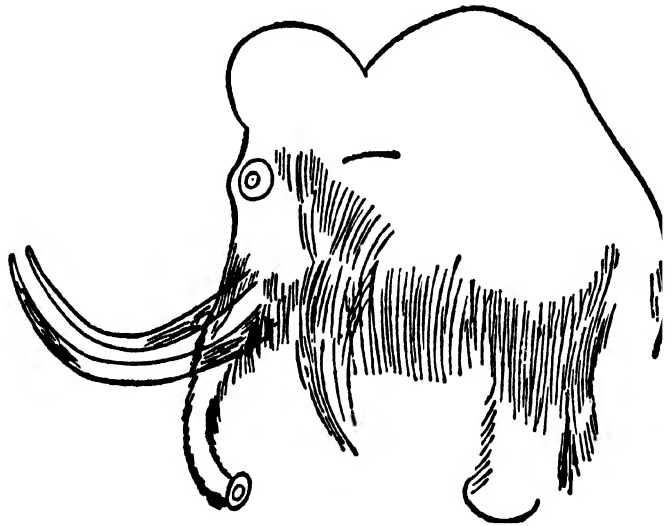
A WILD BOAR HUNT

Wall painting in dark red

PREHISTORIC CAVE DRAWINGS

it by friction but, however acquired, this new technique was an inestimable boon. The blazing hearth became the nucleus of communal life, providing warmth, light, and protection, for the boldest animals feared a flaming torch, and this new conquest liberated man in great measure from the terror of night. Under the smoke-blackened roof of a cave or in the open country beneath the stars a fire created a magic circle in the shelter of which it was possible to sleep tranquilly or work at some uncompleted task. Around the hearth a community spirit developed and a host of new techniques originated.

Without fire men had necessarily eaten all flesh raw, gorging on the carcass of their prey before it became too rotten. **Domestic arts** Cookery, the art of roasting, smoking and later boiling food, not only made meats and vegetables more palatable, it preserved them longer from putrefaction. Containers woven from twigs and rushes were protected from the fire by a coating of clay, a step which may have laid the basis for pottery making. Baked clay vessels provided dishes for all purposes, and scratches made upon them, at first perhaps merely as marks of ownership, were amplified into artistic designs in color, and the ceramic industry was born. Animal skins, scraped, dried, and sewn together, which had provided the first clothing, were superseded in part with the development of weaving. Threads extracted by boiling and mashing stalks of flax were twisted into rope, woven into cloth, or knotted into a mesh to snare birds and fishes, and the foundation thus laid for a second industry, the manufacture of textiles. Once primitive peoples started on this road of technological improvement their brains tended to become more alert, their fingers more sensitive. The new techniques slowly prepared the way for the adoption of new implements and new aids, receptacles for cooking and storing food, needles and awls for sewing, a potter's wheel on which to turn and shape the wet clay, spindles for spinning and frames for weaving, chisels for engraving, vegetable dyes for staining cloth, and red ochre and other pigments for painting. A love of ornament manifested itself; the men carved pictures of animals on their knife handles, the women threaded themselves necklaces of bear's teeth. Whether such adornment was an evidence of "art for art's sake" or sprang from a superstitious faith in talismans and charms the anthropologists have not decided, but whatever its inspiration it marked a further step in the progress of primitive handicrafts.

First a hunter and then a homemaker, prehistoric man became in his turn an architect. The pits which he dug and covered with boughs reflect a rudimentary engineering skill, and **Neolithic architecture** by the New Stone Age he had graduated to more ambitious projects. The foundations of community houses built perhaps ten thousand years ago on the shores of Swiss lakes prove that Neolithic peoples learned to unite their efforts for collective undertakings. Boats that could carry a dozen men or more were another attainment, achieved most likely by hollowing out a large tree trunk with the aid of fire and adze. Sleds on which to drag objects too heavy to carry likewise date from these or earlier times. But the most remarkable monuments which the Neolithic men left behind them to demonstrate their skill as builders are the rows and circles of huge upright stones which may still be seen in many parts of Europe. Sometimes slabs many tons in weight are found set edgewise to form a square chamber roofed with massive tablets, and archaeologists have assumed that these dolmens, as they are termed, were originally designed as burial chambers. Sometimes rough pillars of stone are found arranged in circles or avenues, and from their disposition it seems probable that they were associated with a cult of sun worship. To quarry and transport such monoliths successfully the Stone Age engineer must have used mass labor and displayed inexhaustible patience and remarkable ingenuity. They stand as further testimony that the peoples of Europe were making comparatively rapid progress in the centuries that led up to the dawn of written history.

Any account of life in the Stone Age must remain of necessity general and incomplete. It is doubtful if estimates of prehistoric man's

progress can ever be more than approximate;
the evidence appears at times to
Fragmentary evidence conflict; and it is not impossible
that more than once the clock
ran backward and techniques laboriously
learned were forgotten in a period of
recession. The artifacts uncovered by the
archaeologists, from eoliths to wall paintings
and pottery, offer at best but mute and par-
tial testimony, for they have survived
through the mere accident of durability
while a thousand articles and relics more
eloquent and suggestive fell to dust. It has
been surmised, for instance, that primitive
man bored holes in rock by rotating a stick
with a bowstring, using sand as an abrasive,
and that he split the rock by the alternate
application of fire and water. Some of the
rocks which he drilled and shaped remain,
but his drill and bow have crumbled. A
famous archaeologist has pointed out that
our own civilization, judged fifty thousand
years from now by the same capricious evi-
dence, might appear an age of beer bottles,
because glass is the most durable material
that we produce and distribute in large
quantities. Of course the student of ancient
cultures does not have to depend exclusively
upon the evidence provided by chance sur-
viving artifacts. He has learned how to eke
it out with the data accumulated by the
palaeontologists and anthropologists from
their examination of fossils, and by the eth-
nologists who have studied backward peo-
ples like the aborigines of Australia, savages
still at a level approximating Stone Age cul-
ture when first visited by Europeans. Fi-
nally, the student of prehistory may learn
much from the work undertaken in compara-
tive philology, for the philologists have
shown that words may sometimes prove al-
most as durable as skeletons or pictures. By
tracing language to its roots they provide
clues to the origins and migrations of an-
cient peoples, for word changes illumine the
slow upward struggle of man's mind in its
more recent development, somewhat as the
tools and other artifacts recovered from the
past reflect the persistent and increasing dex-
terity of his hands. Despite such aids, how-
ever, all we know with certainty about early
man is that we know very little.

4. THE DOMESTICATION OF ANIMALS AND PLANTS

The mastery of language, tools, and fire
set man apart from the beasts, made his life
safer and fuller, and fixed the
pattern of the first primitive **Food and population**
human societies. But so long as
human beings remained dependent for their
food supply upon such wild fruits, grains or
vegetables as they could gather, and upon
the animals or fish which they could hunt or
catch they lived upon a narrow and precari-
ous margin of subsistence. A severe winter,
the depletion of the antelope herds, or the
failure of migratory birds to return on time
might mean literal starvation for the com-
munity. Even the natural increase of the
group itself was a menace, for the wild life of
a given area could be killed off if hunted too
persistently, and such curtailment of the
meat supply would automatically reduce the
quota of human inhabitants if they had
multiplied too rapidly during a few years of
plenty. Savages who remain at the hunting
stage of culture cannot increase beyond the
relatively low maximum which the wild life
of the area can permanently sustain.

Man's fourth great experiment, the at-
tempt to regulate his food supply, came later
than his conquest of language,
tools, and fire, and probably **Domesticated animals**
dates from Neolithic times.
When he learned to secure some control over
the movements and increase of the animals
on which he fed, and to cultivate and im-
prove the grains and fruits which would sup-
port their life and his, he embarked upon a
conscious program of changing and adapting
his natural environment to suit his needs.
The first animal which European man ap-
pears to have tamed was the dog, which be-
came his faithful ally for hunting and fight-
ing, and could be slaughtered for food in a
season of famine, a practice still resorted to
today among the Eskimos. By the close of
the Neolithic Age, sheep, oxen, goats and
pigs had been domesticated also, but it is not
known with certainty where the most an-
cient breeds came from, nor possible in all
cases to identify their parent strains. The
horse, for example, which has played such a
prominent rôle in recorded history, was a late
arrival from Asia, and did not appear in the

PRIMITIVE AGRICULTURE

*Early Egyptians plowing and sowing as their
ancestors had done for a hundred generations*
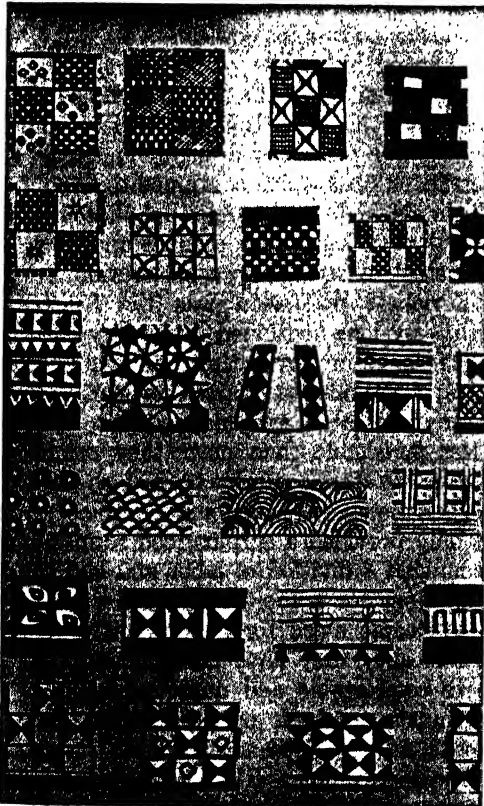
ANCIENT POTTERY DESIGNS

*There is individuality in the patterns which ancient
people, who could not read, invented for their clay
vessels and tiles.*
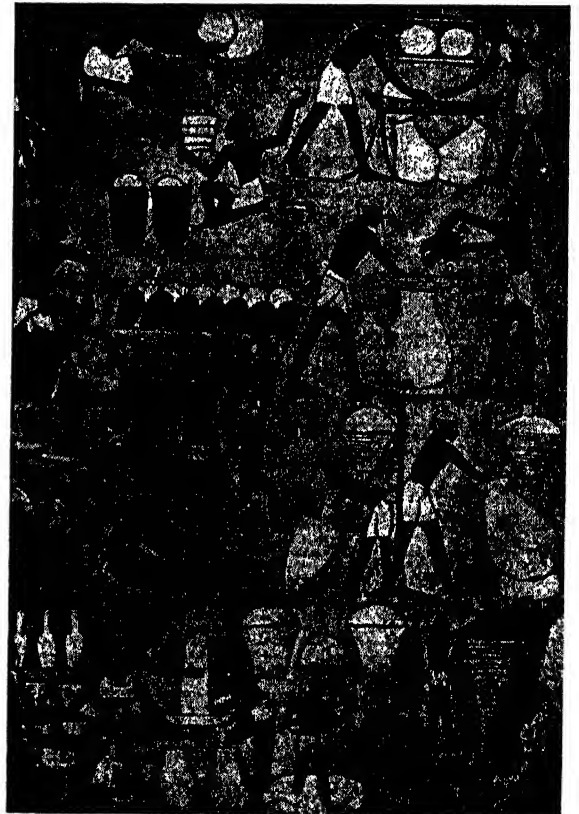
AN EGYPTIAN POTTERY ESTABLISHMENT

*Over 5000 years ago the Egyptians had
pottery factories with division of labor.*

Mediterranean world until approximately 3000 B.C.

If, in the course of its evolution, a primitive society grew dependent upon domesticated sheep or cattle for food and clothing, the welfare and protection of the herds became a primary concern for all members of the population. The families composing a tribe might then migrate annually with their herds in search of richer pasturage, carrying their possessions with them and pitching their tents for an indefinite stay wherever grass was plentiful. Under such nomadic conditions the wealth of a people was literally "on the hoof"; it was not profitable nor even possible for them to accumulate great possessions or to build cities; and the virtues which they learned to cultivate and to honor would be those they most needed, endurance and watchfulness and courage in the face of raids or attacks. The close relationship and dependence which existed between the welfare of the people and the herds invested all pastoral rites and duties with vital significance, and it is not surprising that primitive peoples commonly invoked magic in their efforts to make the herds increase and multiply, or represented their gods in the form of animals. The docile kine which provided milk, cheese, meat and leather might become, for instance, the one sure symbol of benevolence in a harsh world. Herdsmen risked their lives in defense of their cattle as readily as in defense of their families for the welfare of the two was identical. A parallel to this close dependence can sometimes be found today under frontier conditions, where, in an isolated homestead, the loss of the family cow may be a more tragic calamity than the loss of one of the children.

With the domestication of sheep and pigs the primitive community was assured a more constant and plentiful supply of fresh meat, while goats and cows could provide dairy products. But with more mouths, human and animal, to feed, the community found itself increasingly dependent upon an adequate supply of vegetable matter. How men first learned to select and cultivate the wild grains, saving the seeds to sow for next

Pastoral nomads

Cultivation of grain

year's crop, and carrying them to new lands as the tribe migrated, is one more secret lost in the dawn of history. Traces of domesticated wheat and barley have been found in Neolithic dwellings in Europe, and millet, oats and rye were added by the close of the Neolithic Age. All these cereals had probably been imported originally from the steppes of central Asia where they had been cultivated from remoter times. With the exception of sorghum, which may have been cultivated first in Africa, and maize, which formed the staple crop of the leading American Indian cultures, Asia is the probable homeland of all the more important cereals, for rice, too, was first domesticated in the Asian lowlands.

By turning farmer, man found a way to assure a regular supply of fodder for his beasts and meal for his family, but the demands of his new calling changed his habits of life. He had to remain on the fields which he cultivated, moving on only if the land became exhausted or prolonged drought rendered it infertile. Tribes which continued to live off their herds might still wander but those that tilled the soil kept fewer animals and made their stock a secondary consideration, for their richest possession was the fruitful earth. By long-continued husbandry these early farmers improved the quality of their grains; where rain was scarce they learned to construct irrigation systems; and since grain is less perishable than meat they erected granaries to store a surplus against a year of poor harvests. Such systematic agriculture not only provided a surplus food supply, it encouraged a division of labor and laid the foundations for a more diversified culture. When people dwell for generations in the same locality they have more incentive to create comfortable and durable homes, to accumulate a stock of possessions, keep records, and establish a government which will preserve order. The close connection between agriculture and civilization is attested by the archaeologists, who have discovered no great civilization of early times which was not largely dependent upon wheat, rice or maize for its food supply.

Thus man evolved from a food *seeker* to a

The first farmers

food *producer*, a momentous milestone in
his slow upward progression.
New social patterns Among groups which settled to
agriculture the pattern of life
was profoundly modified; inevitably new
customs and traditions, new folkways and
mores, developed, for people could now live
in closer proximity, a few acres of land sup-
porting a group which, in the hunting stage,
would have required several square miles of
territory for their game preserve. This in-
creasing density of population stimulated
social impulses and made possible larger col-
lective undertakings. New skills and handi-
crafts evolved in response to the new duties
and problems; the procession of the seasons
which controlled the vegetation cycle became
a matter of absorbing significance, and new
myths and rituals associated with the activi-
ties of sowing and reaping became inter-
twined with more ancient formulas and in-
herited beliefs. The several geographical
areas of Eurasia and Africa in which the
more important of these early agricultural
societies developed, the part which their
natural environment played in shaping their
fate, and the pattern into which their cul-
tural life crystallized will form the subject
matter of the following chapter. We pass,
now, from prehistoric to historic times.
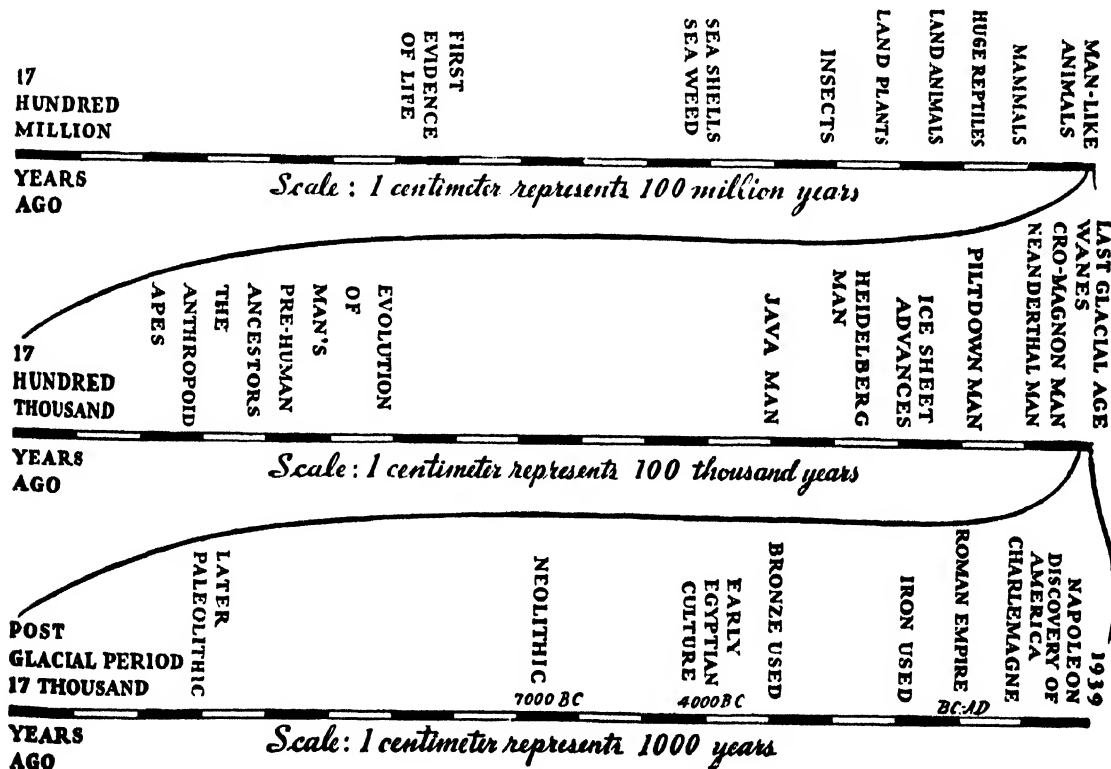
GEOLOGIC TIME CHART

2

The Mediterranean World

c. 5000 to c. 500 B.C.

THE EARLIEST CIVILIZATIONS which the archaeologists have traced appear to have originated, almost without exception, in fertile river valleys. At the head of the Persian Gulf where the silt washed down by the Tigris and Euphrates long since built up a rich plain; on the lower banks of the Nile where each summer the floods spread a deposit of new soil; by the slow-moving waters of the Ganges, the holy river of India; and in the basins of the Hwang Ho and the Yangtze in China, men have cultivated the fruitful earth and lived in settled communities from mythological times. In America traces of a comparable but later development of river culture have been found in Peru, where the dwellers of the coastal valleys progressed independently from an archaic to a relatively advanced stage of civilization between two thousand and fifteen hundred years ago. Students of history have long speculated whether these variegated civilizations were all derived from a common source, were all "colonies" as it were of ancient Egypt or the legendary realm of Atlantis, or whether the inhabitants of these widely separated regions perfected their cultures independently and (until trade or conquest brought them into contact) unknown to one another. Most historians today accept the latter conclusion, and assume that, wherever in Eurasia, Africa, or America human nomads in a stage of Neolithic culture settled permanently in a favorable habitat, there was a

chance for them to develop a higher level of civilization.

After 5000 B.C., in widely separated areas of the Old World, the peasant village culture of Neolithic times produced a new social organism, the *urban* community, and a new type of civilization appeared, distinguished and dominated by these new and populous cities. It is interesting to note that this "urban revolution" seems to have come about independently in the Valley of the Nile, of the Tigris-Euphrates, and of the Indus River, between 5000 and 3000 B.C. In a somewhat similar fashion, after 1500 B.C., an urban civilization slowly took form in the Hwang Ho Valley of China, but like the cities of Egypt and Mesopotamia, the Chinese centers of urban life seem to have been self-evolved and were not colonies or transplantations. This independent growth is even more demonstrable in the case of the Pre-Columbian cultures of America. From Indian peasant villages proud cities of stone emerged, in Yucatan, in Mexico, and in Peru. These cities were the centers of isolated and self-sufficient cultures; they seem to have contributed nothing to one another's growth; and they were already deserted or declining when the Europeans arrived in the sixteenth century, to overthrow the Indian civilizations with superior arts and arms.

Because this text is primarily a survey of European civilization, the cultures of China, India, and America are not discussed in de-

SUMERIAN STATUETTE HEAD

This statue head from the Tigris-Euphrates Valley is 5000 years old.

ing. Archaeologists disagree regarding the dates of the first dynasties, but lists of kings have been unearthed which go back apparently to about 4500 B.C. More substantial proofs of antiquity, such as brick burial vaults containing gold and silver ornaments set with semi-precious stones, dating from 3500 B.C., testify to the existence of an advanced culture on the lower Euphrates in the fourth millennium before Christ. It seems indisputable that such a culture must have rested upon hundreds and perhaps thousands of years of slow progress and technological improvements in the arts and sciences, for original and indigenous cultures do not flower in a day.

The earliest known inhabitants of the lower Tigris and Euphrates Valley, the Sumerians, were skilled agricul- **Sumerians** turalists who kept domesticated cattle, sheep and goats, and constructed an

tail, or correlated century by century with events in Europe. Instead, they are brought into the story when the world-conquering civilization of Europe reached, engulfed, and transformed them. This fate overtook the American Indian civilizations in the sixteenth century; the peoples of India, China, and Japan preserved their cultures relatively intact until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and are discussed in that context.

1. THE LAND OF THE TWO RIVERS

Of the early civilizations two only, the first originating near the Persian Gulf and **Tigris and Euphrates** the second in the Nile Valley, were destined to make direct and important contributions to the progress of the ancient Mediterranean world, and hence to that complex and dynamic culture in the shadow of which we live today and know as modern European or "western" civilization. As early as 5000 B.C., and probably earlier, the rich delta lands of the Tigris and Euphrates supported agricultural communities where the arts and crafts of civilization were steadily advanc-

CODE OF HAMMURABI
(upper part)

Hammurabi, King of Babylon about 2000 B.C., is shown receiving his famous code of laws from the god of the city.

THE SUMERIAN CITY OF UR

The excavated ruins of Ur, probably the greatest city of the world about 2200 B.C.

intricate system of dikes, canals, and aqueducts, to irrigate their fields. Lacking a readily available supply of stone, they constructed their temples and fortifications of sun-dried bricks, and they also used clay tablets for keeping records, impressing written characters upon them while they were soft and then baking them.

For many centuries the Sumerians apparently waged intermittent warfare with settlements farther up the river valley, where dwelt a Semitic people known as the Akkadians. Such conflicts, however, were less important historically than the growth of trade and the exchange of products and techniques, which tended to unite the independent cities of Mesopotamia into one empire. About 2700 B.C. an Akkadian king, Sargon I, brought both Sumer and Akkad under his sway. New dissensions followed, while waves of

Rise of Babylon

Elamite invaders from the east and Semitic conquerors from the west penetrated into the Land of the Two Rivers. About 2000 B.C., Hammurabi, a Semitic king of the rising town of Babylon, which was favorably located near the center of the valley, extended his authority over the greater part of the region. Hammurabi's zeal for order and justice is reflected in his laws, the famous *Code of Hammurabi*, a replica of which was discovered in 1901. These laws reveal the high state of social development which prevailed under the Babylonian ascendancy and suggest that the culture and customs of the various cities of the plain had blended into a composite civilization.

For nearly two thousand years, though its fortunes fluctuated, Babylon remained the most famous city of the Near East. From it and the neighboring cities of "Shinar's Plain" caravans bearing Baby-

Ionian commerce pushed westward to the Mediterranean and south to the Red Sea. Thousands of clay tablets recently recovered and deciphered make it clear that the peoples of the Babylonian Empire were farsighted and industrious farmers and enterprising traders who made the practical affairs of life their chief concern. A glance at a map of Asia Minor will explain why the Tigris-Euphrates Valley became a natural trade route connecting the Mediterranean Sea with the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. As the luxury of Babylon became a legend throughout the East this land bridge and its peaceful cities were raided with increasing ferocity by the warlike nomadic peoples of the adjoining desert and mountain regions. Sometimes the newcomers remained as conquerors and established a ruling dynasty, but they soon tended to adopt the settled life, the more civilized customs, and even the language of the conquered. To control this populous and fertile strip from the Euphrates delta to the Mediterranean coast, to dispose of its products and levy toll upon its highways, was the ambition of many local rulers, and this ambition furnishes a clue to the shifting fortunes, the rise and fall of cities and of dynasties, which fill the pages of ancient history. These military annals, however, which stretch over several thousand years with their campaigns, battles, sieges, and stratagems, form a story too complicated and too profitless to be told in detail here.

A chain of cities

For in the history of man's progress toward civilization the march of armies is often less significant than the journeys of the merchant, because the merchant disseminates new ideas and products, while armies, it has been well said, are almost perfect nonconductors of culture. Conquerors who once made their name a terror and boasted monotonously, like the Assyrian kings, "I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire," are almost forgotten, but modern Europeans are still indebted each minute of the day, whether they realize it or not, to the astrologers, the technicians, and the traders of Babylon. The division of the hour into sixty minutes, the division of the circle into three hundred

Babylonian science

and sixty degrees, and the division of the zodiac into twelve signs or constellations, are all devices which have survived from the lore of Babylonian sages who questioned the stars in their efforts to measure time and to find a clue to man's fate. By the waters (i.e., canals) of Babylon students of natural philosophy first raised to a high standard that "cult of precision" without which the development of science and the mechanical marvels of the present day would be inconceivable. There, possibly for the first time in human history, accurate systems for determining the length, area, cubical content, and weight of physical objects were introduced by royal edict, making possible the development of mechanical formulas and calculations and the projection of ambitious feats of hydraulics and engineering. In the same fashion the establishment of a fixed monetary unit, and the proclamation of laws governing the rate of interest on loans and other business transactions stimulated the growth of trade. Without the invention of this new, accurate, and international language of mathematics, the civilization in the Land of the Two Rivers might have remained a local and unprogressive culture. The occult knowledge long since ascribed to the "wise men of the East," though it was often alloyed with the dross of superstition, preserved this core of useful truths and principles, and it is not surprising that it should have impressed the minds of less civilized peoples as the quintessence of heavenly wisdom. Whether the Babylonians or the Egyptians should be granted priority in this early development of mathematics, geometry, and astronomy is still a disputed question; progress may have gone on independently in both regions; but the Babylonian culture was more speedily and more widely diffused, for the dwellers in the Nile Valley, as the following section will explain, long tended to keep their wisdom to themselves.

2. EGYPT THE "GIFT OF THE NILE"

The Nile Valley is a narrow winding ribbon of low cultivated land running for five hundred miles through the North-African plateau until it ends in a fan-shaped delta at

The Nile Valley

ENTRANCE TO CHEOPS PYRAMID

*This was built by Khufu (Cheops) about 2900 B.C.
It covered 13 acres and was originally 482 feet high.*
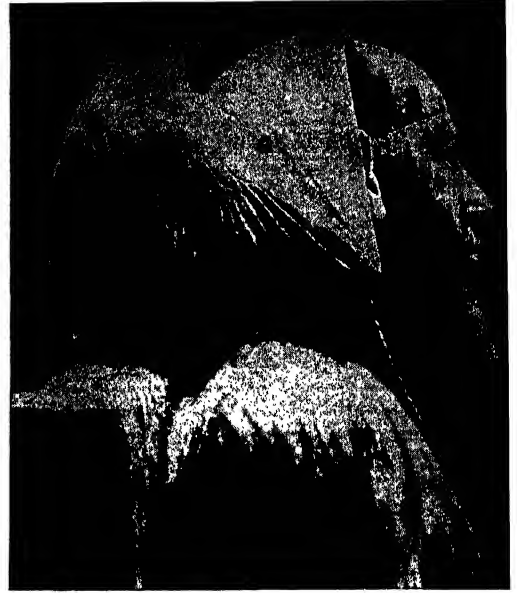
KHEPHREN (KHAFRE)

*Khephren succeeded Khufu and built a pyramid almost
as large.   His head is protected by the sacred falcon.*

EGYPTIAN HORSE AT ABU-SIMBEL

*This Pharaoh ruled Egypt about 1850 B.C. when the introduction
of the horse was revolutionizing warfare.   Note that, a thousand
years after Khephren, the symbolic bird still hovers.   Five hun-
dred years later still the chariot was faithfully imitated (inset).*
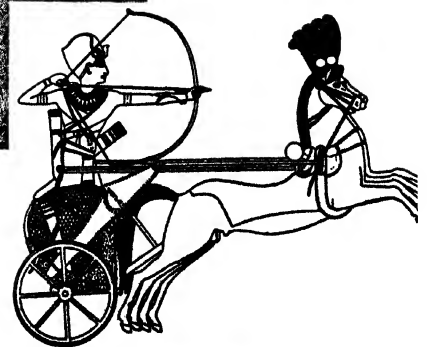
TWO-HORSED WAR CHARIOT
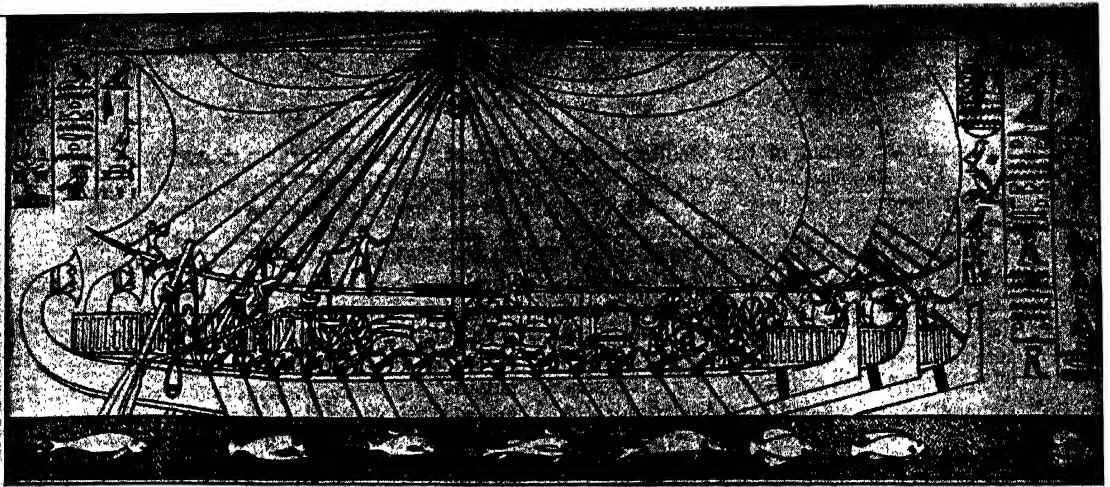
EGYPTIAN SHIPS

58794

The lack of long timbers kept ancient Egyptian galleys structurally weak. Despite the cable truss they were unsafe for rough sea voyages.

POULTRY IN EGYPT

Herdsmen bringing geese to an official for inspection. Note the servility of their attitude.

OFFERING SACRIFICE

Above: This wall painting shows an Egyptian offering tribute to the gods. His mother stands behind him, and the small figure is a servant.

PRINCESS KAWIT

Right: A princess has her hair dressed by one servant while another pours lotion from a flask.

the southeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea. For thousands of years the Nile's muddy banks, refertilized each year by a deposit of silt left by the summer floods, have supported a crowded population, and here, as early as the fifth millennium before Christ, farms and villages were to be found the inhabitants of which had developed a complex culture definitely superior to that of their Neolithic ancestors. By 3400 B.C., the date most generally suggested for the beginning of the First Egyptian Dynasty, the settlements of the lower Nile Valley had been reduced to political and administrative unity under a line of Pharaohs who maintained their capital at Memphis, a city situated at the apex of the Nile Delta. This so-called "Old Kingdom" endured from about 3400 B.C. to 2600 B.C., and the civilization thus established in the Nile Valley proved remarkably stable, preserving the same essential pattern for over three thousand years.

As the ancient Egyptians dwelt in a restricted area, had for centuries no near and **The Pyramid Age** powerful neighbors to threaten them, and were thus preserved from destructive invasions, they tended to live in a world and a culture of their own making. This fact helps to explain why their social pattern and their beliefs and customs, once set, proved conservative and durable. Their state early became what today would be termed an absolute theocracy. The ruler, or Pharaoh, was not merely the administrative head of the government, he was venerated as a god. The serf-like tillers of the soil handed over a goodly portion of their produce to his collectors as an unquestioned tribute, the artisans were conscripted to labor on his monuments, the priests sanctioned his decrees as divine edicts and the scribes and judges recorded and applied them. This cult of the god-king, to which the whole population subscribed, found its most typical and enduring expression in the vast and awe-inspiring monuments erected to receive the embalmed body of the Pharaoh and to preserve it for an after-life. The famous pyramids at Gizeh, which still amaze tourists, were ordered as royal tombs by the kings of the Fourth

Dynasty, between 2900 B.C. and 2750 B.C. The largest, that of Cheops (or Khufu), is 450 feet high and its sides measure 755 feet at the base. So heavy are the limestone blocks of which it is constructed, and so admirably joined together, that they have remained in place nearly five thousand years. It is not easy today to sympathize with the vanity of the despots or to understand the patient devotion of the populace which made these enormous sepulchers possible, but as historic relics they testify to the accurate mathematical knowledge and the engineering skill which the Egyptians had attained five thousand years ago, and they indicate further the extraordinary resources of materials and labor which a ruler of that orderly and well-regimented society had at his command.

After 2600 B.C. the unity of the Old Kingdom was weakened by internal dissensions, and the annals of the next six centuries, which supposedly include the records of the Fifth to **The Middle Kingdom** the Eleventh Dynasties, are scattered and confused. After 2000 B.C. a new line of kings (Twelfth Dynasty) made good their control, and ruled for two centuries from their capital at Thebes, a city some three hundred miles up the Nile from Memphis. This period of splendor, the "Middle Kingdom," was followed by a second period of disunion during which invading tribes, possibly of Semitic origin, established a line known as the Hyksos kings, but were finally driven out between 1600 and 1550 B.C. Then followed four centuries of renewed unity and achievement, **The New Kingdom** the "New Kingdom," under Dynasties Eighteen to Twenty, to be succeeded by another decline and new invasions.

Throughout these political and cultural vicissitudes a hundred generations of men arose, labored, and died by the Nile waters, leaving the record of their aspirations and achievements in the form of tombs and temples, of vast effigies of stone and tiny jeweled figurines, of written inscriptions chiseled in diorite or scribbled on papyrus, the whole presenting to the archaeologist an eloquent account of man's progress over a period of years longer than that which has elapsed

Egyptian Empire

Memphis
Thebes

Assyrian Empire

Nineveh

New Babylonian Empire

Babylon

Persian Empire

Babylon
Susa
Persepolis
Indus
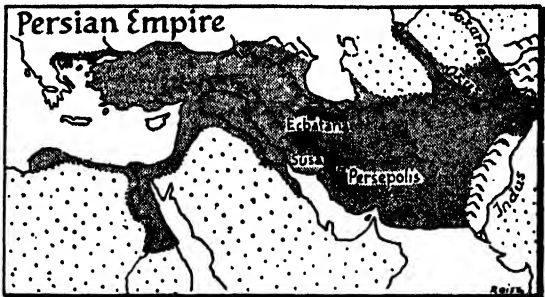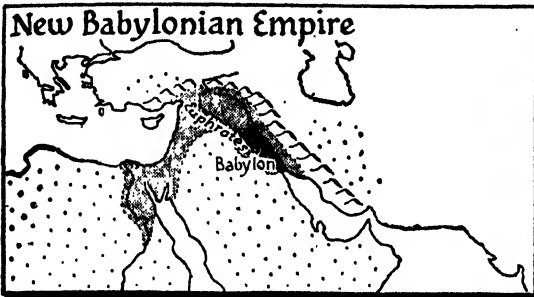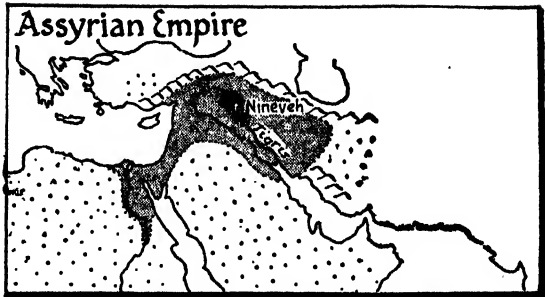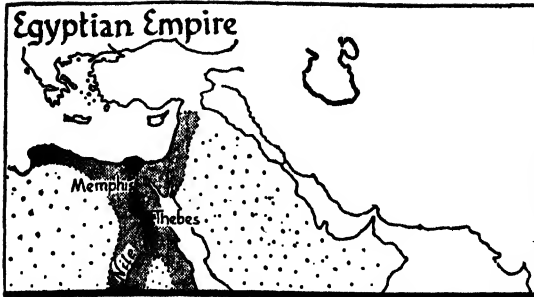
🔲 *Homeland* ▨ *Conquests* ∴∵ *Desert* ⌇⌇ *Mountains*

FOUR ANCIENT EMPIRES

from the establishment of the Roman Empire to the present day.

To list the many important discoveries and cultural gains which the Egyptians made during this long evolution would require a section in itself. The improvements in metallurgy which made possible the manufacture of copper, bronze, and finally iron implements they may have discovered for themselves or learned from the peoples of Asia Minor. The development of writing, the origins of which go back in Egypt to predynastic times, will be discussed later in the present chapter. The architectural monuments, from the pyramid tomb of Cheops (c. 2900 B.C.) to the colossal temple at Karnak (c. 1500 B.C.), have never been surpassed in grandeur, but the more useful and more practical undertakings projected by the Pharaohs are equally worthy of note. Amenemhet III (c. 1800 B.C.) constructed a large reservoir, the Lake of Meri, the better to regulate the Nile floods; Rameses II (c. 1250 B.C.) is credited with opening the first canal linking the Nile Delta with the Red Sea; a later ruler, the Pharaoh Necho (c. 600

Egyptian civilization

B.C.), sent out a naval expedition which apparently succeeded in circumnavigating the continent of Africa. Perhaps the most interesting proof of the careful observations and accurate records kept by early Egyptian students of nature was their calendar, which may have been in use as far back as 4241 B.C., and provided for twelve months of thirty days each, with five additional (or epagomenal) days to make 365.

The ruins scattered through the Nile Valley demonstrate the skill of the ancient engineers, the treasures unearthed in the royal tombs reflect the dexterity of the artisans, but for the life of the common man, his standard of living, his social and family relationships, his thoughts in hours of relaxation, his opportunities for recreation or for improving his position in the world, the evidence is less adequate. Fragmentary legal texts and decisions throw some light on the conditions governing the ownership of private property and on personal rights and duties. The power of the priests is indicated by the fact that, especially in the later periods, they could sometimes transfer a case

Egyptian character

from the secular courts to the decision of their temple oracle. Veneration for the dead, and the conviction that in the after world the soul would be called to an accounting and weighed in the balance, colored the thought of the Egyptians on all moral questions. Burial rituals, for members of the ruling classes at least, were long, elaborate, and costly, and the heir to an estate could not take possession of the property until he had buried the testator with the full ceremonies and honors which custom and law prescribed. From these and similar details it is possible to reconstruct a picture of a sober, industrious, and conventional-minded people, lacking perhaps in initiative and daring, but kindly, conscientious, and obedient.

3. THE PROGRESS OF ANCIENT CULTURE

Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, European scholars had to be content with a few confused and meager details concerning the ancient civilizations which flourished in Africa and Asia Minor before 500 B.C. What little information they possessed was derived from a cursory examination of extant monuments supplemented by the commentaries to be found in the surviving works of Greek historians such as Herodotus (484–425 B.C.). It seemed improbable, a hundred and forty years ago, that anything more could be learned about the forgotten and half-mythical centuries before 500 B.C. But interest in archaeological research was greatly stimulated by the investigations of French scientists who accompanied Napoleon Bonaparte on his expedition to Egypt in 1798. The discovery of a basalt tablet, now known as the Rosetta Stone, which contained an inscription in hieroglyphic symbols, in the later, more conventionalized, Egyptian style of writing known as *demotic*, and in Greek, provided a key which led to the decipherment of numerous records carved on Egyptian monuments or inscribed on papyrus rolls. The reconstruction of other ancient languages followed; the ghosts of long-vanished cities were evoked from the drifted sands; the ruins of tombs and temples, law courts and libraries, were excavated; and the jewels, the armor and chariots, even the bodies of forgotten kings were carried off to grace the showcases in modern museums. Grants from governments, universities, and learned societies made possible the accumulation and classification of such a vast body of artifacts, weapons, pottery, coins, tools, ornaments, and inscriptions, that today it is possible for a devoted student of ancient history to acquire a broader and sounder knowledge of the general conditions prevailing in the Mediterranean world of, let us say, thirty-five hundred years ago than the most learned man of that day could have hoped to obtain in his own lifetime.

Of all the evidences recovered from antiquity, written records, when they can be read, are the most interesting and informative. The invention of writing marked such a momentous step forward in the history of civilization that many authorities regard the possession of a system of written symbols as the characteristic which most clearly distinguishes a civilized from a primitive people. As far back as the Late Stone Age, men had learned to convey simple messages by the arrangement they gave to knots or beads on a string, and their artists could represent familiar objects by roughly drawn pictures. When used to convey ideas, these pictographs tended to become conventionalized into a few swiftly drawn lines, and the first important advance toward a formal system of writing occurred through the adaptation of such *characters* to represent particular syllables. Some idea of the process can be gained from the game familiar to children, in which pictured objects are used to suggest a word or name, as a drawing of a tree and the sun, for instance, to represent "treason." The final stage of alphabetic writing was realized when simplified signs, or *letters*, each endowed with an accepted sound value, were combined to spell out words. With the alphabet perfected, it became a relatively easy problem to record new terms as they were introduced, and even to set down the approximate pronunciation of foreign names or a foreign dialect.

The earliest known examples of alphabetic

Romance of archaeology

Invention of writing

writing were apparently produced by Egyptian scribes about 2000 B.C., and it has been conjectured that derivations of these characters, in variant forms, spread into the Arabian Peninsula and provided the prototype of the diverse alphabets in use there by 1500 B.C. It should be noted, however, that the inhabitants of Sumer and Akkad, in the Land of the Two Rivers, had also elaborated a complex system of pictographic writing before 3000 B.C. As their picture-characters were commonly drawn in vertical columns on soft clay tablets or cylinders (which were baked hard to preserve the message), many thousands have survived and have been translated by archaeologists. This form of writing, which is known as cuneiform (from the Latin *cuneus* a wedge + -form), was written with a stylus which made wedge-shaped impressions of various sizes and combinations on the clay. Cuneiform script evolved into a syllabic and even a semi-alphabetic stage contemporaneously with the Egyptian, and it remained in use in Mesopotamia and other sections of Asia Minor until the time of the Romans.

Cuneiform script

How the characters which you are now reading came to be derived and adapted from the more ancient alphabetic systems is a complicated story and authorities disagree on many points in it. The western European peoples inherited their alphabet from the Romans, who received it from the Greeks. The Greeks seem to have adapted it to their needs from a variant used, very probably, by Phoenician merchants. Fragments of pottery and stone bearing recognizable lettering have been found in ruins which date from 2000–1500 B.C., suggesting that alphabetic writing is nearly four thousand years old. But records inscribed in the various pictographic, hieroglyphic, and ideographic systems which preceded the alphabetic scripts have been found to go back at least two thousand years before that.

Phoenician alphabet

Thus, at a time when the natives of Europe still lived in a condition of Stone Age culture, the rulers of Egypt and Mesopotamia were building extensive libraries to house their archives,

Written records

were transmitting detailed instructions to the governors of distant provinces, and receiving regular reports from their ambassadors at foreign courts. For they appreciated the conservative and preservative function of written records, and they relied upon the body of decrees inscribed in the books of the law, upon the precedents established by their predecessors, upon the lists, tables, and computations compiled by tax collectors, annalists, and astronomers, to confirm the standards and safeguard the traditions upon which they based their sovereignty. The respect with which the simple and illiterate masses regarded the written word tended to invest all such records with a sacred and unimpeachable authority.

This consecration of custom, of institutions immemorially old and traditions sanctified by universal reverence, has already been noted as a leading characteristic of the earliest civilizations. As if aware that a few decades of disorder and confusion might sweep away the gains of a thousand years, the first civilized peoples accepted the discipline to which they were subjected with remarkable docility. Civil wars were relatively rare in ancient Egypt or Babylonia, and popular uprisings almost unknown. A further preservative of the social order was provided by the religious cults which were impressed upon the attention of the populace by frequent festivals and by the official votaries of the various gods. Many of the earliest kings were priest-kings who enforced their will less through an army of soldiers than through an army of priests. In all the ancient cities of Africa and the Near East the custodians of the temples formed a distinct and highly privileged caste which sometimes dominated the king himself. Policies of the highest importance were occasionally decided by appeal to the temple oracles; even military expeditions might be abandoned if the auguries proved inauspicious; and an invading conqueror frequently found the local priests ready to consecrate his usurpation of the throne provided he showed himself prepared in return to guarantee them in their privileges.

Conservative forces

In addition to their official task of im-

ANCIENT NEAR EAST
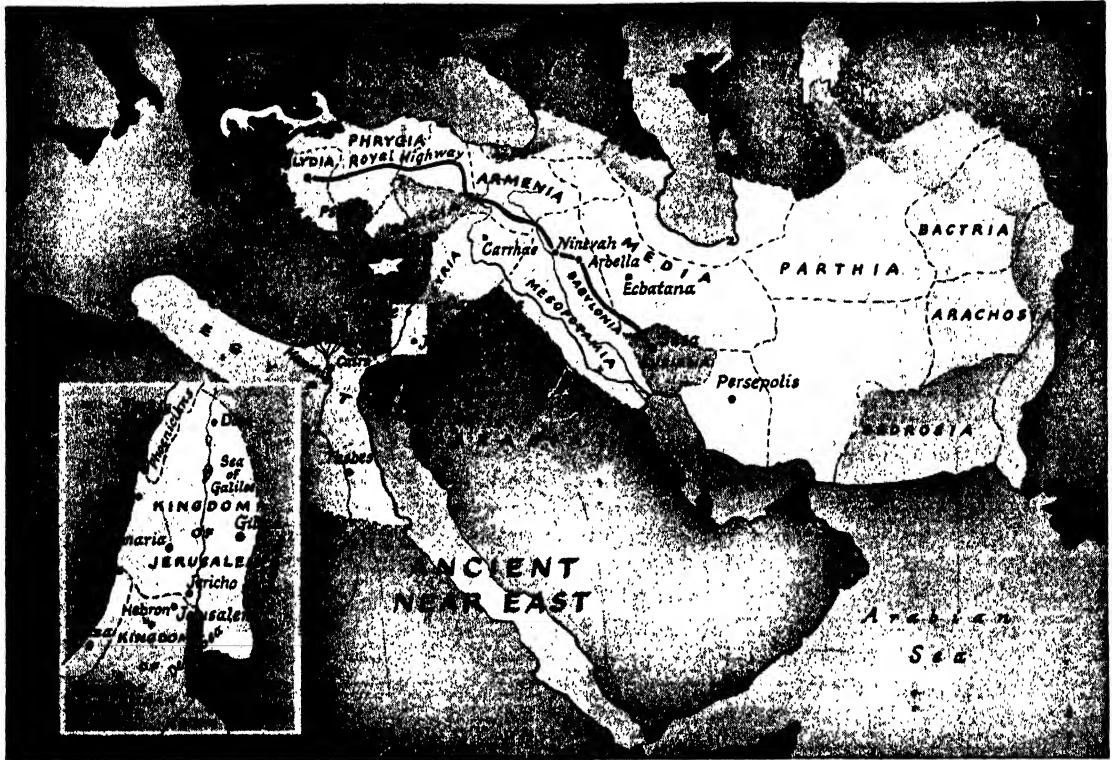
pressing upon all members of the population the duties of civic obedience and reverence toward their rulers, the priests possessed the nobler privilege of inspiring their followers to less selfish standards of personal conduct, to a more acute sense of their responsibility toward the poor and the wretched, to a loftier realization of the dignity of man. It would be interesting to trace in detail the slow advance of religious and ethical ideals, the gradual abandonment of human sacrifices, the substitution of more elevated concepts of divinity in place of the crude and sometimes obscene carvings of men and beasts before which the earliest Egyptians and Semites did obeisance. But limits of space forbid such a discussion. There was, however, one eastern people whose spiritual history, vividly recorded and faithfully preserved, has exerted such a profound influence upon western civilization that their story cannot be omitted here. These were the

The Hebrew scriptures

Israelites, whose sacred writings form the basis of the Old Testament, the longer section of the Bible. Spread to all parts of Europe through the offices of the Christian Church, and translated into the vernacular tongues, these Hebrew scriptures have played a unique rôle in the religious and cultural development of the European peoples.

Sometime in the second millennium before Christ the Israelites settled in the region to the west of the Dead Sea and the river Jordan. Like other groups they passed from a nomadic pastoral stage to a more stable agricultural, and finally to a semi-urban, culture. Because the "Promised Land" which they had occupied formed a natural highway or corridor between Egypt and the successive empires that rose and waned in Syria and Mesopotamia, the Israelites dwelt in constant peril of subjection or dispersion, and they needed all their tenacity, courage, and endurance to

The Israelites

preserve their own peculiar customs and religious beliefs. In the thirteenth century before Christ many of them were apparently carried into slavery in Egypt; in the eleventh they clashed with a people of the coastal cities of the Mediterranean, the Philistines; and in the tenth their kingdom enjoyed a temporary splendor under Solomon the Wise, who grew wealthy from the trade which flowed between the seaport of Tyre and the Red Sea. But new tribulations followed. In the eighth century the Assyrians overran the kingdom; in the seventh the Chaldeans, whose king, Nebuchadnezzar, finally carried off the greater portion of the Israelites to exile in Babylon (584 B.C.). After some fifty years they were enabled to return to their capital at Jerusalem, and they brought back a deepened consciousness of national and religious integrity, a richer heritage of culture, and a desire to collect and to reduce their sacred teachings to a more polished literary form. The resulting text, the Hebrew Bible, was the work of many hands, and was arranged and edited in its authoritative form in the centuries following the Babylonian Captivity, probably between 450 and 200 B.C.

Hebrew religion

Two important ideas or principles are to be noted in the teaching of leading Hebrew prophets, such as Elijah and Amos, which made the religion that they expounded unique among the diverse faiths and ethical systems of the ancient world. They conceived their God Yahweh (or Jehovah) as a jealous god who demanded their exclusive worship and suffered them to have no other gods beside him. This resolute monolatry was exceptional in an age when men worshiped many local deities and polytheism was the rule. A second principle in their teaching marked an even bolder advance, for the prophets of Israel insisted upon the entire spirituality or incorporeity of their god, and the law forbade attempts to represent him by any graven image such as filled the temples of more materialistic-minded peoples. It is true that the Israelites, especially in periods of good fortune, showed a tendency to ignore these lofty doctrines of pure ethical monotheism, but they never forgot them utterly,

and in days of tribulation they returned to their faith. The precepts of their major prophets, uttered with the unflinching courage of men who held themselves accountable to God alone for their actions, and inspired, often, with a burning passion for social justice, were not only centuries ahead of the common religious beliefs of their epoch: they have become a permanent part of the conscience of mankind.

Beginnings of sea trade

One more civilization and one more people remain to be mentioned in this brief summary of the cultural development of the ancient Mediterranean world. This civilization flourished between 3000 and 1000 B.C. on the islands and the irregular shoreline of the Aegean Sea. With the growth of commerce and the construction of seagoing ships the entire Mediterranean littoral was exposed to the quickening influences of trade. The earliest navigators, however, lacking compass and sextant, preferred whenever possible to keep within sight of land, and to run for the nearest haven when storms threatened, somewhat as a cautious airplane pilot today will plot a course which keeps him within reach of an emergency landing field should his engine fail. Safe harbors and islands conveniently spaced thus played an important part in determining the routes of the first seaborne commerce; but, as a glance at a map of the area will show, the islands and harbors of the Mediterranean Sea are very unevenly distributed. The North-African coastline presents few inlets and the hinterland is an uninviting desert plateau. In contrast, the European coastline is backed by a habitable and easily penetrated hinterland with variegated products, and the European harbors are better and more numerous. The western end of the Mediterranean, however, was two thousand miles from the early commercial centers of Syria and Egypt. It is not surprising, therefore, that Egyptian merchants seeking wine, olive oil, copper, pottery, leather, and other products which the European barbarians could provide, turned their ships first toward the Aegean Sea. There chains of innumerable islands, often lying within sight of one another, served as landmarks, and gave the

earliest sailors a sense of greater confidence as they felt their way across "the dragon green, the luminous, the dark, the serpent-haunted seas."

Midway between the Nile Delta and the Aegean Basin lies the island of Crete. Like

Crete and Mycenae

the adjacent Aegean lands it had been settled in prehistoric times by a dark-haired people possibly akin to the Iberians of Spain. By 2500 B.C., and for a thousand years thereafter, the inhabitants of Crete prospered remarkably from the commerce which passed through their ports, and the Cretan sea-kings dominated the surrounding waters so completely they scarcely found it necessary to fortify their palaces. The ruins of their capital at Cnossus, the treasures dug up at Mycenae and Tiryns in southern Greece, prove that this Cretan-Mycenaean culture of the second millennium before Christ differed in spirit and tradition from the Egyptian and Babylonian civilizations, but equaled, if it did not surpass them, in the richness and variety of its products, the beauty and vigor of its art. The Cretan rulers dwelt in comfortable houses of several stories, beautified with paintings and statuary, equipped with bathrooms and plumbing, and approached by well-paved streets. They possessed an advanced system of writing (not yet deciphered), and their art, in its realism, boldness, and freedom from sterile traditionalism, reflects the temper of an active, venturesome people. Their intense individuality, their disinclination to imitate the rigid conventionalism that burdened the older cultures, is further reflected in their attitude toward their priests, who apparently enjoyed no such exclusive power and wealth as in Babylon, and toward their kings, who were regarded as political leaders, not venerated as gods like the Egyptian Pharaohs.

In these brilliant and gifted inhabitants of ancient Cnossus and Mycenae one may note

The early Greeks

a number of characteristics — their independent spirit, their love of proportion and symmetry, their thirst for beauty, their more secular mentality — which were to distinguish to an even greater degree their con-

querors and successors, the Greeks of classical times. These latter were apparently a light-haired people from the north, late comers to the Mediterranean world, who gradually pushed their way into the Greek peninsula and islands, merging with and subduing the Aegean population which they found there. In taking over the Aegean civilization, however, they very nearly destroyed it. Between 1500 and 1000 B.C. Cnossus, Mycenae, Tiryns, and Troy (on the near-by coast of Asia Minor) were assaulted and sacked. The circumstances attending the destruction of Troy about 1200 B.C. became the subject matter of two immortal epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, composed some three hundred years later by the Greek poet Homer. These first great literary creations of the Greek genius were destined to become a part of the cultural heritage of the European peoples, second only to the Hebrew scriptures in the influence they exerted as a treasury of lore and legend.

4. THE EXPANSION OF TRADE

Though the Greeks undoubtedly owed much of their art and culture, more, indeed, than they themselves were ever aware of, to the Aegean peoples whom they conquered and superseded, they required nearly a thousand years to re-create a civilization equal to that which they had disrupted. During part of this interval, from about 1100 to 750 B.C., the Aegean world passed into an eclipse, and little more than legend has survived concerning the activities of the Greeks during these confused and troubled centuries. The commerce which the sea-kings of Crete had once so largely monopolized passed principally into the hands of the Phoenicians, whose seaports in Asia Minor, particularly Tyre, Sidon, and Acre, profited from the ruin which had overtaken their Aegean rivals.

This rapid expansion of Phoenician trade, particularly between 1100 and 800 B.C., is perhaps the most notable feature of this period. The Phoenicians created depots and colonies throughout the Mediterranean Basin, on the islands of Cyprus, Malta, Sicily, and Sardinia, along the North-African coast, and

The Phoenicians

BULL TOSSING IN ANCIENT GREECE

This fresco from the Palace of Minos shows three acrobats, two girls and a boy, bull leaping.
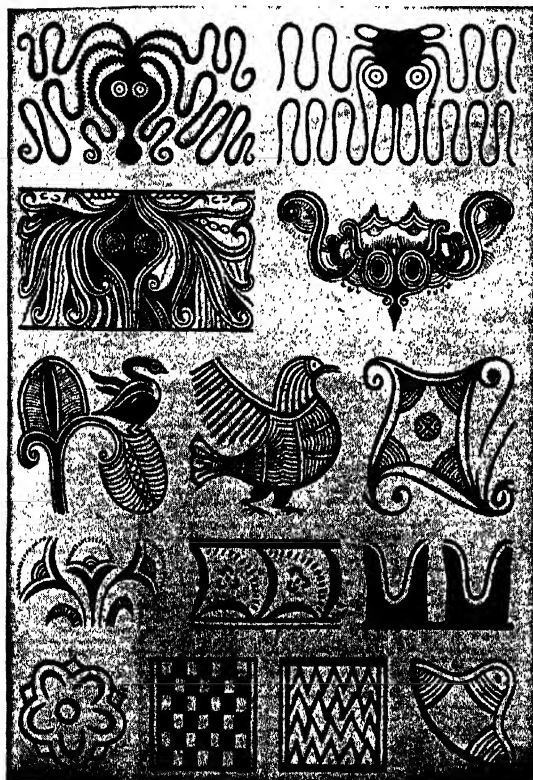
MINOAN ART

Some decorative symbols from late Minoan art
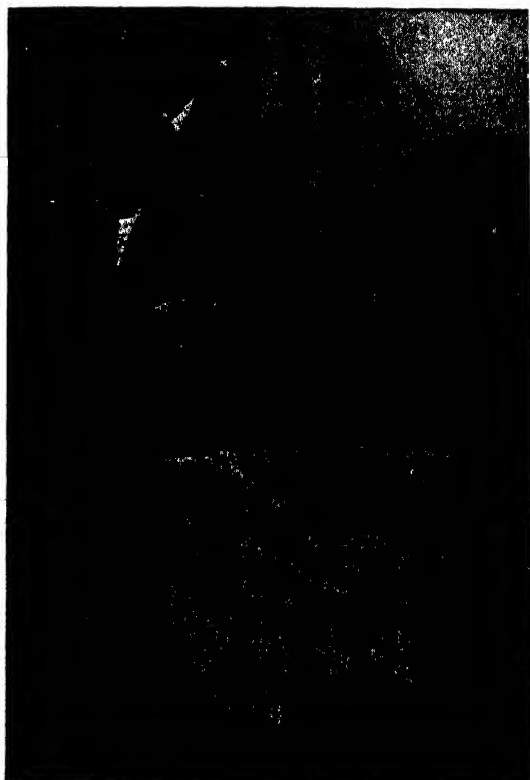
THE LION GATE AT MYCENAE

Pre-Greek ruins of 2000-1500 B.C.

A GREEK FORGE

GREEK MINERS, C. 500 B.C.

ASSYRIAN ARMY LIFE, 800 B.C.

One soldier prepares the officer's bed, while another hands him a drink. Note the reclining animals.

EARLY GREEK COINS

These show Arethusa, Poseidon, Pegasus, and the Cretan Labyrinth.

COURT OF A PERSIAN KING

A Persian king receives homage while his treasurer collects tribute.

in southern Spain. One colony, Carthage, founded about 845 B.C. on the African shore opposite Sicily, grew so powerful that by 500 B.C. it threatened to dominate the western Mediterranean. The activity of the Phoenician traders helped to spread the art of numbers and the art of writing (the "Phoenician" alphabet) among the Greeks and through their intervention among the barbarians, and the exchange of wares tended to bring all the peoples dwelling anywhere along the variegated and irregular coastline of the Mediterranean Sea into a state of economic interdependence. An inventory of the wares that made up the wealth of Tyre at the close of the seventh century before Christ may be found in the writings of the Hebrew prophet Ezekiel, along with the regions that produced them. Silver, tin, lead, brass, and "bright iron"; wheat, honey, oil, and balm; lambs, rams, goats, and horses; wine and white wool; rare woods; purple and fine linen and broidered work; ivory, ebony, emeralds, coral, and agate; spices and precious stones and gold — the list is endless. With wheat from Egypt, wine and olive oil from Greece, spices from Arabia, or tin from Britain providing ready cargoes for the ships as they moved back and forth like shuttles weaving a vast web, the settlements of the ancient world were knit slowly but irresistibly into a single complex economic and cultural pattern.

This trend toward economic unity was favored by, or at least accompanied by, a trend toward political unification. The first millennium before Christ was distinguished by the appearance of successively larger political empires, a tendency which was destined to persist until it culminated in the subjugation of the entire Mediterranean world by the Romans. Even in the earlier millenniums, between 3000 and 1000 B.C., ambitious conquerors had sought to unite the Nile Valley and the Land of the Two Rivers in a single realm. In the eighth century before Christ the attempt was renewed by the warlike Assyrians from the upper Tigris. Armed with iron weapons and newer, more scientific methods of warfare, they brought almost the whole of the civilized East under their yoke

Assyrian Empire

for two centuries.[1] But their exactions aroused widespread discontent, and their power was broken by a revolt of the Chaldeans (nomadic Semites from below the delta of the Euphrates), in alliance with the Medes and Persians. When the Assyrian capital at Nineveh was captured and destroyed in 612 B.C., the empire disintegrated.

The Assyrian hegemony was followed by a brief renascence of Babylonian supremacy under the Chaldeans (606–539 B.C.), who extended their control from the Persian Gulf to the frontier of Egypt, and northward to the Taurus Mountains. But this second Babylonian Empire proved too weak to hold its own against the rising might of the Persian kingdom to the east. In 539 B.C. the Persian conqueror Cyrus captured Babylon and incorporated it into his rapidly expanding dominions. His son, Cambyses, subjugated Egypt; but an expedition which he planned to dispatch against Carthage failed because the Phoenicians refused to provide the necessary ships. In 521 the throne passed to Darius the Great whose long reign (521–485 B.C.) saw the Persian Empire approaching its zenith. From the Indus to the Aegean, from Egypt to the Caucasus, there was no people who dared to defy the "Great King" save the elusive nomads of the Arabian Desert and the northern steppes and the impudent Hellenes in the cities of Greece.

Persian Empire

The Persian Empire was not only larger, it was more intelligently governed and more efficiently organized than any of its predecessors. Good roads for troops and traders, a royal postal system, a wise exercise of religious toleration and a not too oppressive system of taxation made the Persian domination more endurable and therefore more durable than that of previous "world empires." It was but natural, however, that the Persian rulers should desire to bring the Mediterranean islands and the European settlements under their control, if only to regulate trade and secure supplies. The seaports of Syria and the Greek settlements in Asia Minor accepted the Persian claim to universal suzerainty, but the hardy and freedom-loving Greeks of the islands and the

[1] See map, page 23.

mainland of Greece refused tribute. The story of their successful defiance, commencing about 500 B.C., which checked the advance of the Persian forces toward the West, and so changed the course of Mediterranean and consequently of European history, will be related in the succeeding chapter.

5. THE UNCHANGING EAST

In this Mediterranean world of 500 B.C. the peoples had no knowledge whatever of America. It is probable, however, that they already had tenuous trade connections with India and possibly with China. Neither the Indian nor the Chinese cultures influenced the Mediterranean world profoundly at this time, but because of their subsequent contributions the preliminary annals of these Asian empires may be noted.

The earliest urban culture in India apparently developed in the Indus Valley about

Prison of caste

2500 B.C., but it disintegrated or was destroyed. More dependable records exist for the centuries after 1500 B.C., when Aryan invaders arrived on the Indus, probably by crossing the Hindu Kush. These Indo-Europeans (Hindus) subjugated northern India from the Indus to the Ganges (c. 1500–c. 500 B.C.). They imposed their language on the Dravidian peoples over whom they ruled, and they strengthened the rigid social system which divided class from class. The socio-religious amalgam of Hindu society as thus set proved indissoluble and indestructible. There was no escape from the prison of caste; members of different castes could not intermarry; children inherited their parents' status and obligations; and all trades and vocations were assigned to specified groups.

Religious reform movements arose and subsided. The earliest and most vital originated in the sixth century before Christ, through the humane teaching of Siddhartha Gautama (c. 560–c. 480 B.C.).

The Buddha c. 560–480 B.C.

Prince Siddhartha was known to his followers as the Buddha, the Enlightened One. He sought to curb the grosser injustices of the caste system and to substitute more intelligent practices and a more compassionate code. In the course of a thousand years Buddhism was carried into Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Nepal, Tibet, and China. But in India its vigor declined with the passing centuries. After Gautama's day a hundred generations of men strove and suffered and succumbed by the Ganges without achieving any advances in Hindu philosophy or technology powerful enough to transform Hindu society.

In China, likewise, urban cultures arose in the river valleys, crystallizing from Neolithic village communities immemorially old. The annals of the first dynasties are largely myth, but painted pottery from

Confucius c. 551–c. 478 B.C.

c. 2000 B.C., and bronze work with written characters from c. 1400 B.C., reflect the advance of early culture. Chinese history, as distinct from legend, may be said to begin with the Chou dynasty (c. 1125–c. 250 B.C.), and it is a troubled history of warring feudal states. Amid the disorders of the fifth century B.C. a religious teacher arose who set an enduring pattern for Chinese political thought. K'ung Ch'iu, or Confucius (c. 551–c. 478 B.C.), lived in the same age as the Buddha. His admonitions to think clearly, revere the aged, and treat all men with justice, formed the basis of Chinese political philosophy.

The Chinese way of life was set by the agricultural economy. Despite wars, famines, dynastic changes, Chinese culture survived through thirty centuries, proving it was tenaciously rooted and possessed a sort of vegetable vitality. The magnetic compass, silk culture, gunpowder, paper-making and printing were all known to the Chinese before they reached Europe. In 500 B.C., however, and for many centuries thereafter, the civilizations of India and of China remained isolated worlds in themselves like the Mediterranean culture area.

3

The Greek City-States

LITTLE IS KNOWN of the successive migrations of the people who called themselves Hellenes and, coming down from the lands north of Greece, gradually overran the peninsula, the islands of the Aegean, and even the coast of Asia Minor. It is probable that the tribes first to enter Greece absorbed much of the Aegean culture which they found in the land and that they, too, with their Aegean predecessors, were pushed southward and eastward across the Aegean by later migrations from the north.

The Greek peninsula, broken by mountains and valleys, has a long indented coastline. This topography played a large part in the development of the Greeks. Separated from its neighbors by mountains, each community, however small, became a separate political unit. The city, center of government and trade, together with the surrounding countryside, constituted a city-state, or *polis*, in which there grew up political institutions different from those of the kingdoms of the East. The coastline favored the growth of maritime trade, and with the goods they offered for sale the Phoenicians brought manufacturing techniques, decorative designs with an oriental flavor, and the alphabet.

In the organization of commerce and industry the Greeks contributed little that was startlingly new. They introduced variations, they extended commercial operations encouraged by the many colonies they founded throughout the Mediterranean world, and through them the use of coined money was spread. But there had been great merchants in the past and eastern craftsmen had worked with extraordinary skill. The political institutions of the city-states, the evolution of democracy, and even moderate oligarchy, were, however, peculiar to the Greeks. And to their genius we owe a great heritage of art, literature, science, and philosophy.

1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF GREECE TO C. 500 B.C.

Near the end of the eighth century B.C. the Greek poet, Hesiod of Boeotia, wrote of the hard lot of farmers whose days were encompassed by toil and whose thoughts were of small and daily matters. His was an age of iron, he said, and he sighed for the golden days of the past, the age of heroes whose mighty exploits Homer had told in stirring epics. We, too, turn to Homer for those tales of gods and heroes which were to inspire Greek literature and art for many generations, but in the epics we discover also something which Hesiod, perhaps, did not seek, something of more mundane matters, of the political, social, and economic life of the early Greeks.

In the Homeric Age (c. 1000–800 B.C.) the bases of social organization were still the tribe and the patriarchal household, but the tribe was no longer a large, homogeneous group claiming descent from a common ancestor as it probably was when the

Homeric Age: tribe and king

Hellenes first entered Greece. The disruptive influence of successive migrations had broken up some of the tribes, thrust others into such close proximity that they were governed as a unit, and mingled Greeks and pre-Greeks. The patriarchal family, too, began slowly to disintegrate as families, some great and some small, settled permanently on the land and turned to agriculture. The king, whose palace might be in a city or a fortress captured from the pre-Greek inhabitants, was the most powerful chieftain whose lineage could be traced to a god — normally Zeus, "father of gods and heroes." Surrounding him were lesser kings, tribal chiefs and heads of great families, whom he consulted on affairs of state and especially on military matters, for these small kingdoms were often at war with each other. Those of the people who had a tribal and a family status also had a voice in decisions affecting the whole community, for on such occasions the king would call an assembly and the nobles would debate the problem before the people. No vote was taken and rarely did the commoners speak, but they could express their opinions by ominous silence or shouts of acclamation.

The family was composed usually of all who claimed kinship. The father ruled, and he had the power to decree expulsion, even death. In these early days all members of the family worked, nobles as well as their servingmen, kings as well as commoners. And there was much work to be done, for each family was well-nigh self-sufficient. The men herded the flocks, tilled the soil, hewed wood, put up buildings, and made repairs. The women prepared the food and made all the clothing for the family. Women of noble birth were not exempt from these tasks: Penelope was skilled at the loom. In addition to the members of the family, servants and slaves lived and worked on the estate. The servants were free men and women drawn from the class of *thetes*, people with insufficient land or no land at all. They offered their labor for hire and in return received food and lodging and sometimes a wage. But if when their work was done

The Homeric family

their employers refused to pay them there was no authority to which they could appeal. The number of slaves, obtained usually from war and raids, was not great in this early period. Outside the family there were a few craftsmen, workers in wood and stone, potters, metal-workers, and a group of professional bards, doctors, and soothsayers. The craftsman, whose fame might spread beyond his own community, worked at the home of his employer with materials provided for him. The smith alone had his own shop; in nearly every community there was a forge, and there in the winter the homeless *thetes* gathered.

Homeric society was not static. The rate of change was slow, but dynamic tendencies which were to shape the society of a later age gathered momentum in these centuries. Agriculture was extended and the more powerful families acquired the better land. No significant improvements were made in farming methods, but the cultivation of vineyards and olive groves was extended. The Greeks were turning more and more to the sea, though at first for piracy rather than trade. Merchants from the East, especially the Phoenicians, were finding in Greece and the Ionian cities of Asia Minor a growing market for their luxury products and for the metals which they brought to these people who were slow in developing their own mines. In exchange for these goods the Greeks had, at first, little to offer until they increased their production of wine and olive oil and began to manufacture products for sale. These developments began earlier and progressed more rapidly in the Greek cities of Asia Minor. The Anatolian Greeks were probably descendants of the earlier Hellenes who took with them much they had learned from the Aegean culture when subsequent migrations pushed them to the islands of the Aegean and to the coast of Asia Minor. There they came in contact with an advanced civilization which further contributed to their growth. In addition to these advantages the Anatolian Greeks were subjected to the influence of the East and favorably located for commerce. Taking the products of the East as models they be-

Economic development

GREEK CITY-STATES

gan to develop their industries. Wool from the flocks which grazed on the plateaus provided material for textiles; clay offered an opportunity for the further development of ceramics; wood and leather lent themselves to the growing skill of craftsmen. As early as the eighth century coined money was introduced, probably by the Lydians who maintained close commercial relations with the cities of Asia Minor. This greatly facilitated exchange and gave an added impetus to commerce.

Although commerce and industry became increasingly important features of Greek life from the eighth century on,

The era of colonization the great majority of Greeks derived their living from the soil. The growth of population, the relatively poor soil, and the encroachments of great estates seriously threatened the livelihood of many small holders who made up the greater part of this majority. The large landholders had income sufficient to invest in improvements and in lucrative vineyards and olive groves, but the peasants were often without means to tide them over a bad season. When disaster ruined his crops, or when some improvement was necessary, the small holder might borrow from the owner of a large estate, but as security he had to pledge not only his land but himself and his family. Failure to repay the loan meant slavery. Peasant holdings became smaller, the number of those in bondage increased, and the ranks of the landless were enlarged. It was, in large part, to alleviate these conditions and to diminish the danger of revolt that colonies were founded. From the eighth century to about the end of the sixth, groups of colonizers went forth from the older communities, from those of Asia Minor first and later from the mainland, to form new and independent city-states along the shores of Thrace and the Black Sea and westward to southern Italy and Sicily. In the history of Greece these colonies played no small part: they were involved in political struggles, they took part in the cultural achievements of Greece, and they contributed mightily to the development of trade and industry, at first as the recipients of Greek manu-

factured goods for which they offered food and raw materials. Later some of them developed their own industries, others became centers of exchange. Some, indeed, were founded as trading posts. Foremost in the colonization movement was the Ionian city, Miletus, whence bands of settlers went to the Black Sea region. Chalcis and Eretria rivaled each other in establishing colonies in Thrace. Corinth looked farther westward; her most famous daughter city was Syracuse in Sicily.

The political structure of the Greek communities did not remain unchanged during these centuries of economic ex-

pansion and social reorganiza- *Political development* tion. The city-state, its origins traceable to Homeric times, took definite shape in the two succeeding centuries. In the city the political life of a community was centered. Here the citizens from the surrounding countryside met; here was the marketplace, the shops of the craftsmen; here the walls for defense; here the government buildings and the temples. The great landowners, the king's councilors in the Homeric Age, assumed increasing power at the expense of the monarch. In most cities the king retained only his religious functions. The extent to which power was concentrated in the hands of a few varied from city to city, but, in general, the right to vote was confined to citizens with a certain amount of landed property, and the right to hold office was limited to members of a few families or at most to the wealthiest citizens. Age qualifications further restricted the number eligible for magistracies. Monarchy was thus followed by oligarchy.

Sparta, long the most powerful city in Greece, deserves special mention. The inhabitants of Laconia were di-

vided into three major groups: *Sparta* the helots, the *perioiki*, and the Spartiates. The Spartiates alone had a voice in the government and they ruled a population twenty times their number. Nominally at the head of the government were two kings, but the real power was in the hands of five magistrates and a Council of Elders elected for life from among Spartiates over sixty years old. All Spartiates might vote for the magis-

trates and the members of the Council and sit in the Assembly to which major decisions were referred. In general outline this form of government was not unusual, but it was based on a peculiar social organization. The state assigned to each Spartiate a section of land and a number of helots. The Spartiate was forbidden to alienate his family lot or to divide it among his heirs. Until he was thirty years old he lived in barracks; until he was sixty he took his meals with his fellow warriors in the common mess to which he contributed a fixed amount from the produce of his land. The helots who worked the land were state slaves assigned to the Spartiates. From the helots on his estate the Spartiate demanded a certain income and whatever the helots produced above this amount they might keep. Some helots amassed considerable fortunes under this régime; others, less ambitious or working poorer land, received little. The origin of the helots is obscure: the Dorian conquerors may have reduced portions of the native population to serfdom or the Spartans may have conquered their neighbors at a later date. Whatever their origin, the helots were in no enviable position, for the Spartiates, fearing revolt, kept them in subjection by harsh measures. The *perioiki* were free men, but they had no political rights in the government of the city-state, although they were accorded a measure of self-government in the outlying towns. Since the law forbade any Spartiate to engage in trade or industry, the *perioiki* monopolized these pursuits and until the sixth century the products of Spartan industry, her ceramics, her metal and wood and leather goods, ranked with the best produced in Greece. But the Spartan government discouraged trade; self-sufficiency better suited her military aims, and, lacking the stimulus of commerce, Spartan craftsmen fell behind the craftsmen of other cities.

In many cities of Greece, especially those near the coast, the oligarchies were threatened by the growing demand of the rest of the citizens for a voice in the government. The small landholders resented the rule of their creditors; the citizens, whose wealth, derived from commerce and industry, was in movable rather than landed property, demanded the revision of property qualifications. Leaders arose who offered to fulfill these demands in return for popular support in deposing ruling families. Thus, oligarchy was in many instances succeeded by tyranny, which, in turn, paved the way for democracy, for in order to maintain power the tyrants had to make concessions to the people.

Tyranny

While political, economic, and social institutions were assuming those characteristic forms which we shall subsequently investigate more closely, **Literature** there were developments in literature, in art, and in philosophy which were to culminate in the great achievements of the fifth and fourth centuries. No epics comparable to those of Homer were composed in the Archaic period (c. 800–500 B.C.), but other literary forms were employed with a skill that suggests long evolution. Archilochus of Paros (seventh century) wrote so well in elegiac and iambic meters that his reputation as a quarrelsome and turbulent person could not injure his position as an outstanding poet. His lampoons, most of them arising out of personal quarrels, were famous. His hymns to the gods, written in iambic meter, were held in high esteem, and one especially, carrying the refrain, "Lo, the conquering hero comes," enjoyed wide popularity. Most famous of lyric poets were Sappho and Alcaeus of Lesbos, sixth-century contemporaries. Sappho wrote exquisite love lyrics; Alcaeus was more concerned with his adventures in war and politics.

In the sculpture of the Archaic period the nude male figure and the draped female figure predominate. Both stand **Sculpture** erect, somewhat stiffly, and wear fixed expressions, their lips slightly smiling. It remained for the artists of the classical period to give suppleness and variety to sculptured figures, but these later sculptors owed much to the advancements made by their predecessors in rendering more truly anatomical detail and the folds of drapery. More lifelike and varied were the groups of figures done in relief to decorate the temples.

We know little about painting in this

early period, but progress in vase decoration
was rapid. With increasing
Vase painting skill figures inspired by mythology and by the activities of
daily life were painted in vivid action groups.
Athenian black-figure, and later red-figure,
cups were of outstanding artistic merit.

In the Ionian cities during the sixth century there arose a group of men who, dissatisfied with mythological ex-
Philosophy planations of the origin and
nature of things, began to speculate about
the universe. One of the earliest of these
philosophers was Thales of Miletus, a student of astronomy who is reputed to have
predicted the solar eclipse of 585 B.C. Thales,
like Anaximenes and Anaximander, thought
the universe derived from one primary substance. Pythagoras, a mathematician, is
credited with the discovery that the earth is
a sphere. Xenophanes, who founded the
Eleatic school in southern Italy, looked upon
mythology as the creation of man's imagination, and insisted that a single god, unlike
man, directed the universe.

2. THE PERSIAN THREAT AND INTERNAL DISSENSION

In the course of the first two decades of the
fifth century the Greeks met the hosts of the
great Persian Empire and re-
Revolt of Ionian cities pulsed them. For over half a
century the Ionian cities had
acknowledged the suzerainty of Persia.
This was no new experience for them: before
Cyrus defeated Croesus, Lydia had been
their overlord. A group of separate cities,
each jealous of its autonomy, could not withstand the encroachments of neighbors so
close and so powerful as these. Although
both Lydia and Persia had refrained from
interfering to any great extent in their internal affairs, these Greek cities did not accept subjection in utter passivity. When
Persia succeeded Lydia, some of them rose
in revolt. But this was no general rebellion
and Cyrus soon re-established his · power.
In 499 B.C. a similar revolt occurred. Athens
and Eretria sent some slight aid to the insurgents, but the general indifference of the
mainland and the lack of concerted action
among the Ionian cities themselves served

to emphasize the absence of pan-Hellenic
solidarity.

Cyrus had extended Persia's sway over
domains far to the east; Darius looked toward the west. The cities of
the islands and the mainland   **The Persian War**
seemed in no position to resist
Persia's expansion. They were small independent kingdoms, often at war with one
another and without internal stability, for
the age of tyrants was a troubled one. Since
about 516 B.C. Darius had been extending
his influence in Thrace. In 492 he sent a
large expedition to that land north of Greece,
and two years later, to punish Athens and
Eretria for the aid they had given the Ionian
cities, he opened his campaign against
Greece. This initial effort was a dismal
failure. On the field of Marathon the Persian army was defeated by an Athenian
force half its size. This victory redounded
to the glory of Athens alone, for the aid
which Sparta had promised did not arrive
in time. Ten years were to elapse before
Persia again essayed the conquest of Greece.
In the interim Darius died and was succeeded by his son, Xerxes. The Greeks,
finally aware of the danger which threatened
them all, planned a co-operative defense.
Sparta put her faith in the army; Athens,
yielding finally to the advice of Themistocles who had long advocated a navy, built
a large fleet. In 481 a pan-Hellenic league
was formed under Spartan leadership, for,
although Athens had won the battle of
Marathon, Sparta had a long-standing
record of military achievement. In 480 and
again in 479 the armies of Persia marched
through Greece, twice devastating the plains
of Attica, but the defeat of the Greeks at
Thermopylae was more than compensated
by the great victory of their fleet in the
Straits of Salamis (480 B.C.) and the second
Persian invasion was repulsed by the army
on the field of Plataea in Boeotia and by the
navy at Mycale (479 B.C.). The independence of Greece, including the Ionian cities,
was, for a while, secure.

While the Greeks in the East were thrusting back the tide of Persian conquest, the
Greek cities of the West, with Syracuse at
their head, repelled the incursions of
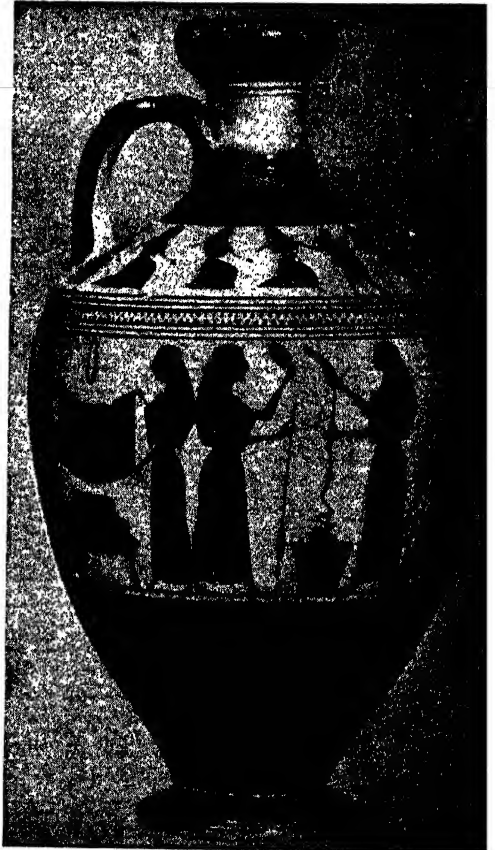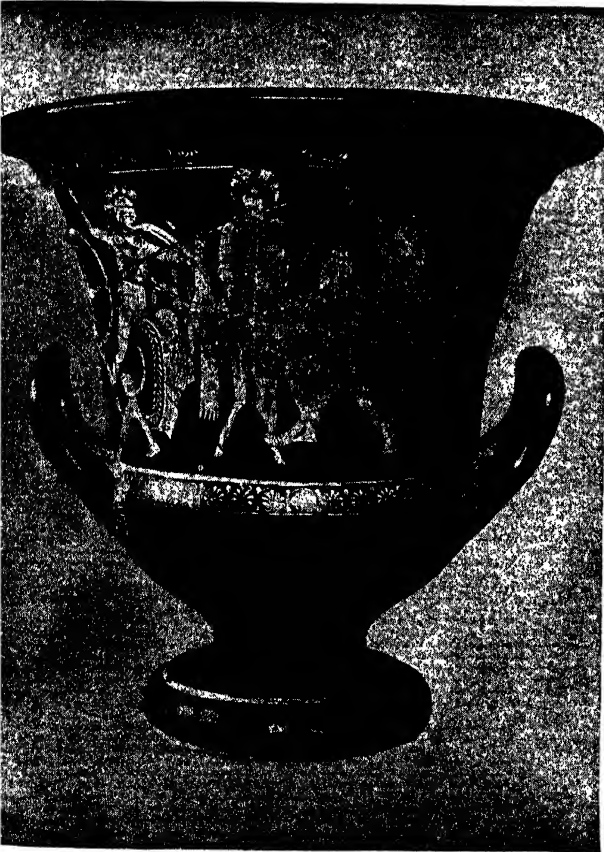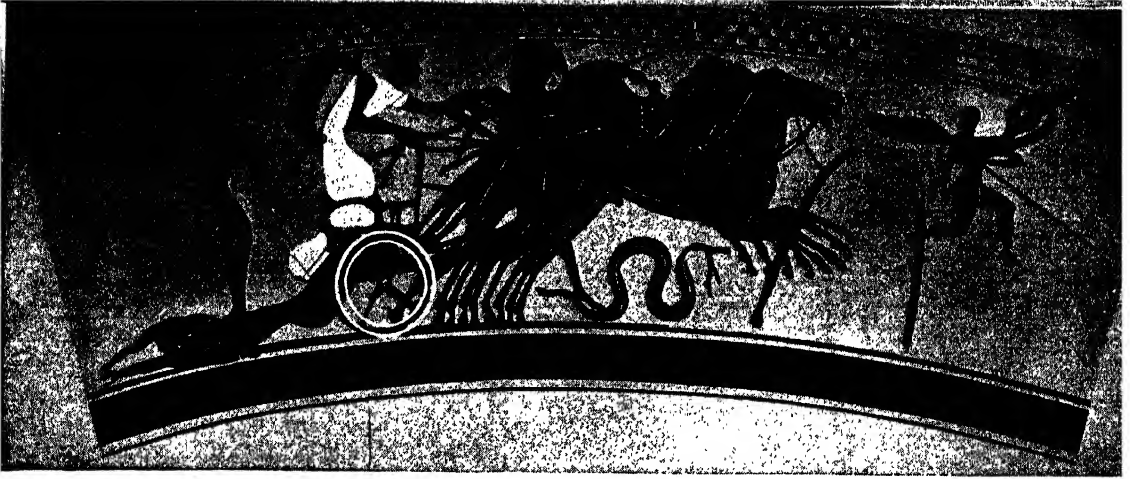
GREEK POTTERY, SIXTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES B.C.

The Greeks drew the themes for many of their vase paintings from mythology. The drawing from an Athenian vase at the top shows Achilles dragging Hector's body. The red figured vase (lower left) depicts the battle of the Greeks and the Amazons, a favorite theme. The domestic scene (lower right) depicts women engaged in spinning and weaving.

GREEK FOOT SOLDIER, C. 500 B.C.

Greek armor, which consisted of a helmet, shield, cuirass, and greaves to protect the shins, all made of bronze, gave effective protection while still permitting freedom of action.

Carthage. Carthage, queen of the western Mediterranean, resented the *The war in the West* growing power and commercial expansion of the Greek cities in Sicily and had clashed with them several times during the sixth century. The Greek cities of Sicily and southern Italy, like their parent cities in the East, were often at war with one another. Conflicts were rife in the latter part of the sixth century when tyrants controlled the city-states. One of these tyrants, Gelon, who ruled Syracuse as well as some lesser cities, so strengthened the military forces under his command that when Carthage, encouraged, perhaps, by Persia, opened a campaign against Sicily in 480 B.C., he led the Greeks to victory.

After the war with Persia, Athens assumed leadership in Greek affairs. She was not unprepared for this rôle. The economic expansion of the preceding era had reached

her shores: her port, Peiraeus, was thriving; the work of her craftsmen was famous; and, by the end *The rise of Athens* of the sixth century, she had outstripped Corinth in many phases of industry and trade. By the beginning of the fifth century Athens was in the vanguard of political and social development. She had known the oppression of oligarchy and the vicissitudes of tyranny, but, unlike most cities, the evolution of her political institutions had been accomplished with very little bloodshed. From the middle of the seventh century the power of her king had been severely curtailed. Indeed, kingship became an elective office held for only a year. The customary law of the land was committed to writing. To Solon, elected chief magistrate in 594–93 B.C., is attributed a series of fundamental reforms including the division of the population into classes based on property each with its political privileges and obligations, the enfranchisement of the *thetes*, and the prohibition of slavery for indebtedness. Under the tyrant, Pisistratus, land was further redistributed, public buildings were erected, festivals inaugurated, and trade encouraged. Then at the end of the century came Cleisthenes whose reforms laid the firm foundation of Athenian democracy.[1]

The relative decline of the Eastern trade, attributable in part to the Persian wars, and the steady growth of trade with the West shifted com- *Athenian Empire* mercial leadership from the cities of Asia Minor to the cities of the islands and the mainland. The fleet which the Athenians had built at the instigation of Themistocles put them in position to take advantage of this shift. To wrest from Xerxes those Greek cities still under his domination, to prevent Persia from resuming power in the Aegean, and to insure mutual defense, cities of Asia Minor and the islands agreed, in 478 B.C., to form a maritime confederacy with Athens at its head. Headquarters were established at Delos, and a constitution was formed giving to each member representation on the Council and demanding from each ships or money in proportion to its wealth. Athens, strong-

[1] See following section.

est and wealthiest of the cities, dominated the confederacy and gradually transformed it into an empire. In 454 the treasury of the Confederacy was moved from Delos to Athens and its contents thereafter were handled by the Athenian government. The allies who resented Athenian domination and attempted to withdraw from the Confederacy were brought back by force. Athens interfered in the internal affairs of these cities, favoring the democratic parties and encouraging the election of magistrates who would be subservient to her will.

Sparta viewed with alarm the hegemony of Athens in the Aegean. At the head of the Peloponnesian League, established in the sixth century to gather together the autonomous city-states of the Peloponnese, including Corinth and Megara, Sparta had long considered herself the most powerful city in Greece. Corinth, jealous of her flourishing trade with the West, resented the encroachments of the Athenians in this territory. In 457 Athens besieged Aegina, Corinth's ally, and the fall of that city caused Sparta to bring the forces of the Peloponnesian League against Athens. Until 446 these two major powers with their allies and dependents were engaged in intermittent warfare. In that year Euboea revolted against Athens and the Peloponnesian army reached Attica. Athens was forced to make concessions acknowledging Sparta's superiority on land, but in return Sparta recognized Athens' maritime empire. It was an uneasy peace. In the subsequent decade Athens' chief concern was holding her empire together. Then, between 435 and 432, Athens and Corinth again came into conflict, and in 431 the two great leagues clashed in a war which lasted with varying intensity until 404. All but a few city-states were aligned on one side or the other. Athens relied on her fleet, Sparta on her land forces. The conflict extended to the Greek cities of the West with Athens aiding the cities arrayed against Syracuse. But the Athenian expedition sent to Sicily in 415 failed ingloriously. Until 413 the struggle was indecisive. In that year a contingent of Peloponnesian forces entered Attica and remained there

Pelopon-nesian War

until, in 404, after her fleet had been defeated by a Spartan navy built with Persia's aid, and Athens herself besieged, the Athenians surrendered. The conditions of peace imposed by Sparta included the break-up of the Athenian Empire, the destruction of the long walls between Athens and Peiraeus, the surrender of the Athenian fleet, and the establishment of an oligarchy in Athens in the hands of thirty men approved by Sparta.

But Greece was not thereafter at peace. Sparta and Persia were engaged for fourteen years in conflict over the Ionian cities which Persia expected to receive in return for the assistance she had given Sparta during the Peloponnesian War. While Sparta was thus occupied, Athens, Thebes, Corinth, and Argos formed an alliance (395 B.C.) to resist her domination in Greece. Athens, meanwhile, had quickly restored her democracy and had re-established some of her alliances. An effort was made in 386 to assure peace: the Ionian cities were ceded to Persia, and the autonomy of all Greek city-states was proclaimed. But alliances and counter-alliances were formed nonetheless and the formation of leagues bore witness to the inadequacy of the independent city-state ideal which dominated Greek political organization; their conflicts told eloquently of the inability of the Greek cities to relinquish their autonomy and unite as a nation.

3. GREEK CIVILIZATION: POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS

The successful issue of the conflict with Persia vindicated Athenian democracy. It was with no small pride that Aeschylus in his play, *The Persians*, had Atossa ask in wonder at the prowess of the Athenians who had defeated her son, Xerxes, at Salamis,

"And who then is their shepherd? Who lords it o'er their host?"

And the chorus answered,

"To no man are they vassals, nor yield they to command."

Cleisthenes' reforms, coming at the close of the sixth century after long evolution toward more popular government, fixed the forms of Athens' political institutions. Most

important of his innovations was the division of the population into territorial groups which cut across the old units. Ten new tribes were created each composed of three *trittyes*, or groups of parishes (*demes*), one in Athens, one on the coast, the third in the countryside of Attica. The *deme* was the electoral unit; on its rolls were registered all citizens living within its jurisdiction. To correspond with this new division of the population the old Council of Four Hundred was enlarged to five hundred members. Membership in the Council was open to all citizens over thirty years old. To insure its being a fair sample of the citizen body, the requisite number were chosen by lot, and men who had held the office twice were ineligible. The Council, divided on a tribal basis into ten committees each of which presided for one tenth of the year, did not make the final decision in legisla-

Athenian democracy

Council

PERICLES

This great statesman played such an important part in Athenian history that the most brilliant period of Greek culture is often called "the Age of Pericles."

tion, but it prepared the bills to be brought before the Assembly, issued decrees to facilitate the execution of decisions made by the Assembly, and negotiated with the representatives of foreign powers. In addition to these duties, the Council collaborated with the magistrates in the work of administration.

All Athenian citizens over eighteen years old were members of the Assembly, although in practice only a fraction of the citizen body attended its meetings. Most Athenian citizens were farmers, and, while the seasonal nature of their work left some free to engage in politics, others were too busy or too far away. The citizens who lived in or near Athens were in a better position to take advantage of their political privileges. The large number of holidays and the small-scale nature of industry made it possible for craftsmen to leave their work when a meeting of the Assembly was called. Proposals were read, and if the Assembly voted to debate the matter, any member might express his opinion or propose an amendment, although usually the party leaders monopolized the discussion. Votes were taken by a show of hands. After 461, any citizen might open judicial proceedings against the author of a proposal which he considered unlawful. The jurisdiction of the Assembly was wide: it passed on the proposals of the Council, and occasionally its members suggested measures; it had the final word in the disbursement of state funds; it elected some magistrates and subjected all of them to examination; and it formed a court to judge cases involving important crimes against the state. To it also belonged the power of ostracism, an institution initiated either by Cleisthenes or in 488–87, which gave the assembled citizens an opportunity to vote for the exile of a leader suspected of tyrannical designs. By a later extension it was applied to men whose policies they wished to reject. The victim of ostracism had to go into honorable exile for ten years.

Assembly
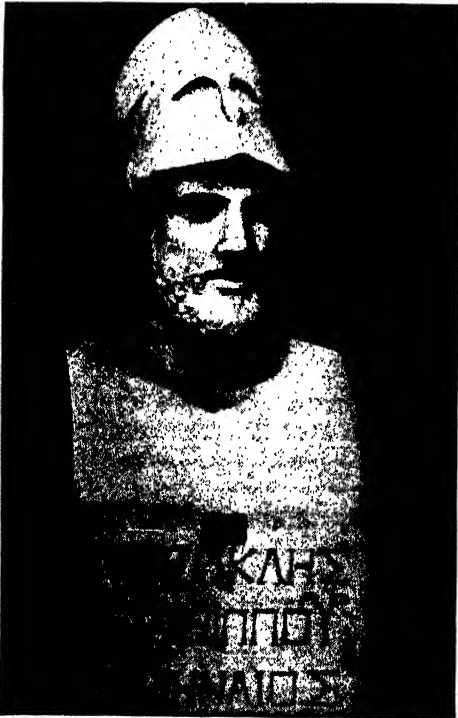
The administration of justice was the province of the *Heliaea*, a large jury numbering about six thousand in the fifth century. The members

Justice

were chosen by lot, six hundred from each tribe, and divided into tribunals. To insure attendance each heliast was paid a small sum. There were no state prosecutors and no lawyers in Athens: the injured party brought suit and the defendant had to present his own defense. The decision rested with the heliasts who voted by secret ballot for condemnation or acquittal. Although a trial had to be completed in a day, the tribunals were overwhelmed with work and trials might be delayed for months. The jurisdiction of the Council of the Areopagus, an old institution which had controlled the administration of justice, was, in 462, confined to homicide cases.

The privileges of democracy were restricted to Athenian citizens. In 451 Pericles himself, the accepted leader

Classes of the people, who was elected *strategos* (general) year after year when Athens was at the peak of her power, introduced a law providing that citizenship be confined to those whose parents were both Athenians. This restriction came at a time when the number of resident aliens was increasing in Athens. These resident aliens, the *metics*, had no political privileges, although they might appeal to the law if a citizen would stand sponsor, and they were forbidden to acquire landed property. Thus they turned to industry and commerce, gaining control of these pursuits while the citizens tended more and more to devote their time to politics. Citizens might be found in all ranks of society from the richest to the poorest, engaged in all occupations, but the majority of them were farmers. Lowest in the social scale were the slaves. With the growth of industry the number of slaves increased. The absence of machinery was in part a cause of slavery, in part an effect. Some slaves, especially those from the East, were skilled craftsmen; others, from barbarian lands, were unskilled and were used for heavier tasks. In law the slave was a chattel, but he received some protection in Athens. To kill a slave was manslaughter; a mistreated slave might flee to a sanctuary and demand to be sold; in place of fines he was punished by flogging, but the strokes were proportioned to the

fine. Manumission might be granted in the master's will, or it might be attained by repurchase, for with his master's permission, a slave might engage in business and sell his labor or the products he made, turning over a portion of his earnings to his master. The master did not have to accept this ransom, but if he did the slave was free and had the same status as a *metic*. *Metics* and even freedmen might be granted citizenship for outstanding service to the state.

Democratic institutions were to be found in other Greek cities, but democracy was not the only form of government in Greece. Corinth and other commercial cities were governed by plutocracies; tyranny lasted long in the cities of the West; many rural communities retained their landholding oligarchies.

Although the number of industrial enterprises multiplied during the fifth and fourth centuries, industry never attained large-scale organization. **Industry** The typical shop was composed of a master craftsman, a few slaves and hired assistants, and perhaps an apprentice. The armormaking establishment of Cephalos with one hundred and twenty employees in 404 was unusually large. The outstanding exception to small-scale organization was mining. Mines belonged to the state. Citizens, and occasionally *metics*, were granted concessions to extract the metal in return for rent and royalties. Concessionnaires hired gangs of slaves to work the mines, and the lot of these slaves was hard indeed, for the heavy manual labor was not lightened by machinery. Some division of labor was effected during the fifth and fourth centuries, especially in those industries making goods for export. In the manufacture of ceramics the tasks of firing, shaping, and decorating were early distinguished. In metal-working there were specialists in various kinds of agricultural implements, in each item of armor, in each weapon. But not all metal-workers were specialists. Domestic industry persisted, but fine textiles were woven outside the home and expert chefs prepared special dishes for sale. The erection of public buildings was usually divided among several contractors, although for some public works

the state used its slaves. In the latter part of the fifth century, wages, paid usually in money and by the day, tended to be normalized. In the fourth century the size of industrial establishments increased, specialization was more widespread, wages varied according to the kind of work performed, and payment by the piece became prevalent.

With the rise of urban centers devoted to commerce and industry the demand for foodstuffs increased. It has been

Commerce

estimated that by the fourth century Athens had to import seventy-five per cent of the grain she consumed. Grain and livestock came to Athens from Thrace and the Black Sea region. Corinth imported these necessities from the West, and when Athens attempted to tap this source Corinth took steps to exclude her. The problem of the food supply was of such importance that states passed laws to limit re-exportation of grain brought to the ports, prevent engrossing, and insure distribution at low prices especially in times of distress. In addition to grain, Athens imported fish, salted meats, fruit and wine. Raw materials were another large item in Athenian imports: metals, wood and pitch, wool and flax were needed by her craftsmen. From the East came luxury goods. Slaves, too, were brought from the East as well as from Thrace and the Black Sea region. In exchange Athens exported olive oil, silver, marble and lead, manufactured products, and works of art. Trade, except in grain, was free. The state levied only a small export and import tax. By far the greater part of commerce was carried on by sea. Roads were generally poor and the cost of inland transportation was well-nigh prohibitive. Although improvements had been made in ships and the art of navigation, there was still much danger of shipwreck and piracy. Few ships ventured forth in winter.

One of the most important developments in Greek commerce was the use of bottomry

Investment and banking

loans. A merchant might borrow funds to purchase a cargo, but because the risks were great interest rates were very high. Not all investments were in trading ventures. Men with surplus funds could invest in industrial enterprises, or buy houses in Athens and lease them or purchase slaves for hire. By the end of the fifth century another field for investment was opened to citizens and *metics* alike — banking. The banks of the fourth century b.c. did not employ credit instruments to the extent that modern banks do, but they effected the exchange of money without the actual transfer of coin; they received deposits and acted as agents in investing other people's money.

While these economic institutions became increasingly complex throughout the fourth century, the rift between rich and poor and between city-dwellers and the rural population widened. Wealthy citizens moved to town, leaving their estates in the hands of foremen. Poor farmers struggled to wrest a living from small plots, often mortgaged, and there were no new lands accessible as there had been in the era of colonization. In some cities workers found their wages depressed and their opportunities for work lessened by the competition of slave labor. Out of these conditions sprang social revolt. In Argos in 370 b.c., about twelve hundred wealthy citizens were killed and their property confiscated in a rising of the poor. Athens escaped revolution, but she was involved in those conflicts between city-states that characterized the fourth century. The Peloponnesian War had drained her treasury, taxed the resources of many of her wealthy citizens, and destroyed farms throughout Attica. For many years thereafter Athenian state finances faced difficulties. The incidence of liturgies, public services performed by wealthy citizens and *metics*, had to be spread. The emergency tax on property was levied with increasing frequency, and private companies were formed to collect it. As the problems of government became more complex and as the exigencies of warfare favored the use of a mercenary rather than a citizen army, the citizens lost some of their interest in public affairs. Not only were the rich reluctant to perform liturgies, the less wealthy demanded compensation for attending the meetings of the Assembly. These factors placed a strain on Athenian democracy.

4. GREEK CIVILIZATION: ART, LITERATURE, AND PHILOSOPHY

In mythology Greek art of the classical period found inexhaustible inspiration.

Religion Temples were built to house the gods, hymns were composed in their praise, festivals were held in their honor. The gods of the Greeks were anthropomorphic. Though superhuman in power, beauty, and moral grandeur, they were not above such human motivations as jealousy and favoritism. Their characters and functions overlapped to some extent, but the major attributes of the more important deities were distinguished. Thus, Zeus was the king of the gods, mighty in rage and firm in justice; Athena, sprung from the head of Zeus, goddess of wisdom; Aphrodite, born of the sea foam, goddess of love; Apollo, especially dear to the Greeks, was the god of light and healing, the patron of music and the arts. The worship of these gods involved no dogma, no systematized theology. Even the ritual attending their worship was not the special office of a priestly caste; in some city-states priests were elected like other magistrates. Each city claimed a god or goddess as patron and the worship of this deity was fraught with keen patriotism. The adventures of the gods formed a rich mythology, their spiritual attributes were identified with moral laws, but as an outlet for religious feeling the mystery cults were more satisfactory. The worship of Dionysus, "the beautiful, weeping creature, vexed by the wind, suffering, torn to pieces, and rejuvenescent again at last," and the Eleusinian mysteries dedicated to Demeter and Kore, were of great antiquity. Both cults sprang from a deep awareness of the mystery of the seasons, the death of the earth in winter, its rebirth in spring. To the initiated both promised purification from sin and personal immortality.

Greek temples were rectangular structures containing a main room, or *cella*, and per-

Architecture haps an additional small room, a porch in the front and sometimes one in the back, a roof sloping slightly from the center and a row of columns in front. Columns might also be built along both sides and some temples had a double row at one or both ends. The construction of the column marked the style of the architecture. The Doric column, developed on the mainland, was simple to the point of severity; the Ionic column, originating in Asia Minor, was more graceful and decorative. The more ornate Corinthian column was of later development. The frieze and pediments of the temple were decorated by groups of figures carved in relief usually representing scenes from mythology. Wars and the ravages of time have destroyed most of the temples and public buildings built by the Greeks. Those which still stand are in ruins. But from these ruins we can reconstruct the harmonious lines and excellent proportions of the original edifices; from the fragments of sculpture that remain we can glimpse the strength and beauty of the figures that adorned the temples. In contrast to their temples and public buildings the private homes of the Greeks were insignificant. Simply designed, these dwellings lined narrow, crooked streets. Occasionally a wealthy citizen would build a more imposing house in the country, or even in the city, but these were relatively scarce.

The most famous examples of Greek architecture are the buildings on the Acropolis in Athens. The Persians had demolished the original temples and the work of reconstruction was begun under Pericles. Here on a hill were built the Parthenon, magnificent tribute to Athena; the exquisite Ionic temple of Athena Nike; the Erechtheum with its Porch of the Maidens; the Propylaea, a gateway cut into the wall at the entrance to the Acropolis. The Parthenon, designed by the architect, Ictinus, was built of marble in Doric style. It had seventeen columns along its sides and eight in front and in back. On the west pediment was depicted the struggle of Athena and Poseidon for control of Athens; on the east the birth of Athena. The continuous frieze around the outer walls of the cella, portraying scenes from a great festival in honor of Athena, was an Ionic feature. The cella itself was divided into two parts, a small room where precious gifts brought by worshipers were kept and a larger room in
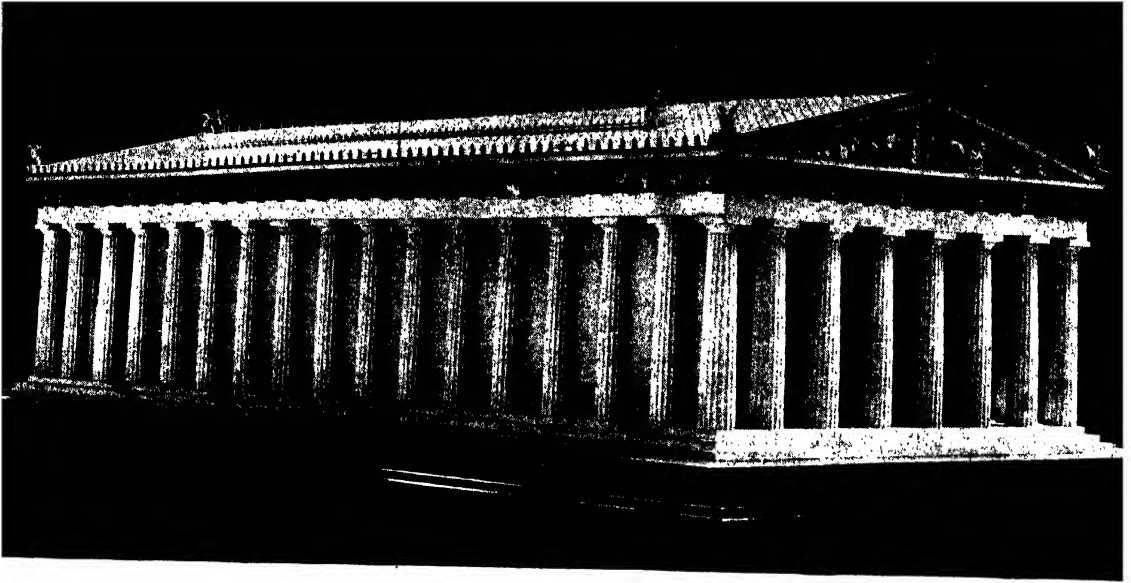
A MODEL SHOWING HOW THE PARTHENON PROBABLY LOOKED TO THE MEN OF ANCIENT ATHENS
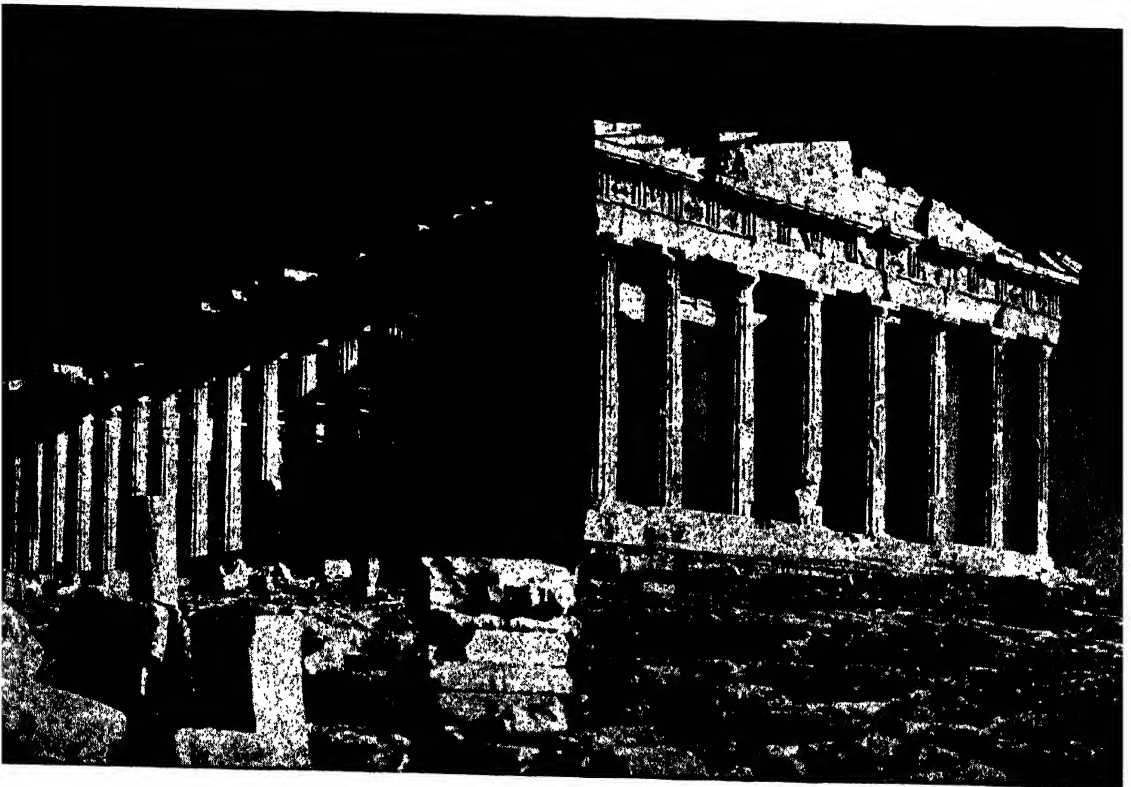
THE RUINS OF THE PARTHENON, PARTIALLY RESTORED

GREEK ARCHITECTURE

ΓΙΙΕΝΑ LEMNIA (PHIDIAS) HERMES OF PRAXITELES APOLLO SAUROKTONOS
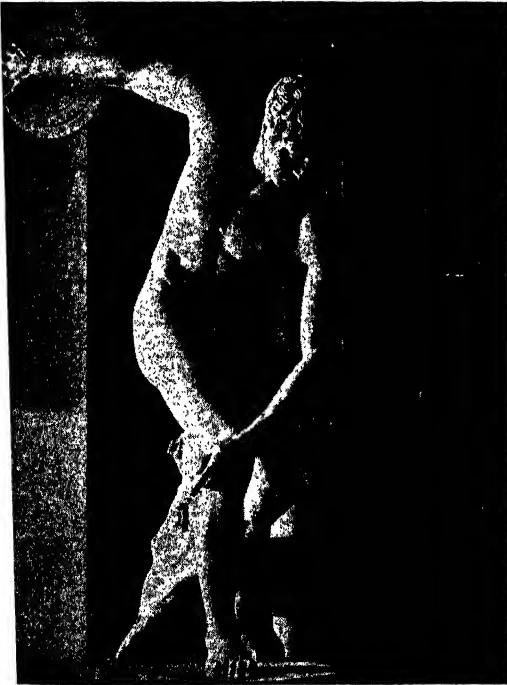
THE DISCUS-THROWER BOY PULLING A THORN FROM HIS FOOT

The statues of the gods above illustrate the trend from the rigid dignity of the Archaic period to the more subtle and human style of Praxiteles, while the two statues below show the Greek ability to portray the human form in vivid action.

GREEK SCULPTURE

SOPHOCLES

This portrait statue gives us not only a vivid impression of the popular dramatist, but also shows what the well-dressed Athenian would wear.

which stood the marble and gold statue of Athena.

The statue of Athena in the Parthenon and the figure of Zeus in the temple at Olympia were the works of the great sculptor, Phidias. It was he, too, who designed the frieze and pediments of the Parthenon. Phidias fixed forever in their full dignity and grandeur the forms of the gods whose statues he shaped. In the first half of the fifth century important advancements were made in statues of athletes. The rigid stance of the Archaic period gave way to a more varied distribution of weight and to action poses; a serious expression took the place of the "Archaic smile." In the second half of the

Sculpture and painting

century, Polyclitus, who excelled in statues of athletes, improved upon the variations of his predecessors and introduced a new stance — standing at ease. In the fourth century more subtle and delicate treatment of both men and gods was achieved by Praxiteles whose statue of Hermes has survived in the original. Lysippus, famous for his busts of Alexander the Great, also fashioned a statue of Poseidon which fixed for all time the image of the god of the sea. Our only records of classical painting are the comments of critics who saw the pictures. From them we hear of Polygnotus, first in the line of great artists, who painted large murals. In the second half of the fifth century came Apollodorus to whom the first effective use of light and shade is attributed.

The art of lyric poetry reached a peak in the works of Pindar. Born about 522 B.C. this poet lived through the first fifty years of the great fifth century. Most of his poems were written in celebration of victorious athletes in the competitive games at the pan-Hellenic festivals. Following a pattern that had become customary, his odes were divided into three parts, the first in honor of the athlete, the second a tale from mythology, and a concluding section of philosophical observations. Pindar was a master of vivid description and terse expression, and an enthusiastic champion of pan-Hellenism.

Poetry and drama

Drama was born and flourished in Athens. At the festival of Dionysus it was customary for a chorus to sing narrative lyrics telling of the deeds of gods and heroes. During this performance the chorus and its leader engaged in dialogue. When, early in the fifth century, Aeschylus introduced a second actor and unfolded his story through dialogue, the dramatic form emerged. In grandeur of theme, in nobility of sentiment, and in the poetic beauty of his choral lyrics Aeschylus was not surpassed. Only seven of his plays have come down to us. Chief among them is the *Orestia*, a trilogy which is considered by many to be the greatest play written by any Greek dramatist. Sophocles, the most popular dramatist of his day, was Aeschylus' younger contemporary and rival.

A GREEK SCHOOL

Literature and music were the most important subjects taught in the Greek schools.

Building on the foundation laid by Aeschylus he refined the technique of tragedy. In Sophocles' plays the number of actors has been increased, characters are more sharply delineated, the structure of the plot is more complex, and attention is concentrated with greater singleness on one tragic issue. In the greatest of his plays, the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, destiny plays a large rôle. It was Oedipus' fate to kill his father and marry his mother. So great was his horror when he discovered that, unknown to him and despite all precautions, his awful destiny had been fulfilled, that he gouged out his eyes. Sophocles wrote objectively, never introducing his personal emotions and views into his plays. Euripides, sixteen years younger than Sophocles, did not hesitate to express his opinions through the characters in his tragedies. These characters are more human than the idealized heroes of Aeschylus and Sophocles and their traits are revealed with greater psychological insight. Euripides minimized the rôle of the chorus and introduced a romantic element into his plots. Most of his plays are studies of women: Medea, the woman scorned; Phaedra, driven to suicide by a dishonorable and futile passion; Alcestis, the devoted wife who gave her life that her husband might live. Unpopular in his own time Euripides became the favorite of later generations.

There was little action in Greek tragedies. Deeds of violence were reported through dialogue, not acted on the stage. The speeches were long and written in poetic form. The chorus, often a group of men or women of the town where the action occurred, intensified the mood of the scenes in their lyric passages of joy or foreboding. Mythological tales, known to the spectators, inspired most of the plots and their outcome was usually fated.

Comedy developed later than tragedy. It, too, evolved from the Dionysiac festivals, but the choral performances from which it emerged were intended to amuse the spectators. The materials of comedy were drawn from everyday life: current movements were satirized, well-known men ridiculed. Only the work of Aristophanes has come down to us, and of his forty-four plays only eleven have survived. In the fourth century comedy was a more popular dramatic form than tragedy. Changes, more fully developed in the New Comedy of the Hellenistic age, were initiated: plots revolved around romantic intrigue, fictitious characters drawn to type took the place of caricatures of prominent men.

Prose was a much later form of literary expression than poetry. It was probably Anaxamander of Miletus, the sixth-century philosopher, who **Prose** introduced prose writing. Hecataeus, also of Miletus, used the new medium for his observations on people, places, and customs. Thereafter science, philosophy, and history

were written in prose. Not until Herodotus (c. 484–425 B.C.) wrote his discursive account of the Persian wars did history become a distinct discipline. For his material Herodotus relied on tales and legends and on information gleaned during his travels. He was a close observer and a born storyteller. Herodotus looked upon the gods as causal agents in human affairs and he gave credence to the oracles. Thucydides (c. 471–399 B.C.) was the first to write really critical history. A participant in the Peloponnesian War, he set himself the task of writing a history of that conflict with as much accuracy as possible. Unlike Herodotus he excluded merely entertaining information and anecdotes, discarded popular legends for which he could find no verification, and sought causes in historical circumstances rather than the will of the gods. Xenophon, a fourth-century historian, is best known for his *Anabasis,* an eye-witness account of the hardships suffered by a band of Greek mercenaries in their march from Babylonia to the Black Sea after Cyrus, their leader, was killed in his struggle to wrest the throne of Persia from his brother.

There were two divergent movements in the philosophy of the fifth century. One stemmed from the sixth-century inquiry into the nature of the universe; the other took as its object man and his institutions. Chief among the philosophers concerned with the composition of the natural world were Leucippus and Democritus, who evolved an atomic theory of matter which they held was applicable as well to the processes of thought. Paralleling these inquiries into nature was the development of scientific medicine. In this field the work of Hippocrates was outstanding. He and his followers were impatient of supernatural explanations and cures. They claimed that disease had natural causes and they kept careful records of the symptoms they observed.

Philosophy

The sophists were teachers intent on preparing men for their duties as citizens. They laid stress on the study of man himself, and they taught that truth could be attained by careful and logical reasoning. Through them young men who could afford it re-

ceived a higher education. The emphasis placed by the sophists on logic and argument was in some instances distorted to mere mental gymnastics to win a point or present an opinion in persuasive fashion. The sophists' concern with politics led to the flourishing of the study of rhetoric, the art of effective public speaking. Chief among these teachers was Socrates. He was not strictly a sophist, for he offered his services without payment, and his method was that of questions and answers rather than lectures. Socrates laid particular stress on ethical problems. He founded no school of philosophy, though later several of his disciples worked out philosophical systems based on his teachings. The Athenian government, suspicious of Socrates' association with young aristocrats, arrested him in 399 B.C. and condemned him on the charge of corrupting the youth of Athens.

Most famous of Socrates' disciples was Plato (427–347 B.C.). Plato's most influential contributions were his political theory as set forth in the *Republic* and the *Laws,* and his metaphysical system. Plato disapproved of the increasingly important place occupied by commerce and industry, and he distrusted democracy. In his ideal state the rulers would be philosophers specially trained for their position of responsibility. The rest of the population would be divided into a class of warriors — for Plato held that "It is the law of nature that between all cities war shall be continuous and everlasting" — and a class of producers. Land was to be the chief source of income Material goods were to be held in common; monogamy was to be done away with, and children were to be reared by the state. According to Plato's metaphysics the world of Being is a world of archetypes or eternal ideal Forms of which material objects are but imperfect and transitory copies. Before its sojourn in a human body on earth the soul dwelt among the Forms. To recollect them is the mind's highest function.

Plato

Aristotle (384–322 B.C.), Plato's pupil, was far more interested in this world of Becoming than in the distant world of Being. In his *Politics* he examined actual systems of government

Aristotle

and drew certain conclusions from their functioning. Monarchy, he said, tended to degenerate into tyranny, aristocracy into oligarchy, polity into democracy. In his *Ethics* he claimed that actions were not good or bad in themselves, but only in so far as they contributed or failed to contribute to well-rounded individual happiness and the well-being of society. To a study of natural phenomena Aristotle brought the scientific method of empirical observation and inductive reasoning. The system of logic which he set forth became the basis for all subsequent study of logic.

4

The Hellenistic Age

THROUGH most of the fourth century B.C., wars and social struggle were sapping the strength of the Greek city-states, and no new resources to meet this drain could be expected from expanding economic activity, for foreign markets were demanding fewer Greek manufactured goods as they developed their own domestic industries. Persia, the old enemy of the Greeks, watched this internal disintegration with avid interest, awaiting the time when Greece would be too weak to resist her armies. And, in the second half of the century, Macedonia, a young and vigorous state newly united under her farsighted king, Philip II, watched both Greece and Persia. Greece was too weak to meet the new Persian threat; Macedonia was too strong not to meet it. But to enter the lists with Persia, Philip had first to bring Greece under his control, thereby securing her aid or at least her neutrality. This he accomplished. But the task of fighting Persia was left to his son, Alexander, a young and brilliant general who conquered the whole eastern world from Egypt to India. Alexander's empire did not long endure, but in the brief span of its existence it opened the East to the Greeks and their culture, and in the two centuries from the death of Alexander to the time when Rome secured domination of the East, a new civilization flourished, a civilization founded on Greek culture, but with a superstructure reflecting the conditions under which it was shaped. The city-

state was no longer the only unit of political, social, economic, and cultural life. Great kingdoms ruled by absolute monarchs dominated the scene and smaller kingdoms imitated their structure. Old values and old loyalties faded; citizenship lost its meaning; cosmopolitanism replaced localism. New values emerged, but they responded to the needs of the individual rather than the community. A new class arose, a Graeco-Oriental upper class speaking the Greek language and imbued with Greek culture, to fashion the life of the new age. Many of its members were business men, for economic opportunity increased when the East was joined with the lands of the Aegean and the Mediterranean to form an economic unit. This was a prosperous age and a turbulent one, an age of wars and far-flung trading operations, an age of absolutism and individualism. It was also an age of experiment in institutions and in thought. And in these centuries the civilizations of Greece and the Orient met to form a new combination which, however, remained essentially Greek. This was the civilization which Rome took over and adapted and passed on to the western world.

1. MACEDONIAN CONQUESTS AND THE HELLENISTIC KINGDOMS

The kingdom of Macedonia, located just west of Thrace,[1] retained its tribal organization and loose monarchy limited by the power of the landed aristocracy until, in 359 B.C., Philip II, re-

Macedonia

[1] See map, page 35.

gent and later king, came to the throne. This energetic king, familiar with Greek culture and military organization from a three-year sojourn in Thebes as a hostage, strengthened the monarchy in Macedonia and built up a national army to take the place of the traditional but less reliable feudal levies.

When Philip became king of Macedonia, the city-states of Greece were already seri-

Dissension in Greece
ously weakened by decades of internecine strife. Sparta, taking advantage of the King's Peace of 386 B.C., had extended her control on the mainland. Athens, perceiving the need of a co-operative effort, had, by 377, formed a maritime confederacy with the avowed purpose of checking Sparta's aggression. The Boeotian League under the leadership of Thebes had been reconstituted, and in 371 Thebes and Sparta clashed. The Spartan forces were defeated by the able Theban general, Epaminondas, who was to teach Philip of Macedon those military techniques, especially the use of the phalanx, which made the Macedonian army almost invincible. The defeat of Sparta was a signal for the Arcadians to break away from the Peloponnesian League and form a league of their own. One of the most significant characteristics of the Arcadian League was its federal structure with a representative legislature, a development which might have given the Greeks a clue to national organization had not their rivalry been so bitter. But the Arcadian League was short-lived. In 363 it collapsed when Mantenea made overtures to Sparta. To hold the League together Epaminondas led the Theban forces into Arcadian territory where he met his death in battle. Without Epaminondas the Boeotian League declined.

Philip knew the weakness of Greece, but he bided his time. In 357 B.C. he began oper-

Philip and Greece
ations in Thrace, gaining control of the mines of Mount Pangaeus despite the protests of Athens. Athens was unable to do more than protest, for her maritime confederacy was fast disintegrating and she was engaged in a futile effort to prevent defection. In the course of the next twenty years, Philip advanced slowly toward dominance in Greece, taking advantage of every excuse to strengthen his hold on the Greek cities. Demosthenes, a patriotic Greek and the greatest orator in Athens, called upon his countrymen to stop Philip's advance, but his *Philippics*, stirring diatribes against the king of Macedonia, were of no avail. Isocrates, the most outstanding sophist of the fourth century, also saw that Greece was threatened with conquest, but the enemy he named was Persia. Persia had encouraged conflicts in Greece, distributing gold where it would do the most damage, in order so to weaken the country that conquest would be easy. Isocrates advocated attacking Persia even at the cost of submitting to Macedonia.

The Athenians took Demosthenes' advice, but it was Isocrates' course which prevailed. In 338 B.C. the forces of Athens and Thebes, aided by only a few small states, met Philip at Chaeronea and suffered a decisive defeat. Before the year was over, Philip called a council at Corinth which Sparta alone refused to attend. There a Hellenic League was organized with Philip at its head. Philip was no ruthless conqueror. Each city-state within the League was to remain autonomous, although each was expected to furnish contingents to an army of which Philip was to be the commander. At the meeting of the Council in the following year, Philip announced his intention of going to war against Persia.

Before he could carry out his plans Philip was assassinated and his son, Alexander, only twenty years old, suc-

Alexander's conquests
ceeded to the throne. Athens, taking advantage of the temporary confusion caused by the death of Philip, planned revolt and Thebes actually revolted. Alexander replied by destroying the city of Thebes. Then he turned to Persia. Most of the Greek cities of Asia Minor accepted him without a struggle. To undermine the effectiveness of the Persian fleet, Alexander determined to take its bases. This he accomplished by defeating the Persian army at Issus and, after a seven months' siege, capturing Tyre. These victories gave him possession of the coasts of Asia Minor,

Syria, and Phoenicia. Next he added Egypt to his domains, an easy conquest, for the Egyptians had long resented Persian rule. Returning to Asia, Alexander inflicted a crushing defeat on the Persian forces in Babylonia in 331 B.C. But still he was not satisfied. In a triumphant march eastward, he led his army into India, coming to a halt only when his soldiers refused to go deeper into an area of intolerable climate and deadly fevers.

Alexander's conquests were more than a series of military victories, brilliant though these were; they were also the **Spread of Greek culture** medium through which Greek culture was to be disseminated throughout the civilized world. Alexander himself had a deep-seated admiration for the cultural achievements of

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

The Azara bust, now in the Louvre, Paris, is the most striking portrait of the great conqueror.

the Greeks: it was not for naught that Aristotle had been his tutor. Following each successful campaign he founded cities in the newly conquered territory, cities which served a military purpose, but which also attracted emigrants from Greece.

When Alexander returned from India, the great problem which confronted him was that of administration. How was he to govern his vast domains? The question can never **Alexander's government** be adequately answered, for Alexander died before he could effect a permanent solution. But from his temporary measures we can infer something of his intent. As he went from conquest to conquest, he left the recently acquired territory in the hands of Macedonian generals, and, for a while, he made no move to change the forms of government traditional in his realms. He even appointed Persians to some administrative posts in the satrapies, but this was found to be inexpedient. Although they were removed, it was probably Alexander's intention ultimately to permit natives to share in the government. He urged his followers to marry native women and he himself set an example by marrying Roxana, a Persian princess. And he founded cities whence Greek culture was to be spread. It was a fusion of races and, to some extent, of cultures which he intended.

To establish his position in these diverse realms, Alexander resorted to an expedient which has since occasioned much comment and not a little contro- **Deification of Alexander** versy — he declared himself a god. This act was differently interpreted in various parts of his empire. The Macedonians did not accept him as a deity, but, since he was their legitimate king, their refusal had no serious consequences. In Egypt the Pharaohs had always been worshiped as gods: each was the son of Ra. So when Alexander became their ruler the Egyptian priests solemnly proclaimed him to be the son of Ra. The Persians did not look upon their kings as gods, but they believed them to be divinely appointed and divinely inspired. Thus they readily accepted Alexander as their god-appointed king. In Greece it was no new thing for a living man to be

ALEXANDER AND THE KING OF PERSIA, DARIUS, AT THE BATTLE OF ISSUS

From a mosaic in the Naples Museum

worshiped as a god, although usually such cults centered around dead heroes. Political theory, too, contributed to the willingness of the Greeks to accept Alexander's deification. Some justification had to be found for his position as ruler: as a man he was a usurper, a tyrant, but as a god he was beyond man-made law, his will was the supreme law.

Alexander died in 323 B.C. at the age of thirty-three. His empire did not long survive him. Antigonus, governor

Hellenistic kingdoms

of Phrygia, made himself master of the Persian domains, ousting Seleucus from Babylon in 321 B.C. Seleucus joined with Cassander, ruler of Macedonia, Ptolemy, governor of Egypt, and Lysimachus, who controlled Thrace, to check Antigonus. It was not, however, until 301 B.C. that Seleucus, aided by Lysimachus, succeeded in defeating Antigonus. Seleucus then made the empire of Antigonus his own, permitting Lysimachus to keep Asia Minor for only three years. Thus Alexander's empire was divided into three main kingdoms:

Syria, including Asia Minor, ruled by the Seleucids; Egypt, under the Ptolemies; and Macedonia, which, in 277 B.C., came under the control of Antigonus Gonatas, who drove out the invading Gauls. In addition to these major kingdoms, each of which sought supremacy in the Hellenistic world, several smaller kingdoms were formed, usually by secession. Chief of these was Pergamum in Asia Minor, a wealthy little kingdom whose rulers strengthened their power and influence by an astute policy of favoring one or the other of the great kingdoms in their wars with each other. To Pergamum is due the credit for confining the Gauls in central Asia Minor.

In Greece two leagues were formed, the Aetolian League which, at the height of its power in the latter part of the third century, included most

Leagues in Greece

of the cities of central Greece, and the Achaean League in the south. Both these leagues had a federal organization: the citizens of the member cities also had federal citizenship and were members of

ALEXANDER'S SUCCESSORS

These portraits of Hellenistic rulers are taken from contemporary coins. From left to right: Philetairos of Pergamum; Eukratides, King of Baktria; Seleucus I, King of Syria.

the federal assembly with the right to vote for federal officers. As in the fourth century, so in the third, rivalry between the leagues prevented their becoming effective agents for the unification of Greece. Sparta, with a citizen body reduced by war and economic distress to about seven hundred by the middle of the third century, was overshadowed by the Achaean League. Cleomenes III, who became king of Sparta in 237 B.C., effected several far-reaching reforms in re-distributing the land and enlarging the citizen body (227 B.C.), and then proposed putting himself at the head of the Achaean League. To prevent this the League allied itself with Macedonia, thus making Macedonia once more the paramount power in Greece.

During most of the third century the three major kingdoms maintained a balance of power, though at the cost of war and threats of war. Then, near the end of the century,

Intervention of Rome
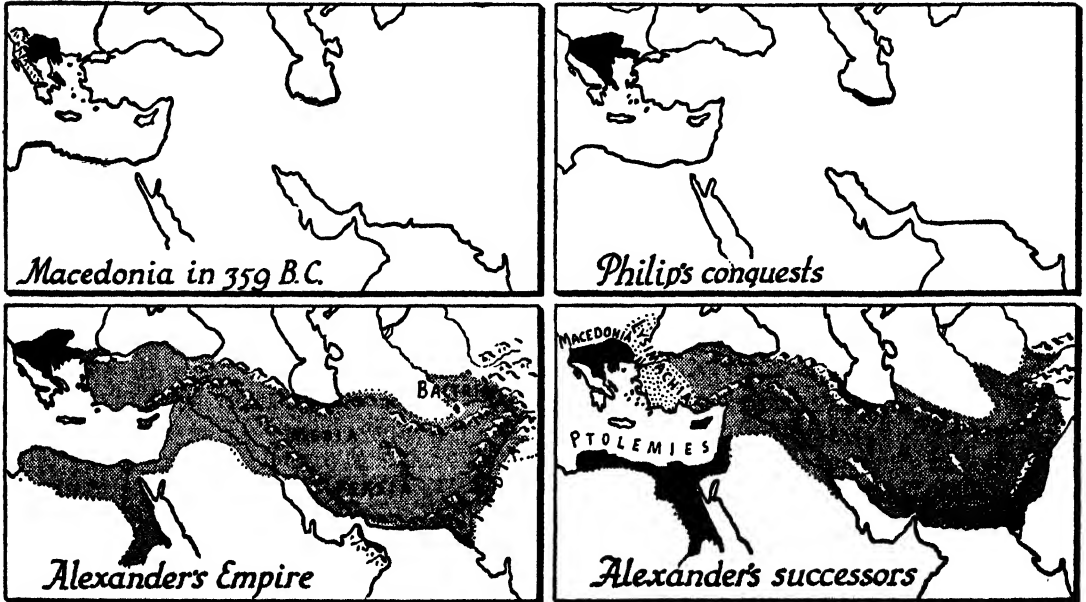
Macedonia in 359 B.C.

Philip's conquests

Alexander's Empire

Alexander's successors

Antiochus III of Syria and Philip V of Macedonia combined to drive Egypt from the Aegean and divest her of her possessions in Syria and Anatolia. When Egypt appealed to Rome for aid, and Pergamum and Rhodes, too, asked her to intervene, Rome entered the struggle, for this growing state, fresh from her final victory over Carthage,[1] was loath to see any kingdom in the East attain sufficient power to become a rival. Rome concentrated her attack on Macedonia, and in 197 B.C. defeated Philip and deprived him of all territory beyond Macedonia. Antiochus, meanwhile, was enlarging his domains in Syria at the expense of Egypt, and, at the invitation of the Aetolian League, even entered Greece. At this point Rome stepped in. In 191 B.C. the Roman army forced him out of Greece and deprived him of his gains in Asia Minor. To her allies, Pergamum and Rhodes, Rome gave additional territory. Macedonia came into conflict with Rome again in 171 and was again defeated. Finally, in 146 B.C., after another unsuccessful attempt to defy Rome, Macedonia was made a Roman province. At about the same time the Greek cities turned against Rome and in punishment Rome broke up their leagues and made a separate alliance with each city. Thus, by the middle of the second century Rome had the whip-hand in the East, although neither Syria nor Egypt was yet her province.

2. HELLENISTIC CIVILIZATION: POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS

Alexander's policy of founding new cities in the lands of the East was continued by his successors, the Seleucids. **Greek cities** These new cities with their predominantly Greek population were accorded a large measure of self-government. Greek cities in Macedonia, too, had their own constitutions. But, although many enterprising Greeks flocked to Egypt to exploit the rich resources of that land or to acquire positions in the machinery of the king's complex and ubiquitous bureaucracy, only three cities could boast even partial autonomy — Alexandria, the center of culture, trade, and government, Ptole-

[1] See following chapter for the history of Rome.

mais, and Naucratis. In Egypt as in Syria the Greeks formed a ruling class and their culture was the nucleus of Hellenistic civilization. But the line between Greeks and non-Greeks was not sharply drawn. Descendants of those whom the Hellenes had once called barbarians, educated in Greek schools and speaking the Greek language, now took their places in the ranks of the true Greeks to form a Graeco-Oriental upper class. There remained, however, a cleavage between the Hellenized upper classes and the natives who retained their traditional speech and customs.

In Macedonia the traditional concept of kingship long persisted: the monarch was neither divine nor absolute, and he depended upon a national **Absolutism** army, not a mercenary force. The kings of Egypt and Syria claimed unlimited authority. Kingdom and subjects were theirs to do with what they would and divine sanction justified their acts. Such was the theory. In practice the power of the monarch was limited somewhat. The varied character of the population made absolute government difficult in Syria. The Greeks living there were accustomed to managing their own affairs, and since the Seleucids were aware that the prosperity of Syria depended upon the Greek cities, they permitted these municipalities considerable independence. But only in local matters. Some members of the old landed aristocracy also refused to relinquish all their privileges. And some outlying sections of the empire actually seceded and set up their own governments.

Absolutism found its most complete expression in Egypt. There autocracy extended to economic as well as to political life. The Ptolemies **Royal control of economy: Egypt** took advantage of the traditional prerogatives of the Pharaohs in ordering economic activity to bring agriculture, commerce, and industry under their control. In theory the king owned all the land. Vast royal estates, scattered through the country, were worked by tenant farmers directly for the benefit of the king. By the end of the second century, the remuneration granted to these peasants was so small that the government was unable to

find sufficient men willing to cultivate the royal lands. To solve this problem, the king forced tenant farmers to pledge themselves not to leave the land between sowing and harvest. Later, he curtailed their movements still further, and finally, as a last expedient, the king impressed peasants into service on his domains. Soldiers in the regular army received land, but these grants were inalienable; not until the first century could they be freely bequeathed. Some estates were held on long leases and a few lands passed into the hands of private individuals as royal gifts. Since the cultivation of most of the land in Egypt was directly or indirectly under government supervision, improvements could be introduced and discoveries in agricultural science applied. Thus, grain exports were increased and under the first Ptolemies Egypt grew in wealth and power. The wealth of Egypt did not depend solely on her grain. Under the aegis of the Ptolemies industries were rapidly developed. Royal factories had a monopoly of the manufacture and sale of certain products, including oil and linen. In Pergamum, too, the king directed economic life. Royal estates were worked for the government; royal factories employing state slaves enjoyed a monopoly in the most important export industries, especially parchment and fine textiles.

The Hellenistic age saw an extensive development of the more advanced economic institutions which appeared in **Commerce and industry** the great days of Athenian prosperity. Specialization of labor reached remarkable proportions in the royal factories. Although artisans continued to produce goods in small workshops for direct consumption, mass production for sale to merchants who carried goods to a mass market characterized the major industries. The use of money spread and credit instruments were widely employed: banks were established by individuals and by states, checks and letters of credit were in common use where transactions were large. Prices fluctuated and speculation was rife. One of the most daring ventures in speculation was that undertaken by Cleomenes, governor of Memphis, who cornered Egyptian grain in 330 B.C. when there was a famine in Greece. Commerce expanded as merchants from Greece sought opportunities in the lands thrown open by Alexander's conquests, as new wealth stimulated demand, and as banking and credit facilities were extended. From India came spices and cotton, from Africa gold and ivory, from Arabia frankincense, and from China silk. Goods from India came to Egypt by water through the Arabian Sea and the Red Sea, or they might be carried through the Persian Gulf to the Tigris. Caravan routes from India and Central Asia terminated in the coastal cities of Syria, Asia Minor, and Phoenicia. Antioch became an important manufacturing center where raw materials from the Far East were transformed into finished products for sale to more westerly lands. Fine woolen textiles were woven in Miletus and Pergamum. Industrial establishments in Alexandria produced glass, fine jewelry, and cosmetics. Improvements in navigation aided this far-flung commerce. Ships were made larger and safer, ports were improved, and lighthouses erected. The great lighthouse in the harbor of Alexandria was an architectural and engineering triumph as well as an aid to ships. The Hellenistic age, especially in the early period, was indeed a prosperous one. But prosperity did not come to all classes. The Graeco-Oriental upper class of merchants, manufacturers, government officials, and landowners enjoyed its fruits, but the lower classes, the peasants, the industrial workers, and the slaves remained poor, and it was they who suffered most from the changing fortunes of the Hellenistic kingdoms. For, although the whole Hellenistic world prospered during the last years of the fourth century and the first years of the third, thereafter first one kingdom and then another declined.

Greece herself was the first to receive a fresh impetus from Alexander's conquests. Alexander released the hoarded bullion of the Persian monarchs and a period of rising **The fortunes of Greece** prices ensued, stimulating industry. The demand for Greek manufactured goods increased at the same time, for Greek emi-
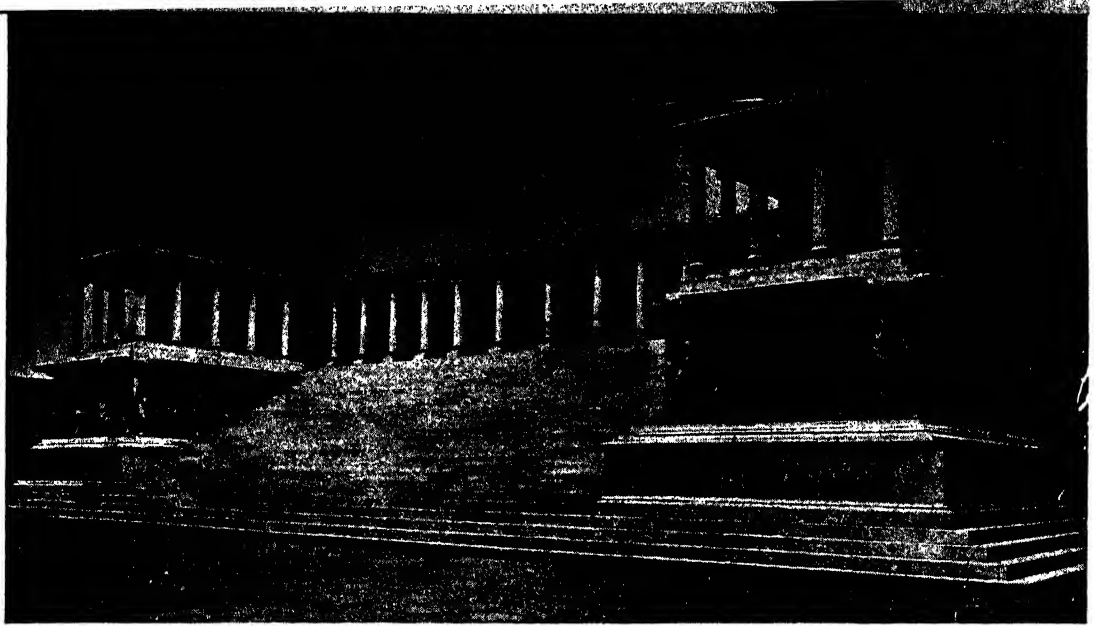
ALTAR BUILT BY KING EUMENES II, C. 180 B.C.

This magnificent altar is one of the finest examples of Hellenistic architecture.

DETAILS FROM THE LARGE FRIEZE WHICH RUNS ABOUT THE BASE OF THE ALTAR

The vivid action is characteristic of Hellenistic sculpture.

THE ALTAR OF ZEUS AT PERGAMUM

grants settling in distant lands wanted products from their homeland. But during the early part of the third century, Egypt and Syria were energetically exploiting their own resources and developing their own industries. The demand for Greek goods gradually declined. And while Egypt and Syria fought for hegemony in the Aegean, Greece bore the brunt of war and consequent interruption of trade. By the end of the third century, Greece was in a sad plight. The growth of large estates had been encouraged by the emigrations of an earlier day, but with the economic frontiers closed by war and by the growing self-sufficiency of Asia and Egypt, small holders could no longer sell their inadequate plots and seek their fortunes elsewhere. The press of population became so desperate that race suicide seemed imminent; the population of Greece declined noticeably during the second century. At the same time the contrast between rich and poor was more sharply delineated. The rich few lived in ostentatious luxury; the poor could barely survive.

By the end of the third century, Egypt, too, was doomed, for Syria and Macedonia in coalition brought her to her knees, and while the intervention of Rome saved Egypt from becoming a conquered territory, it did not restore her as a major power. Despite the tribute exacted by Rome, Syria remained prosperous, for she retained her caravan trade. Pergamum, too, continued to enjoy great wealth. But as the third century drew to a close, Rhodes, favorably situated as a meeting-place for ships carrying goods between the north and the south and between the east and the west, rose to economic supremacy. Egypt's wide trading operations had helped to make Rhodes a center of exchange and the favor of Rome during the third century contributed greatly to her prosperity. The Rhodians grew rich on customs receipts. They developed a navy strong enough to make the Aegean unsafe for pirates; their maritime regulations were so widely adopted that they constituted a body of commercial law.

But Rhodes became too powerful. In 166

Rise of Rhodes

B.C. Rome gave the island of Delos, already a center of transit trade and the chief port for trade in slaves, to Athens, stipulating that the island be made a free port. Thus, Delos succeeded Rhodes as the emporium of the Hellenistic world and, like Rhodes, its prosperity crumbled when Rome finally withdrew her favor. With the establishment of an empire Rome no longer needed a trading station in the East.

Delos

3. HELLENISTIC CIVILIZATION: PHILOSOPHY, LITERATURE, AND ART

The cosmopolitanism and individualism characteristic of Hellenistic civilization were not unrelated. Greek culture dominated the new and larger world: the Greek tongue became the language of all educated men; with some modification Greek art forms persisted; Greek economic developments were the bases of Hellenistic organization. But the *milieu* in which the Greeks had fashioned this culture was gone. The place of the city-state, with its laws and its mores and the demands which it made upon the loyalty of its citizens, was taken by vast and impersonal kingdoms. The intense awareness of differences, so characteristic of citizens of the old city-state, gave way to a recognition of thinly spread but widely diffused similarities. And one cannot identify oneself with the entire civilized world. This recognition made for cosmopolitanism; and the lack of vital, delimited interaction between the individual and the community, which cosmopolitanism implied, made for individualism. Men sought the reason and the source and the end of their being within themselves.

The dominant philosophies of the age reflected this deep-rooted individualism. Epicureanism, a system of thought evolved by Epicurus in the last years of the fourth century, taught that the ultimate standard for human conduct was individual happiness. Happiness Epicurus defined as the absence of pain, a state of tranquillity which left the mind free for positive pleasure in intellectual interests. While Epicurus taught this philosophy to the young men in Athens, Zeno founded a

Philosophy

school of Stoics which held that the end of man was the attainment of virtue. Virtue consisted in the complete triumph of man's reason and, through reason, the harmonious adjustment of the conduct of human affairs with the order of the universe. All irrational impulses must be eradicated; pain and pleasure, fear and hope were obstacles to the realization of virtue. As a *modus vivendi* Stoicism proved too stern and uncompromising. Although its basic concepts persisted and exerted much influence, the demands made upon its adherents gradually became less rigorous. Stoicism and Epicureanism were the leading systems of thought in the Hellenistic age, but not all men adhered to one or the other. Some maintained an attitude of skepticism. A few remained faithful to the old gods, and many put their faith in the mystery cults.

The Eleusinian mysteries, and the Orphic cult which was closely connected with the Eleusinian, gained ever-widening popularity. The traditional Greek gods became fused with Oriental deities having the same general attributes, and eastern mysticism crept into the rituals attending their worship. A god might be known by many names, so many, indeed, that the individuality of the deity often faded into an abstraction. This generalization of divinity shifted emphasis from the god to the ritual, and in the symbolisms of worship believers renewed their faith in purification and immortality. Astrology, also an importation from the East, found many willing to give credence to its claims. The spread of mysticism and astrology further indicate the individualism of the day: the cults offered personal salvation and a life after death; astrology purported to reveal a man's destiny in a world of multiple standards and shifting fortunes.

Religion

While philosophy became increasingly a matter of ethics and religion concentrated on personal salvation and the afterlife, science became more impersonal, more exact. Scientists sought more to discover the precise nature of phenomena in the external world than to find man's place therein or even to set forth an explanation of the entire universe. And the

Science

science of the Hellenistic age was truly brilliant. In the field of mathematics Euclid's work was momentous; his system of pure geometry written early in the third century is studied today. Archimedes (c. 287–212 B.C.), also a mathematician, made discoveries of far-reaching importance in mechanics and hydrostatics. One of the most significant of his contributions was the discovery that when a body is immersed in a fluid, it loses weight equal to the weight of the fluid it displaces. This is still known as Archimedes' principle. In the second century Hipparchus made some very important astronomical calculations including an almost accurate estimate of the distance between the earth and the moon. Eratosthenes (c. 273–192 B.C.) estimated the earth's circumference and reached a figure only about four per cent less than that accepted today. In physiology, too, amazing progress was made. Early in the third century Herophilus discovered the nerves, and Erosistratus investigated both the sensory and the motor nervous systems, distinguishing between them.

The Museum at Alexandria, supported by the state and dedicated to research, was the scene of much scientific investigation. Here, too, were performed vast labors in literary scholarship. The Museum library was the largest and most complete that the world had yet seen. Scholars pored over its manuscripts, deciphering, determining authorship, deciding which of several was the correct version. But the literary endeavor of the Hellenistic age was not confined to scholarship. There were no great writers of tragedy after Euripides, but in the third century comedy flourished for a while in the expert hands of a few outstanding dramatists. The New Comedy of the third century stemmed indirectly from Euripides. Because he had brought to his writing a brooding realism which questioned the old heroic values and which probed the human heart, Euripides had not been accepted in his lifetime. But a later day, bereft of those very values which he had questioned and like him concerned with the complex nature of man, applauded his genius. In the comedies of Menander (c. 342–291 B.C.), chief exponent of the New

The New Comedy
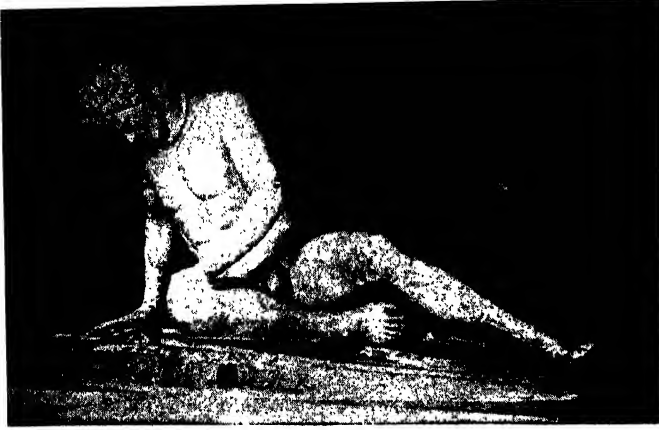
THE DYING GAUL

The incursions of the Gauls were not without influence on Hellenistic art. This is one of the outstanding products of the Pergamene school of sculpture.

NIKE OF SÁMOTHRACE

In a dynamic fusion of strength and fluidit; the Hellenistic sculptor has interpreted th ancient Greek goddess of victory.

LAOCOÖN

Hellenistic sculpture was at its best in the depiction of emotion. The group showing the death of the priest Laocoön and his son, by Agesander of Rhodes, is one of the most compelling of its kind.

APOLLO BELVEDERE

This statue, now in the Vatican, Rome, seems to carry on the older Greek tradition.

Comedy, conventional plots based on the complications of love intrigue are a vehicle for subtle character analysis and an astute examination of ideas and motives.

The writing of history flourished during the Hellenistic age. Most of these historical **History** works, and, indeed, the greater part of all the literary output of the period, have been lost, but information concerning them may be gleaned from later writers familiar with the original manuscripts. The amazing career of Alexander the Great inspired many to tell the tale. Others wrote of events subsequent to the conquests. Some published biographies, autobiographies, and memoirs. In much of this historical writing thoughtful and critical handling of material was sacrificed to stylistic elegance and entertainment. Of outstanding significance was a history of Rome from 264 B.C. to 144 B.C., emphasizing the years from 221 to 144, written by Polybius, a Greek sent to Rome as a hostage after the Third Macedonian War. Polybius wrote this history as a guide for politicians, but didactic intent did not impair his great ability as a historian.

In poetry as in history readers of the age — and this was a reading rather than a listening age — demanded stylis- **Poetry** tic brilliance, an insistence which resulted in the emergence of a group of professional writers well trained in their craft. Numerous poetic forms were employed. Graceful and idealized scenes from country life were depicted in idylls. Callimachus, greatly admired by his contemporaries, and Theocritus, whose idylls on the life of Sicilian shepherds influenced the writing of Virgil's *Eclogues*, were masters of this form. The epigram, a brief and witty comment on the ways of man, enjoyed wide popularity. Diatribes, some in verse and some in prose, railed against hypocrisy, corruption, and stupidity. For a less educated audience mimes were written, dialogues treating of the least savory aspects of city life. The epic was still employed for didactic as well as literary themes. Most famous of literary epics was the *Argonautica* composed by Apollonius telling the tale of Jason and the Golden Fleece.

Hellenistic cities were more carefully planned and more elaborately adorned than the earlier Greek cities. Many public buildings were con- **Art and** structed, including palaces, the- **architecture** aters, temples, and even temporary structures for royal festivities. Private dwellings, too, received far more attention. The style of architecture remained predominantly Greek, but many novelties were introduced in the execution of details. In temple architecture the Corinthian order gained at the expense of the Doric and to a lesser extent of the Ionic. Sculpture as well as architecture was influenced by classical Greek models, but the spirit of the age was reflected in a marked tendency toward realism. There is in Hellenistic sculpture an emotional intensity, a stress on human and particularized feeling not found in the products of the classical age. The compelling Laocoön group, produced during the first century B.C. by Agesander of Rhodes, illustrates Hellenistic realism and intensity. The Dying Gaul, wrought by a sculptor of the Pergamene school, is a less explicit but no less effective embodiment of human suffering. And the famous Nike of Samothrace, the Winged Victory, is a superb representation of motion.

5

The Roman Republic

AT THE END of the sixth century B.C., when the vigorous city-states of Greece were already emerging from the archaic period of their civilization, the little Italian city-state of Rome was just beginning her career as an independent republic. Compared to the Greeks of that age, the Romans were little better than barbarians. A sturdy and strong-willed race they were, but with small aptitude for abstract speculation and with still less of the creative originality in the fields of literature and art that were the glory of ancient Greece. Three centuries later, when Greece had passed her golden age, the Romans appropriated .the Greek heritage and used it as the foundation for a great and lasting culture of their own; but their most original and characteristic achievements were of a different kind. These solid Latin farmers demonstrated over a period of centuries their possession of a legal and political genius such as the world has seldom seen. And these qualities, so sadly lacking among the more subtle and speculative Greeks, carried the little city-state on the Tiber from triumph to triumph until she had become the undisputed mistress of the Mediterranean world. Alone among the ancient city-states, Rome was able to evolve a legal and political system that could survive the strain of territorial expansion and bridge the gap from city-state to empire.

1. THE EARLY ROMAN REPUBLIC AND THE FIRST PERIOD OF EXPANSION (TO 202 B.C.)

We have little historical knowledge of Italy prior to the foundation of the Roman Republic. For the earlier period we must depend chiefly on the evidence supplied by modern archaeology. The majority of the Italian people were evidently descended from Indo-European tribes who had drifted down from the North across the Alps in successive waves during the second millennium before Christ. Of these the most important for Roman history were the kindred Latin peoples who settled the fertile plain of Latium on the western coast south of the Tiber. They were already well established when the neighboring district of Tuscany to the north of the Tiber was conquered by the Etruscans some time prior to 800 B.C. The Etruscans were a seafaring people of mysterious but probably Eastern origin, more highly civilized than the Italians among whom they settled. With them came the first influence of the highly developed culture of the eastern Mediterranean. Their industrial and artistic products follow Greek models too closely to claim much originality, but they show a high degree of technical skill. In the seventh century they began to spread their territorial domination southward among the poorly organized tribes of Latium. Throughout most of the sixth century Etruscan kings ruled Rome and the neighboring Latin cities, contributing in no small degree to the development of Roman culture and institutions. Meanwhile, during the seventh and sixth centuries, Italy was brought into still closer contact with the civilization of the East as

The Italian background

Greek colonies were planted in Sicily and on the southern coast of the peninsula.

The sixth century was drawing to a close when the Romans rose in rebellion against

The republic: government

the Etruscan kings and established an independent republic. The traditional date, 509 B.C., is probably fairly correct. The constitution of the new republic was essentially conservative and aristocratic. The existing social distinction between the wealthy "patrician" families and the "plebeian" mass of the people was given legal sanction and formed the basis of a political caste system. Intermarriage between the two classes was forbidden, while all offices as well as membership in the Senate were reserved for the patricians. The executive and legislative branches were carefully balanced so as to prevent radical action. Full executive authority, including command of the army and, in the early period, large judicial powers, was shared by two consuls elected for a year at a time. These were advised by the Senate, a body of three hundred elder statesmen appointed for life, at first by the consul, later by the censors. The constitutional powers of the Senate were rather vague, but their practical influence was always great. As the republic expanded in later centuries new offices were created to take over parts of the consuls' duties and it became the custom to appoint all who had held offices to the Senate. It thus became a body of experienced administrators whose advice the short-term magistrates could scarcely reject. The legislative power and final sovereignty, however, rested not with the Senate but with the assembly of citizens, which also elected the magistrates. In the early period of the republic this was a very conservative body, dominated by the patrician families. Its organization was based on that of the army which was divided into classes and "centuries" according to wealth. As the assembly voted by centuries, whence its name of *comitia centuriata*, and a clear majority of the centuries were assigned to the wealthy class, the patrician control of legislation was secure. This institution remained virtually unchanged until the end of the republic, though in time it lost its exclusive authority

and had to share lawmaking power with an assembly of the plebs.

The aristocratic constitution of the young republic reflected the social and economic organization of the Roman peo-

Social and economic life

ple. The political caste system was based on wealth, mostly in the form of land, and on a very strong family organization. As with many primitive agricultural people, the family was a much larger and more significant unit than its modern counterpart, including as it did clients and slaves, and the head of the family had an unlimited authority. Every effort was made to perpetuate the family fortunes, and the recurrence of the same family names in political office, generation after generation, attests the success of the patricians in keeping their family estates intact. Indeed, the economic developments of the first two centuries of the republic favored the growth of large patrician estates, though they were hard times for the poor. Rome had little commerce in this period and no more industry than was needed for the production of articles of daily use by small artisans. Agriculture formed the basis of Roman wealth. But during the fifth and fourth centuries, the rich volcanic top soil of the Campagna was becoming exhausted as the result of over-cropping and the deforestation of the neighboring hills. By the fourth century, grain raising in the lowlands of Latium was becoming unprofitable and was being replaced by cattle and sheep grazing. In this less intensive use of the land the small farmer was at a distinct disadvantage. More and more, small farms were bought up to be incorporated in large estates, while the discontented plebeians organized their political strength in the hope of securing relief from debt or allotments of public land from conquered territory.

The struggle between the classes, which formed the underlying *motif* of Roman politics for centuries, began early in

Rise of plebeian power

the history of the republic. Until much later times, it was a very orderly struggle. With characteristic Roman tenacity and respect for law, the plebeians kept up a steady political pressure, and during the course of little

more than a century and a half they succeeded in bringing about a gradual and bloodless democratic revolution. Early in the fifth century they gained the right to elect tribunes to protect their interests. Then the powers of these tribunes and of the plebeian assembly (*comitia tributa*) which elected them were steadily increased until, by 339 B.C., the latter was recognized as a lawmaking body with full powers, subject only to the formal assent of the Senate, and even this check was removed before long. Meanwhile the plebeians had secured the right of intermarriage with the patricians and eligibility to nearly all state offices. They had also secured some economic relief in a modification of the laws regarding debt and through small allotments of public land. These had been dangerous years for Rome, during which she was forced to lead the Latin League in a series of defensive wars against warlike neighbors until the nearest and most threatening of these had been conquered. It was to the indispensable part they played in the army during these wars that the plebeians owed much of their political success. When Rome entered on a period of more rapid expansion in the later part of the fourth century, the plebs had thus secured an active share in government and the power to control legislation when they chose to do so. With that for a long time they remained content. Under the pressure of war they were usually willing to leave the conduct of government to experienced patrician magistrates. Moreover, the founding of Roman colonies in conquered territory served for a time to relieve their economic grievances and at the same time removed large numbers of the plebeians from active political life in the capital.

The year 343 B.C., in which the Romans consented to go to the aid of Capua against the powerful Samnite tribes **Expansion in Italy** that were threatening her, marks the beginning of a new period in Roman history. From that time on she was drawn into one foreign war after another, each resulting in further territorial expansion. As a result of this first Samnite war Capua became a dependent ally of Rome. The cities of the Latin League were now becoming alarmed at the growing power of their Roman ally and tried to break away from her. But Rome would bear no defection and the Latin War ended with the absorption of the Latins into the growing Roman state as partial citizens. Rome had now become too powerful to live at peace with her neighbors. The motives that led to further expansion are obscure. There seems, indeed, to have been no settled policy, though the land hunger of the plebeians was probably a factor. The republic was drawn into a series of conflicts by immediate political events and, thanks to her solid military organization, emerged from each with new land and more dependent allies. The second and third Samnite wars filled most of the period from 326 to 290 B.C. As the struggle progressed, other Italian peoples allied themselves with the Samnites, and shared their fate. When the wars were over Rome dominated all of Italy below the Lombard plain with the exception of the Greek cities at the southern tip of the peninsula. And these she conquered fifteen years later.

With rare political wisdom, the Romans refrained from reducing the conquered Italians to complete subjection, as was the habit of ancient conquerors. She left the defeated **Results of expansion** cities and tribes an almost complete local autonomy, contenting herself with control of their military force and foreign policy. Separate treaties with each welded the Italian peoples into a firm federation under Roman leadership. The terms of the treaties varied with varying conditions, thus making possible more satisfactory relations than could have been established under any one consistent scheme. In addition, Roman and Latin colonies with full or partial Roman citizenship were founded at strategic points throughout Italy. This accomplished the dual purpose of accelerating the Romanization of the peninsula and of supplying the poorer Roman and Latin citizens with much-needed land. These colonies had also the important economic effect of turning the surplus Roman population back to the land instead of into industry or commerce. The Romans remained a nation of farmers and landowners.

Rome was soon to have need of her allies, and her wise treatment of them was to be

First Punic War

amply justified by their loyalty during the long struggle with Carthage, which began scarcely more than a decade after the last wars in Italy. Hitherto Rome and Carthage, the only other strong state in the western Mediterranean, had been friendly enough, for the former was a land power interested chiefly in agriculture, while the latter dominated the Western sea and drew her wealth from commerce. There was no sufficient point of contact to arouse enmity. The Roman conquest of the commercial Greek cities in southern Italy altered this situation, since Carthage held more than half of Sicily and was thus a dangerously close neighbor. The first Punic War (so called from the Roman name for the Phoenician people of Carthage) began in 264 when the Carthaginians threatened to occupy Messana and close the narrow straits between Sicily and Italy. Most of the fighting occurred in Sicily, and the Romans soon realized that they could never succeed in an overseas war without a navy strong enough to meet the Carthaginian fleet and keep sea communications open. This was a new venture for the Romans and proved immensely expensive in both money and men. During the next few years they lost two complete fleets, totaling more than five hundred ships, as the result of battle and shipwreck. The Roman treasury was exhausted and the people were already taxed to the limit of endurance, but Rome would not admit defeat. Private contributions raised the money for a new fleet. It won a decisive victory in 242 and the Carthaginians, having lost control of the sea, retired from Sicily. Peace was declared in the following year.

The war left Rome exhausted, but she was able to recoup her losses in part by exacting a large indemnity from Carthage and by levying an immense tribute of grain from the conquered territory in Sicily. The

The first Roman province

conquest of Sicily marked the beginning of a new policy for Rome, the first step toward empire. A few friendly cities were treated as the Italians had been, but the greater part of the island was made into a Roman province with the obligation of paying a tithe of its produce to the Roman people and under the governorship of a military *praetor* sent out from Rome. A few years later Rome acquired still more territory by taking Sardinia from Carthage.

The peace that followed the first Punic War was no more than a truce of exhaustion. The military party in Carthage, led by Hamilcar Barca, was determined on revenge

A SEA BATTLE

A Roman marble relief showing the oar-propelled vessels of the Roman navy

and the recovery of Sicily and Sardinia. Meanwhile, Hamilcar attempt-
Second Punic War ed to compensate for these losses by founding commercial colonies in Spain. After his death his brilliant son, Hannibal, continued his work until he had an army in Spain which he felt was strong enough to invade Italy. The story of the second Punic War (218–202 B.C.) is one of the most dramatic in military history. Traveling at incredible speed, Hannibal marched through southern Gaul and struggled across the Alps into Italy before the Romans were well aware of their danger. The Carthaginian commander had no intention of besieging the city of Rome, which was much too strongly fortified, but pinned his hopes to defeating the Roman army in open battle and thus providing the conquered Italians with an opportunity to rebel and assert their independence. Had this happened, the power of Rome would have been permanently broken. So far as Hannibal's own part of this plan was concerned, his hopes were realized. In one battle after another he defeated the Romans, finally wiping out almost the entire Roman army at Cannae in 216. But Rome's Italian allies failed to live up to his expectations. They remained stubbornly loyal to Rome. During the next few years the Roman army, under the canny leadership of Fabius Cunctator, adopted the exasperating policy of refusing open battle, so that Hannibal was forced to waste his strength in futile maneuvers. He could neither capture Rome nor crush the elusive Roman army, and though he could lay waste large sections of Italy the Roman state remained intact. In these years the tenacious courage of the Romans and their allies was tried to the utmost. The loss of men and of material wealth had been tremendous. Yet Rome was still capable of taking the offensive. In 204 an expeditionary force under Scipio Africanus was sent to Africa and Hannibal was forced to return to defend Carthage. The war ended with his decisive defeat at Zama. By the terms of peace, Spain became a Roman province, while Carthage was forced to pay a huge indemnity, surrender her fleet, and accept Roman dictation of her foreign policy. There could no longer be any question of Rome's complete domination of the western Mediterranean.

2. EXPANSION AND CIVIL WAR, TO THE END OF THE REPUBLIC

The devastating struggle with Carthage and the final victory, which made Rome the strongest power in the Mediter-
ranean world, wrought great **The Senate** changes both in the internal politics of the republic and in her relations with other states. The conflict between the democratic and aristocratic parties had been thrust into the background by the stress of war. The plebeians had already gained sufficient voice in government to satisfy their most pressing demands and, while the state was in danger, were willing to entrust the conduct of affairs to the more experienced senatorial class, which now included many of the richer plebeians who had gained admission to the Senate by way of public office. The Senate, indeed, had gained almost complete control of policy, especially in foreign affairs, for it was a continuous body and its members were more thoroughly conversant with the complicated problems of state than the yearly magistrates or the occasional popular assembly could be. As a result, the foreign policy of Rome in the years following the second Punic War naturally reflected the interests of the senatorial aristocracy. The senators were mostly great landowners, trained in public service. They would have little interest in gaining commercial advantages from Rome's growing power, but would be keenly sensitive to anything that affected the prestige or honor of the state. Moreover, as the most cultured group at Rome, many of them had been strongly influenced by the recent introduction of Greek literature and art and had acquired a great admiration for Greece.

It was this combination of pride in the power of Rome and interest in Greek culture that motivated the foreign pol-
icy of the Senate in the opening **Eastward expansion** years of the second century. Hitherto, Rome had preserved a strict neutrality in the quarrels of the Hellenistic kingdoms which had emerged from Alexander's empire, but she could no longer ig-

nore the responsibilities of power. When Philip V of Macedonia and Antiochus III of Syria threatened to upset the balance of power and destroy the independence of the Greek states, the Senate felt called upon to interfere. After defeating Philip in 197 and Antiochus in 191, Rome guaranteed the freedom of the Greek states and assumed a benevolent protectorate over them. There was as yet no imperialistic intention in Roman policy, but having entered Greek politics she was forced, step by step, into taking stronger measures. During the next few decades this tendency was strengthened by the rise of a narrowly Roman, anti-aristocratic party led by the censor, Cato, who disliked both the arrogance of the wealthy senators and their predilection for Greek culture. After a second Macedonian war (171–167 B.C.), Macedonia was cut into four republics and the Greek states were reduced to the position of dependent allies; and, when even this failed to keep the peace, Rome took over Macedonia as a tribute-paying province (146 B.C.) and tightened her hold on the Greek allies so that they became completely dependent on her. Meanwhile, the narrow patriotism of Cato led Rome into an unprovoked assault on Carthage (149–146 B.C.). The ancient Phoenician city was destroyed and the Carthaginian territory became the Roman province of Africa. A few years later, 133 B.C., Rome acquired still another province, that of Asia, by the testament of the dying king of Pergamum. Thus, through no foresighted policy but, as has been said of England, in an almost absent-minded fashion, the Roman Republic was acquiring an empire.

The era of imperialistic expansion had inevitable repercussions on the social and economic life of the Roman people. Wealth flowed to Rome from the plunder and tribute of the provinces, greatly increasing both public and private capital. Very little of this new capital, however, was invested in industry or commerce, so that there was less change in the character of Roman economy than might have been expected. Industrial production, it is true, was increasing in volume with the growing demands of a wealthy

Economic and social developments

class of consumers, but it was still limited largely to manufacture by small artisans of goods for daily use, with little or no surplus for export. The most significant change was the introduction of large quantities of slave labor as the result of conquest and plunder in the East. This naturally tended to drive free labor out of competition and had the undesirable effect of adding to the number of poverty stricken and discontented city plebeians. Commerce, too, was growing in volume, but, save for army and state contracts let out to citizens, the greater part of this was left to the more commercially experienced Eastern peoples who had now been drawn into Rome's expanding orbit. The Roman senators were barred by law and custom from engaging in trade, and the socially inferior but economically active class of *equites* or knights, who were the new capitalists of Rome, found safer and more substantial profits from investment in contracts for public works or army supplies or for the exploitation of state mines and forests than in competition with the skilled merchants of the East. The knights, too, enjoyed a privileged position in the provinces as bankers and, after 124 B.C., as contractors for the collection of the provincial taxes. By the end of the second century many of them were very wealthy and were becoming a power in politics.

The great majority of Roman capital was still invested, as of old, in land. The second Punic War had greatly accelerated the growth of large estates. Whole sections of Italy had been deserted following their devastation by Hannibal's armies, and after the war these lands were taken over by the government as public land to be leased to anyone who could invest the necessary capital to restore them to use. Despite an earlier democratic law limiting the amount of public land that could be leased to any one person, wealthy families soon acquired large tracts of this devastated territory. Later, the capital obtained by senators and knights from the exploitation of the provinces and from public contracts went to swell still further the size of the great estates and to revolutionize agricultural methods. Scientific cultivation by slave labor of specialized money crops, such

Agriculture
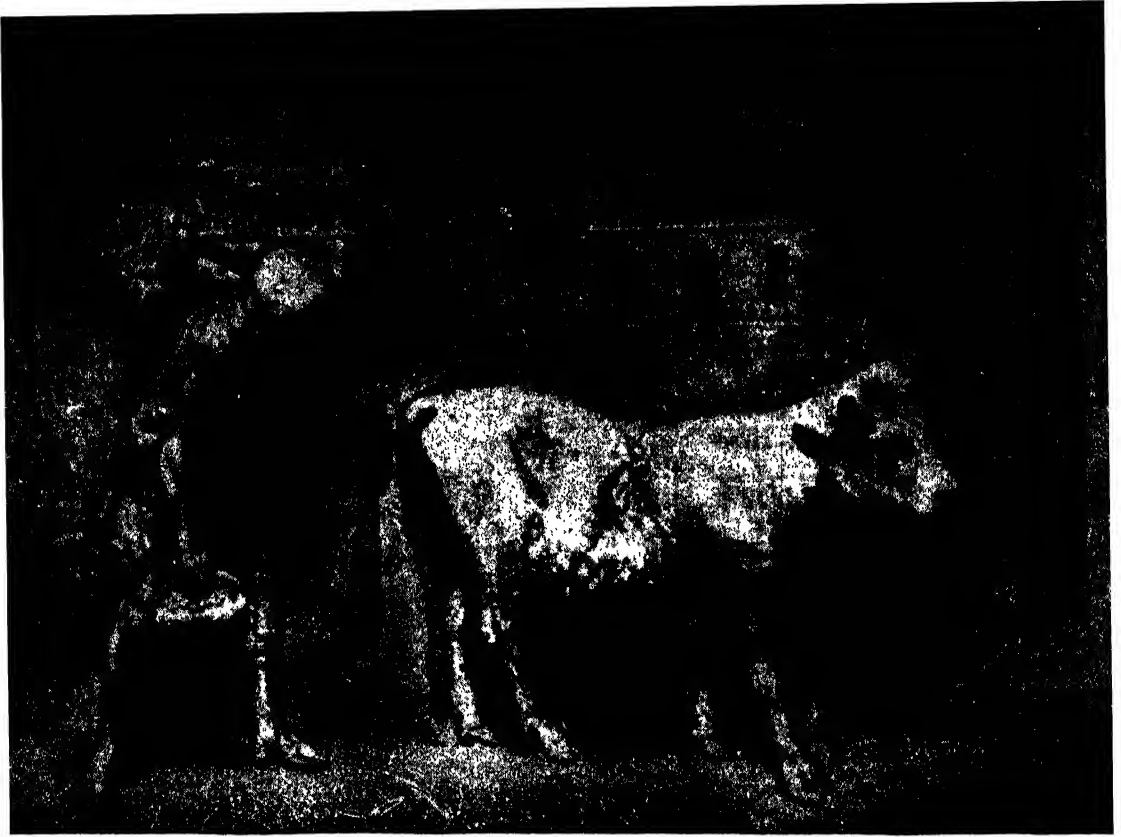
A ROMAN PEASANT ON HIS WAY TO MARKET

*The peasant shown in this marble relief seems bowed by toil. As slave
labor increased, the lot of the free peasant did in fact become harder.*
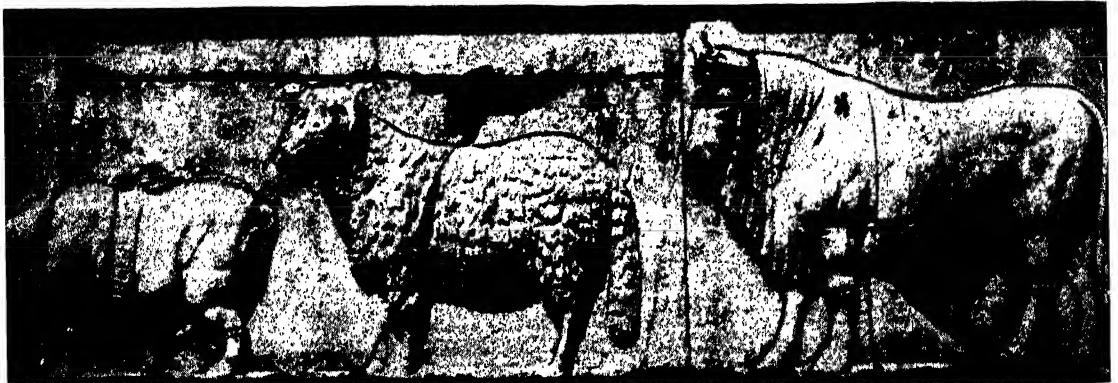
FARM ANIMALS

The farm animals shown in Roman reliefs seem remarkably like the modern breeds.

as wine, olive oil, and wool, replaced the grain growing and subsistence farming of the free peasants in most parts of Italy. The *latifundium* or large estate was operated as a capitalist enterprise with the sole aim of making a profit for its absentee owner. It required considerable initial capital to plant a vineyard or olive orchard or stock a sheep ranch, and there was a long delay before vines and orchards began to bear fruit. The initial cost of a large number of slaves would also mount up. But, once well established, the *latifundia* paid a steady profit. Small farmers could not compete with these new methods and, as more and more were forced to give up their land, the social discontent of the earlier period rose again to a dangerous pitch.

It was the hope of re-establishing the class of small land-owning citizens, who had been **Gracchan reforms** the military and political backbone of the republic during the first period of expansion, that inspired the reforms proposed by Tiberius Gracchus. As one of the tribunes for the year 133, he proposed to the *comitia tributa* a law for the redistribution of all public lands held in excess of the legal limit for individuals. The popular assembly had the undoubted right to enact such a law, but for a long time it had not exercised its full powers, since one or other of the tribunes could usually be found to veto any law that the Senate disapproved. Gracchus, however, persuaded the assembly to recall the tribune who vetoed his measure and to pass the law. The senators were scandalized by this revolutionary procedure, and when Gracchus stood for election again the following year riots broke out in which Gracchus himself was killed. The redistribution of public land was continued for some years after his death, then came to a standstill, until, ten years later, his unfinished task was taken up by his younger brother, Gaius Gracchus. The reform program of the younger Gracchus was much more far-reaching, and given time he might have accomplished a great deal of good. Like his brother, however, he was defeated and killed while his reforms were still in their initial stage. A further redistribution of land proved to be no more than a temporary palliative for the social ills of the plebeian class, while of his other reforms only the establishment of a dole of grain for the populace of the capital and the system of letting out contracts to knights for the collection of the provincial taxes were of lasting importance, and they of very doubtful benefit to the state.

The Gracchan dream of restoring democratic government by a free and vigorous citizenry was impossible of fulfillment at this late date. The **The Social War** Roman plebeians, living on the dole and including among their number a growing proportion of freed slaves of foreign extraction, were not the citizens who had made Rome great. Yet the Gracchi had shown them their political power and under any leader who could catch their fancy by bribes or promises they might yet be a disturbing factor in politics. A new spirit of violence filled the political conflicts of the rest of the century and spread eventually to the Italian allies. These, despite their loyalty in time of desperate danger, had never been admitted as a body to Roman citizenship. In 91 B.C., they rebelled and were pacified only after three years of destructive warfare, called the Social War, by the long-desired gift of citizenship. Under other circumstances this act might have furnished the republic with a broader and more stable political base, but the new citizens, like the old, were not allowed to vote unless present in person in Rome and were antagonized by being grouped in only eight of the thirty-five wards of the *comitia tributa*. They merely added to the number of discontented citizens who might follow a demagogue.

To this unstable political situation, the army added a new element of danger. During an otherwise unimportant war against the Numidian king, **Early civil wars** Jugurtha, the army had been reorganized by Marius, the democratic consul for 107 B.C. Instead of drafting the property-owning citizens as was the ancient custom, he recruited a volunteer army composed mostly of landless men, who served as professional soldiers for pay and promises of land. The new army represented the irresponsible and discontented elements in

Rome c. 500 B.C. — Rome, LATIUM

Roman Terr. 275 B.C. — ETRURIA, Rome

Roman Territory, 202 B.C. — Massilia, Rome, SARDINIA, SICILY, Syracuse, Carthage, Carthago Nova, Gades

Roman Territory, 133 B.C. — Mediolanum, ILLYRIA, SPAIN, Numantia, Olisipo, Rome, MACEDONIA, GREECE, ASIA, Pergamum, Ephesus, Corinth, NUMIDIA

Roman Territory, 44 B.C. — BRITAIN, Rhine R., GAUL, Bibracte, Lugdunum, Genua, Aquileia, Rome, CRETE, CYPRUS, Antioch, Leptis Magna, Cyrene, Alexandria
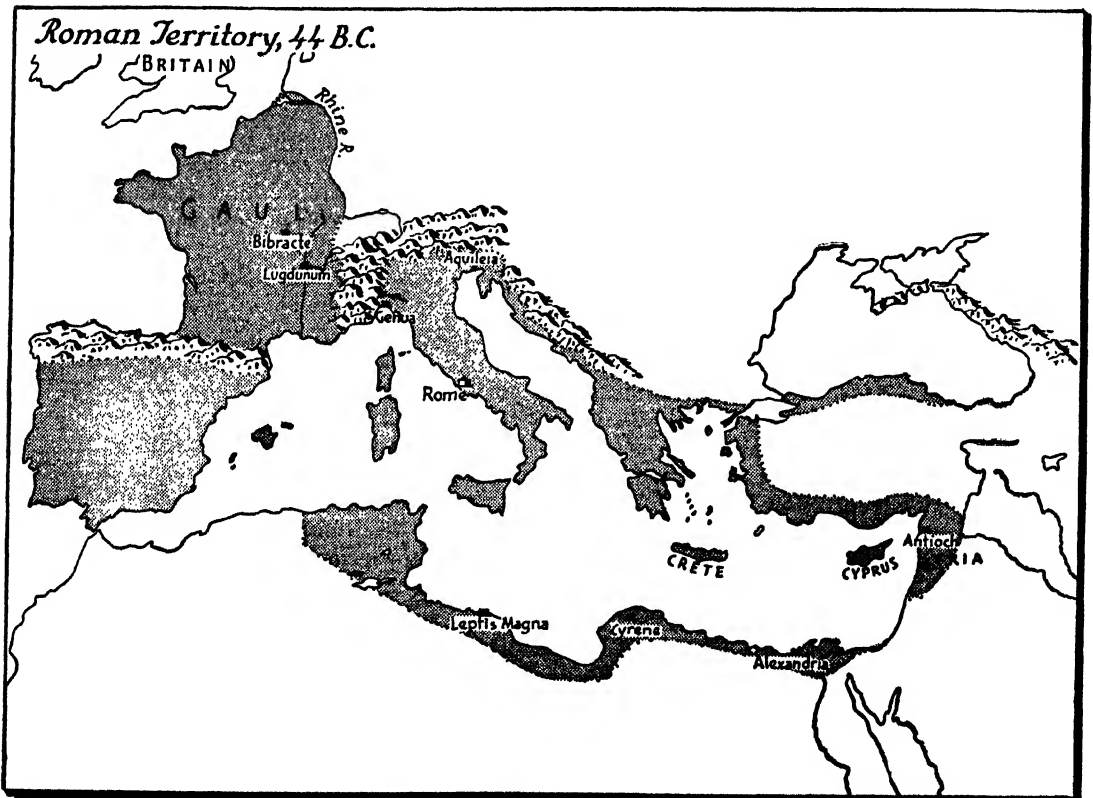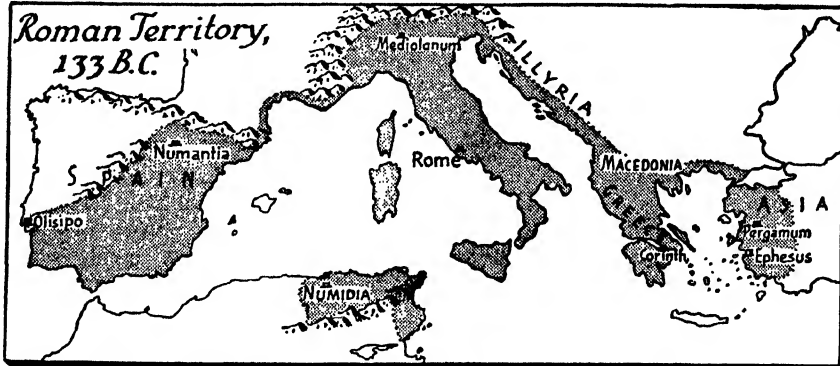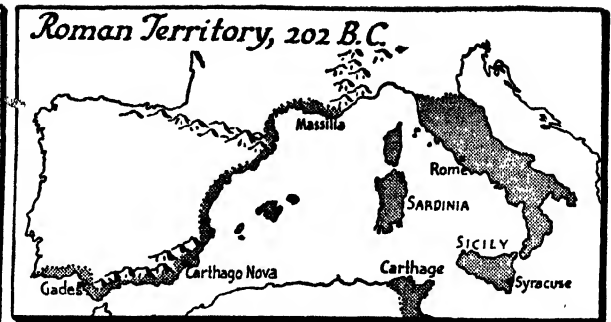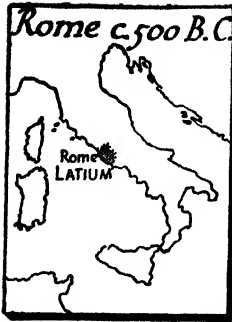
EXPANSION OF ROME

Roman society and might prove a dangerous weapon in the hands of an unscrupulous general. This was demonstrated in 88 B.C., when Sulla, the aristocratic general who had commanded in the Social War, marched on Rome and drove out Marius and the democratic leaders. It was an armed *coup d'état*. Sulla then left to carry on a war with the Eastern king, Mithridates of Pontus, while Marius returned with an army, seized the capital and massacred hundreds of his senatorial enemies. During the next few years the violence of party strife grew into civil war, accompanied by wholesale proscription and massacre of the defeated parties. Sulla returned in 84 B.C. and, after heavy fighting, once more occupied Rome and proscribed thousands of knights and senators of the democratic party. It has been reckoned that during the decade of the Social War and the early civil wars at least half a million Romans and Italians perished.

The evident disintegration of republican government in the first century B.C. was **Rome and the provinces** closely connected with economic and social developments in Italy, but in a more fundamental way it was the result of Rome's expansion and of the exploitation of the conquered provinces. Irresponsible senatorial governors and the knights who held contracts for the collection of provincial taxes co-operated to fleece the helpless provincials. Both the aristocratic senatorial party and the democratic party led by the knights were rapidly adopting a policy of barefaced imperialism, motivated by no more altruistic aim than to rob the conquered peoples of the East. In 63 B.C., Pompey, having at last crushed Mithridates, opened up new fields for plunder by adding the rich provinces of Bithynia, Cilicia and Syria to Rome's growing empire. Rome had now become a parasitical state, draining the provinces of their wealth with disastrous results for herself as well as for the unfortunate provincials. The great fortunes made by conquering generals, senatorial governors and tax-collecting knights went to increase the size and number of large estates in Italy. And this in turn swelled the number of small farmers who, having lost their land, were forced to join the degraded city populace that lived on the dole from the provincial revenues. The final result of imperialism seemed to be the ruin of the provinces and the demoralization of the Roman citizens of every class. The republican government of a small city-state was evidently proving inadequate for the administration of an empire. The only solution seemed to be the dictatorship of some man strong enough to suppress party strife by force and to restore honest and efficient government. And the necessary force could be provided by the great professional armies which had been created to carry out the policy of imperialism.

Half a century of civil wars between rival leaders elapsed, however, before a permanent dictatorship was established. For a time, Julius **Julius Caesar** Caesar seemed destined to accomplish this result. He was the most able politician of his generation and won a great reputation and the loyalty of his army in a long series of wars which ended with the conquest of Gaul and the invasion of Britain. Returning in 49 B.C., he entered on a civil war with his old ally, Pompey, who had ruled Rome in his absence. The defeat of Pompey left him master of the state. Caesar's power was that of an armed dictator, though he exercised his authority through the old republican offices and institutions. He instituted a number of admirable reforms and, given time, might have reconstructed the state on a permanent basis and have won the loyalty of the Roman people. But Caesar was ambitious. The belief that he intended to establish himself as a deified king of the Hellenistic type aroused intense opposition among the old senatorial aristocracy, and on the famous Ides of March, 44 B.C., he was assassinated.

The murder of Caesar did not restore free republican government. His place was taken at once by a triumvirate, composed of Marc Antony, **Antony and Octavian** Lepidus, and Caesar's grandnephew and heir, Octavian. A proscription of the enemies of the triumvirate and a civil war with the senatorial party led by Brutus and Cassius followed. The triumvirs were victorious, but the selfish bond that held

them together could not withstand the strain imposed by the necessity of sharing power. While Octavian earned the confidence of the Romans by just government in Italy, Antony followed his own designs in the East, where he married Cleopatra, the Queen of Egypt. Charging him with a treasonous plan to carve out for himself a kingdom among the Eastern provinces, Octavian marched eastward, defeated Antony in 31 B.C., and annexed Egypt. Octavian was now master of the state as his great-uncle had been before him. But his dictatorship was a permanent one. Though he asserted his intention of restoring the republic and though he maintained the Senate, the consuls, and the old machinery of government, he kept control of the government in his own hands during a long lifetime and passed on his power to the emperors who succeeded him. In 27 B.C. the Senate conferred upon him the name of Augustus, and it was under that name that he proceeded to reorganize the Roman Empire and establish the great period of Augustan peace.

### 3. ROMAN CULTURE IN THE REPUBLICAN AND AUGUSTAN AGE

Of the early literature, art, and philosophy of Rome, almost nothing remains, and historians entertain a probably well-founded suspicion that very little existed. The interests of the sturdy farmers, soldiers, and statesmen of the early republic did not run naturally in those directions, while their remarkable lack of commercial contact with the outside world kept them for a long time free from the influence of more advanced civilizations. The conquest of the Greek cities of southern Italy and Sicily brought the Romans into direct contact with Greek culture, but it was not until toward the end of the third century that they seem to have become fully aware of its charm. Having become aware of it, however, the educated class in Rome set about absorbing Greek literature and thought with all the enthusiasm of the recent convert. During the second century, as the eastward trend of foreign policy brought the republic into ever closer relations with the Greek world, Greek became a necessary part

Influence of Greek culture

of a Roman gentleman's education and, by the following century, had become a second mother tongue to the Roman literati. Greek slaves and freedmen swarmed in Rome, bringing the artistic techniques of the Hellenistic East or, in many instances, serving as tutors to the sons of wealthy families. The beginnings of Roman literature and philosophy date from the beginning of the Greek influence and, throughout, they retained the character imprinted upon them by Greek forms and Greek thought. But, as they developed, they became adaptations rather than imitations of the Greek models. Roman culture was built upon a Greek foundation, but the structure was Roman, and it had the lasting quality peculiar to Roman buildings. It still stands today as one of the great monuments of human civilization, preserving for us not only much Greek thought that would otherwise have been lost, but also much that was the original expression of Roman genius.

The drama dominated the early period of Latin literature. Plays adapted from the Hellenistic New Comedy or the older Greek tragedies brought

Latin drama

entertainment and intellectual stimulus to a public not yet fully accustomed to reading in any extensive fashion. The pioneer in this field was a Greek freedman from Tarentum, Livius Andronicus (c. 284–204 B.C.), but before long native Italian playwrights appeared. The first of whose quality we can judge from plays that have survived intact was Plautus (c. 254–184 B.C.), who wrote boisterous, rollicking comedies based on Greek plots. These seem intended for popular consumption and must have received a hearty response from the groundlings. In the next generation, the more subtle shadings of Greek comedy were presented in an infinitely more refined, literary Latin by Terence (c. 195–159 B.C.), a member of the aristocratic circle of the younger Scipio, though born a slave in Africa. At the same time Ennius (239–169 B.C.) reproduced in Latin the best tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides, with variations that brought them into harmony with the characteristic Roman conceptions of morality. Drama continued to be the most prolific form of Latin literature through

REALISTIC HEAD, NATIONAL MUSEUM, ATHENS
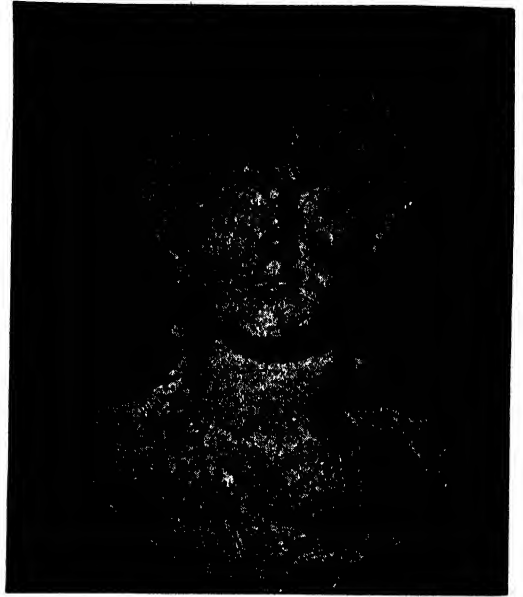
AGRIPPINA, THE ELDER, CAPITOLINE, ROME
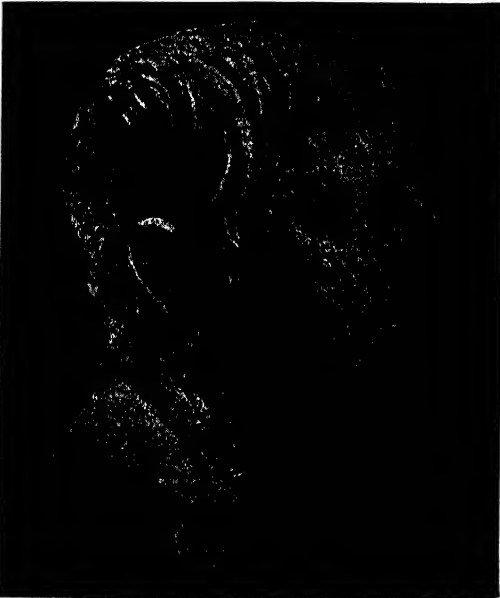
ROMAN TERRA COTTA: PORTRAIT BUST
OF A ROMAN
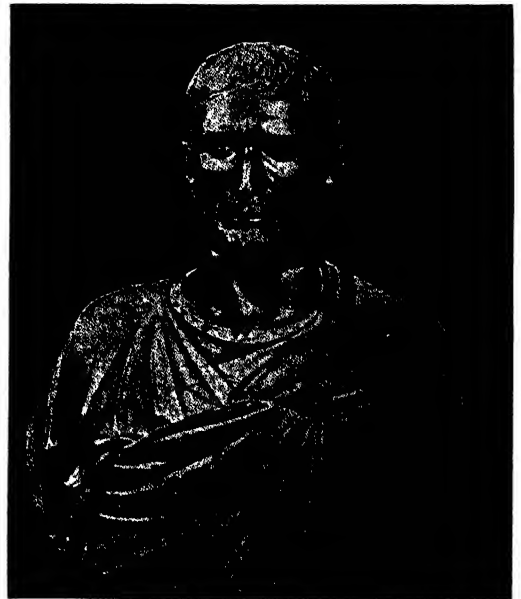
BUST OF AN OLDER MAN,
FIRST CENTURY B.C., ROME

SCULPTURE OF THE LATE REPUBLIC SHOWING
HELLENISTIC INFLUENCE

*Roman portrait sculpture of the late republican period was strongly influenced
by the individualistic realism which was characteristic of Hellenistic art.*

most of the second century. As the educated Romans developed more consistent reading habits, however, it declined, its place being taken by other types of poetry and prose.

The early imitations of Greek poetry were rendered somewhat awkward by the intractability of the Latin **Poetry** tongue. Long practice under Greek guidance was needed before it acquired the flexibility that would enable the Roman poets to rival their Greek models. By the middle of the first century it had reached that stage, and the Roman writers had by then so thoroughly absorbed the spirit and forms of Greek literature that they were able to work freely, without the cramping effect of too close imitation. The lyric poetry of Catullus (87–54 B.C.) has all the spontaneity and ease of a native literature

despite his use of Greek forms. Latin poetry continued to flourish through the civil wars of the dying republic, but the restoration of peace by Augustus ushered in an age of unprecedented achievement, the golden age of Latin literature. In that generation Virgil (70–19 B.C.) wrote the national epic of the Roman people, the *Aeneid*, and expressed the characteristic Roman love of the land in his *Eclogues* and *Georgics*. Horace (65–8 B.C.), too, was thoroughly Roman in spirit, adapting the austere rhythms of Latin speech to a wide variety of lyric forms with the easy grace of a master. One need only mention in addition Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid to show why the age of Augustus occupies such a prominent place in the history of the world's literature.

Latin prose, like Latin poetry, was
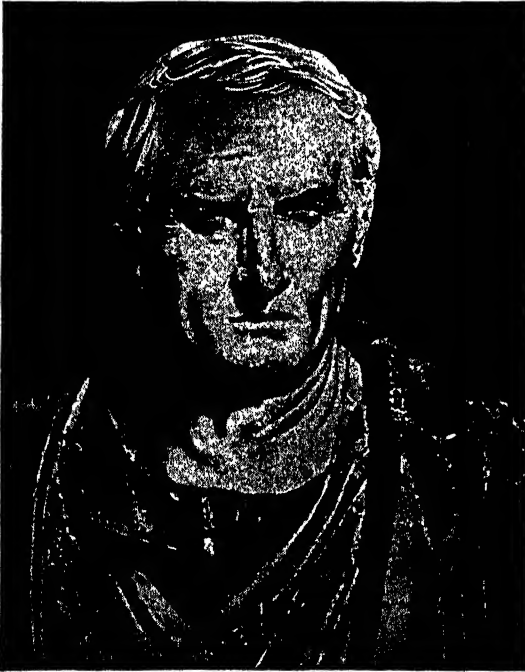
MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO
106–43 B.C.

The most famous orator and man of letters of the Roman Republic is portrayed here clad in the senatorial toga and with an expression of frowning concentration, as though he were weighing an opponent's argument and framing a crushing rebuttal.
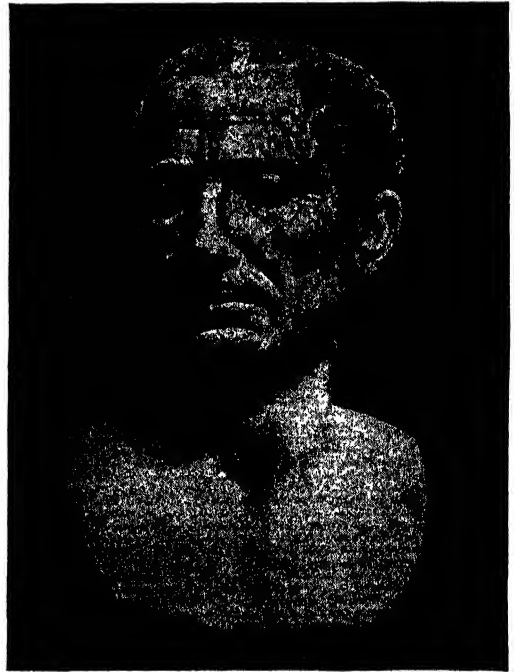
JULIUS CAESAR
C. 102–44 B.C.

This bust of Julius Caesar gives a striking impression of the firm will and well-balanced intelligence of Rome's great soldier-statesman. It is also an excellent example of the realistic sculpture borrowed by the Romans from the Hellenistic world.

Prose

strongly influenced by Greek models, but to an even greater degree it retained an essentially Roman character. The best of Latin prose was produced by men who played a leading rôle in the political life of the republic. From Cato the Censor to Cicero and Caesar, nearly every outstanding statesman wrote excellent memoirs, treatises, and orations. The demands of public life made oratory one of the principal studies of Roman youth and it became one of the most characteristic forms of Latin prose. In this field Cicero (106–43 B.C.) excelled, though he utilized his unrivaled command of prose style to equal effect in numerous philosophical treatises and in letters that have ever since remained a model for familiar correspondence. The keen interest of educated Romans in politics and the state also found expression in the writing of Roman history, of which the great work of Livy (59 B.C.–17 A.D.) remains the most perfect example.

Religion and philosophy

The religion of Rome was native to the country, but like other aspects of Roman culture it was transformed by Greek influence, while Roman philosophy was in origin an importation from Greece. The early Roman religion consisted of a formalized worship of *numina* or spirits who pervaded the household, the fields, and the woods. Later, as the state developed, the conception of household gods was adapted to the needs of the state and a ritualistic state religion evolved as a significant factor in practical politics. It was only after the Greek cultural invasion, however, that the impersonal *numina* or gods acquired an anthropomorphic character and a mythology. By the simple expedient of identifying the native gods with their Olympian prototypes, the Romans took over the literary heritage of Greek mythology. As a result of this process, Latin literature was greatly enriched, but the Roman religion lost its indigenous character and much of its hold on the faith of the educated classes. By the age of Augustus it had degenerated into a literary convention, a "poets' religion," while the religious emotions of the mass of the people were being fed by Hellenistic cults imported from the East. Robbed of an intellectually respectable religion, the educated Romans turned to Greek philosophy for comfort and guidance. The metaphysical speculation of the Greek philosophers had no very great influence, for it was alien to Roman habits of thought, but in the more practical side of the Stoic and Epicurean systems there was an ethical teaching that could be adapted to fit Roman moral standards. These philosophies exerted the strongest influence on Roman thought. The Stoic conception of the virtuous sage, in particular, provided "a philosophical sanction for the old Roman virtues of *gravitas* and *pietas*" and rationalized the traditional morality of the ruling class.

SECTION B

The Roman Empire and Its Decline

(c. 1 A.D. — c. 500 A.D.)

A generation before the birth of Christ, there occurred an event which gives a double significance to our conception of that period as the beginning of a new chronological era. The founding of the Roman Empire by Augustus was the decisive step in the creation of a world-state in which were gathered together under one ruler and under the protection of the *Pax Romana* the civilized peoples of all those lands that border on the Mediterranean. During the first five centuries of our era, the Roman Empire supplied the framework of civilization. Within that framework the various ancient cultures interacted upon one another and became more cosmopolitan, while to the evolution of western civilization were added two new ingredients of lasting importance — the Christian religion, and the conception of a universal, international world-state with laws that were the common possession of all civilized peoples. The Mediterranean races enjoyed two centuries of unprecedented prosperity within the protecting frontiers of the empire, but these were followed by three long centuries of economic and cultural decline. When the empire finally collapsed in the West, ancient civilization in that area almost disappeared with it. The whole western half of the empire was overrun by vigorous Germanic tribes from the northern forests beyond the Rhine and the Danube. These barbarian conquerors trampled Roman civilization underfoot, but they could not entirely destroy it. Despite internal decay and external violence, a remnant remained. As had happened so often before in the history of civilization, the conquerors were themselves conquered by a superior culture which they would in time absorb to the limit of their capacity and adapt to their own character and needs. The history of the following centuries is the history of the reconstruction of western civilization from Roman and Germanic materials, shaped by the dominating influence of Christianity.

THE FORUM OF TRAJAN

The famous Forum was constructed by the order of Trajan early in the second century. The column, topped by a statue of the Emperor, is covered with reliefs showing his triumphs.
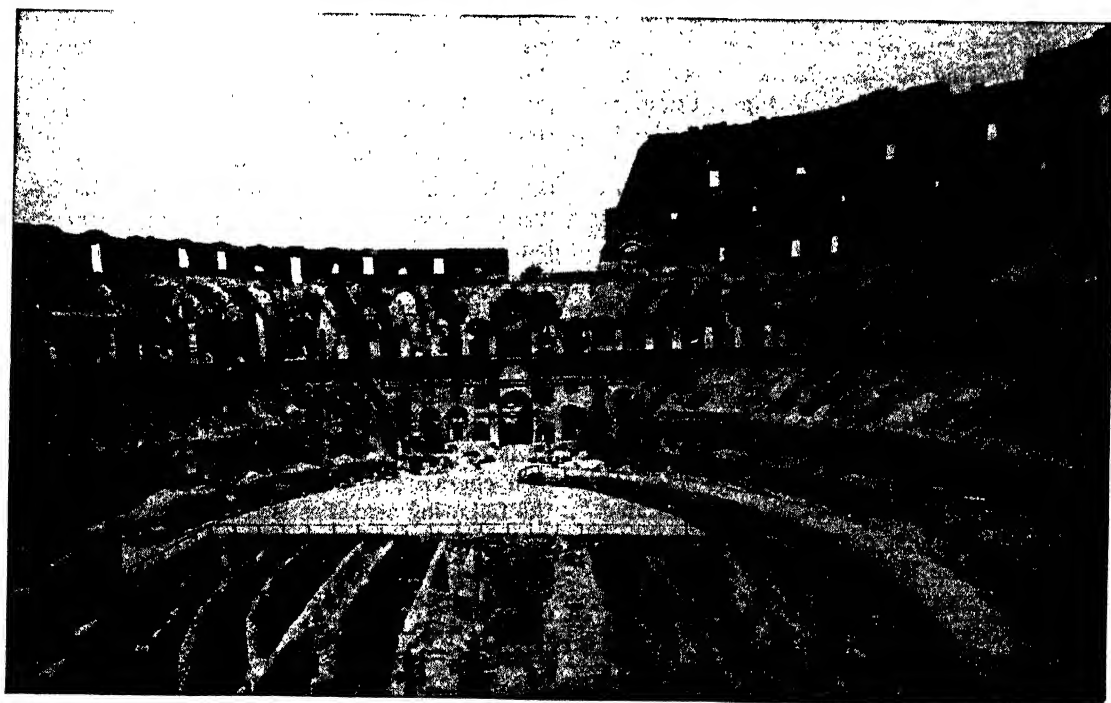
THE COLOSSEUM, ROME

The Colosseum, built toward the end of the first century, furnished a magnificent setting for public games and gladiatorial exhibitions.

6

The Roman World in the First Two Centuries

FOR TWO GLORIOUS CENTURIES, from 31 B.C. to A.D. 180, the civilized world enjoyed peace and prosperity such as it had never known, nor was to know again, within the sheltering frontiers of the Roman Empire. It was not a large world, but it comprised all the lands that had as yet attained any degree of civilization, save for those distant countries in the Far East which were little more than names to the Roman citizen, known to him only through the luxuries imported from India by Alexandrian merchants. Various types of culture were included within this great empire, oriental, Greek, and Latin, their roots striking deep into the past. Now, with no political barriers to keep them apart, and with easy intercourse guaranteed by the protection of the Roman government, they met and, though each retained in part its own identity, they gradually fused to form a new composite, which, for lack of a better name, we may call Roman civilization. Neither the Roman peace nor Roman civilization was destined to last. When the former was broken, the latter declined. But what was left of Roman culture was to form part of the legacy of the past to the people of medieval Europe. Hence, some knowledge of the Roman world and the civilization it embodied is essential to an understanding of the periods that followed.

1. THE ROMAN WORLD

The Roman world, though composed of the margins of three continents, Europe, Africa, and Asia, was a geographical unit.[1] Save for the island outpost of Britain, the provinces of the empire were grouped about the Mediterranean Sea, and the boundaries of the empire corresponded roughly to the limits of the Mediterranean Basin. This great sea, the cradle of ancient civilization, gave to the lands about its shores a uniform, moderate climate. It served, too, as the highway of the Roman world, and from its ports the magnificent Roman roads ran straight to the farthest frontiers, knitting the whole empire together. Placed in the midst of the lands, as its name indicates, the Mediterranean was the focal center of the ancient world. Facing it, the peoples of southern Europe turned their backs upon the German forests that stretched north from the Rhine and the Danube; the Egyptians, Berbers, and Carthaginians of North Africa, too, turned naturally toward it, for behind them lay the great arid expanses of the Sahara; and on the eastern shores of the sea, the thronging population of western Asia were cut off by high mountain barriers from the farther East.

The Mediterranean Basin

[1] See map, page 95.

Despite its geographical unity, however, there was in the Roman world a wide diversity of cultural tradition. In the centuries of the Roman peace, these various civilizations tended to blend, each contributing to the composite whole something uniquely its own; yet they were too firmly rooted in the past entirely to lose their own peculiar characteristics. Throughout the period of the empire, the Roman world remained divided culturally into two great sections, East and West. The eastern half derived its culture from Greek and oriental sources; the western half was heir to a more recent Latin civilization.

Cultural divisions

The East boasted the most ancient civilizations of the Roman world. In Egypt, civilization had flourished for thousands of years along the fertile banks of the Nile. There, one empire after another had arisen, developed its own characteristic culture, and had then declined to make way for a new empire or a new dynasty. Farther to the east, in the rich Mesopotamian valley between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, the great Hammurabi had ruled a highly civilized empire from Babylon two thousand years before Christ. Later, the Assyrians of Nineveh (750–606 B.C.), the Chaldeans of Babylon (606–539 B.C.), and the Persians (539–330 B.C.) had ruled great empires in that part of Asia later to be conquered as Roman provinces. And in Syria, the Hebrew people, through periods of triumph and despair, evolved a code of morals and a lofty monotheistic religion that were to form a priceless portion of the legacy of the East to the Roman world. It was in the realm of religion, indeed, that the oriental peoples made their most significant contribution, for the Christianity which sprang from ancient Judaism was by no means the only religion to spread westward, gaining thousands of converts in other sections of the empire. During the first two centuries, in fact, it seemed much less important than any one of half a dozen oriental cults, though it was the religion that eventually won its way to universal triumph.

Oriental civilizations

But these various cultural traditions, which we group together loosely as oriental,

formed only a part of the characteristic civilization of the eastern half of the Roman world. Equally important, if not more so, was the splendid heritage of ancient Greece. During the fourth and fifth centuries before Christ, while Rome was still a primitive little Italian republic, Athens and the other vigorous Greek city-states had developed art, literature, philosophy, and science to a degree hitherto unequaled in the history of mankind. The epics of Homer, the dramas of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the sculpture of Phidias and Praxiteles, the philosophy of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle formed a rich treasury from which the later East and West alike drew freely for the inspiration of their own intellectual achievements. The legacy of the Roman to the modern world was in no small part the legacy of Greece.

Greek culture

Long before the foundation of the Roman Empire, however, both the ancient oriental civilizations and the more recent culture of the Greek city-states had lost their original form. What the Romans found when they incorporated the eastern provinces into their growing state was a composite, cosmopolitan culture, Greek in language and with Greek traditions predominating, but with a very different spirit from that of the great days of Greece. The Macedonian conquest had destroyed the political independence of the Greek city-states, and with the loss of freedom they had lost also much of their cultural integrity and creative vigor. Then, through the medium of Alexander's conquests and the kingdoms that grew out of them, a veneer of Greek culture had been spread over the entire eastern half of the Mediterranean world. Greek language, literature, and thought became the common heritage of all the eastern peoples. But in transmitting that heritage, they added to it ideas and ways of thinking that were not characteristically Greek and that greatly altered its character. This new culture was not only more cosmopolitan but also more individualistic, and it lacked the classic discipline and restraint of the true Greek culture. Historians have agreed to call this later civilization, which formed the

Hellenistic culture

cultural basis of one half of the Roman Empire, Hellenistic.

The western half of the empire took its language and its cultural tone from Roman Italy. The Celtic peoples of Gaul, Spain, and Britain were as far behind the Romans in the development of their civilization as the Romans had been behind the Greeks. As the expansion of the conquering republic brought them under the political domination of Rome, they were also brought under the overpowering influence of Latin literature and Roman civilization. The spread of these was greatly facilitated, too, by colonization from Italy and by the commercial intercourse and the economic prosperity that followed the foundation of the empire. Even the Phoenician peoples of North Africa, who had an ancient civilization of their own, adopted the Latin tongue. By the second century of the Christian era, the whole western half of the empire had become thoroughly Latinized. The diffusion of Latin culture, however, was accompanied by a decline in the quality of Latin literature. Though a high standard of education was maintained for many generations, none of the later Latin writers can be compared with the masters of the Augustan age.

The civilization of the Roman Empire was thus something different from the culture of the Roman Republic. The latter had been the product of the Roman people and their Italian allies, stimulated and guided by the literature and thought of ancient Greece and its Hellenistic descendants. The former was a composite product of all the peoples of the Mediterranean world after they had been brought into a single political and economic unit by the organization of the empire. The eastern half remained largely Greek in language and tradition, while the western half was predominantly Latin, but constant intercourse between the two tended to diminish the distinctions between them and to bring about the growth of a still more cosmopolitan civilization. This was particularly true in the spheres of art and architecture, where no language barrier stood in the way of dissemination and fusion. Hellenistic

Latin culture

Civilization of the Roman Empire

sculpture and painting were brought to Rome and the West in the last years of the republic and continued on through the empire in a gradually changing but unbroken tradition. The most typical artistic product of the empire, however, was its architecture. Though influenced by earlier Greek and Hellenistic forms, it developed along lines dictated by the needs of the imperial government and the character of the imperial aristocracy. During the period of imperial prosperity, great public buildings and monuments and almost equally elaborate private dwellings were constructed in Rome and in all the chief provincial cities with an imposing solidity and durability that reflect the very essence of the Roman Empire.

2. ORGANIZATION OF THE EMPIRE

The greater part of the lands included in the Roman Empire had been conquered by the Roman Republic. But, though the republican government succeeded in conquering the Mediterranean world, it proved unable to rule it. The attempt to bring a great empire within the governmental scope of a city-state republic resulted in civil war and anarchy, in the economically ruinous exploitation of the provinces and the corruption of the Roman people. The new wine could not safely be contained in the old bottles. When, therefore, Augustus seized control of the empire in 31 B.C. with an authority backed by a victorious army, the majority of the people, Roman and provincial alike, were prepared to accept him as the savior of the state. And Augustus made it as easy as possible for the Romans to accept his authority. He avoided all unnecessary offense to their republican sentiments. Claiming for himself only the military title of *Imperator* and the rather meaningless civil title of *Princeps*, or first citizen, he exercised his authority through the old offices and institutions of the republic. But, though the Senate still met and passed resolutions, and the popular assembly still elected officers, there is no doubt that the will of Augustus controlled every decision. He was commander of the army and navy; he exercised proconsular authority in the provinces; he had absolute control of

The principate

Roman Empire, c. 14 A.D.

Roman Empire at farthest expansion
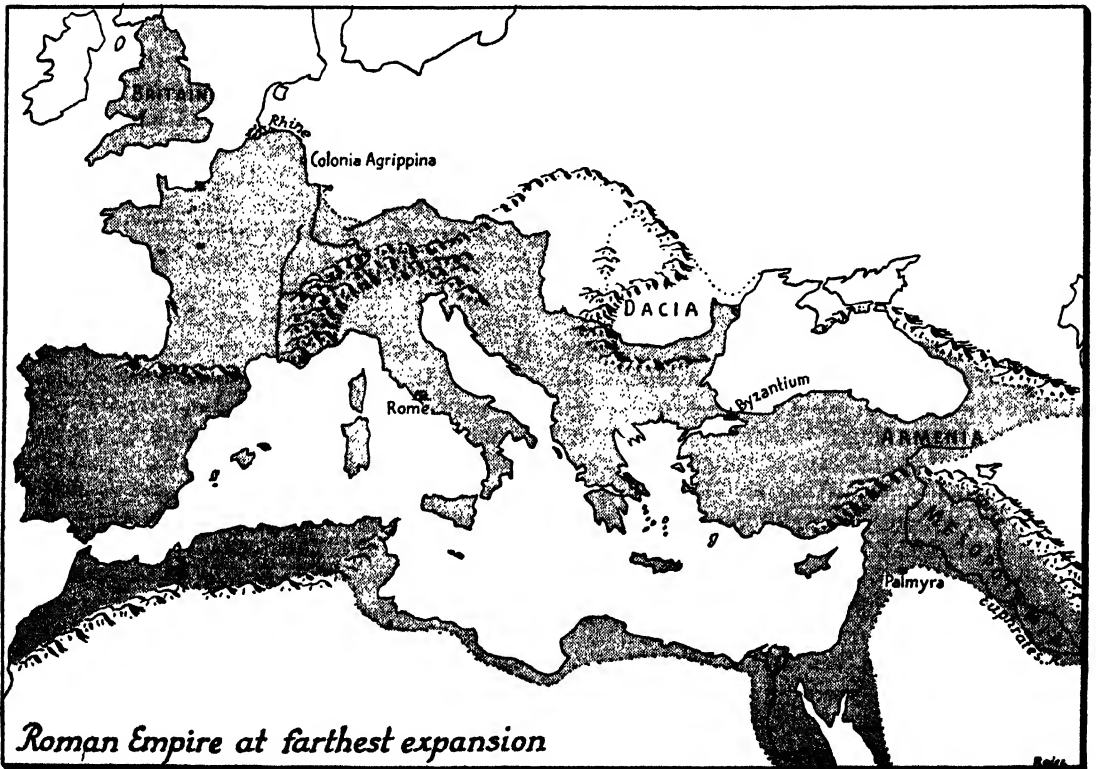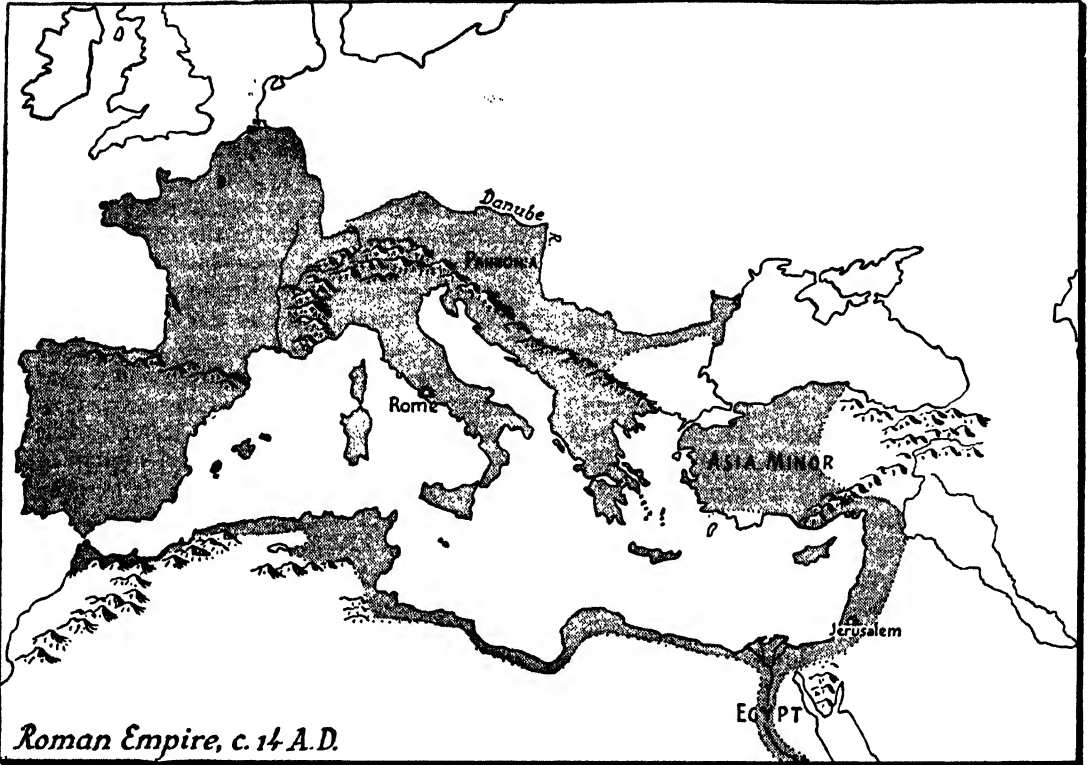
finance; in short, by virtue of a long list of special powers formally or tacitly delegated to him, he was the actual ruler of the state.

During a long lifetime, Augustus made very intelligent use of his practical control of government to reorganize the administration of the empire and to create an efficient governmental system. His reign marked the essential steps from republic to empire. What remained for his successors was to transform his practical absolutism into an openly constitutional absolutism and to complete the evolution of Rome from a city-state to a world-state with universal citizenship and political unity. It was a very gradual evolution and was scarcely completed before the empire began to decline.

Growth of absolutism

The first step in strengthening the emperor's position was to crush the old senatorial families and to nullify the authority of the senate. The chief danger from these representatives of the old republic lay in the fact that there was no established rule of imperial succession. On the death of an emperor the senate became the governing body of the state and had, theoretically, the right to choose his successor. Any member of the old senatorial aristocracy might aspire to the imperial purple. This danger bred suspicion in the minds of the early emperors and led to a cruel and oppressive tyranny. During the period to the death of Nero (A.D. 14–68) when the descendants of Augustus still ruled, most of the old senatorial families were destroyed and the senate was recruited from new men, chosen by the emperors from their own administrative officials and often from the provinces. Under the wiser and more secure rule of the Flavian and Antonine families, from the succession of Vespasian (A.D. 69) to the death of Marcus Aurelius (180), the senate came to represent the whole empire rather than the exclusive Roman aristocracy, and was completely under the emperor's control. Its powers were limited to advising the emperor. The question of succession was settled by the practice of adoption. The emperor himself chose the ablest man at his disposal as his adopted son and heir to the throne.

The senate

The second step in establishing the imperial authority over a united empire was taken by the development of an efficient, centralized administrative system under the emperor's immediate control. The irresponsible provincial governors of the republican régime were replaced by officers appointed by the emperor and directly responsible to him. Even the worst emperors of the first two centuries gave good government to the provinces. Two centuries of unbroken peace and security amply justified the imperial system in the minds of the provincials and secured their unquestioning loyalty.

Imperial administration

The powers of these imperial officials stopped short of local government. In this sphere, which most closely affected the lives of the people, the emperors wisely allowed almost complete freedom. "The greatest glory of the imperial administration for nearly two centuries was the skillful and politic tolerance with which it reconciled a central despotism with a remarkable range of local liberty." For administrative purposes, Italy and the provinces were divided into *civitates* or municipalities. In the eastern part of the empire, these represented survivals of the ancient city-states, with their traditions of self-government and civic patriotism. In the newer barbarian West, tribes or cantons were organized into municipalities with a city as the capital. The citizens (not as a rule including the poorest classes) elected their own officers and their own *curia* or council, chosen from a local aristocracy of wealth corresponding to the senatorial class at Rome. In each municipality the old republican government of Rome was reflected in miniature, with variations depending on the race and traditions of the individual city.

Municipal government

This free local citizenship did much to keep the provincials contented. But the empire could never become a truly united world-state so long as the invidious distinction between Roman citizens and all others remained in force. The emperors realized the advantages to be gained from universal citizenship. It would level all

Extension of Roman citizenship

AUGUSTUS

This statue, now in the Vatican, shows Augustus in the military garb of the emperor, and suggests a vigorous and commanding personality.

CLAUDIUS

Posing as Jupiter with the oak leaf crown, Claudius seems well on his way to personal deification.
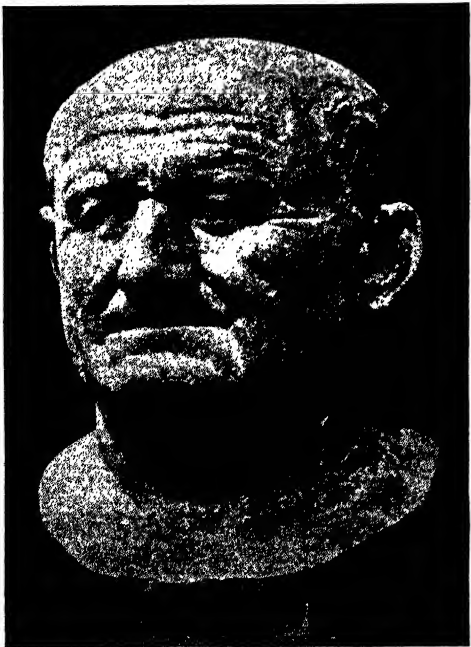
VESPASIAN

Like Augustus, Vespasian was a military emperor, of commanding personality if not such attractive appearance.

DOMITIAN

The younger son of Vespasian, Domitian was the first emperor to be deified at Rome during his lifetime.

ROMAN EMPERORS OF THE FIRST CENTURY A.D.
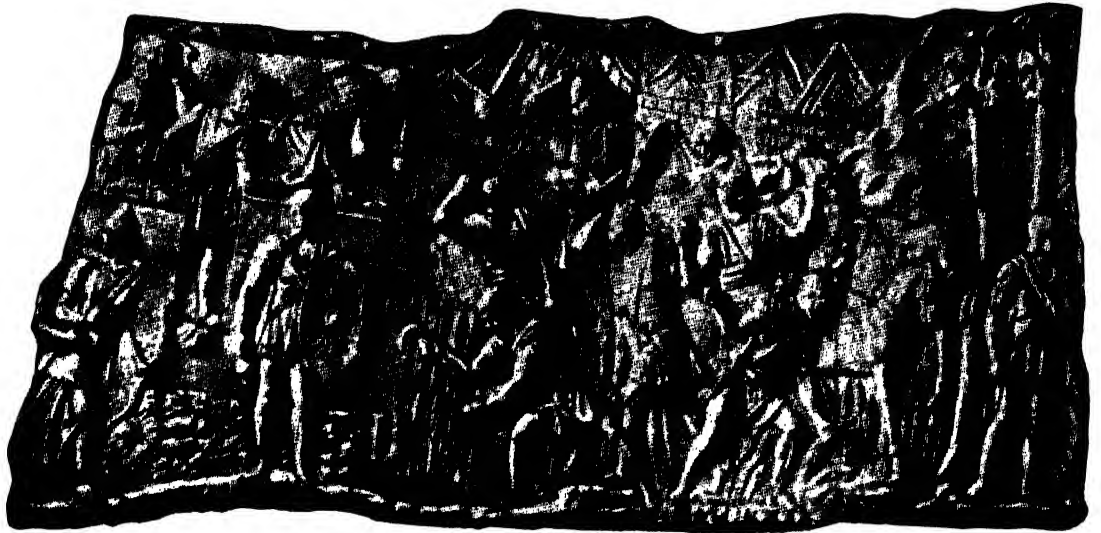
FORAGING FOR FOOD

The Roman army expected to live off the land, especially when in enemy country.

ATTACKING THE WALLS OF A TOWN

The defenders are evidently northern barbarians.

THE IMPERIAL ROMAN ARMY IN ACTION

(Scenes in relief from the Column of Trajan)

classes under their authority, broaden the foundations of their power, add to the loyalty of the provincials, and weld all parts of the state closer together. Hence, despite the jealousy of the Italians, they gradually extended citizenship to the most influential classes in the provinces, until by the *Constitutio Antoniana* of 212 all freeborn citizens of the municipalities throughout the empire were made Roman citizens.

The army played an important part in the dissemination of Roman citizenship. The legions, which formed the bulk of the standing army, were recruited by voluntary enlistment from the body of Roman citizens. When these proved insufficient, provincials were admitted and by virtue of their military service received citizenship. The number thus honored was greatly increased by the military reforms of Vespasian, who barred Italians from service in the legions. The aristocratic youth of Italy might still serve in the praetorian cohorts, the picked imperial bodyguard, and after training there might be transferred as officers to the legions or auxiliary troops. But the rank and file of the legionaries were now mostly citizens of the provincial municipalities, who were granted Roman citizenship. The army, some 400,000 strong, was usually stationed at strategic points along the frontiers, where there was most to fear from invasion. The term of service was from twenty to twenty-five years, after which the retired soldier was often granted land near his old camp. Many of the legions' camps became permanent centers of Roman influence and formed the nucleus of new provincial towns. Some of these towns, formed around the *castra* or camp of the legions, still exist, as is shown by the English names, Chester, Lancaster, Manchester, etc.

The army

We have seen how the imperial administration and the spread of Roman citizenship tended to solidify the empire, while the free municipal government gave an outlet to local initiative. More than this was needed, however, to complete the evolution of the empire into a strongly coherent world-state. Imperial patriotism had to replace, or be superimposed upon, local civic patriotism. This

Emperor worship

result was accomplished in part through the institution of emperor worship. In the ancient world every city-state had had its own peculiar religion, closely bound up with the state. Men were accustomed to worship gods or heroes who were the traditional founders or protectors of the state. In Rome itself religion and patriotism were inseparable. In the earlier eastern empires, too, the emperor was himself worshiped as a god, the personification of the state. This tradition was inherited by the Hellenized monarchies that followed Alexander's empire, and in turn by the Roman conquerors. It was the grateful eastern provincials who first hailed Augustus as a god and savior. He was quick to realize the value of a cult that made imperial patriotism a religion, and one in which the emperor was himself the central figure, though he barred it from Italy lest it offend the old republican sentiment of the Romans. Even in Rome, however, Augustus was deified after his death, and during his lifetime was hailed as *divus* if not as *deus*, a divine hero if not a living god. Many characteristics of the old Roman religion prepared the way for the acceptance of emperor worship in the West, and, as the eastern influence grew with the further unification of the state, it became firmly established. Domitian (81–96) was the first emperor to claim the title *Dominus et Deus* during his own lifetime in Rome. Under his successors, emperor worship became a recognized state religion, in which all citizens took part, whatever their other religious traditions might be. There was little protest, since few of the ancient religious cults were exclusive or debarred their followers from the worship of other gods.

Even more important than emperor worship for the unification of the state was the development of Roman law into a universal civil code. Indeed, its legal system was perhaps Rome's greatest contribution to civilization. It was more just and humane than any previous code, and it has formed the foundation for the civil law of most modern European countries. Republican Rome had from the first its primitive civil code, based on the Twelve Tables and applying exclusively to Roman citizens.

Roman law

Each of the conquered territories had also its own legal system, and these the Romans permitted to continue with local jurisdiction. But as the Roman Empire assumed world proportions, as commerce and interrelations between the provinces increased, some body of law with jurisdiction over subjects as well as citizens in all parts of the empire was urgently needed.

As early as the second century before Christ, such a body of law was evolved from the praetors' edicts and from the decisions of jurists in individual cases tried in the Roman courts. This collection of praetors' law and of the precedents established by judges' decisions was strongly influenced by the best local laws and the current practices of merchants throughout the empire. In time it came to form a common code applicable to all freemen everywhere. Based on jurisprudence rather than on legislation, the Roman code was constantly reinterpreted to keep it in harmony with the changing needs of the age. The great value of this reinterpretation by edict and precedent lay in the general recognition by Roman jurists of the fundamental principles, based on Stoic conceptions of justice and human brotherhood, that equity is more important than strict legality and that all free men are equal before the law. About the beginning of the second century of the Christian era, the praetors' edicts were restricted and formalized, but their place was taken by the emperors' rescripts and decrees, so that the construction and reinterpretation of the imperial code was continued unbroken.

3. SOCIETY IN THE FIRST TWO CENTURIES

By the second century, the Roman Empire had become a vast commonwealth of self-governing cities, whose local **Society predominantly urban** freedom was protected rather than disturbed by the imperial administration. Stimulated by the security and prosperity that accompanied the "Roman peace" and by the policy of the emperors, old cities took on a new life and new ones sprang up to rival them in all parts of the empire. For where there were no cities, the emperors created them. One hundred and twenty new towns were founded in barbaric Dacia. In Spain only twenty-seven of the two hundred and ninety-three communities were left without a civic center. Gaul and North Africa were thickly strewn with thriving towns, and in the more densely populated East there were scores of cities whose names indicate their origin by imperial initiative. The society of the whole empire, with all its great variety of race and culture, had become predominantly urban.

In the prosperous years of the first two centuries, the urban population of the empire possessed great wealth, and they spent it freely in adding to **Luxury of city life** the beauty and dignity of their native cities. Rome was proverbial for the splendor of its temples, theaters, circuses, forums, public baths, and palaces, while in the provincial cities the same magnificent buildings were to be found in proportionately lesser degree. Even the smaller towns of Gaul and Britain were well planned, well kept, and sanitary. The streets were wide, straight, fully paved, and clean. Great aqueducts brought water to the cities in plentiful supply. There were statues and monuments everywhere. Private houses, too, were built with every facility needed to make life pleasant and agreeable. They had shaded central courts in which fountains played to cool the midday heat. They had running water and, in some cases, central heating. The ruins of Pompeii, preserved intact through the centuries by their covering of lava, show a degree of comfort and convenience in public and private life utterly unknown to medieval Europe. And Pompeii was little more than a third-rate town. Professor Rostovtzeff concludes his description of the cities of the empire with the following statement, rather startling to anyone who has not examined the remains of Roman civilization: "One can say without exaggeration that never in the history of mankind (except during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Europe and America) has a larger number of people enjoyed so much comfort; and that never, not even in the nineteenth century, did men live in such a surrounding of beautiful buildings and monuments as in the first two centuries of the Roman Empire."
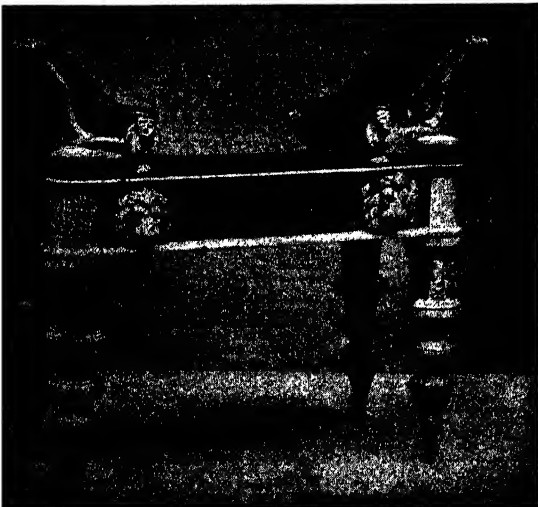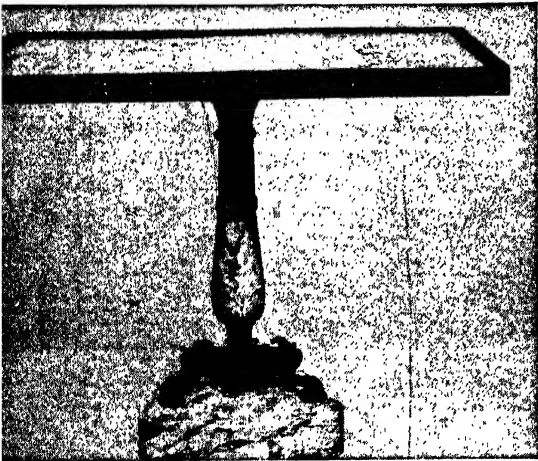
The furniture shown on this page is evidence of the elegance and luxury that characterized the homes of the wealthy Romans. Above is a sculptured marble fountain base. On the left, a heavy marble table, a delicate and beautifully decorated marble table, bound with a bronze rim, and a couch made of bone. The last was probably designed as a dining couch, but erroneously restored in modern times as a seat.

ROMAN FURNITURE

Many of these buildings and public works were constructed by the emperors or by the municipal governments. The **Liberality of citizens** majority, however, owed their existence to the civic pride and generosity of wealthy citizens. Markets, bridges, roads, and aqueducts, as well as all kinds of public buildings, were donated to the city by men who had been honored with public office in the local government, or by men who hoped to be so honored, or by others motivated simply by that passionate love of their native city which was so strong a force in the ancient municipality. The circuses, banquets, and other public amusements of that sociable age were also due in many cases to private liberality. Social standing and civic honors were alike the monopoly of wealth; but wealth carried with it also heavy duties of service and generosity, rigidly enforced by public opinion.

The municipal aristocracy was made up of the wealthier citizens who had sufficient **Social classes** property to qualify for offices in the local government or for membership in the *curia*. The list of *curiales* or *decuriones*, as those eligible for membership in the *curia* were called, was revised every five years. From this group men of servile birth were usually excluded. Yet former slaves, "freedmen," often rose to positions of wealth and power, and to a social ranking second only to the *curiales*. Many a highly educated Greek slave, or Syrian who had inherited the commercial genius of his race, was able to acquire sufficient money to buy his own freedom and afterwards to make a great fortune in trade. The mass of the citizens, professional men, shopkeepers, artisans, and so forth, and the poorer proletariat, who were sometimes excluded from citizenship, led obscure lives of little or no social or political importance. There were, however, frequent public amusements, gladiatorial shows, chariot races, games, and pantomimes, to break the tedium of their lives, and most of them belonged to some club or "college," which organized banquets and social gatherings and afforded them the comforting sense of belonging to an exclusive society, so dear to the hearts of gregarious men. The slaves, of whom there were great numbers, were the lowest social class. They were the property of their masters, without social or civil rights, though a growing humanitarian spirit was mitigating the brutality with which many were treated in the early days of Rome's conquests.

Superimposed upon the municipal aristocracy, and recruited from it, was an imperial or Roman aristocracy. This was made up of two classes, the **Imperial aristocracy** senators and the knights or *equites*. By the second century these classes had lost their purely Roman character and were composed mostly of provincials who had risen in the imperial service. The *equites* were men of moderate wealth, who had held offices in the imperial administration or the army. The senatorial aristocracy in turn was chosen by the emperor from the *equites* who had won his gratitude by faithful service. Both the imperial and municipal aristocracies were clearly defined castes, based partly on heredity, partly on wealth. Class distinctions were sharply drawn, but were not permanent. Few noble families lasted for many generations. The luxury and ostentation of the wealthy and the insidious influence of household slavery bred an unhealthy social atmosphere. The birth rate in aristocratic families was very low and the families soon died out. Their places were taken by new men from the lower classes.

4. ECONOMIC LIFE IN THE FIRST TWO CENTURIES

When Augustus ushered in the two centuries of Roman peace, he introduced also an era of unprecedented prosperity to Italy and the provinces. The wars which had devastated the empire were ended. The civilized world had been united in a single state, under a government strong enough to guarantee peace and security. Merchants might carry their wares freely from Pontus to Spain, from the Nile to the Thames, without crossing a frontier. And wherever they went they found the same laws, the same coinage, the same privileges, and the protection of the same government. During the first two centuries, the emperors allowed full freedom to commerce, barring slight interprovincial duties, and abstained from governmental

interference in industry. New and safe markets were established in the barbarian provinces. Everywhere new cities were founded, providing at once the supply and demand for a new economic life.

A good share of the amazing revival of commerce must be credited to the ease and security of communications within the empire. The Mediterranean Sea, though stormy and treacherous, was a broad highway through the center of the Roman world, and the imperial fleet kept it clear of pirates. In each province the emperors repaired or constructed a skillfully planned network of roads, connecting all the important cities. These roads, stone-paved and permanent, were built originally for the legions, but they served the merchants equally well. Over them messengers of the imperial service, equipped with relays of horses, could average fifty miles a day. Ordinary travelers could maintain an average speed of five miles an hour in districts where a thousand years later roads were nonexistent or almost impassable. Communications in Europe and the Near East were probably never so rapid or so safe until the coming of the railroad as they were in the first two centuries of the empire.

Communications

Commerce with lands outside the empire flourished, but was of secondary importance. From the East, the traditional source of luxuries, came perfumes, spices, ivory, precious stones, and silk, and from central Africa, ivory, gold, precious woods, and condiments, to be paid for in manufactured goods or coin. Furs, amber, wax, and slaves were imported from Germany and Russia, in return for oil and wine. It was a colorful trade, but it was almost entirely in luxuries and its importance cannot be compared with that of the trade within the frontiers.

Foreign commerce

Within the empire, the most important articles of interprovincial commerce were raw materials and manufactured goods for everyday use, the prime necessities of life. It was from these rather than the luxuries that great commercial fortunes were made. Corn, olive oil, wine, timber, metals,

interprovincial commerce

hemp, and flax could not be produced in all parts of the empire and so had to be shipped to the consumer. Some manufactured articles, too, could be produced only, or to better advantage, in certain localities. With these exceptions, goods were usually manufactured in the town where they were to be sold. Egypt had almost a monopoly on the production of linen and paper. Asia Minor, Italy, and Gaul produced quantities of woolen goods. Syria alone held the secret of Tyrian purple dyes and also led in the manufacture of fine glassware. Italian glazed pottery was unrivaled till the second century, when it was driven from the markets by the superior products of Gaul. In other wares also Gaul supplanted Italy, taking her place as the leading industrial country of the West. These and other articles, specialties of certain regions, were shipped freely and in great quantities to all parts of the empire.

Though great fortunes were made from commerce, much of the wide prosperity of the Roman world resulted directly from manufacturing. Industry was mostly in the hands of small independent artisans. It contributed to the livelihood of the masses rather than to the fortunes of the few capitalists. When the goods manufactured were intended for the local market, as was most often the case, the artisan was merchant as well as manufacturer, selling his wares to the consumer in his own little shop. Only in the case of goods intended for a distant market was there any attempt at mass production. Wealthy men sometimes employed large numbers of slaves or free workers in their shops. However, this differed from our own factory system in that each worker completed the article he was making, from beginning to end, and there was little use of machinery of any but the simplest sort. But even goods intended for export were often produced by independent workers.

Industry

Roman society was so characteristically urban, and commerce and industry played so important a part in economic life, that we are in danger of forgetting the country and the products of the soil. Yet the fact remains that the majority of the population worked on the land, and

Agriculture

agriculture formed the broad base on which the economic structure of the empire rested. The great fortunes accumulated through commerce or imperial favor were mostly invested in land; for land-ownership provided a safe, respectable income with a minimum of risk and worry, which was always the ideal of the wealthy aristocracy. Men of great wealth bought up large estates, which they cultivated by slave labor or let out to small tenants. Free peasants with small holdings were unable to compete with cheap labor and scientific methods of agriculture, and many were forced to sell their land, which went to swell the already large estates of the rich. The peasants themselves were faced by the melancholy alternative of joining the poor city proletariat or of becoming tenants on the land they once had owned. The wealth resulting from agriculture, then, was becoming concentrated in the hands of a relatively small class of landed proprietors.
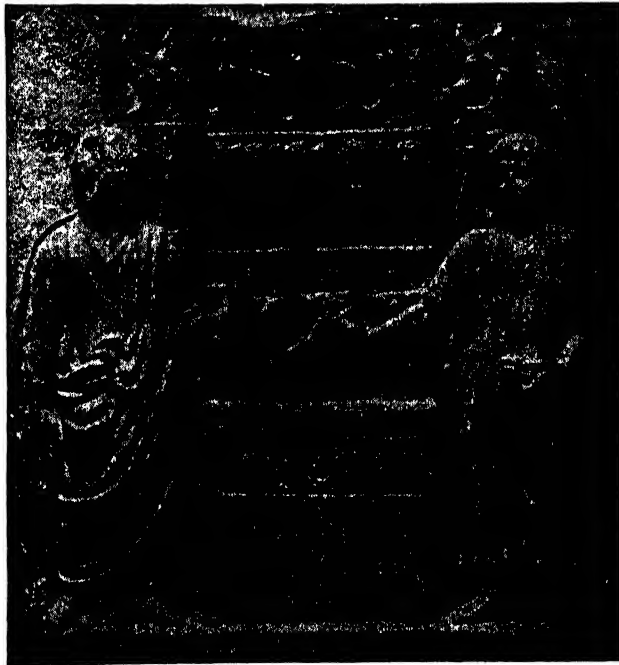
A ROMAN CUTLERY SHOP

A plastic relief now in the Vatican Museum, Rome. A large part of Roman industry was carried on by small shopkeepers who made and sold their wares direct to the consumer.

7

Decline of the Roman Empire

TO THE STUDENT who has studied the history of the Roman Empire during her two glorious centuries of peace, prosperity, and highly cultivated civilization, the three centuries that followed must come as a disheartening anticlimax. The rapid decline of the empire, and its disappearance in the West before the end of the fifth century, will seem inexplicable and almost incredible. Generations of historians, both before and after Gibbon wrote *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, have offered their explanations. But no single explanation will entirely suffice. Each factor in the situation seems to be at once cause and effect of the general tendency. We can only conclude that there were hidden elements of weakness in the structure of the Roman world, which were not apparent so long as everything went smoothly, but which combined to cripple society once the peaceful course of prosperity and good government was broken. The principal reasons for the general decline were undoubtedly economic; but the economic decline was itself accentuated by social and political ills, some of which we can discover, but many of which elude us as surely as do the fundamental causes of our own economic depressions.

## 1. BEGINNING OF THE DECLINE — THE THIRD CENTURY

It was during the third century that it first became painfully evident that the Roman Empire was decaying in every root and branch of its being. The people of the Roman world were losing their vigor. The upper classes were becoming apathetic through long enjoyment of easy prosperity, while the oppressed lower classes were becoming more discontented. There was a notable decrease in the population, accounted for partly by a series of widespread epidemics, but to a greater degree by the decrease in the birth rate, due to the unwillingness of the luxurious upper classes to raise large families and to the increasing poverty of the lower classes. The general decline in vitality was reflected clearly in the falling-off of creative energy in every field of culture, save religion. Already the golden age of Roman civilization had passed and imitation was taking the place of originality.

Symptoms of decline

These, however, are merely symptoms of the decline. What were the causes? That is a more difficult question to answer. Certain economic explanations have been offered, and are worth considering. The drain of coinage to the Far East to pay for imported luxuries must have had the effect of hampering business by causing a shortage of money. The building-up of great landed estates, worked by slave labor or by dependent tenants who were little better than slaves, undoubtedly had something to do with the decline of agriculture, which diminished the food supply of the empire and so added to the suffering of the poor. But these are

Causes of the decline
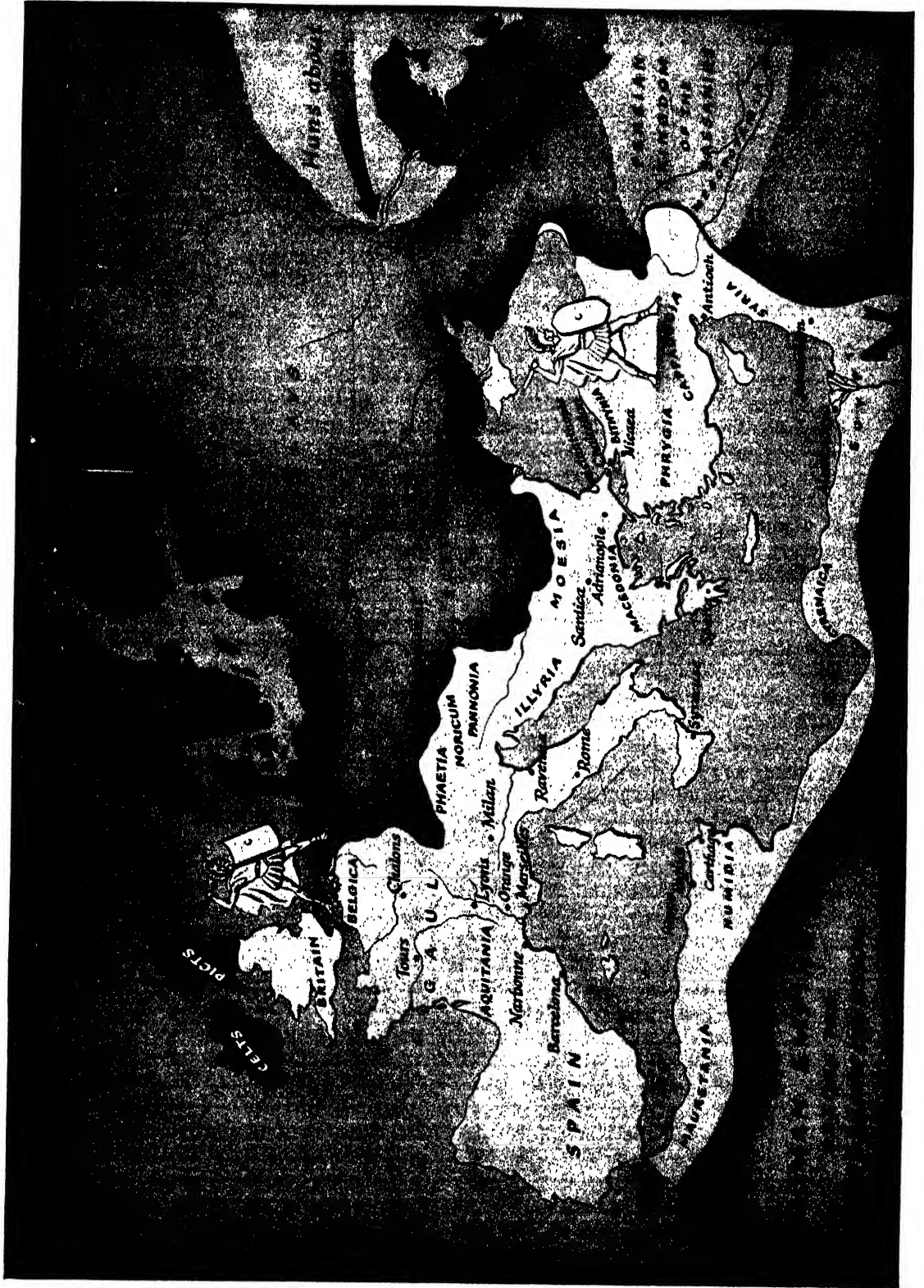
scarcely fundamental causes. More significant is the fact that Roman commerce and industry apparently faced a declining rate of growth after the first century. The inclusion of the half-barbaric and economically undeveloped provinces of the West within the empire had opened up a great field for commercial and industrial exploitation on the part of the more highly developed East. At the same time, the advance of these western provinces from semi-barbarism to a standard of living comparable with that of the rest of the empire helped to maintain a steady rate of expansion in the economy of the empire as a whole. By the second century, however, the West was fully developed and the last economic frontier had vanished. Thereafter further expansion would have to come largely within the existing limits of a stable society. New methods of cheaper, mass production might have maintained the rate of growth by lowering the price of goods and increasing the quantity that could be sold. Or a more equable distribution of wealth and higher wages might have had a similar effect by increasing the buying power of the population. But neither of these things happened. The Romans made no significant inventions of machinery or technique to speed up production; the competition of slave labor tended to keep wages at a very low level; and an increasingly large proportion of the wealth of the state was being concentrated in a relatively small aristocratic class, whose consumer demand was necessarily limited and who most often invested their wealth in large landed estates rather than in commerce or industry. As a result, the economy of the ancient world lost the stimulus of expansion, and a capitalist economy that has ceased to grow is in imminent danger of decline.

When all the economic and social causes of the decline of the empire have been considered, one fact remains clear. In **Failure of government** an autocratic state, much depends on the quality of the government, and throughout the second century the emperors had become steadily more autocratic. Until the death of Marcus Aurelius in the year 180, however, they had all been men of unusual ability, fully capable of discharging their enormous duties. Good government might not have been able to maintain prosperity much longer, but bad government certainly precipitated the decline and hurried it along. And bad government began with the reign of Commodus (180–192), the son of the philosophical Marcus Aurelius, nor did it end with his assassination at the hands of mutinous soldiers.

There followed, instead, a century of chaos and anarchy, in which the army took government into its own hands. Imperial power had always depended essentially on the sup- **Military anarchy** port of the legions, but hitherto the emperors had held them in control. Now the army assumed control of the emperors, creating and destroying them at will, and the army was now composed largely of the lowest classes. Two centuries of peace and prosperity had made an army career unattractive to those whose intelligence, wealth, and social position opened up more satisfactory prospects in civilian life. Between the years 192 and 284, there were thirty-three emperors, and most of them died by violence. During all that time, the empire was more or less constantly a prey to revolution, civil war, and the threat of foreign invasion. Troops marched and countermarched through all the provinces, plundering as they went and rendering the roads unsafe for merchants. To make matters worse, the emperors, in order to satisfy the demands of the mutinous soldiers who had created them, were forced to impose crushing taxes on the well-to-do classes, thus striking a direct blow to trade by sapping the buying power of the most prosperous citizens. They also adopted the ruinous policy of raising money by debasing the coinage. This combination of disorder, heavy taxation, and military tyranny was all that was needed to upset the delicate economic equilibrium of the Roman world.

Once started on the downward path, the Roman Empire declined steadily. Roman society had apparently no longer the inherent strength necessary to right itself. It yet remained to be seen what the government could do, once the military anarchy was brought to an end. In the last years of the third century, the Emperor Diocletian made

a desperate effort to restore the strength of the empire by the brute force of a despotic government. He reorganized the empire in the most arbitrary fashion, and for a time succeeded in checking the most obvious signs of disintegration. But in the long run, the cure proved worse than the disease. From this point on, the expedients of autocratic government were among the most potent factors in hastening the general economic and social decline.

2. REFORMS OF DIOCLETIAN AND CONSTANTINE

The reign of Diocletian (284–305) marks a turning point in the history of the empire, almost as significant as the change from the republic to the empire under Augustus. Like Augustus, Diocletian was faced by the task of preventing the disintegration of the state, and he strove to solve the problem in the arbitrary fashion that came most natural to a half-civilized soldier who had fought his way up from the ranks by sheer force of will. His first step was to assume all power in the state and to free himself from all constitutional checks. The emperors had been gaining steadily in power since the days of Augustus; but hitherto the old forms of senatorial government had been preserved. Diocletian abandoned all such fictions. He reduced the senate to the status of a municipal council for the city of Rome and declared the emperor to be the supreme ruler of the state, with no constitutional limits to his power. The emperor was now the sole source of all law and authority and was himself above all law. He was the divine ruler, surrounded by all the pomp and ceremony of an eastern despot, demanding servile obedience from his subjects. This was a far cry from the days when Augustus had posed as the first citizen of Rome, to whom the body of citizens had delegated imperial authority. The very idea of Roman citizenship now disappeared. There remained only subjects.

The second step was to centralize imperial administration so as to bring the whole system of government more directly under the emperor's control. Diocletian realized, however, that the task of personally

Diocletian establishes an autocracy

Administration centralized

governing so vast a state would be beyond the powers of one man. He recognized also that the Greek East and Latin West were drifting apart, with separate interests. He therefore chose a colleague in the year 286, a trusted general named Maximian, who was to share with him the title of Augustus or emperor and to govern the western half of the empire. Further, to avoid interference on the part of the army with the succession to the throne, each of the two Augusti adopted a younger man, who took the title of Caesar. The Caesar was to assist in the task of governing and to succeed to the title of Augustus on the death or abdication of his superior. To systematize the civil administration, Diocletian then divided the empire into four great prefectures, each governed by a prefect who was directly responsible to the emperor of his half of the empire. The prefectures in turn were divided into a varying number of dioceses (there were seventeen in all), each administered by a vicar who was responsible to the prefect. The dioceses also were divided into provinces, much smaller than the old provinces (there were one hundred and one in the whole empire), each under a governor who was responsible to his vicar. Instructions could thus be passed down from the emperor, or cases could be referred back to him, through a regular system of officials. Each of these officers was assisted by a host of civil servants and special agents. There were also scores of officials attached to the imperial courts to assist in the central administration. This highly organized system took over all the duties of local as well as imperial government. The municipalities lost their free self-government and the municipal *curiales* became merely unpaid servants of the state, who carried out the dictates of the imperial officers.

The third step in reform was to reorganize the army so as to make it more efficient, more dependent on the emperor, and less closely connected with the people and their political aspirations. The military was entirely separated from the civil administration. Senators and citizens were gradually excluded from the army, as they had other services to perform for the state, and they soon lost all

Army reorganized

DIOCLETIAN (GOLD MEDALLION)

This portrait of the emperor who reorganized the Roman Empire suggests that firmness of will was his outstanding trait.

CONSTANTINE

The colossal marble head of Constantine carries a similar suggestion of commanding will.

military spirit or ability. The old legions were posted along the frontiers as hereditary guards, while a new and more mobile force, nearly doubling the size of the army, was recruited from German barbarians and the most uncivilized subjects of the empire. This barbarous army served only for their pay and had no interest in the wishes of the people. Their officers rose from the ranks by a regular system of promotion, the highest office being that of *magister militum* or master of the soldiers. In the late fourth and fifth centuries this office was usually held by a German of barbarian origin, Romanized though he might have become.

These changes immediately strengthened the imperial authority. But the elaborate imperial courts, the numerous administrative officials, and the large mercenary army were very expensive. The emperors needed money and still more money, while at the same time the waning economic prosperity of the empire made the collection of taxes more difficult. To secure a sufficient income, Diocletian instituted a new system of taxation, which was simple, uniform, and efficient from the government's point of view, but deadly in its effect upon the people. It was to be responsible for many, if not most, of the economic and social ills of the later empire. The principal tax was on land. All the land of the empire was divided into units of varying size according to their fertility, each unit or *iugum* (so named because it was theoretically the amount of land a yoke of oxen could plow) in the municipality to pay an equal tax. There was also a poll tax on the workers of the land, the unit being a *caput* or head, which, however, might include more than one person. Later, for convenience, the two units were combined in a single tax on the land and the men who worked it. Merchants and artisans who had no land paid a special and very heavy tax. Each year the emperors calculated the amount of taxes needed. This sum was divided and subdivided among the various administrative divisions of the empire until the process ended by the assignment of a definite sum to each municipality. The municipal *curia* or council was held responsi-

Reform of taxation

ble for the collection of that sum. The system seems reasonable enough, but it left too many opportunities for graft and oppression on the part of the administrative officials, and its enforcement had, as we shall see in the next section, most unfortunate effects on Roman society.

Diocletian's system was somewhat modified by his successors, but in the main it remained in force till the fall of the Western Empire. The practical working-out of many details was left to Constantine the Great (313–337), who after some years of civil war between rival Augusti and Caesars reunited the empire under his single rule. Diocletian's plan for dividing the administration of the empire and controlling the succession had not worked very well, but the actual division between East and West was growing too strong to be ignored. Constantine himself demonstrated that by founding a new capital at Constantinople in the East. After his death the empire was again divided, and there were nearly always two emperors thereafter, though it must not be forgotten that the division was solely for administrative purposes. In theory the empire remained one and united, under two rulers of equal power. At times, however, one must for the sake of convenience refer to the different parts as the Eastern and Western Empires.

Constantine completes the reform

3. SOCIAL DECLINE — SOCIETY FIXED IN HEREDITARY CASTES

In the society of the early empire there had been elements of weakness that tended to sap the vigor and vitality of the people, but these were counterbalanced by the individual freedom and opportunity for advancement enjoyed by all except the slaves. Roman society under the empire was never democratic. It was divided into classes, jealous of their rights; but in the first two or three centuries these classes were constantly recruited from below. There was no legal check on the ambition of the individual to improve his social or economic position. Peasants might move to the city, or artisans might become small landowners. Any worker, except the slave, was free to choose whatever occupation seemed to offer the greatest reward. Even the slave might buy his freedom and go into business for himself. Many freedmen rose to positions of wealth and influence. Any freeborn man of unusual thrift, industry, or initiative might make sufficient money to join the curial class, the local aristocracy, and be eligible for membership in the municipal council. And any *curialis* might hope for promotion to the imperial aristocracy and the senatorial rank. The incentive to ambition provided by these opportunities for advancement was responsible for much of the vigorous economic life and the social vitality of the first two centuries, and it might have helped to restore the fading energy of the empire now that the military anarchy was ended. But all this was changed by the autocratic emperors who followed Diocletian and who, in applying his system of government, were forced to bind men to their class or occupation in hereditary castes, reducing all but the most fortunate to a dead level of slavery to the state.

The success of Diocletian's reform of the administration and the army depended on the collection of sufficient taxes to pay for their upkeep. The most important tax was that on land and on the agricultural workers. This was paid, not by the great landowners, but by the tenant or small owner who actually worked the land. Many of these, unable to pay the taxes from profits that were steadily decreasing for other reasons, were forced to abandon their land and to evade the taxes by moving to another locality or by changing their occupation. At the same time the population was decreasing. As a result, a good deal of land was deserted and fell out of cultivation, thus lessening the amount of taxable property. To check this development, which would prove disastrous to the imperial income, Constantine issued laws binding the agricultural worker, and his children after him, to the land he worked. The tax on the land and that on the worker were now united and became an hereditary obligation. No matter who owned the land, the workers remained as hereditary tenants, still legally

Workers bound to their land

free men except that they could not leave their land. They were called *coloni*. Slaves could no longer be sold off the land and as their saleable property value disappeared they were given the partial freedom of the *colonus*. All farm workers then were leveled to the same condition of partial servitude. A series of severe laws punished the *colonus* who left his land as rigorously as though he were a runaway slave. A great proportion of the population was thus forced to give up all hope of changing their economic or social status.

The merchants and artisans in the city met the same fate. They had to pay a special tax, heavy enough to be
Tradesmen bound to their trade ruinous in a time of constant economic depression. Certain necessary trades were being deserted since there was no longer any profit in them. The autocratic emperors could think of no way of improving conditions except to issue new laws forcing the merchant or artisan to continue in his occupation. The workers in each trade formed an hereditary caste. A baker must remain a baker, and all his sons must become bakers. There was no legal escape, even though it might become impossible to make a living, and though there might be better opportunities in other occupations.

But of all the people of the empire, the once well-to-do upper and middle classes of the municipalities, the *curiales*,
Curiales ruined suffered most, being reduced to universal and perpetual bankruptcy by the disastrous system of taxation. The *curiales* had been the mainstay of the flourishing municipal life of the early empire. Membership in the *curia* had been an honor eagerly sought. Now it became a ruinous burden. For the *curia* was made responsible for the collection of all taxes in the municipality. If it could not collect the full amount assigned to it, the members had to make up the deficit, and there was usually a deficit, from their own pockets. To keep the *curia* filled, the emperors issued strict laws forcing all men who had sufficient property to enroll in the curial class, and forcing all *curiales* to take their turn in office. In 336 Constantine made the curial position

hereditary. It was still possible for a *curialis* who had sufficient wealth left after having filled all the offices a number of times to purchase senatorial rank which granted exemption from curial duties. But few were able to avail themselves of this privilege, and the sons of those who did, if born before their father's elevation, remained in the curial class. The *curiales* sought desperately to escape, and many succeeded, despite the harsh laws to the contrary, thus making the burden heavier for those who remained. By the beginning of the fifth century men of curial descent were barred from the army, the administration, and the clergy. They could not leave the city, even for a short trip, without permission; they could not reside in the country; and they could not sell or dispose of their property by will without the permission of the governor of the province. Many were reduced to such despair that they forfeited their property and sought to hide themselves as *coloni* on senatorial estates. Occasionally the emperors tried to alleviate the condition of the *curiales* in individual cases, as when Julian in 363 granted immunity from service in the *curia* to the fathers of thirteen or more children, who might be considered to have done enough for the state. But on the whole the laws regarding the *curiales* became steadily more oppressive and their condition ever more hopeless.

The senatorial aristocracy was the most fortunate class, a wealthy, privileged group, riding securely on the surface of a sea of destitution. Its members no longer had any neces-
Senatorial aristocracy sary connection with the senate, and their numbers had greatly increased, since the early days of the empire. Their wealth was invested in land, since they were barred by law from engaging in commerce, and most of them were owners of great estates that were steadily crowding out the small landowner. As a rule their fortunes had been made originally in the imperial administrative service, and were constantly increased by the unlimited opportunities for graft which they enjoyed. For despite all the good intentions of the emperors, it proved impossible to enforce honest administration in the
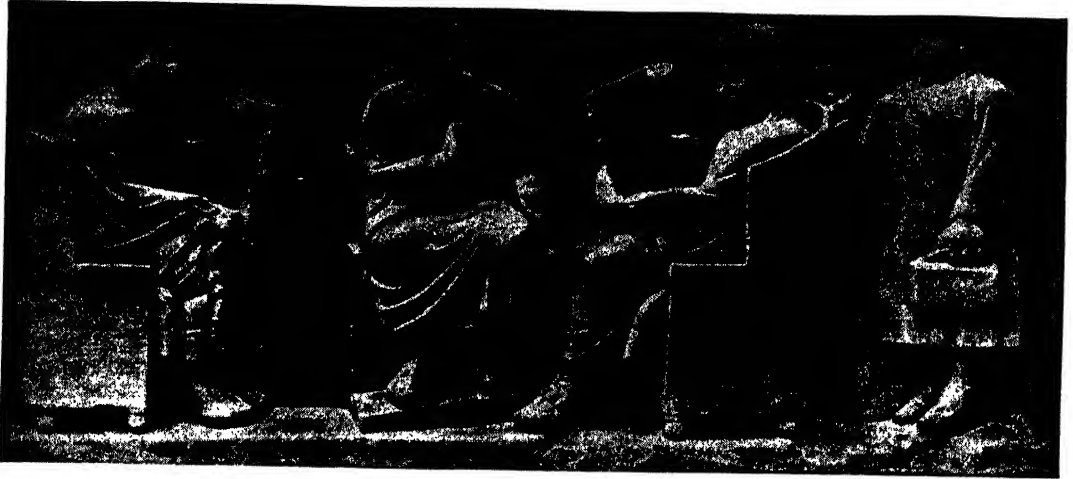
A ROMAN SCHOOL

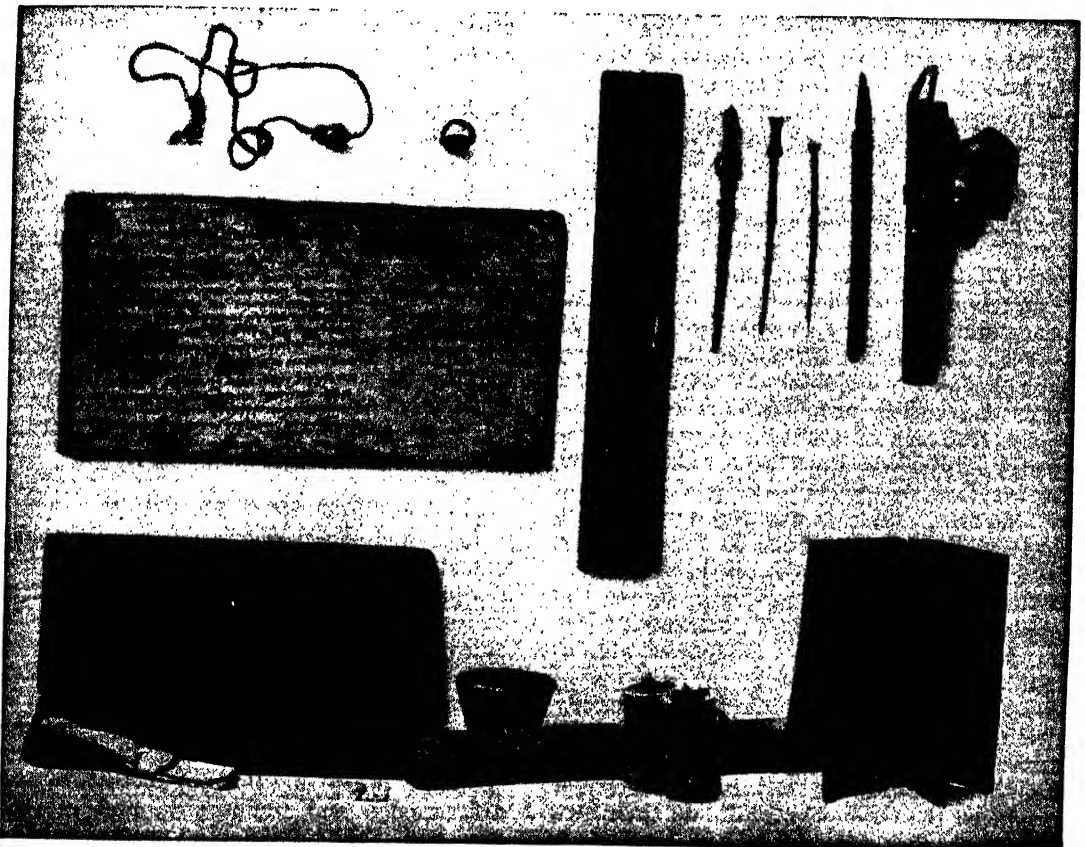*Roman education maintained a high standard long after the vigor of Roman culture had declined. The above relief shows a school in Trier on the northern frontier of the empire about the third century.*

WRITING MATERIALS AND UTENSILS OF ANTIQUITY

In the foreground, left, is a two-page letter consisting of two wax tablets hinged together and sealed with a band.

provinces. Governors and the higher officers, all of the senatorial class, were able to cheat the people on the one hand and the government on the other; while the senatorial landowners were often able to evade the taxes or to use their wealth and connection with the administration to defraud their poor neighbors or their tenants.

To summarize the course of social decline: the fourth and fifth centuries witnessed the ruin and degradation of the worker on the land and the merchant and artisan in the city, and above all of the upper and middle classes of the municipalities, who had been the backbone of old Roman society, while the only group that was still prosperous was the selfish, parasitical, and unproductive senatorial aristocracy, made up of corrupt administrative officials and great landed proprietors.

#### 4. ECONOMIC DECLINE UNDER THE AUTOCRACY

"The salient trait of the economic life of the late Roman Empire was gradual impoverishment." The military anarchy of the third century had had a paralyzing effect on the commerce of the Roman world. It had aggravated those obscure but fundamental ills in the economic structure of the empire which were already noticeable at an even earlier date. Whether prosperity could have been restored after the restoration of internal peace and strong government by Diocletian is very doubtful. Certain it is, however, that the means employed to save the state from dissolution were such as made economic recovery impossible. Commerce, industry, and agriculture were alike crushed by taxation that ate up the profits. More serious still, and this was the dry rot that destroyed the foundations of the economic structure, the profits from all three were decreasing to the vanishing point due to the gradual disappearance of markets. The buying power of the once prosperous municipal aristocracy, as well as of the poorer classes of town and country, was steadily declining, taxed out of existence. Only the senatorial class and the government remained as important buyers. The former produced the necessities of life on their own estates, while the latter, though buying extensive supplies for the army and the people of the capitals, fixed prices so low as to be ruinous to the producer and the carrier. Economic activity seemed to be caught in a dreary, endless circle. Taxes ate up the profits; the loss of profits decreased the buying power; the failure of buying power decreased the profits and made it more difficult to pay the taxes.

Yet this vicious circle might still have been broken by the force of individual initiative, which has so often in history fought its way over or around economic obstacles, had that initiative been allowed free play, or had it been inspired by the hope of possible success. But the despotic laws which bound men to their occupations and social position paralyzed all individual effort. And the evil was so widespread that, even were a man able to evade the laws and to rise above his hereditary class or change his occupation, he would be little better off. The peasant might move to the city, or the city worker might change his trade or move to the country, without improving his condition. Of if either were unusually successful, he might possibly make a sufficient fortune to obtain admission to the curial class, and then he and his descendants would be ruined indeed. Moreover, any evidence of unusual prosperity merely incurred increased exactions from the rapacious and corrupt tax collectors, whose demands were limited often enough only by the ability of the individual to pay. With every avenue of escape cut off, the men of the later empire came to accept the situation in a mood of passive resignation.

Initiative paralyzed

5. DECLINE OF ROMAN CULTURE

Roman civilization emerged from the fiery ordeal of the third century with its metal not purified but debased. The general level of culture was distinctly lower than it had been and it was given no opportunity to recover, but rather sank with increasing rapidity during the fourth and fifth centuries. It is not surprising that a period of general decline should be accompanied by a corresponding decay of culture. Literature and art, science and philosophy, and all the workings of the human mind must always be
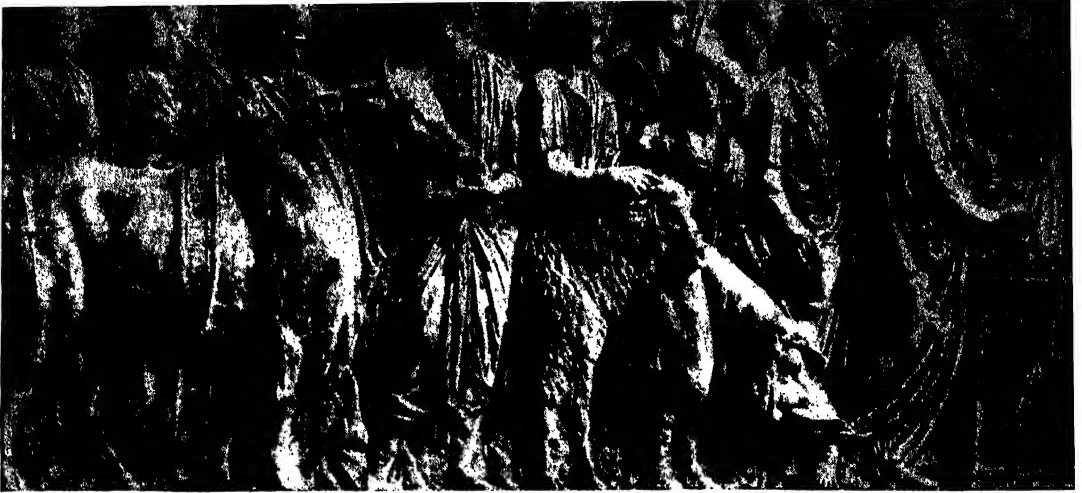
ROMAN SACRIFICE

*The marble relief above shows a typical scene from Roman
official religious practice, the sacrifice of a pig, sheep, and bull.*

ISIS

*This scene is from a temple of Isis in the city of Rome, but note the Eastern character of the
figures as compared to the purely Roman character of the participants in the official cult above.*

RELIGIONS OF THE EMPIRE

strongly influenced by the conditions under which men live. Some of the inevitable results of the political, social, and economic developments we have outlined are too obvious to demand comment; others deserve some further explanation.

The culture of the ancient world was the product of busy and vigorous little city-states, and especially of the aristocratic class in those states, a class wealthy, leisured, and cultivated, free and independent. After the civilized world was included in the Roman Empire, the city-states continued their free existence as Roman municipalities. They retained their strong local patriotism, their civic religions, their traditions and self-government, all factors that encouraged the ancient type of culture. But as the empire developed into a unified state, the cities lost many of their peculiar qualities and the population became more cosmopolitan. Their freedom, too, was being more and more limited by the constant extension of the emperor's authority and the scope of his administration. Old traditions were dying, and with them went much of the incentive to creative work. Even before the end of the second century, men were beginning to look backward with reverence to a golden age in the past, which they could not hope to re-create. Latin writers began to study and imitate Cicero, Virgil, or Horace rather than to create original work of their own. The spirit that had made classic culture great was disappearing with the passing of the kind of society in which it throve, and the empire was supplying nothing to take its place. This fact became increasingly evident as the liberty of the cities and the wealth and freedom of the municipal aristocracy were destroyed under the military anarchy of the third century and the autocratic government of the fourth and fifth.

The strongest characteristic in the mental attitude of fourth- and fifth-century Romans was apathetic resignation. The great majority of the population had lost all individual liberty and all hope of improving their economic or social position, while the condition of the empire as a whole grew steadily worse. With no hope

Decline of municipal aristocracy

Loss of nerve

of improving conditions, men came to accept them, turning for comfort, as did the Christians, to thoughts of a happier life after death, or, as did the pagans, to wistful study of a golden age in the past. Such a state of mind was fatal to originality or creative energy. Abundant evidence of this can be found in the literature of the period. Generation after generation imitated the great classics of the Augustan age, without producing anything new or significant. Those who, like the poet Claudian or the letter writer Sidonius, still retained something of the old style and taste, had little or nothing to say. In all branches of art the same sterility, the same lowering of standards of taste, was very evident. The men of the late empire were losing their mental energy because they had lost their nerve and no longer felt competent to cope with the problems of a world that was growing too difficult for them. Roman civilization may be compared to a sick man, stricken with a malignant fever, who has still a chance of recovery if his will is strong enough, but who is doomed to certain death if he gives up hope. And the Romans had given up hope.

This gradual loss of hope and confidence was accompanied by the rise of new religions, to which many men turned for comfort and which offered emotional distraction or the hope of a happier life after death. The old pagan religions of Rome and the Greek city-states had emphasized the duties of the citizen to his native state, but they offered very little personal hope or comfort to men who had lost their confidence in the state, and as the city-states lost their identity these religions lost much of their appeal. In their place, the western world adopted a number of philosophies and religions from the East. With the exception of Christianity, the names and special characteristics of these oriental religions are relatively unimportant to a general survey of European history, as they had little or no effect on later times. Though differing widely in many respects, they shared one common characteristic. What hope they gave to the individual was purely personal and was to find its fulfillment in a future world rather than in this.

Oriental religions

If they did not actually discourage, they did little to encourage the vigorous performance of economic and social duties. Many historians have found in the spread of these religions one cause of the decay of ancient civilization.

In this depressing chapter, we have tried to picture Roman society in the centuries of decline, and to show as far as possible why it had lost its earlier strength and prosperity. Two great movements, however, of vital importance to any study of the fourth and fifth centuries, we have neglected so far, reserving them for special treatment in the following chapters. They are, first, the triumph of Christianity and its adoption as the state religion of the Roman Empire, and second, the invasion of the empire by hordes of Germanic barbarians. Both had a great immediate influence on the history of the dying empire, but an even greater effect in shaping the civilization of medieval Europe.

8

The Christian Church in the Roman Empire

AS THE OLD PAGAN ROMAN EMPIRE decayed, there grew up in its midst a new spiritual empire, which in course of time was to replace it in the West and to carry on in western Europe the Roman tradition of unity in administration, law, language, and culture through the long chaotic centuries of the Middle Ages. Christianity was the one vital force and the church the one living organism in the Roman world during the last two centuries of the Western Empire. When that empire disappeared, the church, so far as was possible, took its place; the popes took over the universal authority of the emperors; and the episcopal hierarchy filled the void left by the withdrawal of the imperial administration. Throughout the Middle Ages the unity of the Roman Catholic Church was the bond that held together the various races of western Europe. Christianity had made profound changes in Roman thought, ethics, and morals; it had helped to destroy much of pagan culture; yet it was through the church that such elements of Roman civilization as it could assimilate were preserved and handed on to the Germanic peoples who swept over the Western Empire, burying it beneath the flood tide of barbarism.

1. SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES

Throughout the first three centuries, while Christianity was struggling upward against tremendous odds, the older forms of paganism were losing their vitality. As the empire became more closely knit together, the official religions gained universal recognition, but at the same time lost much of their hold on the thought and especially on the emotions of the people. The emperor was worshiped from the Euphrates to the borders of Wales, but nowhere was his cult more than a formal patriotic rite. The ancient gods of Greece and Rome, enshrined in the epics of Homer and Virgil and consecrated by official usage, were still worshiped, but in much the same formal way. There were temples everywhere to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva and the other gods who sat upon Mount Olympus, watching with impartial interest the destinies of men, though interfering now and then for the salvation of the state. But there was nothing left in the old mythology to give inspiration, hope, or comfort to the individual, nor to answer his anxious queries concerning his fate after death had overtaken

Decay of official religions

him. Even before the disastrous third century, when public and private calamities caused men to seek more eagerly than ever for supernatural comfort, the twilight had begun to settle over Olympus. It was soon to darken into night, though the old gods long maintained a shadowy existence through official practice and in literary tradition.

But the waning of the ancient paganism did not mean the triumph of Christianity.

Rise of oriental cults

Instead, other and apparently more powerful religions from the East took the place of the official cults in the active life of the people, and it was this new paganism that was to be Christianity's most serious rival. From the time of its foundation, oriental religions had spread westward through the empire, following the lines of trade. Their progress was facilitated by the remarkable ease of communication. By the third century they were the dominant religious force in the West as well as in the East. In all their various forms, these oriental cults held out much the same promise and satisfied much the same need. They offered purification from personal guilt or sin, and they promised immortality to their devotees. Through participation in their mysteries, sacraments, or initiations, the soul of the worshiper was "saved" or "redeemed," brought into closer contact with divinity. The ceremonies themselves, colorful and often verging on hysteria, made a strong emotional appeal to men wearied with a drab and hopeless existence.

The adherence of the more highly educated classes was gained through the support

Neoplato-nism

given to the eastern cults by the dominant philosophical system of the third century, Neoplatonism. This was a late revival of the philosophy of Plato, though in a debased form and intermixed with oriental ideas and superstitions. To the Neoplatonist, the chief aim of all thought and aspiration was to bring the individual soul into closer communication or harmony with the great spiritual force which rules the universe, whatever man may call it. And he recognized the gods of the various religions as partial and imperfect manifestations of that divine force. Neo-platonism, then, was a kind of vague monotheism, or belief in one god, who, however, might be worshiped under many forms and in many ways. As this philosophy became popular, the devotees of the various eastern religions came to accept their gods as personifications of one divine power, and many if not most of them joined more than one cult, seeking in each a different aspect of the one truth. The belief in one god, fostered by Neoplatonism, in a measure prepared the way for Christianity. On the other hand, the acceptance of all gods made it the most dangerous enemy to the exclusive monotheism of Christianity, which branded the worship of all other gods as idolatry and a deadly sin. Neoplatonism is important, too, as we shall see, for its influence in shaping certain aspects of Christian thought and doctrine.
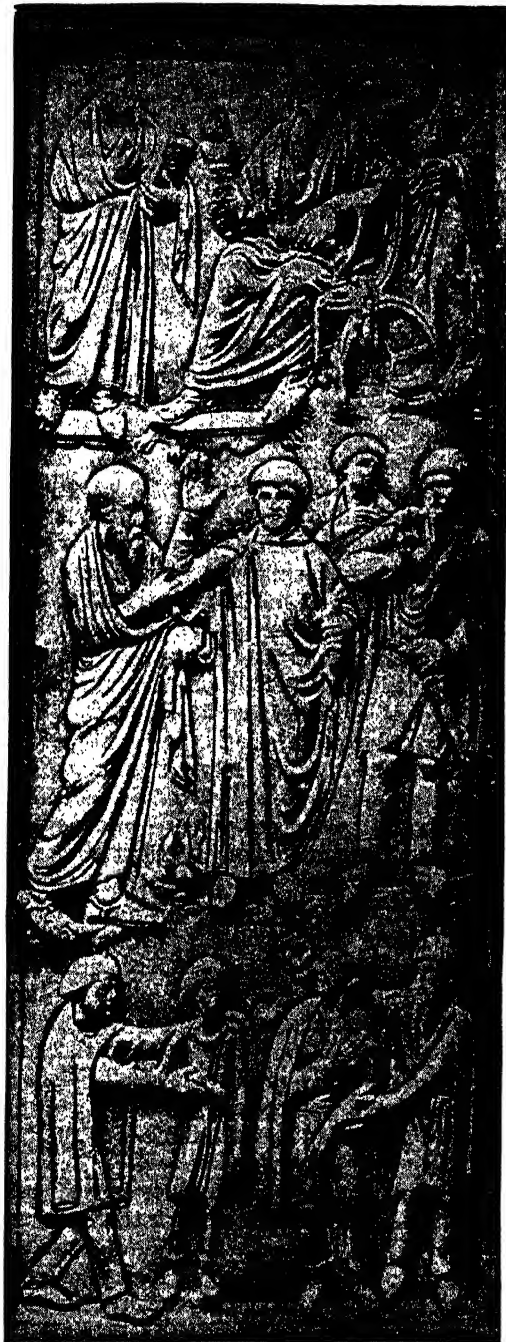
In the midst of all these religions, which were supported or tolerated by the imperial government, Christianity was gradually spreading throughout the Roman world during the first three centuries. Slow

Factors re-tarding Christianity

though its progress was at first, it gained ground more rapidly with the beginning of the general decline, until by the middle of the third century there were well-organized Christian communities in nearly every city of the empire. There were many factors in the situation which hampered the growth of the new religion. Indeed, that it spread as rapidly as it did, and that it rose to final triumph over all other religions, is the most remarkable fact in its history, the greatest of the Christian miracles. Almost from the beginning it was opposed and often persecuted by the government, and for the first two centuries at least it was generally unpopular. Christianity had begun under what might seem the most unfortunate circumstances, in a rebellious province among men of a stubborn and seditious race, which could not be assimilated and which was hated and despised by the other peoples of the empire. The first apostles were not only Jews, but Jews who had been disowned by their own people, and who, moreover, were of the lowest social rank. They gained most of their early converts from the slave and laboring classes. Christianity, too, was the
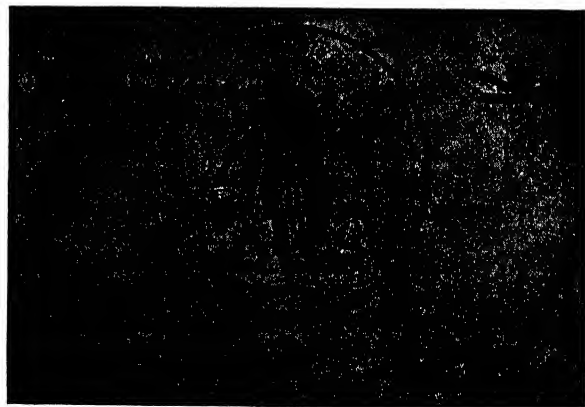
EARLY PICTURES OF JESUS

The miracle of the multiplication of the loaves. From a painting in the catacomb of Saints Peter and Marcellinus.

Scenes from the life of Saint Paul.
An ivory tablet of the fifth century.

A mural from the catacombs representing the good shepherd and other Christian symbols

EARLY REPRESENTATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN STORY

only exclusively monotheistic religion in the ancient world, with the exception of its parent Judaism. The Christians would tolerate no other gods, would not participate even in the most formal way in the rites of the official or other religions, and vigorously condemned all other cults. This aroused the resentment of pagans of all types, accustomed as they were to living amicably side by side, recognizing in one another's religion the worship of the same divine power. The ethical and moral content of the Christian teaching was also very difficult for the pagan to understand or to accept.

Yet, despite all the disadvantages under which it labored, there were elements in Christianity which made it ir-

Factors favoring it

resistible. The figure of Christ loomed large in the thought of the early church. More perhaps than at any later time, the Christianity of this period was the religion of Christ. The first missionaries had known him in the flesh, and the tradition was passed on, still vivid with the charm of his magnetic personality. His followers had as the central fact of their religion a definite personal Saviour, who supplied in the only satisfactory way that connecting link between man and God, for which the philosophers and the devotees of the pagan cults were blindly groping. This faith in an historical Saviour carried with it a definiteness of conviction in the reality of salvation, of the expiation of sin, and of the immortality of the soul (all questions that obsessed the mind of the ancient world) far greater than was possible for the mythological pagan cults. At the same time, Christianity gave men hope for the future, not only for themselves as individuals, but for the world. Where the pagan looked back with nostalgic longing to a golden age in the distant past, the Christian, especially in these first centuries, looked forward with confident expectation to the dawn of a golden age in the future, when the second coming of Christ would herald the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. Finally, Christian ethics and morals, difficult though they were for the pagan to accept, bore fruit that could not be ignored in the admirable lives led by the early Christians. Nor could the pagan fail to see that they had peace of mind, hope, and certainty, strong enough to carry them through the fires of persecution, when for the rest of the world there was no peace, when hope was dying, and certainty unattainable.

2. PERSECUTION AND TRIUMPH

Christianity as a religion and the church as an association were banned by the imperial government as soon as they became strong enough to attract the attention of the emperors.

Early persecutions

About the year 111, the Emperor Trajan issued a rescript to the provincial governors instructing them to prosecute those openly charged with adherence to the new religion, but not to seek them out nor to continue the prosecution if they were willing to take part in the ceremonies of the official cult. For the following century and a half, this rescript may be taken as a fair enough definition of the imperial policy. Christianity was not a legal religion and its members might be punished even to death, but there was no general or consistent attempt to suppress them. The initiative was left to the provincial governors, who enforced the law with more or less severity as they chose. By the middle of the third century, however, conditions had changed and reforming emperors were forced to take stronger action.

One may well ask why the imperial government, usually so tolerant of all religions, should have maintained so hostile an attitude toward Christianity over a period of two centuries.

Reasons for persecution

Yet there was reason enough, and from their own point of view the emperors were amply justified. Christianity was opposed to the whole spirit of Roman civilization and of imperial government. The most serious specific charges brought against the Christians were that they were stubborn and consistent law-breakers, that they refused to discharge the duties of a citizen toward the state, and that they were organized in illegal and dangerously seditious societies. And these charges were well founded. The Christian, strict monotheist as he was, was forbidden to take part in the emperor worship

which was the patriotic duty of all citizens. He could not accept public office nor serve in the army without violating his principles, as both demanded participation in certain official and, to the Christian, idolatrous ceremonies. His attitude toward the whole governmental system, so closely bound up with paganism, was one of suspicion if not of actual hatred, and in any case he felt that he owed his first loyalty to a higher fatherland than the worldly empire.

Such an attitude in individuals was sufficiently dangerous. It was made more formidable by the compact and efficient organization of the church. In nearly every community the Christians had a strong, coherent organization, with known bishops and holding corporate property. And they were in constant communication with the other churches throughout the empire. Christianity was becoming a state within and opposed to the empire. No autocratic ruler could afford to ignore it. In proportion as their numbers increased, especially with the beginning of the third century, when they were joined by many from the upper classes while the empire was itself declining in power, the Christians became an ever greater menace to the state.

In the year 250, the Emperor Decius undertook a vigorous program of reform to check the alarming decline, and **Persecution under Decius** as part of that reform instituted the first thorough attempt to crush out Christianity in all parts of the empire. All citizens were commanded to take part in the ceremonies of the official religions. Those who refused were liable to various punishments, including the death penalty. Great numbers of the Christians complied with the law, while others bought certificates asserting that they had done so. But there were also many who remained true to their faith and suffered martyrdom. The persecution raged for about a year, until it was cut short by the death of the emperor.

During the remainder of the third century, the Christians were alternately persecuted and tolerated, according to the **Last persecution** policy of the various emperors. From each persecution they emerged with numbers greatly diminished,

but with their organization still intact; and at the first sign of toleration, the apostates, as the deserters were called, returned, and with them came new converts, won over by the example of the martyrs. Despite persecution, Christianity was growing stronger and more popular. It was also becoming more inimical to the government, and hence more dangerous. The last and most thorough attempt to stamp it out was begun in 303 by Diocletian, the great reformer and reorganizer of the empire, and was continued by his successors till 311. They succeeded only in proving that the Christians could not be crushed. The next great emperor was to seek their support and to found his government on a close alliance with the once outlawed church.

The abdication of Diocletian (305) was followed by years of bitter civil strife. By 312 there were four rival emperors, of whom one was Constantine the Great. Supported only **Christianity freed by Constantine** by the legions of Gaul and Britain, he was the least powerful of the four. His rival in the West was Maxentius, who held Italy, Spain, and Africa, while Licinius and Maximus divided the East between them. His position was very uncertain, but he was able to form an alliance with Licinius to defeat their respective opponents in the West and East. Like himself, Licinius had taken a neutral stand during the late persecution, while Maxentius and Maximus had actively oppressed the Christians. Gathering his legions together, Constantine marched swiftly down into Italy, staking his whole career on the chance of victory against greatly superior forces. It was probably during that daring march that he decided to seek the support of the Christians. At any rate, to that period belongs the story, so variously interpreted, of his vision of a fiery cross in the sky and the words *Hoc vince* (By this conquer), which he took as his standard. At Saxa Rubra, a few miles from Rome, he met the army of Maxentius, destroyed it completely, and became sole emperor of the West. The following year he met his colleague Licinius, who had also been successful, at Milan, and there issued an edict of general and complete toleration of all reli-

gions including Christianity. Licinius was unwilling to go farther than that, but in 323 Constantine defeated him and united the whole empire under his rule. From that time on Constantine's attitude toward the Christians became steadily more favorable, until he was finally baptized into the faith a few days before his death in 337. He took no action against paganism, but his patronage of the church set Christianity well on its way to becoming the state religion.

Edict of Milan (313)

That Constantine's policy was inspired to any great degree by religious motives seems most unlikely. He was no doubt drawn toward the idea of monotheism, as were so many intelligent pagans, and in his later years came to consider Christianity its truest expression. But his action was that of a keen and farsighted statesman rather than a convert. The Christians were still a minority in 312 (probably not more than one tenth of the population of the empire), but they were a very determined and well-organized minority, settled for the most part in the cities and wielding far more influence than their relative numbers would indicate. Constantine had seen the failure of Diocletian's attempt to crush them. Where Diocletian had failed, he himself could have little hope of success; and if the Christians could not be crushed, it would be better to have them as allies rather than as enemies. In 312 he had needed the support of the Christians against Maxentius, and after 323, when he was emperor of both East and West, he needed the aid of any organized force that would help to hold the empire together. The compact organization of the Christian Church appealed strongly to Constantine's political sense. It had shown its power in the days of persecution, when it had threatened to disrupt the state. Now it might be equally effective in helping to unify and preserve the empire.

Constantine's motives

3. CHURCH AND STATE: THE STRUGGLE AGAINST HERESY AND PAGANISM

The fourth century was a period of astounding growth in the Christian Church. The century opened with the persecution of the Christians, still a small minority of the population, by a pagan emperor. At its close, Christianity was the sole official religion of the empire, claiming at least the formal adherence of the great majority of the population, and protected by a Christian emperor who issued persecuting laws against pagans and all who departed in any way from the accepted doctrines of the state church.

The fourth century

But this rapid growth was not all pure gain to the church. The influx of great numbers of the indifferent or self-seeking inevitably lowered the general average of morality and religious zeal in the church, while at the same time introducing non-Christian elements into its doctrine and practice. Before the Edict of Milan, the Christians had been a picked group of earnest believers who were prepared to sacrifice something of worldly advantage, even if all were not prepared to face death, for their faith. Now it was to the advantage of all to join the triumphant religion. The easy conversion of those who were merely following the course of least resistance or of personal advantage signified no very vital change in their method of life, nor in their thought. They clung stubbornly to ancient superstitions, translating them into terms of the new religion. The cult of a host of saints and martyrs sprang up to take the place of the many local gods of pagan mythology. The pagan who had relied on the protection of the homely gods of the hearth found similar comfort from the adoption of a patron saint. Christian celebrations were created to replace pagan feasts and holidays. For example, the date of Christmas was set on the birthday of Mithras (the unconquered Sun), which had long been a day of joyous celebration in the pagan world. The assimilation by Christianity of so much of popular belief and practice was in no small degree responsible for its almost universal acceptance during this period, but it involved the sacrifice of its early purity and simplicity.

Lowering of standards

The change made by Constantine in the status of the church raised several vexing problems, among them that of the relation of the state to the church, which was to
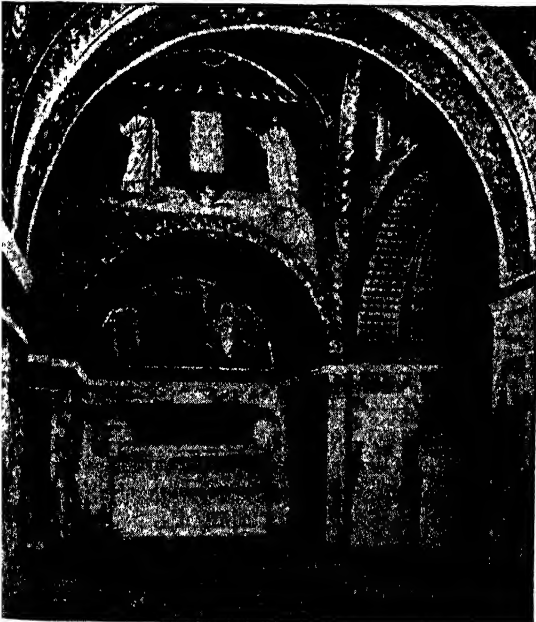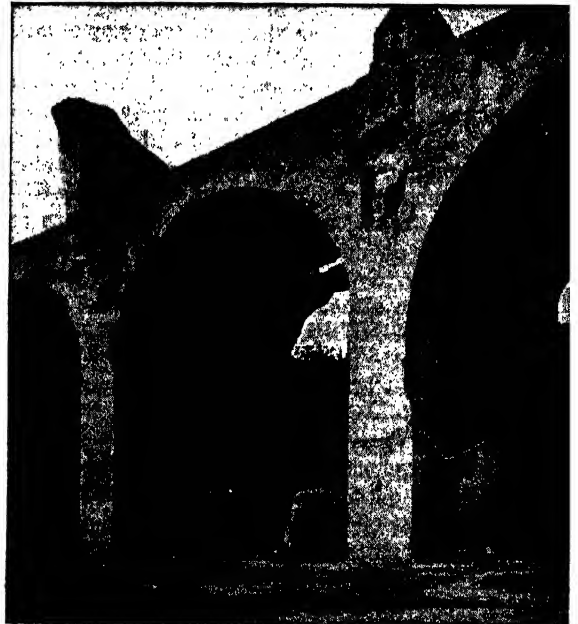
CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE

INTERIOR OF THE MAUSOLEUM OF THE
EMPRESS GALLA PLACIDIA, C. 450

BASILICA OF CONSTANTINE, EARLY
FOURTH CENTURY

EARLY CHRISTIAN ARCHITECTURE

trouble the peace of Christendom for centuries. Hitherto the church,

Church and state

being outside the law, had been left free and independent of governmental interference, save for the attempts to suppress it. Would it retain that freedom after Christianity had become the official religion of the empire? And further, would the emperor, himself a Christian, submit his conscience to the guidance of the church in matters of faith and morals, terms that might be extended to include almost any political act? Or would the emperor insist on controlling the policies of the church, which was growing rapidly in wealth and political influence, on the ground that an absolute ruler could not afford to give up his hold on so powerful an institution? The solution of these problems varied with the centuries, but in the fourth century and thereafter in the East, with few exceptions, the emperors asserted a practical control of the church.

Another problem, which though not new took on a new significance with the official

Growth of dogma

recognition of Christianity, was raised by the necessity of defining Christian belief or dogma in an authoritative way so as to preserve the unity of the faith. In the early days of the church, Christian belief had been relatively simple, dominated by the personality and teaching of Christ. But as time passed, it became necessary to state more clearly certain points not fully explained in the Scriptures, in order to defend Christianity against pagan attacks and also to preserve the purity of the faith, which was in constant danger from the pagan ideas brought in by new converts. Most of the early controversies over points of dogma arose in the Eastern Church. The Greek mind, trained in philosophy and metaphysical speculation, was forced by its own nature to work out clear logical statements of all debatable questions, no matter how abstract. Out of the innumerable controversies resulting from this urge toward speculation and definition, there grew up a body of recognized dogma, accepted by the universal church and called orthodox. The opinions of the minority in each case, which were condemned by the dominant party in the church, were called heterodox or heretical. The distinction between orthodoxy and heresy, between opinions accepted or rejected by the church authorities, was often decided partly by political considerations and after a bitter struggle between the opposing parties.

Both problems, the authoritative definition of dogma and the relation between church and state, arose in an acute form in the decade following the Edict of Milan as the

The Arian heresy

result of a controversy which for some sixty years threatened to break up the unity of the Christian body. The Arian heresy was in its historical consequences the most important of all the variants from orthodox belief that troubled the peace of the early church. The dilemmas presented by the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation obsessed the minds of Greek Christians and caused in one way or another most of the early heresies. Was Christ, the Son of God, fully divine, of the same nature as God? Were the Father and Son, the first two persons of the Trinity, one or distinct, and the latter a creature, created in time and hence on a lower order than the former? And if created in time, how could he be re-created in finite human form? Had Christ become fully human? If not, how could his suffering save and redeem mankind? Stripped of all its involved subtleties and distinctions, the doctrine brought forward by Arius, a priest of Alexandria, about the year 318 was a denial of both the absolute divinity and the complete humanity of Christ. His argument was logical in a literal-minded way, but it would have robbed Christianity of its essential meaning. Both his supporters and opponents felt the question to be of vital importance.

When Constantine took over the government of the East after his defeat of Licinius in 323, he found the church divided into apparently irreconcilable parties. The emperor

Council of Nicaea

never did understand just what the argument was about, but he was quite certain that it must be stopped. He had favored Christianity and was prepared to support it still further in the hope that the well-organ-

ized church would help to unify the empire. It would have just the opposite effect, however, if the church were split into two antagonistic parties. The unity of the church was a vital political issue. To preserve that unity, one side of the argument or the other (Constantine did not greatly care which) must be established as orthodox, and those who would not accept it of their own free will must be forced to do so by the state. As a means of reaching an authoritative decision, the emperor called the first general or ecumenical council of the church to meet at Nicaea in 325. All the bishops were invited to attend, but only seven delegates came from the West. The majority of the bishops were opposed to Arius, and the emperor used all his influence to make the decision unanimous. The council condemned the Arians and drew up the Nicene Creed maintaining the full divinity and humanity of Christ, which with a few alterations has been accepted ever since by most Christian churches as the orthodox statement of faith. Following the council, Arius and his followers were sent into exile.

But Arianism was by no means dead. It continued to spread through the East and among the Germanic tribes north of the frontier. Most of the later invaders of the empire were Arians. The prolonged life of the heresy was very largely due to the continued interference of the imperial government in church affairs. The next emperor in the East, Constantius (337–61), the second son of Constantine, who for a time shared the empire with his brothers Constantine II and Constans, became a convinced Arian and entered the struggle with partisan enthusiasm. The Arian bishops were recalled while the orthodox were deposed, and Athanasius, the great champion of the Nicene Creed, was forced to flee to the West. Council followed council with bewildering and contradictory results. Ammianus Marcellinus, the pagan historian, joyously remarked that "the highways were covered with galloping bishops," and prophesied the dissolution of the church. Heresy seemed about to triumph, but after the death of Constantius the Christians were tempo-

Arian re-action under Constantius

rarily reunited in opposition to a last desperate revival of paganism.

There were still many pagans in the empire. The government had taken no action against them, though Constantius had issued some oppressive edicts which were never enforced. The Roman senate and

Pagan revival under Julian

aristocracy were predominantly pagan, and most of the teachers in the schools carried on the old tradition. In fact, patriotism and literature were the strongest supports of the old religions, and many of the highest social and intellectual classes longed for a return to the ancient gods of the golden age, when Greece and Rome had been truly great. One of these, and the most ardent, came to the imperial throne in 361, Julian (called by Christian historians "the Apostate"), a nephew of the great Constantine. With the reunited empire under his rule, Julian disowned the Christianity he had been forced to profess, and spent his brief reign in a vain attempt to revive all that was best in paganism and to make it the state religion. Julian was in many ways one of the noblest spirits of his age, but he was running counter to the current of the times. The Christians were not so hopelessly divided, nor the pagans so zealous, as he had hoped. He died knowing that he had failed and, according to a legend that is too good to be true, murmuring, "Galilaean, thou hast conquered!" His own legions chose a Christian, Jovian, as his successor.

After the failure of the pagan revival, Christianity became again the imperial religion, and again the Arian controversy tore the eastern churches. On the death of

Arianism under Valens

Jovian after one year's reign, the generals of the army chose as emperor one of their own number, Valentinian I (364–75), who immediately gave the rule of the East to his brother Valens (364–78). The former in the orthodox West could afford to ignore the dogmatic controversy, but in the East it was impossible for the emperor to stand aside. Valens followed the example of Constantius and gave his support to the Arians, who nevertheless were losing ground through divisions and quarrels among themselves. Un-

like the orthodox, they had no definite statement of their faith to hold them together. The year 378 was a momentous year for the Roman Empire. Valens fell in battle against the victorious Goths, the first of a long series of successful invaders of the empire,[1] and with him perished the last hope of Arianism.

Gratian, the son of Valentinian, had already succeeded his father in the West. He now chose as his colleague in the East a Spanish count, Theodosius I (379–95). Both had been reared in the West and were strictly orthodox. As Arianism was mostly an eastern problem, it was left to Theodosius to crush it. In 380 he issued an edict threatening all heretics with legal punishment, and the following year summoned the second ecumenical council of the church at Constantinople, which confirmed the Nicene Creed and condemned Arianism. Further imperial edicts restored all orthodox bishops and forbade the Arians to hold services or build churches. Arianism was suppressed, as it had been fostered, by the power of the state. It still continued strongly among the barbarians, but within the empire its cause was lost. Meanwhile, Gratian was taking steps to stamp out paganism, and in 391 and 392 Theodosius issued stringent laws against idolatry. Sacrifice to pagan gods, whether in public or private, was to be regarded as treason, and paganism gradually died out during the following century. The legal triumph of the church over heresy and paganism and its evolution from a persecuted sect to a persecuting state church were complete.

4. THE LATIN CHURCH: THE RISE OF THE PAPACY

The center of interest in religious history during the fifth century shifts to the West. The church in the East had conquered its most dangerous heretical opponent, though other heresies arose in profusion, springing for the most part from the attempt to define further the exact nature of the union of perfect God and perfect man (established by the Nicene Creed) in Christ. Political rivalry between the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and

The fifth century

[1] See below, page 128.

Constantinople, who were all fighting for supremacy in the Eastern Church, added bitterness to these controversies. But in the long run peace was restored, the primacy of the Patriarch of Constantinople, the imperial capital, was recognized, and through the patriarchs who were their creatures the emperors maintained their control of the church, which gradually sank into a stagnant and somewhat servile quiet. In the West, on the other hand, the imperial power was being weakened and finally destroyed under the shock of successive barbarian invasions, while the Latin Church was growing rapidly in organization, independence, and authority, with a theology peculiarly its own and under the leadership of the bishops of Rome, who fell heir to the universal authority abdicated by the emperors.

The church at Rome and in the West generally during the first two centuries after its foundation was predominantly Greek, Christianity having spread first among the Greek-speaking commercial classes. As it was adopted more widely, however, by all classes, it necessarily drew its adherents from the Latin-speaking majority of the population. Before the end of the persecutions, the Western Church was almost entirely Latin, and the difference in language was significant of other and more important differences between the Christians of the West and their Greek brethren. The very small delegation sent by the western bishops to Nicaea in 325 shows how little interest they took in the problem which was threatening to disrupt the Eastern Church. Throughout the fourth century the gap between East and West was slowly widening. The administrative division of the empire and the founding of a new capital for the East at Constantinople were both cause and result of an actual diversity of interest. After the death of Theodosius in 395, under whom the empire had been briefly reunited, the division into two empires was final and complete. In theory, of course, the unity of the empire was still maintained, but in actual practice East and West went their separate ways independently. And this division in the state was strengthened by a similar split in the church,

The Latin Church

though it, too, maintained its theoretical unity. The knowledge of the Greek language, essential to communication with the East and to an understanding of Greek ideas, was dying out in the West. At the same time there grew up, in the last years of the fourth century and in the fifth, a school of Latin theology and church policy, quite different from the Greek, and destined to shape the thought of western Christendom for more than a thousand years.

The leaders of this movement were three men who are recognized by Latin Christianity as the greatest of the Church Fathers, Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine. Though differing widely in character and in the nature of their contributions, they were all three stoutly orthodox, doughty champions of the unity and authority of the Catholic Church.

The Latin Church Fathers

Saint Ambrose (c. 340–97) was a practical administrator. From his father, the prefect of Gaul, he inherited the tradition of Roman government. In 374 he was elected Bishop of Milan, where the emperor was then residing, and soon became the most influential official in the Western Church. In all his relations with the government he insisted on the maxim that the emperor is *in* the church, not *over* it, and he had the courage and character to force even the great Theodosius to submission, refusing to administer the sacraments to him until he had done full penance for the massacres at Thessalonica. In his writings and his example, Ambrose left to the Western Church a priceless tradition of discipline and independence.

Ambrose

His contemporary, Saint Jerome (c. 340–419) was the most learned of the three, a masterly scholar and linguist. Aside from his numerous works against heresy and his active promotion of monasticism at Rome (of which more hereafter), his great service was the translation of the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek into forceful and eloquent Latin. This task, which occupied twenty years of arduous labor, was completed in 405. The Vulgate, as this version of the Bible is called, was soon accepted as the authoritative text

Jerome

by the Latin Church, as it still is by Roman Catholics, and had an incalculable influence on ecclesiastical literature during the following centuries.

Saint Augustine (354–430) was the theologian among the Fathers, the real founder of Latin theology. Born in the Roman province of Africa, he was trained in philosophy and classical literature and much influenced by Neoplatonism before he fell under the influence of Bishop Ambrose and was converted in middle age to Christianity. In 395 he was made bishop of Hippo in Africa and spent the rest of his life in active pastoral work and in writing. His *Confessions*, written about the year 400, rank high among the world's great autobiographies, as well as among the finest works of religious inspiration. His longest work, *The City of God*, was undertaken after the sack of Rome in 410 to demonstrate that the calamities which had overtaken the empire were not due to the desertion of the ancient gods, but were merely signs that the old worldly empire was passing, to be replaced by a new spiritual empire, the Christian Church. But even more important than these were the numerous works in which he constructed a dogmatic system, in opposition to the Pelagian, Donatist, and other western heresies. Typically Latin, Augustine was not vitally interested in the metaphysical speculations that so attracted the Greeks. On the contrary, his thought revolved about the more human problem of how the individual Christian obtains salvation. And this problem he resolved into a logical and almost legal system of divine justice, in which he pictured all men as damned by the original sin inherited from the fall of Adam, were it not that some have been predestined or chosen from the beginning for salvation through Christ's sacrifice, which salvation comes to them, not by virtue of any action of their own will, for the human will is powerless, but through the working of divine grace upon those who are chosen. This became the orthodox belief, though the church never fully accepted the extreme statement of Augustinianism, and the revival of the question by Martin Luther in the sixteenth century caused a revolution in the church.

Augustine

A PAGE FROM THE CODEX SINAITICUS

This page from the Gospel of Saint Mark is taken from one of the earliest surviving copies of the Greek New Testament. From copies of this kind Saint Jerome translated the Bible into Latin.

SAINT AUGUSTINE

This probably tells us more about early Christian painting than about the great Church Father whom it represents.

The period which marked the growth of Latin theology witnessed also the completion of a centralized system of government in the Western Church. The building of a clerical hierarchy of ascending offices was a matter of slow growth, in which the church followed the lines of imperial administration. Within each Roman *civitas* or municipality since the second century, the bishop had been recognized as the supreme authority in the church. As it grew in size and wealth, lower orders of clergy were created, priests who administered sacraments and cared for the spiritual welfare of the flock, and deacons who were responsible for financial affairs, all under the rule of the bishop. The next step was to create some higher authority that could establish uniformity in belief and practice and enforce discipline over these isolated communities. In the third century councils of all the bishops in a given province of the empire were fairly common. By the

Organization of the Latin Church

end of the fourth century the bishop of the provincial capital, who presided at these councils, had been recognized as the superior of the bishops in his province, with the title of Metropolitan or Archbishop. The Latin genius for government, trained to think in terms of a centralized administration and reinforced by the dangers of disunion in a time of frequent heresies and barbarian invasions, demanded some still higher authority over the whole church. This led to the elevation during the fifth century of the Bishop of Rome to a position of supremacy in the Latin Church, comparable to that of the emperor in the civil government.

As head of the Christian community in the ancient capital of the empire, the Bishop of Rome occupied a position of great political influence at home and of prestige abroad. Already in the fourth century, the pagan Ammianus Marcellinus had noted, with a mixture of admiration and contempt, the wealth, pomp

The Bishops of Rome

and power of the Roman bishops. Their importance was greatly increased after 402, when the emperor deserted the capital to establish his court in the impregnable city of Ravenna, sheltered by its impassable marshes.[1] Thereafter the bishops became the most powerful officials in the city. After the sack of Rome by the Visigoths in 410, Bishop Innocent I (402–17) took the lead in directing and aiding reconstruction. It was Innocent, too, who first definitely asserted his right to supremacy in the Western Church. From the beginning of his reign, he claimed that all the churches of the West owed obedience to the Roman bishop and that in all matters of discipline and usage they should accept his decisions and follow the custom of the Roman Church.

From this point on, events moved rapidly. The bishops in all the provinces were assuming greater powers, due to the collapse of the imperial administration under the shock of successive invasions. In many cities they took over the duties of the imperial officers, acting as judges and governors and using their influence to protect the citizens from their barbarian conquerors. With these new responsibilities they felt more keenly the need of moral support from some higher authority and looked more eagerly to the Roman bishop for guidance. Thus by the middle of the century, Leo the Great (440–61) was able to exercise the full authority over the church, to which as pope (for we may now use that term for the Bishop of Rome) he felt entitled, and that authority was given imperial sanction by a law of Valentinian III, conferring upon him jurisdiction over all the bishops in the Western Empire. Leo I was in many ways the most impressive figure of his generation, a man of remarkable energy, courage, and statesmanlike vision. When Rome was threatened by the Huns in 451 and sacked by the Vandals in 455, it was Leo who carried out the negotiations, successful in the former case, on behalf of the defenseless city. With inflexible purpose he forced the bishops of the farthest provinces to obedience, and in the heretical controversies of his time, he boldly asserted his right

Leo the Great

[1] See below, page 129.

to settle the questions at issue as the final authority in matters of faith. The papacy had still to pass through many vicissitudes of fortune before it reached its full growth, but from Leo's time on, Western Christendom looked to Rome for leadership.

We have seen why some supreme authority in the church was necessary and have traced the steps by which it arose. Before leaving the subject, let us examine some of the reasons why that supremacy should have been given to the Bishop of Rome rather than to any other bishop, and also the theories which bolstered up his claims. From the first the Roman bishop occupied a unique position in the church, as heir in a way to the authority both of Augustus, the founder of the Roman Empire, and of Saint Peter, the traditional founder of the Roman Church. The dominant position of Rome in the empire, as the capital and center of imperial administration, gave to the head of the Christian community there a prestige which no other bishop could equal, and made it natural that he should become the head also of the ecclesiastical administration. Moreover, according to the tradition generally accepted in the church, the Apostle Peter had been the first Bishop of Rome, and to him, as the Bible tells, Christ had given the care of his flock and the keys of heaven and hell, saying, "On this rock will I build my church." As successors to Peter, the Bishops of Rome claimed the full powers given to him by Christ. The Roman bishopric was generally known as the See of Peter or the Apostolic See. Finally their rise to supremacy was aided by the reputation for orthodoxy, built up by a long line of Roman bishops, who, with the Latin instinct for law and authority, stood steadfastly by the letter of the orthodox creeds.

Theory of papal supremacy

5. THE GROWTH OF MONASTICISM

One further aspect of Christian life and thought, and not the least important, came into existence during this period, i.e., monastic as opposed to secular or worldly Christianity In almost every religion which has deeply touched the emotions of men, and where the

The ascetic impulse

ideal of spiritual communion with God has stirred the imagination, some earnest souls have felt an irresistible impulse to renounce all worldly or material pleasures, in order that they might concentrate their desires on the things of the spirit, and to undergo physical suffering, so that they might conquer their bodily desires and give free play to spiritual aspiration. The practice of this renunciation and voluntary suffering is called asceticism. It was not a uniquely Christian impulse (indeed, there is no more than a suggestion of it in the teaching of Christ), but was common in other religions of eastern origin. During the third century, it was given strong support by the Neoplatonic philosophy, of which we have already spoken. In popular Neoplatonism there arose, as a sort of by-product, an oriental concept of two antagonistic forces at war in the universe, spirit and matter. This is known as dualism. It led to the idea that all material interests and all physical appetites or passions are by their nature evil, and that they must be overcome before the spirit, purified by that conquest, can reach its desired harmony with God. This conception coincided with certain aspects of Christian thought and in turn had a powerful effect upon it. Dualism in greater or less degree remained a constant factor in Christianity until at least the end of the Middle Ages. Over against God and the spirit, it set up an unholy trinity of the world, the flesh, and the devil. The truly religious life became that which forswore all connection with these three.

About the beginning of the fourth century, when the church had passed from persecu-

Monasticism

tion to triumph, this ascetic impulse took on a new and more definite form. The crown and rewards of martyrdom were no longer available for those who took their religion hard. The church was no longer a community apart from the world, but had embraced the world. The more deeply religious, then, who felt it necessary to withdraw from the world, were forced also to withdraw in a measure from the church and to seek in solitude, or in the company of an inner circle of the devout, that freedom from worldly contacts that had

been enjoyed by the early church. These motives, strengthened by the growth of the ascetic ideal, drove men out into the desert to live as hermits and later to form communities with those of like mind. They were the first Christian monks.

Monasticism began, as was natural, in the East, the home of asceticism. The first monk of whom we have definite

In the East

knowledge was Saint Anthony, an Egyptian, who in the last years of the third century fled to the Thebaid desert from the world that was too much for him. He lived as a hermit in constant prayer, fasting, and self-inflicted suffering. The tales of his holiness, his visions, and the miracles attributed to him spread through Egypt and attracted others in great numbers to follow his example. The natural instinct of men to live in some kind of organized society soon asserted itself, even among these hermits who had fled from society, and before 325 the monk Pachomius founded the first monastic community with a definite rule of government. As monasticism spread from Egypt throughout the East, thousands embraced it, the majority preferring the orderly communal life with provisions for daily labor prescribed by the rule of Pachomius. There were still many hermits, however, and among these asceticism was often carried to the most eccentric extremes. The classic example is that of Saint Simeon Stylites, who in the fifth century spent thirty-six years on top of a pillar, exposed to the weather and without room even to lie down. But for the most part, the communal life triumphed over the solitary, and an improved rule written by Saint Basil before his death in 374 was adopted by most monks in the Greek Church.

Western monasticism was originally an importation from the East, though it soon became acclimatized and de-

In the West

veloped along characteristically Latin lines. Introduced at Rome, apparently by Saint Athanasius in 339, it soon attracted numbers of both men and women. At first there was some opposition to what seemed an antisocial movement, and Saint Jerome, the most vigorous and influential champion of the monastic ideal in the West,

aroused a good deal of antagonism by encouraging a number of noble Roman ladies to desert the world. But once started, monasticism could not be checked. It became increasingly popular, spreading from Italy to all the provinces, and appealing to a variety of motives. The ascetic impulse was still, of course, the strongest, but there were many who embraced monasticism as a means of escape from intolerable social or family obligations. The movement here passed through the same course of development from the solitary to the communal life as in the East, but western monasticism was always more practical and orderly, laying greater stress on the necessity of discipline and labor. The monks of the Latin Church, too, were much less interested than the Greeks in theological speculation and took less part in the controversies of the age.

To trace the full development of monasticism in the West into a uniform and regulated order, we must go a little **Saint Benedict** beyond the chronological bounds set for this chapter to the sixth century and the epoch-making work of Saint Benedict of Nursia. Born about 480 of a wealthy and noble Italian family, Benedict fled at an early age from the temptations and distractions of the world and, like so many of his generation, sought salvation in a hermit's cell. For three years he lived a life of rigid asceticism and complete solitude, his home an almost inaccessible cave in a precipitous rock. But his very efforts to escape from the fellowship of men brought men to him. The fame of his holiness attracted numbers of monks to his vicinity, who begged him to be their leader. About the year 520 he founded the famous monastery of Monte Cassino, and some time later wrote for the guidance of his monks the rule which was to regulate monastic life for centuries. Wherever the rule was adopted, it checked the restless wandering and the dangerously irregular asceticism of the monks. It provided that the monk should take the three fundamental vows of perpetual poverty, chastity, and obedience, and that thereafter he was bound to remain in the same monastery for life, to obey his superior with humility in all things, to give up all private property, and to cut himself off from all relations with people, even his own family, outside the monastery. Each monastery was a separate institution, ruled by an abbot who was elected by the other monks for life. His powers were limited only by the provisions of the rule and by the supervision of the bishop of the diocese.

Each Benedictine monastery was a small self-contained community. Its members all lived under the same roof and shared the same food at a common table. Saint Benedict had **Life in a Benedictine monastery** had personal experience of the dangers and temptations that accompanied too much solitude, idleness, and unbridled asceticism. He therefore provided for a full schedule of daily activity and forbade all unusual ascetic practices. Part of each day, a large part we would think, was devoted to prayer, meditation, and religious services at prescribed hours, while six or seven hours were to be spent in manual labor in the fields or about the house. Food, though not of a luxurious sort, was to be provided in sufficient quantities to maintain health. There were also special rules for the care of the sick or aged. It was an austere, hard life, but not an impossible one.

The sanity, moderation, and orderly government of the Benedictine rule appealed strongly to the western mind, and in the following centuries it was adopted by all monasteries in the West. It was also applied to the nunneries. As a result of the provisions for labor in the fields and copying manuscripts, the monasteries became centers of civilization everywhere throughout the dark ages, and played an important part in cultivating waste land, improving agricultural methods, and preserving literature and learning.

9

The Barbarian Invasions of the Empire

BEYOND THE FRONTIERS of the empire lay the barbarian world, often hostile and always a menace to Roman civilization. Roman statesmen could never forget for long the danger threatening from the north, where restless and warlike German tribes milled along the Rhine-Danube border, and time and again, since before the days of Julius Caesar, the legions were called upon to expel barbarian invaders. Until the fourth century they were always successful, but the task became increasingly difficult, for the empire was fast weakening as a result of the general decline. Meanwhile, great numbers of Germans had entered the empire peacefully, in small groups, to take service in the army or to work on the large estates. Having settled within the empire, these barbarian immigrants were, in course of time, more or less Romanized, though as their numbers increased they undoubtedly helped to lower the general level of Roman civilization. But if the Roman melting pot could assimilate a slow barbarian infiltration, it could not absorb whole nations, when once the barbarians succeeded in making an armed invasion. And the mass invasions began in 376, when the Visigoths crossed the Danube frontier, setting an example that was soon followed by other tribes all along the northern border. In wave after wave, the barbarian host broke across the shattered frontier, until within a century the Western Empire was submerged beneath the barbarian flood.

Thus was added to the basic Roman culture, modified by Christianity, the third ingredient which went to make up medieval civilization, the influence of the Germanic peoples who from this time on were the dominant force in western Europe.

1. THE EARLY GERMANS

The original home of the German or Teuton race was in all probability the northern part of modern Germany near the Baltic coast and across the   *Origins* sea in the southern portion of the Scandinavian peninsula. Here they may have remained for many centuries with a population held relatively stable by the even balance of their struggle for existence. The acquisition of better tools and techniques, however, probably from the more civilized south, in time gave them a little edge in their eternal conflict with the forces of nature so that the population began gradually to increase. They then began to expand slowly west to the North Sea, southwest, south, and southeast to the Rhine and the Danube, and east to the Vistula. In Caesar's time they occupied all the land he knew beyond the Rhine. Closer contact with Roman commerce now brought them still better tools and weapons, so that it became easier to maintain life, and the population thereafter increased more rapidly.

Our knowledge of the early Germans before they impinged upon the Roman Repub-

lic, and thus made their first tumultuous entrance upon the stage of history, is necessarily vague and uncertain. It belongs to the field of archeology rather than of history. Yet from the implements, weapons, and bones excavated from tombs and village sites we can learn something of their daily life and trace the general trend of their civilization. For actual historical information we are indebted chiefly to a brief account in Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*, known to every student who ever studied Latin, and to a more full and circumstantial account of their manners and customs in the *Germania*, written by the Roman historian Tacitus in A.D. 98. The reliability of the *Germania* has been the subject of endless debate. But even if we accept it as reliable, it must not be forgotten that nearly three centuries of contact with Roman civilization and of development in social and political customs passed between the date of Tacitus' work and the first successful invasions of the empire. Some further information may be gleaned from the German laws, written down later but based on ancient custom. The mass of Anglo-Saxon, German, and Scandinavian folk literature, too, in its earliest origins dates back to the period of the invasions and supplies us with valuable material with which to reconstruct the characteristics of the German of that period.

Sources of our knowledge

The Germans were a tall, powerfully built race. To the small, though wiry, Roman they seemed veritable giants. Their fair skin, blue eyes, and long reddish or golden-blond hair were in equally strong contrast to the swarthy races of the Mediterranean Basin. Hardy and robust they must have been, for none but the strong could survive in that land of forest and swamp, with heavy rain in summer and bitter cold in winter. Their temper reflects the stern conditions of their life. Though hard-headed and canny enough in many ways, they were of a moody and fitful temperament, given to hard drinking, reckless gambling, and fighting. Through all the earliest Germanic literature there runs a persistent strain of melancholy, illuminated by flashes of fierce delight

Appearance and characteristics

in the heady joys of battle. Their virtues, like their vices, were those of a rough, primitive race. Physical courage, loyalty, and hospitality were their prime virtues, as they have always been among men who are called upon daily to pit their strength against the forces of nature and who must depend on their fellows for existence amidst constant dangers from a hard climate, flood, famine, and hostile neighbors.

At the time of our first historical knowledge of them, the Germans had already reached the iron age of civilization and had begun the practice of agriculture, though Tacitus later describes them as still depending for the most part on hunting and on their herds of cattle and swine for their food. They already lived in village communities and, as time passed, undoubtedly developed a more settled way of life with constantly increasing cultivation of the soil. Their agricultural methods, however, remained crude and wasteful. They had very few industries and those the most primitive. The smith, who made tools and weapons, practiced almost the only honored trade. The freeman preferred to devote his time to hunting and fighting, leaving the work in the fields and the making of clothing from skins, wool, and linen to the women and slaves.

Manner of life

Tacitus divides the Germans whom he knew into four social classes: nobles, freemen (evidently the great majority), freedmen (who were little better than serfs), and slaves. Modern historians have disagreed violently as to the extent of the freedom enjoyed by the mass of the early German people. In all probability the gap between the noble and freeman widened as the Germans became more civilized and gained a more coherent organization, with social and political power becoming more closely concentrated in the hands of the noble families. The family, as in most societies, was the social unit; but there was also a larger kinship group, the *sib* or clan, composed of families related originally by blood ties. Members of the clan felt a mutual responsibility for the welfare of their fellows, avenged the death of their kinsmen and supported them in lawsuits or

Social organization

in battle. This clannish loyalty was necessary to the protection of the individual at a time when central government was still loosely and ineffectively organized. Distinct from these family or kinship groups was the *comitatus*, a band of warriors who attached themselves voluntarily to some chief renowned for his courage and skill in war. These "comrades" were attached to their chief by a strong bond of personal loyalty; they fought at his bidding and considered it a disgrace to survive him if he were killed in battle. In return he supplied them with arms, clothing, food, and plunder.

The smallest political unit was the village community, which enjoyed a considerable degree of self-government. The largest unit in the early days was the tribe. In the primitive state described by Tacitus the government of the tribe was in the hands of a council of chiefs, of noble family or distinguished by their courage or wisdom; but all important questions were discussed and decided in an assembly of all the freemen (that is, of the warriors) presided over by the chiefs. During the period of migration, many of the tribes united to form larger groups or nations, and in the process the freemen apparently lost much of their earlier independence and share in the government. The dangers which attended the mass migration of a whole people demanded a more highly centralized government than had been needed in the early days. Before the age of the invasions nearly all the Germanic nations were ruled by kings with the aid of an advisory council of chieftains. The development of kingship was by no means uniform among all the tribes, and the powers of the king were probably not clearly defined, but depended on the character of the individual king and upon circumstances of stress or danger.

Political organization

The social and political ideas of the early Germans were almost completely personal, having to do with family relationships or personal loyalties to a chief or king. The concept of a territorial state as a political entity had not yet arisen among them. This personal character is reflected in their laws, which

Law and justice

dealt mostly with injuries or obligations between individuals. Their laws, moreover, unlike those of the Romans or of the Moslem states, were not the product of legislation on the part of the government plus the precedents established by the decisions of judges, but were made up of immemorial customs of the tribe, handed down from generation to generation, though not put into written form till after the invasions. A crime was considered, not as an offense against the state, but as an injury to an individual, for which the law gave him a means of procuring satisfaction. A trial or lawsuit, then, was a contest between two individuals, with the court acting as the arbiter. There was little attempt to sift evidence in weighing the justice of a complaint. The decision was arrived at by a formal process, in which one party or the other justified himself by a solemn oath, at times aided by the oaths of a number of his friends, or by undergoing some kind of ordeal. The penalty for the guilty was fixed by custom, and usually consisted of a fine. Even murder could be compensated by the payment of a fine or *wergeld* (man-money), the amount of which was fixed according to the rank of the murdered man.

2. THE MIGRATIONS BEFORE 376

The "Wandering of the Nations," as the German scholars call the great migrations into the empire after 376, had in reality begun long before that date. For centuries the increase in population had driven German tribes to seek more fertile or less thickly populated lands, while the pressure of expansion from the interior of Germany piled up the southern tribes against the barrier of the Roman frontier. Germany was not densely populated according to modern standards, but it was a land of forest and swamp, and the early Germans with their primitive methods of agriculture and their reliance on herds and hunting for the greater part of their food needed a great deal of land to support them. Their margin of subsistence was always small, and any increase in population soon caused overcrowding. The migration of a whole tribe or nation, driven from their territory by the pressure of other tribes be-

Cause of the migrations

hind them or begun of their own volition in search of more favorable conditions, was made more easy by the fact that they were not entirely dependent on agriculture and had neither the settled habits nor the traditional attachment to their land of a race of farmers. Sometimes the migrations were peaceful and unopposed; more often they involved the conquest or expulsion of the tribes who occupied the new territory.

As the press of population increased outside the frontiers of the empire, great numbers of Germans drifted across the border to seek employment in the Roman army or to settle peacefully in the rich and protected provinces. By the time of Constantine, the barbarian element in the army had begun to predominate over the Roman, and during the following two centuries, in the West at least, the imperial soldiers and officers, including those of the highest rank, were mostly German. Of those who entered peacefully as farmers, some were given land by the state in deserted regions, while others became tenants on the large private estates. In either case they went to swell the *coloni* class of half-servile agricultural workers. Still others were allowed to enter by tribes as *foederati* or allies, and were given grants of land by the government within the frontier on condition that they should aid in repelling further invasions. This gradual infiltration of barbarian elements into the empire played its part in lowering the level of Roman culture, but it also helped to ease the shock of the great invasions, for by that time the Roman provincials were already acquainted with German customs and the invaders found many of their own race, partly Romanized, already settled in the provinces.

Germans filter into the empire

By the fourth century, the restless wandering of the German people, attended by conquests and alliances, had led to the formation of several more or less clearly defined nations, each composed of an amalgamation or federation of smaller tribes. It will be of service in tracing their later history to note the position of the more important of these on the eve of the great

The nations in the fourth century

invasions.[1] Of the West German tribes (those whose original home was the central southern coast of the Baltic), two great confederations had formed along the Rhine, the Franks on the lower and the Alamanni on the upper part of the river. In the northwest, along the coast of the North Sea and in the Danish peninsula, were the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes who were later to invade England. Of the East Germans (those whose early home was apparently the southern part of the Scandinavian peninsula and the Baltic coast between the Oder and the Vistula), one nation, the Burgundians, had drifted westward to the Main, between the Franks and the Alamanni. The rest had moved south and east, the Vandals to the upper reaches of the Oder, with the Lombards still farther east between the Oder and the Vistula, while far to the southeast were the two great Gothic nations stretched all along the lower Danube and the Black Sea.

By the middle of the third century, the Goths had completed their long migration from the Baltic shores and had divided into two separate nations, the Visigoths or West Goths and the Ostrogoths or East Goths. The river Dniester formed the boundary between them. Of these the Visigoths were brought into closest touch with the empire, which lay just across the Danube from them, and they were the first barbarian nation to invade the empire successfully. During the first three quarters of the fourth century, except for a brief period, 367–69, the Visigoths were on peaceful terms with the Romans and a considerable trade sprang up between them.

The Goths

It was during this quiet interlude that Christianity was first introduced among the Goths, gaining great numbers of converts. Credit for this must be given in large measure to Bishop Ulfilas, who began his forty years of active missionary work among the Visigoths in 341. He was not himself of pure Gothic blood, being descended from a Christian family of Cappadocia taken prisoners by the Goths in a raid of the preceding century, but he was a Goth at heart. As a young man he had been taken to Constanti-

Introduction of Christianity

[1] See map, page 95.
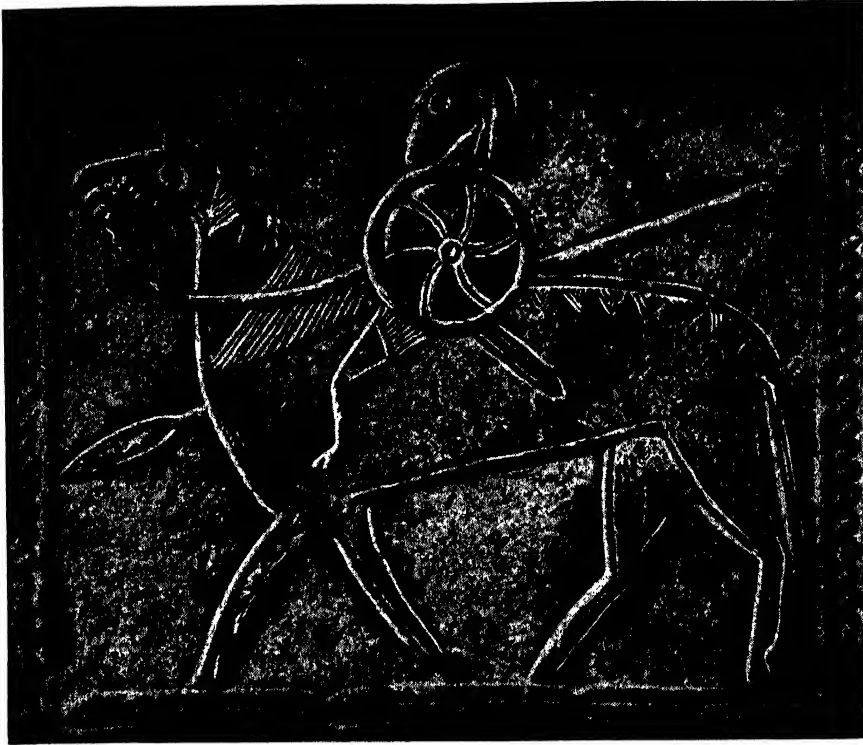
A MOUNTED GERMAN WARRIOR AT THE TIME OF THE INVASIONS

From a relief in Hornhausen

nople, apparently as a hostage, and there received a good education in Latin and Greek. Returning as a missionary to his people, he was amazingly successful. As part of his missionary activity, he translated the Bible into the Gothic tongue, inventing an alphabet modeled on the Greek for the purpose and thereby laying the foundation for a written German literature. Hitherto the Germans had had no writing except the crude *runic* letters, suitable only for carving brief inscriptions on tools or weapons. The translation of so large a work as the Bible into a language which had no traditions of writing must have involved immense labor, even though the gentle bishop did quietly omit the more bellicose tales from the Book of Kings as an unnecessary stimulant to a people already too prone to war. Modern philologists owe a great debt to Ulfilas for this specimen of one of the Germanic dialects three centuries earlier than any other that

has survived. Through the agency of the Gothic Bible, seconded by the personal influence of Ulfilas, Christianity spread widely through the Visigothic people and from them to the Ostrogoths, Vandals, and other German nations before the end of the fourth century. But it was the Arian form of Christianity, in which Ulfilas himself had been trained during the period of Arian domination in the East. As a result, almost all the barbarian invaders of the empire were either pagans or Arian heretics, a fact which added further strain to their relations with the orthodox Romans among whom they settled.

The final invasion of the empire by the Visigoths was not undertaken of their own volition nor with the aim of conquest, but was forced upon **The Huns** them by fear of the Huns, a horde of Asiatic barbarians, new to Europe. These pastoral nomads were of Mongolian or Tartar race.

For centuries they had driven their herds in yearly migrations from the northern to the southern steppes of central Asia, following the seasonal changes in pasture. Forced at last by some obscure disturbance among the races of the interior of Asia to seek new pastures, they launched themselves westward into Europe, falling upon the flank and rear of the Ostrogothic Kingdom about the year 371. Short, broad-shouldered, and bow-legged from much riding, with yellow skin and hideous, beardless faces marked by deep scars inflicted in childhood, unspeakably dirty, thus did the Gothic historian Jordanes later describe these fierce and untamed savages, who seemed more barbarous to the Goth than did the Germanic barbarian to the civilized Roman. The Huns lived, fought, ate, and even slept on horseback. They were far more mobile than the German tribes and their ability to cover great distances in incredibly short time led the Goths to exaggerate their numbers. Their hideous appearance and the fierceness of their mounted attack, too, broke the spirit of the superstitious Goths. By 375 they had conquered the Ostrogoths, and the following year the Visigoths, after a vain attempt to check them at the boundary line of the Dniester, turned in panic to seek protection within the Roman frontier.

3. THE INVASION OF THE VISIGOTHS

In 376, when the Visigoths petitioned for permission to cross the Danube and settle within the empire, the imperial government had been seriously weakened by the recent death of Valentinian I, the able and energetic emperor of the West and the dominating spirit in the imperial partnership. His younger brother Valens, the eastern emperor, was thus left to meet the crisis on his own responsibility, for he could not accept the guidance of the youthful though brilliant Gratian, who had succeeded his father in the West, as he had always done that of Valentinian. The dilemma presented by the Goths might well have troubled a stronger man than the cautious and vacillating Valens. To refuse their petition was to risk a serious war; to grant it was to admit a potential enemy to

Invasion and war

VALENTINIAN I

This colossal bronze statue was probably a fair likeness of the vigorous warrior emperor, but it also indicates in the crudeness of detail a decline in Roman art since the great age.

the heart of the empire. After a long and to the Goths a maddening delay, he decided to admit them on condition that they surrender their arms, give hostages, and settle as *foederati*. All might yet have been well had these terms, humiliating though they were to a warlike race, been strictly enforced. But the corrupt and avaricious officials who supervised the transportation of the barbarians across the Danube neglected to secure their arms, while at the same time plundering them and taking many of their young men and women as slaves. Moreover, no provision was made for feeding the host. Within a year the Visigoths, enraged by this treatment and made desperate by famine,

THEODOSIUS THE GREAT

The great emperor is shown here with his son Arcadius
and Gratian's young brother, Valentinian II.

broke their oath of allegiance and set out to plunder Thrace.

Meanwhile, in the West, Gratian was busy repelling an invasion of the Alamanni on the Rhine and was unable to bring aid to the East till late in the summer of 378. By that time Valens had finally arrived on the scene and had taken command of his army at Hadrianople. Jealous of his nephew's victory in Gaul, Valens decided to engage the Gothic army himself without waiting for the reinforcements which Gratian was bringing from the West. It was a disastrous decision. Before nightfall the emperor and two thirds of his army were slain and the remainder scattered. The battle of Hadrianople marks the beginning of an epoch. For the first time a barbarian host had defeated and almost annihilated the invincible Roman army.

Battle of Hadrianople

The victorious Goths soon found that, though they could ravage the open country at will, they could not capture the walled towns nor consolidate their conquests. The new emperor of the East, Theodosius I, who had been chosen by Gratian as his colleague, was soon able to restore the peace. By 382 the Visigoths were settled in Thrace as *foederati* or allies, retaining their own customs and government. Under the firm rule of Theodosius, the East enjoyed a period of quiet, but in the West there was turmoil and confusion. Two successive revolts of the legions in Britain and Gaul led to the death

The Visigoths and Theodosius

of Gratian (383) and of his younger brother and successor Valentinian II (392). On both occasions Theodosius marched west to crush the usurping emperors who had been raised by the army. The leader of the second revolt was one of the emperor's most trusted generals, a Frank named Arbogast, the first of the barbarian emperor-makers. For a few months after his campaign against Arbogast and his puppet emperor in 394, Theodosius ruled over the whole empire. But it was divided again after his death between his two incompetent sons, Arcadius (395–408), who took the eastern half, and Honorius (395–423), who, though only ten years old, became the nominal ruler of the West.

With the death of the great Theodosius, the Roman Empire fell upon evil times.
Alaric and Stilicho The Visigoths, under the leadership of a young chief named Alaric who was probably raised to the kingship at this time, immediately broke the peace and set out on a plundering expedition through Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece. Alaric was no wild barbarian chieftain, but a soldier trained in the Roman army. He had commanded the Gothic auxiliaries in Theodosius' last campaign and may have turned against the empire through disappointment in not receiving a higher office as a reward for his services. Arcadius seemed helpless to defend his empire, but in the West there was one strong statesman, the commander-in-chief Stilicho, a Vandal who had risen to the highest command in the Roman army under Theodosius, married the late emperor's niece, and now acted as regent for the child Honorius. Stilicho twice marched against the Visigoths, but was prevented from crushing them by the jealousy of Arcadius and the pressure of revolts in the West. Alaric was given some military or governmental post in Illyricum, and from 397 to 401 he settled with his people in the Balkans between the upper Danube and the Adriatic. He now turned his attention to Italy and invaded it in 401 and 403, only to be driven back by Stilicho. Meanwhile, the western frontiers were falling, left unprotected as the legions were called in to defend Italy. In 406 the Vandals, with a host of allies from other tribes, swept across Gaul to the Pyrenees and later entered Spain. In 407 there was another revolt of the remaining legions in Britain and Gaul. And in 408, as though to complete the chaos, Honorius was persuaded to decree the death of Stilicho. The Vandal general, whatever his private ambitions or designs may have been (he had married his daughter to Honorius and there is something suspicious about his repeated failure to crush Alaric when he had him at his mercy), had proved himself the one man who could hold the barbarians in check. His death opened the gates of Italy to the Visigoths.

Alaric met with little opposition as he led his people down into Italy. The emperor had taken refuge behind the marshes that surround Ra- **Alaric invades Italy** venna; the army was disrupted; and Rome was at the mercy of the Goth. By surrounding the helpless city and cutting off supplies, Alaric soon wrung a large ransom from the terrified inhabitants. He then tried to make peace with the emperor, but Honorius, himself safe in Ravenna, refused

ALARIC, KING OF THE VISIGOTHS

This portrait of the great barbarian leader was taken from a seal. It is probably not a speaking likeness.

to meet his terms. In disgust the Visigothic king again besieged Rome and forced the senate to accept an emperor of his own nomination, one Attalus, a Roman noble. But Attalus proved more intractable than Alaric had anticipated and was soon removed from his precarious dignity. As Honorius still refused, with all the stubbornness of a weak nature, to grant Alaric's demand for land, the latter again marched on Rome, captured it, and gave it over to his followers to plunder. The sack of Rome, the ancient capital of the world empire, shook the morale of the Romans as perhaps nothing else could have done. We have seen how it inspired Saint Augustine to write a defense of Christianity against the charge that the disaster had been caused by the desertion of the old gods. After pillaging the city for three days, the Visigoths moved on to southern Italy laden with plunder. Alaric probably intended to pass over to Africa, but his plans were cut short by his premature death late in 410.

Sack of
Rome (410)

The Visigoths, now ruled by Alaric's brother-in-law Ataulf, seem to have wandered aimlessly about for a time, finally crossing in 412 from northern Italy into Gaul. For some time their relations with Rome remained uncertain. In 414 a crisis was caused by the marriage of Ataulf to Galla Placidia, the sister of Honorius, who had been taken from Rome as a prisoner. The emperor was opposed to the marriage, but more friendly relations were restored after the death of Ataulf in the following year. Under the new king Wallia, the Visigoths fought against the Vandals in Spain as allies of the empire, and in 418 or 419 were recognized as *foederati*, forming a kingdom in southwestern Gaul between the Loire and the Pyrenees. From there they later expanded into Spain and by about the middle of the century had occupied the whole peninsula, except the northwest corner. The Visigoth Kingdom continued in Gaul until the coming of the Franks in the early years of the sixth century and in Spain till the Mohammedan invasion of 711. In the part of Gaul ceded to them by Honorius, the Goths took possession of two thirds of the land,

Visigoths in
Gaul and
Spain

leaving one third of each estate to the original owners, who were also allowed to remain under Roman administration.

4. THE VANDALS AND HUNS AND THE FALL OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE

The settlement of the Visigoths in Gaul was followed by a brief period of comparative stability on the part of the barbarian invaders, but it was soon broken by the renewed migration of another Germanic nation, destined to rob the empire of some of her richest provinces. The Vandals, who had crossed from eastern Germany to Spain in the great invasion of 406, had finally been driven to the southern part of the peninsula by the combined force of the Visigoths and the imperial troops. Thence they cast longing eyes across the Straits of Gibraltar toward the rich grain fields and wealthy cities of the North African provinces. Hitherto the Vandals had met with no great success in their wanderings. On the eve of their departure from Spain, however, they acquired, in the person of the terrible Gaiseric (428–77), a king who was to infuse new life into his people and to lead them to victory for nearly half a century. Allowing for the exaggeration of contemporary historians, who regarded him as a bigoted Arian heretic and fierce persecutor of the orthodox, Gaiseric still stands out as one of the most ruthless, if also the most farsighted and capable, of the German leaders of this period. Taking advantage of the disturbance caused by a rebellion of the Count of Africa, and according to tradition invited by him to interfere, the new king of the Vandals led his nation across the straits in 429 and overran the whole North African seaboard, devastating the land as he went. The death of the aged Saint Augustine during the siege of Hippo is one of the memorable events of these tragic years. The emperor was powerless to stem the tide, and in 435 was forced to recognize the Vandals as *foederati*.

The Vandals
invade Africa

But Gaiseric was not long content with partial success. The capture of Carthage in 439, the largest city and most important harbor on the African coast, completed his conquests. Three years later the emperor

ceded the North African provinces to him.

Vandal Kingdom in Africa

The Vandals now turned to the sea in search of further plunder. Using Carthage as a naval base, their ships preyed upon Roman commerce and the unprotected coast towns of the Mediterranean. This systematic piracy struck a deadly blow to the expiring commerce of the empire, while the loss of corn and taxes from the African provinces further depleted the already exhausted imperial treasury. The Vandal Kingdom continued to flourish for nearly a century, to be finally destroyed in 534 by the victorious armies of Justinian.[1]

While Africa was being wrenched away, the empire maintained a precarious hold on

Italy and Gaul

Italy and part of Gaul, though all its powers were declining with ever-increasing rapidity. The death of Honorius was followed by the reign of a usurper, but in 425 the house of Theodosius was restored. Galla Placidia, the widow of Ataulf, had married the Roman general Constantius, and now, once more a widow, returned to Ravenna with her infant son Valentinian III (425–55). For a decade she ruled as regent and thereafter continued to exercise a strong influence over her incompetent and dissolute son until her death in 450. During this period the outstanding figure in the Western Empire was the general Aëtius. A Roman provincial, though married to a Gothic princess, he had spent some years as a hostage to the Huns. For years he maintained a close friendship with the ruling family of the Huns and relied on Hunnish mercenaries for support against the emperor, when he was out of favor, or against the barbarians in Gaul, when he was in the imperial service. Galla Placidia was suspicious of his loyalty, but she was forced to give him command of Gaul and to make him Master of the Soldiers in 429. From that time on, save for one brief period when an attempt to depose him led to civil war, Aëtius acted as prime minister of the crown, the real ruler of the Western Empire. He showed little interest in Africa, but concentrated his attention on Gaul, where he succeeded in keeping the barbarians in check.

He prevented the expansion of the Visigoth Kingdom; repelled the Franks; and with the aid of the Huns crushed the Burgundians, transplanting the defeated nation to southeastern Gaul (443), where they founded a federate kingdom between the Rhone and the Alps.

Meanwhile, the Huns, those fierce Asiatic nomads who had driven the Visigoths across the Roman frontier, had organized a great marauding empire to the north of the Black Sea

The Huns under Attila

and the Danube. Here they hung like a threatening cloud over the Eastern Empire, while Theodosius II (408–50), the son of Arcadius and almost as weak as his father, sought to placate them by the payment of tribute. About 433, the famous Attila came to rule over the united Hun tribes, the Ostrogoths, and the other subjugated European barbarians, increasing the menace by the force of a keen predatory mind and a dominating personality. Attila soon forced Theodosius to double the tribute, but for some years the relations between the powerful Mongol and Constantinople remained peaceful enough. After 440, however, the Huns began to threaten the Eastern Empire more seriously, and throughout the following decade repeatedly ravaged the provinces south of the Danube, exacting a higher tribute on each occasion. This systematic blackmail was brought to an end by the death of Theodosius. Marcian (450–57), his successor, refused to pay the Hun-money and Attila, perhaps judging the devastated eastern provinces scarcely worth further plundering, turned his attention to the West.

The invasion of Gaul by Attila in 451 spread terror through the West, rousing Romans and barbarians to present a united front against the

Attila invades Gaul and Italy

dreaded "Scourge of God." Having crossed the Rhine to the north of Mayence, Attila rode southwest into the heart of Gaul. Near Troyes in the Mauriac plain he met an allied army hastily gathered together by Aëtius and composed of Roman troops, Visigoths, Burgundians, and other *foederati*. In the bloody battle which followed (popularly but inaccurately called the battle of Châlons), neither side

could claim a clear victory. It was generally recognized as a Roman triumph, however, as Attila withdrew from Gaul to his capital in what is now called Hungary. The following year he returned to the attack, this time swooping down over the Julian Alps into Italy, where there were no German federates to aid the disorganized Roman army. After sacking several cities in northern Italy, Attila again retired without attempting to capture the defenseless city of Rome. Legend has accorded the credit for saving the city to Pope Leo I, who held an interview with Attila and persuaded him to spare it. Famine and fever among his plunder-laden troops, however, probably weighed more heavily with the Hun than did the arguments of the good bishop. At any rate, he returned to the Danube and died there a year later (453).

Attila's empire, which had been held together by his strong personality, fell to pieces immediately after his

Disappearance of the Huns

death. It had never become an organized territorial state, nor had it struck roots into the soil. The vassal tribes rebelled and the Huns themselves were soon divided. Within a few years they had broken up or drifted eastward, disappearing into the shadows that for the modern historian veil eastern Europe and the Asiatic steppes. They had passed through Europe like an evil wind, but left no permanent mark, save for the débris of the empire they had helped to destroy.

With the retreat of Attila, the Romans breathed freely again, but not for long.

The Vandals sack Rome (455)

Within two years Rome was in more serious danger than ever. Aëtius, who had never been fully trusted by the emperor, was assassinated by him in 454, and his murder was soon avenged by the assassination of Valentinian himself. So ended the dynasty of the great Theodosius, and in the paralysis of imperial government which followed, Gaiseric the Vandal saw an opportunity too promising to be ignored. Sailing across from Carthage, the Vandals entered Rome without opposition. Again Leo I interceded with the barbarian, gaining a promise from Gaiseric that the lives of the inhabitants

would be spared. For two weeks the Vandals looted the still wealthy city at their leisure, after which they returned home, leaving Rome impoverished.

The two decades following the sack of Rome saw the final disintegration of the empire in the West. Such vestiges of Roman administration as remained in the provinces practically disappeared, while in

End of the Western Empire

Italy the real rulers were the barbarian generals who, with the titles of Master of the Soldiers and Patrician, not only controlled the imperial government as their forerunners Stilicho and Aëtius had done, but created and deposed emperors at will. For the first sixteen years of this period, Ricimer, a German of Suevic and Visigothic descent, occupied this position, to be followed after a brief interval by Orestes and finally in 476 by Odovacar, or Odoacer, a Scirian German and leader of the barbarian soldiers from beyond the Danube who now made up the greater part of the Roman army in Italy. Odovacar, less imbued with the Roman tradition than his predecessors, decided to do away with the futile pretense of creating a puppet emperor. He deposed the last emperor of the West, Romulus Augustulus (the young son of Orestes and satirically named "the little emperor"), and thereafter left the throne vacant, taking the government openly into his own hands, though recognizing the nominal authority of the emperor in the East. Theoretically, this meant that the Roman Empire was once more united under one emperor, who delegated power to the patrician in Italy; actually Odovacar was the independent ruler of Italy and the empire in the West had come to an end. This made relatively little change in the conditions of government, it is true, since the greater part of the Western Empire had long since fallen a prey to barbarian kingdoms, and Italy itself had been ruled for twenty years by barbarian generals. Still, the fact that there was no longer to be an emperor of the West makes the date 476 a significant one.

5. THE OSTROGOTH KINGDOM IN ITALY

After thirteen years of undisputed rule in

Italy, Odovacar, like so many of the emperors whose place he had taken,

Ostrogoths invade Italy found his position threatened by a new barbarian invasion. The Ostrogoths had freed themselves from the overlordship of the Huns after the death of Attila and had migrated into the Balkan provinces of the Eastern Empire, where they alternately ravaged the country and fought for the emperor as *foederati*. Under the vigorous leadership of their king Theodoric, they became a serious menace to the empire, almost equally dangerous whether as friends or as enemies. Theodoric had passed most of his youth in Constantinople as a hostage. He had gained a thorough knowledge of Roman institutions, which showed him the weakness of the empire, though at the same time it aroused in him a great respect for Roman traditions and civilization. Oddly enough, he seems never to have learned to write, but merely traced his name with the aid of a gold plate in which the letters had been cut. In 488, the Emperor Zeno sought to rid himself of a dangerous ally by commissioning Theodoric to invade Italy and suppress Odovacar. After some delay, the Ostrogoths reached Italy in 489. Odovacar was defeated in battle and took refuge in the impregnable city of Ravenna. For nearly three years the Goths besieged the city in vain. At last Theodoric resorted to treachery. Having tricked Odovacar into negotiating a peace treaty, he assassinated him. This act completed the conquest of Italy.

For thirty-three years Italy enjoyed the advantages of a just and moderate government under the Ostrogothic

Theodoric, king and patrician king. Despite occasional reversions to barbaric cruelty and treachery, Theodoric (493–526) proved a worthy successor to the best of the Roman emperors. We may discount the effusions of court poets, but the estimate of Procopius, the historian of the Eastern Empire, may be taken at its face value. "His manner of ruling over his subjects was worthy of a great emperor; for he maintained justice, made good laws, protected his country from invasion, and gave proof of extraordinary prudence and valor." He gave proof, too, of unusual wisdom and tact

in handling a delicate situation, for although he was to all practical intents and purposes the independent ruler of Italy, his constitutional position was rather ambiguous. He was the legitimate king of his Ostrogothic people, but so far as the Italians were concerned his position was that of a nominal agent of the emperor, who had conferred upon him the title of Patrician. Realizing that this strengthened the legitimacy of his government without curtailing his real power, Theodoric continued to recognize the formal superiority of the eastern emperor.

The dual character of Theodoric's government arose from the fact that he ruled two distinct races without making any attempt to draw them together or to encourage fusion.

Two races in Italy

The Goths had appropriated about a third of the land (some scholars say of the public land) and had settled quietly among the resident Romans. Each race retained so far as possible its own legal and judicial system, though cases involving both Romans and Goths were apparently tried in the Gothic courts. The status of the two races was strongly influenced by the fact that the army was purely Gothic. The Goths remained the military caste; their courts were military courts; and their land was granted to them according to custom as federate soldiers. The civil government was as purely Roman. Theodoric made no change in Roman administration or laws in so far as they affected Roman citizens, and all civil offices were filled by native Italians. The old imperial officers, the consuls, and the senate remained with remarkably little change and were among the most loyal supporters of the Gothic king. Even the difference in religion between the Arian Goth and the orthodox Roman, though it caused some friction, seems not to have placed any serious strain upon their relations. Theodoric made no attempt to force his own religion on his subjects, but maintained a policy of absolute toleration. "We cannot," he wrote through his secretary Cassiodorus, "impose religion, because no one can be compelled to believe against his will."

Perhaps the greatest change made by the

Gothic king was the introduction of peace, security, and revived prosperity in Italy during his long reign.

Revived prosperity

Agriculture and commerce flourished as they had not done for a century. Justice was administered with greater firmness and integrity. Long-neglected harbors, aqueducts, and public buildings were restored and new ones erected. Italy was still far removed from the good old days of Roman prosperity, but better off than she had been or than she was to be again for centuries to come. Unfortunately, Theodoric's work died with him. Factional strife broke out soon after his death, and by 555 the Ostrogothic Kingdom in Italy had been crushed by the armies of the great eastern emperor, Justinian.[1]

The brief period of peace brought with it a slight revival of intellectual life, but could not check the steady decline of Roman culture. Rather, the work of the Latin writers who flourished under Theodoric merely serves to demonstrate the drift toward barbarism in the West. The great age of classic literature was buried in the distant if unforgotten past, while the creative period of Christian writing had ended with Augustine, the last of the fourth-century Latin Fathers. The representative writers of this period, Boëthius and Cassiodorus, both Romans in the service of Theodoric, contented themselves with translations from the Greek, the knowledge of which was dying out in the West, with slim commentaries on the work of earlier commentators, and with compilations and epitomes of earlier learning. The Roman mind, half-barbarized, could evidently no longer appreciate the full scope of antique thought, nor could it create an independent literature of its own. The most original work of this age, the *Consolations of Philosophy*, written by Boëthius in prison while awaiting execution as the result of a conspiracy against Theodoric, has charm and pathos, but it is no more than an eclectic echo of various ancient philosophical systems, in which the sole originality lies in the author's choice of such materials as suited his needs. Yet the labor of

Continued decline of culture

[1] See below, page 141.

these scholars was not unimportant, because unoriginal. By bringing the thought of the civilized past down to the level of a more barbaric age, they kept it alive and furnished the groping minds of a still darker period to come with material not too far above their range of comprehension, so that they might in time recover something of the fading heritage of Greece and Rome. Boëthius and Cassiodorus were to rank high among the most popular authors of the Early Middle Ages.

In tracing the principal migrations of the barbarian peoples during this confused period, we have so far ignored the conquest of Britain, not because it is unimportant, but because it stands somewhat apart from the main current of events on the Continent. Early in the fifth century the Roman legions had been withdrawn from Britain for the defense of Italy and Gaul, leaving the Britons to their own devices. During the next two centuries the distant island province, almost unnoticed by Rome, was overrun by a Germanic nation or coalition of nations, the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, who sailed over from their home in northeastern Germany on the shores of the North Sea and laid in Britain the foundations of the English people. Little is known of the actual course of the conquest, save that it occupied a long period of steady migration and of thorough occupation of the land. Seriously begun probably about the middle of the fifth century (though there had been piratical raids on the east coast of Britain long before that), it was completed by the end of the following century. The Romanized Celts who made up the provincial population were either annihilated or driven back into the hills of Wales and Cornwall in the southwest corner of the island. They seem to have had little or no influence on the religion, language, or manners of the invaders, who remained Germanic and pagan. It was the most thorough and complete conquest made by any of the barbarian nations.

Anglo-Saxons in Britain

We have ignored the Franks, too, in the long run the most important of all the barbarian invaders. For the conquest of Gaul by the united Frankish tribes, begun in the last years of

The Franks

the fifth century and completed early in the sixth, was but the beginning of a long story and one that forms the central theme of western European history for some centuries. It will be left to a later chapter for fuller treatment than could be afforded it here.

By the end of the fifth century Roman government had completely disappeared in the Western Empire, its place being taken by a number of barbarian kingdoms.[1] Italy was ruled by the Ostrogoths, North Africa by the Vandals, Britain by the Anglo-Saxons, southwestern Gaul and Spain by the Visigoths, and southeastern Gaul by the Burgundians, while the Franks had already conquered what remained of the latter province. Of these only the Franks and the Anglo-Saxons were to retain their conquests. The remainder were soon to lose their political identity and in time even their racial identity, having merged with the people among whom they

Summary

[1] See map, page 134.

had settled. For it must not be forgotten that, except in Britain, the invaders were never more than a minority of the population of the conquered provinces. Statistics as to their actual numbers vary so widely as to be obviously unreliable, but it has been suggested that none of the invading nations numbered above one hundred thousand. Gaiseric's army, according to tradition, counted eighty thousand fighting men, though this is probably an exaggeration. At any rate, the numbers were small enough to permit the final absorption of the barbarian by the Roman stock to a very large extent. The fusion of the two races was accompanied by a fusion of cultures. The barbarian became more civilized through contact with the Roman, while on the other hand the Roman was drawn down closer to the level of the barbarian. The final result was a mixture of the Latin and Germanic past, welded together to make up medieval civilization.

SECTION C

The Early Middle Ages

(c. 500 — c. 1050)

With the disappearance of the Roman Empire in the West, Europe may be considered to have entered upon that period of its history vaguely known as the Middle Ages. It is a rather misleading term, but hallowed by centuries of use and difficult to replace. The term Middle Ages was first coined by Renaissance historians, who regarded the thousand years following the collapse of the Roman Empire as merely a middle period of Gothic barbarism, separating the glorious age of antiquity from their own great age of the revival of classic civilization. More modern historians have retained the term because it serves a useful purpose and has been so long accepted; but they have shown that its original meaning was based on a complete misconception of the nature of European history. The Middle Ages were much more than the name implies; for it was during those thousand years that the modern world was made, and they also produced a civilization different from that of the age before or after and well worthy of study in its own right. But if it is a mistake to treat the Middle Ages as a negligible period, it is equally misleading to treat the whole period as a single, coherent age. For even the most summary purposes of classification, ten centuries are too long a time, and they wit-

nessed too many sweeping changes, to be grouped together under one name if that name is to retain any significance. For greater convenience, therefore, we have made further divisions, and will treat first under the heading of the Early Middle Ages the period extending roughly from the end of the fifth to the middle of the eleventh century. Changes in plenty occurred even within this shorter period, but it had certain characteristics that mark it off from the more settled age that followed. It was during these five and a half centuries, which began with the final disintegration of ancient civilization, that in the almost purely agrarian society of western Europe and in the more cultured East the foundations were laid for that new type of civilization which we think of as typically medieval. It was in this period that the Roman Empire in the East became Byzantine, that Mohammedanism transformed the culture of a large part of the Roman world, that the Germanic and Scandinavian peoples settled down in their permanent dwelling places, that feudal society began to take definite shape, and that the feudal kingdoms on the one hand and a united Catholic Christendom on the other emerged from the tangled chaos of the barbarian conquests.
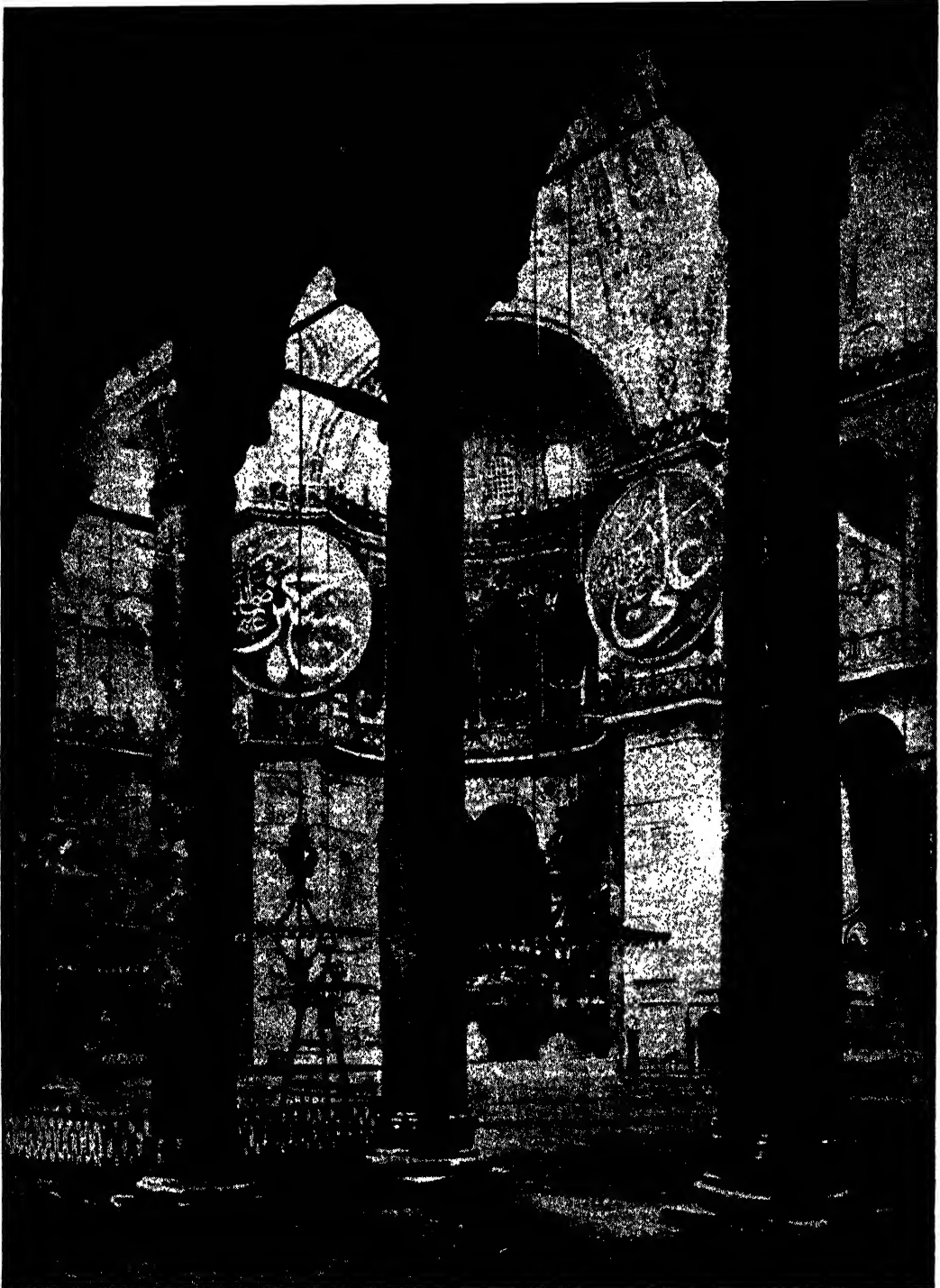
INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH OF SAINT SOPHIA, CONSTANTINOPLE

This most magnificent of Byzantine churches was constructed by Justinian. It was for centuries a Mohammedan mosque, and is now a Turkish museum. The present-day Mohammedan decoration strikes an odd note in Justinian's church.

10

The Eastern Empire Becomes Byzantine

WHEN CONSTANTINE THE GREAT by imperial decree established a "New Rome" on the impregnable site of the ancient town of Byzantium, calling it Constantinople, he gave to the eastern or Greek half of the Roman Empire a capital of its own and a focal center for its administration and its culture. Thenceforth, with occasional exceptions during the fourth century, the two parts of the empire were divided into separate administrative units. In theory the empire was still one and united, but as time passed the two sections drifted farther and farther apart, separated by differences in language and in religious and political interests, until at last the actual division assumed a greater reality than the theoretical unity. After the Western Empire was destroyed by the barbarian invaders, the last link connecting the Greek East with the Latin West was broken. Only the Eastern Empire remained, exclusively Greek in culture and inhabited by people of eastern origin. The old tradition of the Roman Empire, however, died hard. The emperor at Constantinople still claimed lordship over the lost provinces, and in the sixth century Justinian partially realized for a time the dream of restoring the West to imperial rule. Until its final collapse in the fifteenth century, the empire continued to call itself Roman. But even under Justinian the empire was drifting further from the Roman traditions, continuing the steady development of social and political institutions, religious ideas, and a culture based on its Greek and oriental heritage rather than on that of Rome. To call this later empire Roman, as did the people of the empire themselves, leads to confusion and a misconception of its true nature. A better name is that commonly used by historians and derived from Byzantium, the original name of the city of Constantinople. Hereafter we shall call it the Byzantine Empire.

1. JUSTINIAN'S DREAM OF RESTORING THE ROMAN EMPIRE

For more than a century after the death of the great Theodosius in 395, the empire in the East was not distinguished by strong government. Its rulers were able to do little more than preserve their state from the assaults of barbarian enemies, while making little attempt to save the West from destruction or to reform conditions in their own empire. A new and more glorious era in the imperial annals opened with the proclamation of the Emperor Justin in 518. An Illyrian peasant of Latin race, Justin had neither education nor experience in government beyond that supplied by his training in the army. But he had a nephew named Justinian, who soon became the power behind the throne and directed his uncle's government until the death of Justin in 527, when he succeeded him as emperor. Thanks to his uncle's generosity, Justinian had been given all the advantages of education and training that the older man lacked. Moreover, he

Justinian (527–65)
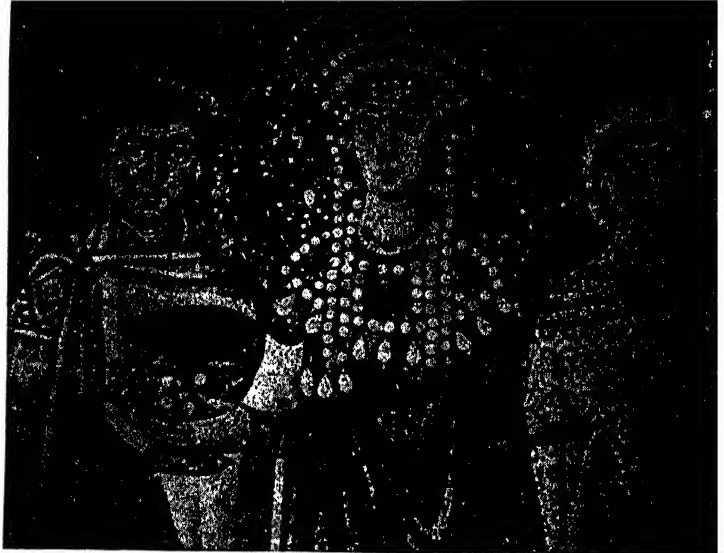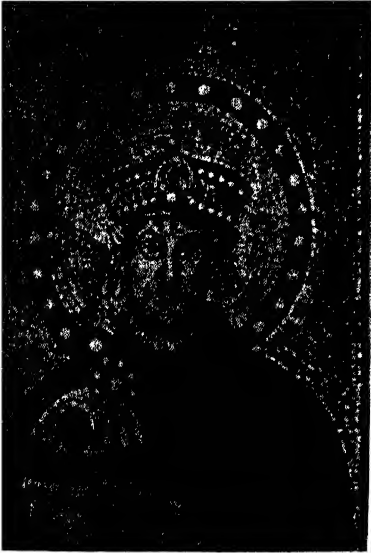
JUSTINIAN (*left*) AND THEODORA (*right*)

The mosaics above are contemporary portraits of the famous imperial couple in the churches of San Apollinare Nuovo and San Vitale, respectively, both in Ravenna.

had intelligence of a high order and an amazing capacity for work. His tireless attention to the details of administration caused one of his courtiers to describe him as "the emperor who never sleeps." On the other hand, there were weaknesses in his character that at times threatened to nullify the results of his labor. In moments of unusual stress he sometimes showed a sad lack of firmness and decision.

This weakness, however, was fortunately counterbalanced by the iron nerve of his wife Theodora, who more than once, as during the Nika riots in Constantinople in 532, bolstered up his failing courage and saved him and the empire from disaster. Theodora knew the people as Justinian never could. She was the daughter of a bear-keeper in the hippodrome and had herself been a popular actress there. All contemporary writers agree as to her charm and beauty, her keen intelligence and her influence over Justinian, whom she had married in the days before he was elevated to the throne. As empress her power was greater than that of any of her predecessors. Until her death in 548 she shared the government of the empire with her husband, almost as a colleague.

Throughout his reign, Justinian was in-

Theodora

spired by one great ambition — to restore the Roman Empire to all its former greatness. Under the inspiration of that dream he undertook to reconquer the lost provinces of the West, to rebuild the fortifications and public buildings of the empire, and to dazzle the world with the splendor of his court and capital. It was an ambition noble in itself, but its fulfillment was beyond the powers of the state as he found it. A second ambition, which he thought to be a necessary part of the first, was to establish in the most complete way the absolute, autocratic power of the emperor as the sole source of authority. His exalted conception of the emperor's powers and duties led him to make much-needed reforms in the administration and law, but it did not restore the imperial tradition of the great days of Rome. Though he may not have realized it, Justinian was merely following the tendencies of the later orientalized rulers, completing their work in making the empire an eastern autocracy. Since the time of Diocletian, Roman citizens had been reduced to the position of subjects. Now they became little better than slaves.

Justinian's first opportunity for interference in the West was afforded by a dynastic revolution in the Vandal Kingdom in Africa.

Justinian's aims

On the pretext of restoring the rightful ruler, Justinian sent an army under the command of the brilliant general Belisarius in 533. The Vandal resistance proved amazingly weak, and within a year Belisarius had completed the conquest of the kingdom. A similar dynastic dispute gave Justinian a pretext for invading the Ostrogothic Kingdom in Italy in 535. Belisarius again led the imperial troops to victory. By 540 he had conquered all of the peninsula south of the river Po. In both North Africa and Italy the imperial administration and law were reintroduced — also, unfortunately, the imperial taxation which proved ruinous to the liberated provincials. When a new Gothic king, Totila, crossed the Po to regain the kingdom, the Italians were ready to welcome him. Justinian was sadly hampered by lack of money and by war with Persia on the eastern frontier. The war dragged on until 555, when the imperial army under Narses, who had replaced Belisarius, completed the conquest of Italy. Meanwhile, Justinian had also succeeded in reconquering southeastern Spain from the Visigoths and in recovering the islands of the western Mediterranean.[1]

In his zeal to restore the prestige of the Roman Empire, Justinian also sought by the use of skillful diplomacy to dominate the barbarian tribes beyond the frontiers — the Lombards and other Germans, the Slavs who had migrated from what is now Russia to the Danube, and the Bulgars, Avars, and other Mongolian peoples who had followed the Huns from Asia. This was necessary for defense as well. For the wars in the West and with Persia had forced him to withdraw many of the troops from the frontiers, and though Justinian built or reconstructed at great expense a ring of forts about the empire (some six hundred in the Balkans alone), there was still serious danger of invasion. His principal aim was to gain allies among the neighboring tribes. Bribes, titles, and tribute were scattered with a lavish hand. No expense was spared to advertise the splendor and power of the emperor. Barbarian chieftains were invited to Constanti-

Reconquest of the West

Diplomacy and defense

[1] See map, page 144.

nople, where the magnificence of the court and the extravagant ceremony surrounding the person of the ruler made a profound impression on their simple minds. Finally, the imperial diplomats, with that unscrupulous subtlety for which Byzantine diplomacy became famous, stirred up strife among the barbarians in order that they might destroy one another for the good of the empire. This system as perfected by Justinian, though many of the methods were already familiar, continued in force for centuries. It was not always successful; it placed a heavy strain on the imperial treasury; and it aroused the cupidity of the barbarians. Even during Justinian's reign the Balkan provinces were repeatedly ravaged by the Slavs and after his death they settled there in force.

The fault inherent in all of Justinian's grandiose plans was that their fulfillment cost more than the empire could afford. His military and diplomatic operations were expensive enough. To them was added the ruinous expense of restoring and constructing roads, bridges, aqueducts, theaters, palaces, and churches on a scale befitting the grandeur of the Roman Empire. The capital especially, part of which had been destroyed by fire during the Nika riots, was rebuilt in the rich and ornate style of architecture, more oriental than Roman, known as Byzantine. The great church of Saint Sophia, the finest example of this style, still stands as a monument to Justinian's reign, though for centuries it served as a Mohammedan mosque and has recently been converted into a museum.

Public buildings

Under such conditions the problem of filling the imperial treasury became one of the most vital concerns of the government. Justinian was sincerely anxious to be a good as well as a great ruler, but his constant need of money forced him to tolerate the methods of his hated minister, John of Cappadocia, who fleeced the people unmercifully. The Nika riots of 532 in the capital were a protest against his administration and were suppressed only after Belisarius had massacred some thirty thousand of the rioters. After this affair, Justinian undertook to reform the administration so as to protect the

Administrative reforms
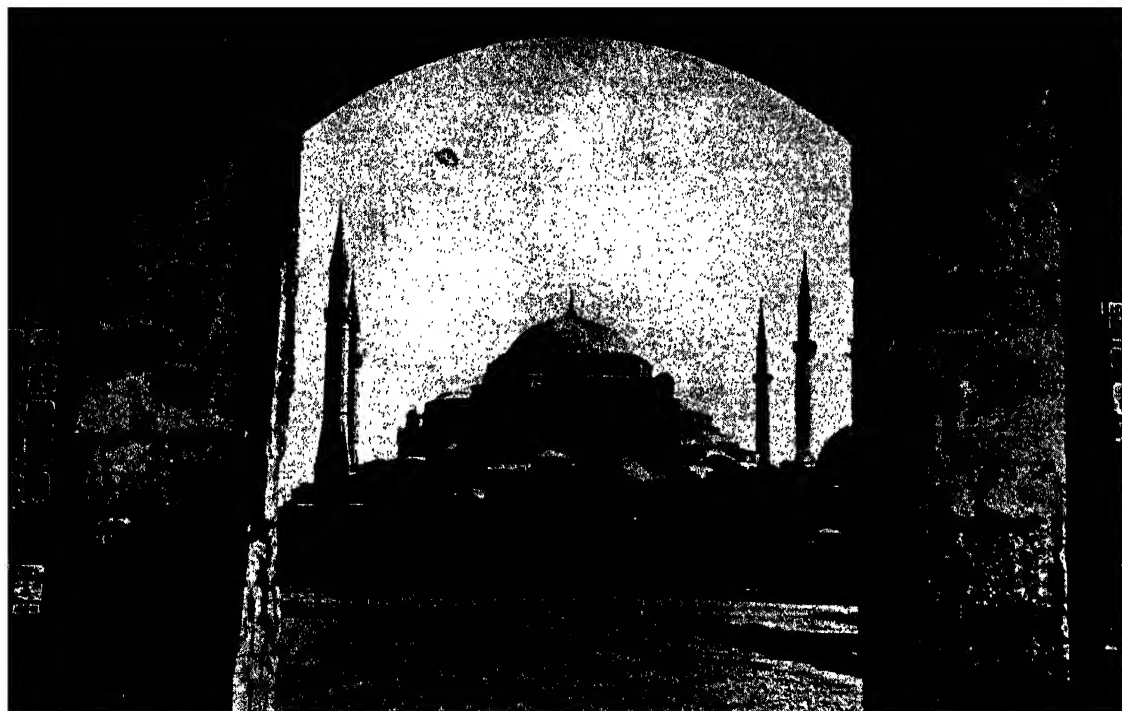
CHURCH OF SAINT SOPHIA, CONSTANTINOPLE
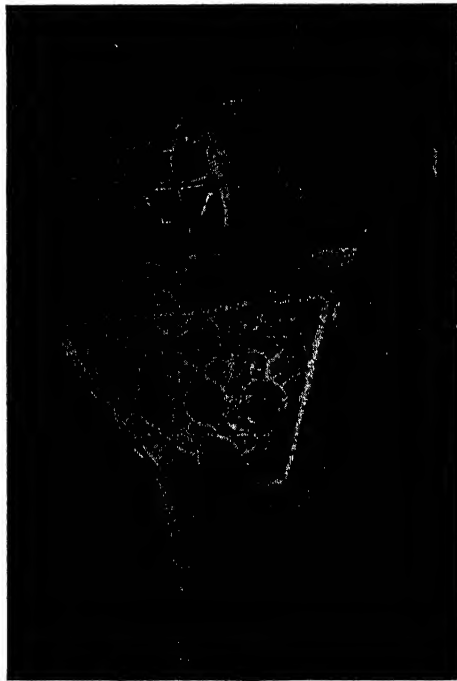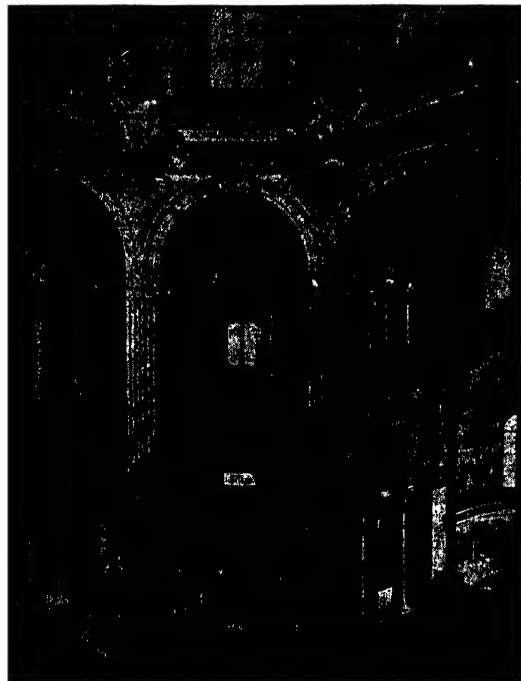
CHURCH OF SAN VITALE, RAVENNA

Interior and detail of choir, constructed during Justinian's reign.
Some of the finest Byzantine architecture still surviving is in Ravenna.

taxpayer from illegal exactions and at the same time to increase the income of the government by checking corruption and by making the civil service more efficient. The sale of offices, which led the men who had purchased them to recover their money at the expense of the people or the government, was abolished and salaries were increased so as to make graft unnecessary. Regular steps of promotion in the service were instituted to encourage industry and efficiency. At the same time, a good many useless offices were done away with and the whole system was brought more directly under the control of the central government, thus increasing the absolute power of the emperor. The result was an administrative machine which preserved the empire through many a crisis in the following centuries.

As has been said, Justinian was determined to make the emperor the sole authority in the state, interpreting that authority to include every aspect of the people's life. Religion was too important a factor to be ignored by a ruler with such absolute claims, and, besides, Justinian was a theologian at heart. Since the time of Constantine, the emperors in the East had exercised a greater control over the church than had their colleagues in the West. They had dominated church government and most of them had used their civil powers to crush opposition to the dogmas which the church had declared to be orthodox. Justinian, however, went one step further, and an important step it was to prove for the future of the Greek Church. He asserted the right of the emperor to decide disputed points of dogma himself and to force acceptance of his opinions on the church and the people. He thus became the effective head of the church in matters of faith as well as of government, while the church became practically a department of state. The Greek Church was never after able to free itself altogether from this subservience to the emperors.

Justinian and the church

One further task undertaken by Justinian, the most important in its permanent and far-reaching effects on later European civilization, remains to be mentioned. This was his codi-

Justinian Code

fication of Roman law, the work with which his name is most commonly associated. There were two kinds of law recognized by the Roman courts. First, there was the direct imperial legislation, laws called "constitutions," issued by the emperors themselves. Then there was a great body of jurisprudence, composed of decisions handed down by authorized judges and lawyers. Through the centuries a great mass of law had accumulated until it became unwieldy and confusing. Some attempt at straightening out this legal tangle had been made by Theodosius II, who in 438 had issued the *Codex Theodosianus* or Theodosian Code including the imperial constitutions since Constantine. However, much still remained to be done if Roman law were to be preserved. Justinian set himself to the task in the first year of his reign, appointing a committee of ten jurists, of whom Tribonian was the most famous, to compile a new code. The *Codex Justinianus* or Justinian Code was completed the following year and given its final form in 534. It included all imperial legislation up to that time in condensed and simplified form, with everything that was obsolete, contradictory, or repetitious eliminated and the whole arranged in logical order. The still more difficult task of carrying out a similar condensation and simplification of jurisprudence was begun in 530 under the guidance of Tribonian and completed in three years. It is known as the *Digest* or *Pandects*. To this was added a brief official handbook or text for the use of students, called the *Institutes*. These three works, together with the *Novels*, a collection of the laws issued by Justinian himself, are collectively known as the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, the body of civil law. In it was preserved all that was most valuable in Roman law in a clear and available form for the use of later generations. It forms the basis of civil law in most European countries today.

Justinian left the marks of his handiwork on many aspects of Byzantine life and government. The law, the church, the administration, diplomacy, and the position of the emperor in the state through the following centuries were all influenced in greater

Failure of Justinian's dream

Byzantine Empire, 527

OSTROGOTHS
Danube R.
Constantinople
P . . o
VANDALS
SASSANIDS

Byzantine Empire, 565

VISIGOTHS
LOMBARDS
Euphrates R.

Byzantine Empire, c.700

AVARS
LOMBARDS
Danube R.
BULGARS
TAURUS MTS.
C
P . . o
A
L
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P
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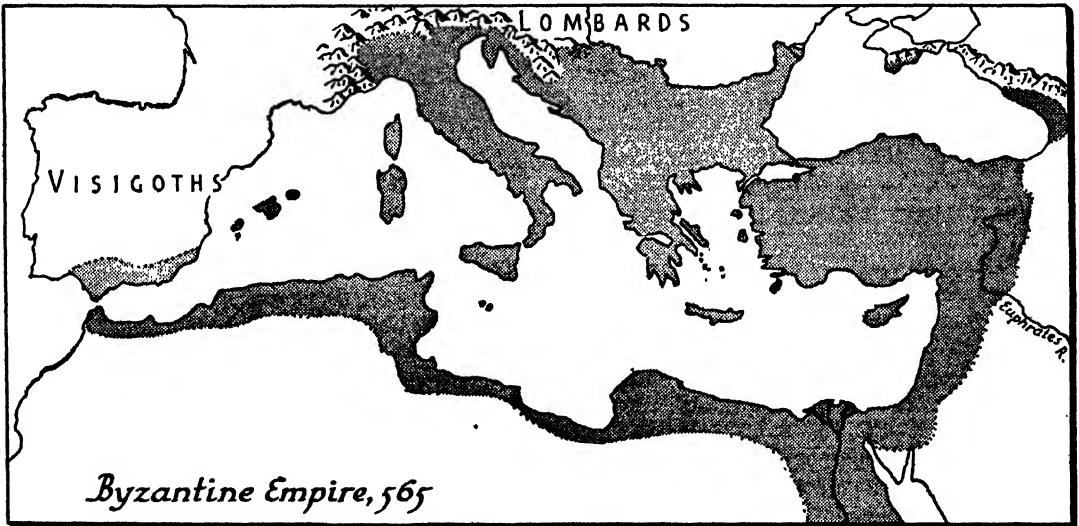
or lesser degree by his work, while the great public buildings he had erected remained a permanent memorial to his reign. But his greatest ambition, the dream of restoring the Roman Empire to its former size and grandeur, was doomed to failure. His plans of conquest and reconstruction had far exceeded the financial resources of the empire. On his death he left the state bankrupt and the people crushed by the weight of intolerable taxation. The empire was so exhausted that it was unable to hold the reconquered provinces of the West or to repel new invaders in the East. The following century saw the empire cut down to a mere fraction of its former size. Indeed, the conquest of the West had been a mistake. Had Justinian devoted his great powers to strengthening the empire in the East he would have deserved greater praise. He could not check the steady development of the empire into a Greek and oriental state. Such portions of his work as in fact remained tended rather to emphasize the eastern character of the empire than to restore the ancient Roman tradition.

2. THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE SURVIVES

The reign of Justinian was followed by a period of repeated losses and disasters, during which the Byzantine Empire was reduced to the territory that, with some variations, it retained till the end of the Middle Ages. Within a generation the Lombards invaded Italy and conquered most of it;[1] the Visigoths recovered the part of Spain conquered by Justinian; the Slavs and other barbarians occupied all of the Balkan provinces except Thrace and the coastline of Greece; and the Persians began a war which left both Persia and the empire exhausted. After the death of Mohammed in 632, the Arabs, now welded into an aggressive nation and inspired by his teaching, set out on a career of conquest at the expense of the empire. By the year 700, they had wrested from it all the provinces in Africa and in Asia, except the peninsula of Asia Minor which lies between the southern shore of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Thus the

Loss of territory (568-700)

[1] See below, page 167.

Byzantine Empire was cut down to a comparatively small territory, part in Europe, part in Asia, centering about the city of Constantinople.[1]

Despite the loss of so many provinces and the almost continuous danger from Mohammedans and Slavs, the Byzantine Empire survived until the middle of the fifteenth century. More than once in that long period it seemed doomed to destruction; it suffered at times from revolution, anarchy, and bad government; but it always recovered. It has been said frequently enough that the most remarkable characteristic of the empire was its power of recuperation. Until fairly recent years historians, following the example of Gibbon, have emphasized the weakness, corruption, and cultural sterility of Byzantium and have pictured the empire as in a state of perpetual decline. There were, indeed, elements of weakness, both political and social, in the Byzantine Empire. But there were also elements of strength and amazing vitality.

Survival of the empire

The absolute powers enjoyed by the emperors who followed Justinian, though dangerous in the hands of a weakling, were a source of great strength when wielded by a strong ruler, and there were many strong rulers in Byzantine history. Time and again in moments of extreme danger a man of powerful personality fought his way to the throne and infused new life into the empire. His control of every department of state, including the church, made it possible for an able emperor to use all the powers of the state to the best advantage. Nor were the results of weak rule as disastrous as they might have been; for the administrative system as organized by Justinian was capable of carrying on the business of government even during a revolution. The imperial authority and the centralized administration gave a real political unity to the state, and this was further strengthened by the religious and cultural unity of Byzantine society. The people of the empire were of many races and were constantly recruited by immigration from beyond the frontiers; but whatever their ori-

Elements of strength

[1] See below, pages 154-156, and map.

gins, they were or soon became orthodox in religion and Hellenic in culture — an important factor in explaining the tenacity with which they clung to their empire against heavy odds.

Through all its changes of fortune the Byzantine Empire enjoyed an economic strength that enabled it to recover from the most serious reverses. The geographic position of the empire, and especially of the capital, gave it unequaled opportunities for trade. Straddling the narrow Sea of Marmara, between Europe and Asia, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, the empire was the meeting-place of trade routes running east and west, north and south. The commerce of the world was trans-shipped in the harbors of Constantinople, bought and sold in its markets. For centuries it was one of the richest cities of the world, "the city of the world's desire." Stimulated by trade, the capital and other imperial cities became centers of thriving industry. Constantinople was especially famous for the manufacture of all articles of luxury.

Economic strength

Nor was it only as a commercial and industrial center that Constantinople gave strength to the empire. Its site, chosen by the warrior Constantine, made it impregnable to attack. Open to the sea, it could not be starved into submission, and built as it was on a small peninsula, only the landward side needed defense. Here it was guarded by walls so strong and so well fortified that they could be held against any army not equipped with modern artillery. Wave after wave of invasion, which might have destroyed the empire, broke against the city walls. Only twice since the days of Constantine has it been taken by siege.

The impregnable city

So much for the factors that helped the empire to survive. Let us now glance for a moment at the reverse side of the shield and note the evidences of weakness. There was one serious disadvantage in the imperial system. No fixed rule of succession had been worked out. A strong emperor might nominate his successor with a fair hope of his being accepted by the people. But the

Elements of weakness

right of heredity was not legally recognized, and in theory the emperor was still proclaimed by the senate and the army with the concurrence of the people, though there was no regular method by which they could make their choice. If the late emperor's nominee were not accepted, the result was usually decided by intrigue and violence. Moreover, the absolute powers of the emperor invited revolution. So long as he ruled there was no check upon his authority. But any man who could gain the support of a powerful faction in the army, at court, in the church, or among the people of the capital might succeed, with luck, in assassinating the emperor and being proclaimed as his successor. He would then enjoy all the powers that went with the imperial purple. It was a prize worth fighting for. True, many successful revolutions placed a strong man on the throne in place of a weakling, at a time when strong government was needed. Yet the system led to perpetual intrigue, plots, and riots, which threatened the security of the government and the state.

Part of the responsibility for this condition must be accredited to the character of the Byzantine people. Much has been written about the vices and weakness of that cultivated, luxurious, and pleasure-loving society, always excitable, capricious, and easily aroused to factional passion. No doubt these characteristics have been overemphasized; for as one historian remarks, "It may be doubted whether any empire can live by vice alone." There must have been counterbalancing qualities of thrift, industry, and tenacious courage. Yet it cannot be denied that the society of the later empire was politically unstable. Disputes over points of theological dogma, economic or political grievances, the ambitions of a popular leader or the unpopularity of a minister could stir feeling to fever heat. The hippodrome, center of Byzantine social life, was often the scene of popular riots that sometimes assumed dangerous proportions. Two rival parties, the Greens and the Blues, sponsored the chariot races which were the chief attraction of the hippodrome, and the victory of one or the other was a matter of state-wide

Social weakness
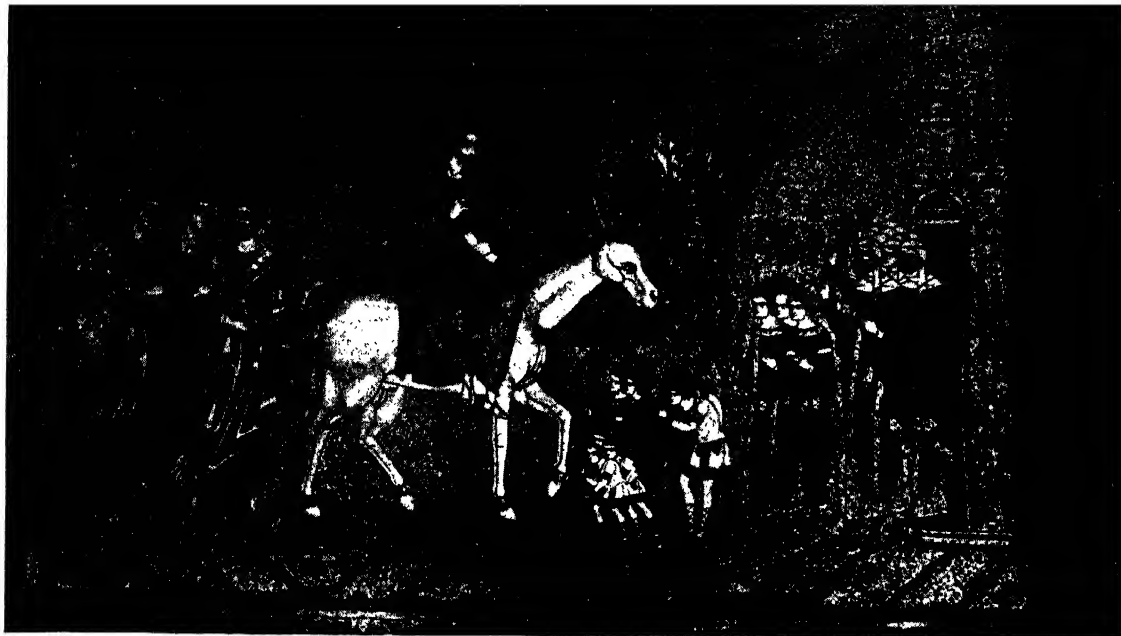
CHRIST ENTERING JERUSALEM

Byzantine mosaic of twelfth century

JUSTINIAN AND COURTIERS

Sixth-century mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna

BYZANTINE MOSAICS

importance. These parties included in their ranks almost the entire population, from the imperial family down to the poorest laborer. They were in reality political parties and furnished a ready-made organization for the popular leader.

The Byzantine people were intensely religious and were always keenly interested in theological questions. Dis-
The Greek Orthodox Church putes over the most fine-spun differences in the statement of dogma could arouse a fanatical spirit, and that feeling was often used by political leaders to gain the support of the populace for their own ends. The monks and the clergy could become dangerous enemies of the government. For the most part, however, the emperors were able to maintain their absolute control of the church, sternly suppressing all heresies or movements for independence, and they found in it a useful instrument for preserving the unity of the empire. The Eastern Church had become thoroughly Greek in spirit and tradition. Differences of language, culture, and interest had divided it from the Latin Church of the West since the fourth century. For years at a time all communion between them was broken off, until in 1054 the schism or split between them became definite and permanent. Thereafter the Greek Orthodox Church, to which the Byzantine and Slavic peoples adhered, was separated by a barrier of theological belief and religious practice from the Roman Catholic world of the West.

The importance of religious interest can be clearly seen in its effect on Byzantine education and literature. The
Learning and literature Bible and the works of the Fathers of the Greek Church occupied a prominent place in the curriculum of the schools, while theology was the subject of a good half of the literature produced under the empire. A second influence, equally strong, was that of Greek antiquity. Byzantine culture was essentially Greek, though it had absorbed much from the Near East, from Syria, Persia, Egypt, and later from the Arabs, and the people of the empire were very proud of their inheritance from ancient Greece. The Greek classics formed the very basis of Byzantine education. Cen-

tury after century the writers of Byzantium imitated the classics, wrote learned commentaries upon them, and strove to preserve the Attic or ancient Greek style. This led to the development of a distinction between the written language and the degenerate spoken Greek. Byzantine society remained cultured and learned all through that period when western Europe was sinking into the dark ages. In history, theology, and private correspondence, the empire produced a brilliant literature. But something of originality and spontaneity was lost through slavish imitation and because the language of literature was no longer that spoken by the people.

In the art of Byzantium the same elements were present as in literature. Religion played fully as important a part. **Art** The churches, like Justinian's great church of Saint Sophia, were the finest examples of Byzantine architecture, and the icons or pictures of saints and religious scenes were among the best works produced by the artists of the empire. As in literature, too, the art of Byzantium drew its inspiration primarily from ancient Greece, with an additional touch of oriental color and luxurious ornament. Byzantine art has often been described as bound by tradition, formal and monotonous, incapable of originality. It was, indeed, a traditional art in many ways, dominated by fixed religious conceptions and by the models of classic antiquity. But it showed also great variety and versatility. Though drawing their inspiration from Greek, oriental, and Christian traditions, the Byzantine artists produced a style that was in reality original and characteristically their own.

Byzantine civilization spread far beyond the narrow confines of the empire. It had a permanent influence on the growth of the Slavic countries **Influence on the Slav nations** of eastern Europe, as great as was the influence of Rome on the Germanic nations of the West. The Slavs who had settled in the Balkans, including the Serbs and the Bulgarians (the latter were of Asiatic race, but had adopted Slav civilization), and the various Slavic peoples who combined to make Russia, looked to Byzan-

tium for religious and cultural leadership. The church of the Slavs was the Greek Orthodox; their writing was based on the Greek alphabet and their literature on Byzantine models; their art and architecture were strongly Byzantine in character; and their foreign trade was mostly with the empire.

But Byzantine influence was not limited to eastern Europe. Relations between Constantinople and the West were **Influence on the West** never entirely cut off. Till the middle of the eleventh century, the empire retained a foothold in Italy, and throughout the remainder of the Middle Ages there was constant commerce between Constantinople and Venice and other Italian cities. Byzantine art forms can be clearly seen in Italy, especially in Ravenna and the south, and to a lesser degree their influence can be traced in the other western countries. The extent of this influence has been hotly debated. It is, at any rate, a factor that cannot be ignored in any study of medieval culture. Above all, the Byzantine Empire performed an incalculable service for European civilization by preserving the body of Roman law and the masterpieces of Greek literature and art, which might otherwise have been lost during the dark period of the Early Middle Ages.

11

The Rise of Islam and the Expansion of the Mohammedan Empire

A FEW YEARS after the death of Justinian, a man was born in a little Arabian town near the Red Sea, who was to have a far wider influence on the history of the world than that exercised by the great Byzantine emperor. In the century following that which saw Justinian's attempt to restore the old Roman Empire, Mohammed founded a new religion that has ever since been the most powerful rival of Christianity, and at the same time laid the foundations for an empire that spread till it included the former Roman provinces in Syria, northern Africa, and Spain and extended eastward to the borders of India. In this empire, composed of many varied races held together by a common religion, there grew up in the following centuries a civilization higher and in many ways more enlightened than that of early medieval Europe, and from which the Germanic peoples of the West learned much, despite the bar of religious antagonism. Today, that empire has long since fallen to pieces and its civilization has decayed, but millions of men still follow the teaching of Mohammed and pray with their faces turned to the town in which he was born.

1. MOHAMMED AND THE FOUNDING OF ISLAM

Arabia, the home of the new religion, has changed very little in appearance or civiliza-

Arabia tion since the death of Mohammed. It forms a large peninsula between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf,

with the Indian Ocean to the south.[1] To the northwest lies Syria, at that time a Byzantine province, and to the northeast the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, then the richest part of the Persian Kingdom. For the most part, Arabia is a desert of rock and sand, where nomadic tribes of Bedouin, as the desert Arabs are called, still live in tents beside the oases where they water their herds. No settled or agricultural life is possible in desert Arabia, and until very recent times much of the interior was unexplored. Along the coastline, however, to east and west there is richer land. There in Mohammed's time cities formed centers of a more civilized life, with considerable commerce and agriculture. But even in the cities political organization had not passed the tribal stage, and until the time of Mohammed there had been no attempt to found a united state in Arabia.

The Arabs, like the Jews, were of Semitic race. The life of the seventh-century Arabs was not unlike that of the early **The Arabs** Children of Israel as pictured in the Old Testament. The family or tribe was the social and political unit, under the authority of the head of the family. Their religion, however, was still a crude and superstitious paganism, in which idolatry played an important part, though Jewish tribes and Christian merchants had spread some knowledge of their religions in Arabia before the coming of Mohammed, and the idea of mono-

[1] See map, page 154.

theism at least was apparently not unknown. Some vague unity was given to Arab religion by the common veneration of certain sanctuaries, of which the most important was a small temple, square in shape, called the Kaaba (Cube). This was situated in Mecca, a commercial town some fifty miles inland from the middle of the Red Sea coast. To Mecca, Arabs came from all parts of the country in annual pilgrimages during the sacred months when tribal warfare was forbidden. The city of Mecca was, then, in some degree the center of Arab religion before the days of Mohammed.

Mohammed It was in Mecca that Mohammed was born about the year 570. Later tradition tells us a good deal about his early life, his appearance and character, but very little of it is trustworthy historical information. Though pious legend ascribed to him important family connections, he was probably of humble birth. He was left an orphan at an early age and lived in poverty till he was about twenty-four years old, when he entered the service of a wealthy widow named Khadija. While working for her, he led at least one caravan on a trading trip to Syria. About the year 595, he married his employer and for the next fifteen years lived the comfortable, if uneventful, life of the ordinary well-to-do Meccan merchant. He was described as a kindly man, gifted with a winning personality. His later career shows him to have had a strong will and ruthless determination, combined with sound practical sense and great ability in judging men.

The founding of Islam The beginning of Mohammed's prophetic mission is dated from his fortieth year, though there is good reason to believe that he had given much thought to religious matters before that time. The tradition tells us that he spent one month in every year in solitary meditation on a mountain near Mecca. Here occurred the first revelation. There seems to be no doubt that Mohammed suffered from some kind of nervous seizure of an hysterical nature, though we have not sufficient reliable information to warrant a clear diagnosis. Epilepsy has been suggested as the cause, but most scholars have discarded this explanation. At any rate, the revelations on which his teaching was based were produced after some kind of trance, which later at least the prophet could bring on at will. The first converts were members of Mohammed's own family or were close friends. Among them, his cousin Ali and his friends Abu Bakr and Omar later played important rôles. Mohammed called his religion *Islam*, meaning "surrender" — i.e., to the will of God — and his followers *Moslems*, those who had surrendered themselves. At first the Moslems formed a secret society. When at last they made their faith public, they met with opposition and persecution from the pagan Meccans, who feared that Mohammed's insistence that there was but one God, Allah, would destroy the faith of the people in idols and with it the profitable trade with the pilgrims who came annually to the Kaaba.

Hegira (622) As Islam slowly gained ground at Mecca, the persecution became more severe. Finally, Mohammed decided to flee from the city and to seek a safer place of refuge for his followers. He found it in Medina, a city to the north of Mecca, where Jewish and Arab tribes had for some time been engaged in civil strife. The way was prepared by sending missionaries, and in 622 a delegation of some seventy converts from Medina invited Mohammed to come to their city. The flight of the prophet and his followers to Medina, known as the Hegira, marks the beginning of the Moslem calendar. Taking advantage of the feuds which divided the people of Medina, Mohammed soon became its ruler, making it the capital of a rapidly growing state.

Islam conquers Arabia In the years following the Hegira, the character of Islam changed materially. It became a fighting religion and the prophet a political leader. Forced to provide for the refugees in his care, Mohammed began to prey upon the caravans which passed near Medina on the way to Mecca. This led to a war with Mecca which dragged on for years. The Moslems continued to raid caravans and nearby villages and to plunder the Jewish tribes. As a victorious religion,
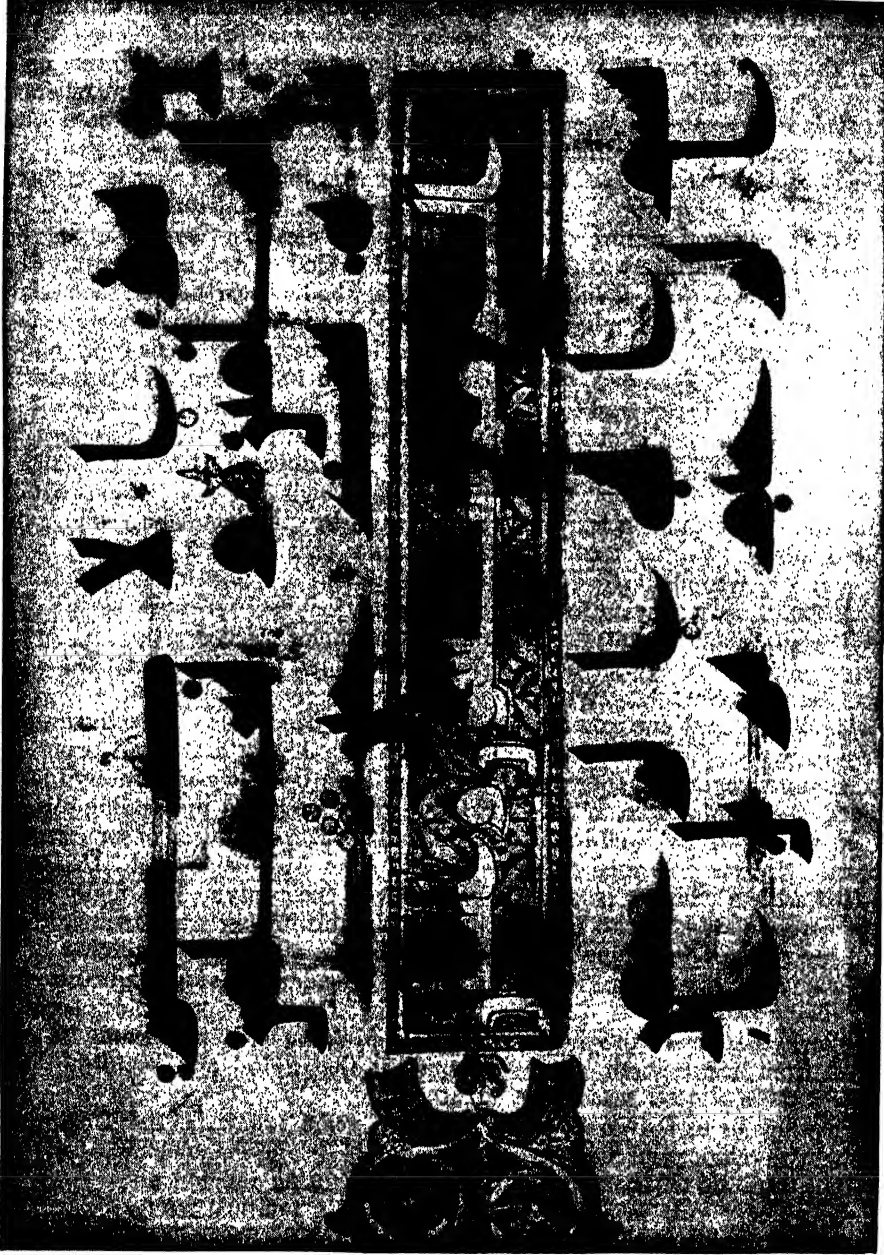
PAGE FROM A KORAN OF ABOUT THE NINTH CENTURY

This copy of the Koran was made on parchment during the early years of the Abbassid caliphate.

promising the blessings of paradise after death and plunder and profit in this world, Islam attracted converts from many of the Bedouin tribes. By 630, Mohammed was strong enough to conquer Mecca almost without opposition. Henceforth Mecca was to be the religious center of Islam, toward which all Moslems turn to pray, and the Kaaba its most sacred *mosque* or temple, though Medina remained for some time the political capital. By taking over the pilgrimages, the sacred city, and the sanctuary from Arab paganism, Mohammed made it easier for converts to join the new religion. Partly by conquest, partly by free conversion, he gained at least the formal adherence of the greater part of Arabia before his death at Medina in 632.

The Koran From the beginning of his mission till his death, Mohammed continued to publish a series of divine revelations, containing all his teaching on moral and theological questions, as well as his legislation on purely political matters and his comments on current events. Together they make up the Koran, collected and put in order soon after the prophet's death and since handed down with little or no change. The revelations were originally dictated by Mohammed to his friends or secretaries (it is very doubtful whether he himself could write), and were preserved as separate fragments with no attempt to keep them in chronological order. In the final edition of the Koran, they were arranged according to length, the longest chapters first, then the shorter in diminishing order. As Mohammed's ideas developed with experience or changed with the needs of the moment, the lack of dates makes it a very confusing book. Often later revelations modify or cancel earlier ones. The contradictions, however, seem to have aroused no skepticism. It was assumed that Allah, like any despotic ruler, might change his mind. Despite difficulties of interpretation, the Koran has always been accepted by Moslems as the final authority on all matters of faith and morals.

The theological doctrines of the Koran are simple enough. There is but one God and Mohammed is his prophet. Other prophets there have been in the past, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. To each a part of the truth was revealed; but the final revelation was made only to Mohammed. **The doctrine of Islam** After death there will be a bodily resurrection and a future life — for the faithful in a paradise of sensuous pleasures, for the infidel in a hell (Gehenna) of perpetual fire. There are also many moral regulations. The prophet commands his followers to practice the virtues of charity, humility, and patience, and to forgive their enemies. He condemns avarice, lying, and malice, and prohibits drinking and gambling. Polygamy is permitted, the prophet setting the example himself by marrying several times after the death of Khadija, but in many ways the position of women was improved and their rights safeguarded. The practices and ceremonies of Islam are described in detail, including prayers at stated intervals during the day, pilgrimages to Mecca, and fasts from sunrise to sunset during the sacred month of Ramadan. For the rest, the Koran is occupied chiefly with legislation for the government of the Moslem state. For his ideas, Mohammed drew freely from Christianity, Judaism, and Arab paganism, though his knowledge of the first two was uncertain and inaccurate, picked up apparently from casual conversations rather than from reading. Yet the result of this mixture of ideas was a doctrine, original when taken as a whole, and designed to appeal to the simple Arab of the prophet's day, while at the same time capable of holding the faith of more civilized people.

2. EXPANSION OF THE MOHAMMEDAN EMPIRE

The death of Mohammed came as a shocking surprise to his devout followers and precipitated a crisis which threatened to wreck the young Mohammedan state. **The crisis** The prophet had made no arrangements for the succession to his position as religious and political ruler. Ali, Mohammed's cousin and husband of his daughter Fatimah, felt that his kinship to the prophet and his unequaled reputation as a warrior gave him a natural claim to leadership. The Medinese were jealous of the Meccan companions of the prophet and

Islam, 632

Islam, 655

Islam, c. 732
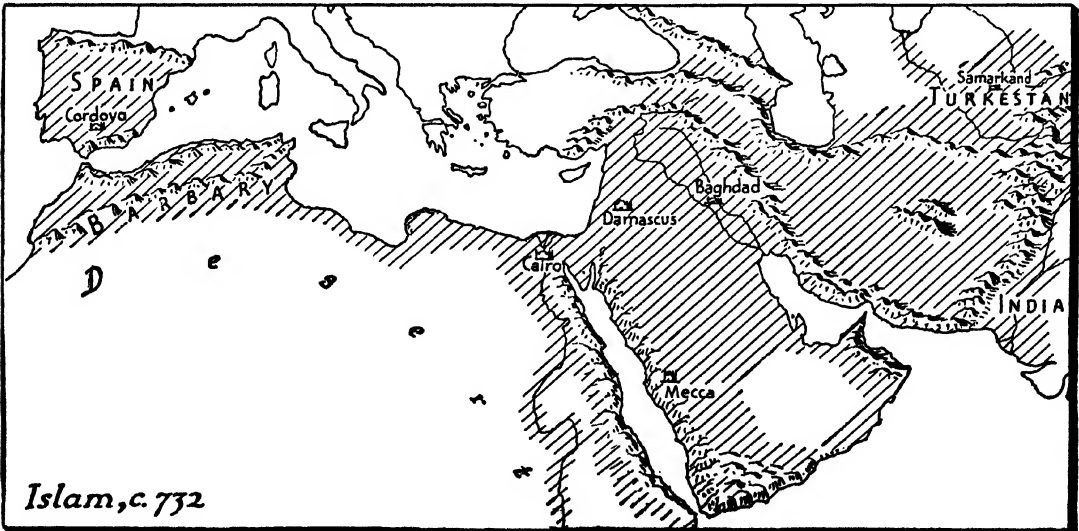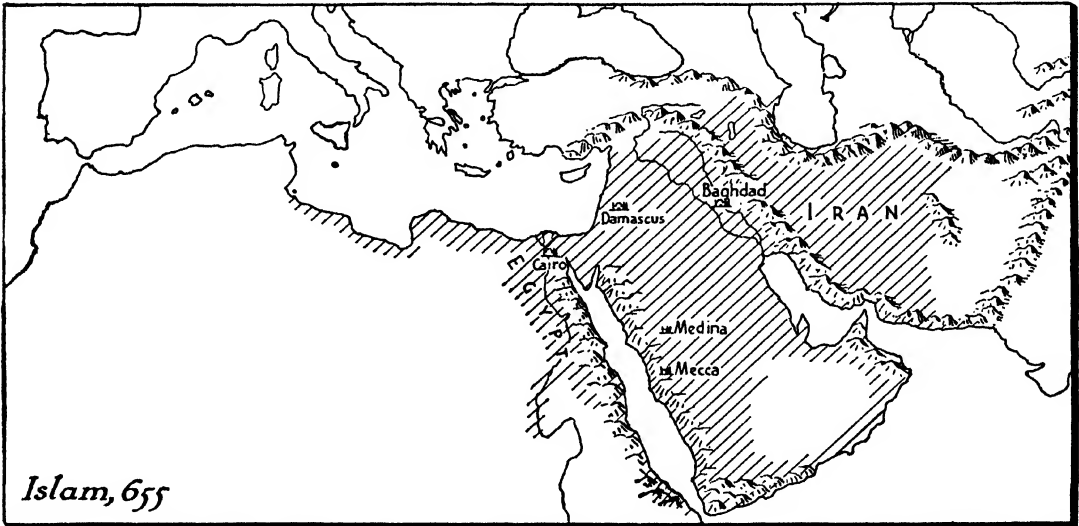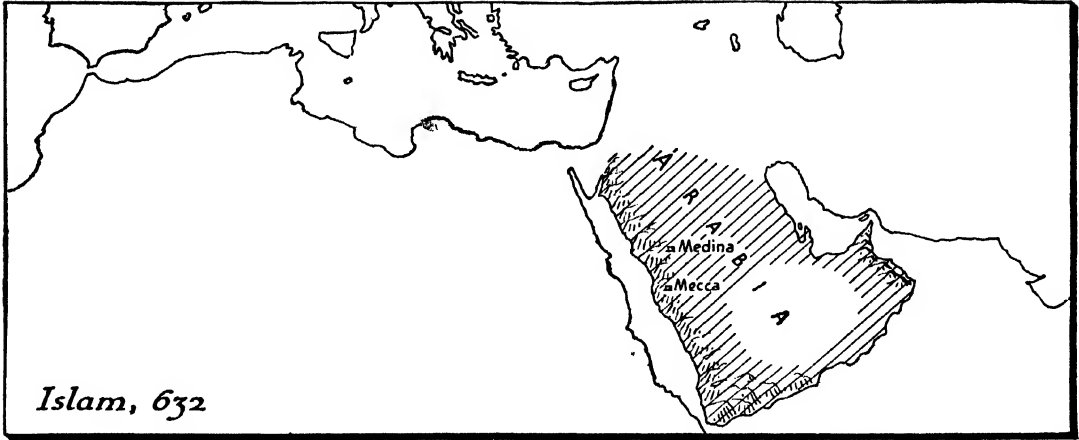
THE EXPANSION OF ISLAM

wanted one of their own number, though they might have compromised on Ali. Despite this strong opposition, however, Abu Bakr was finally chosen by the aid of the redoubtable Omar. He took the title of caliph, held by all the later successors of Mohammed as religious and political rulers of the Moslem Empire. Meanwhile, the new state seemed to be falling to pieces, as tribe after tribe revolted. The Arabs had no tradition of political unity or government and resented the necessity of paying taxes. Many, too, had had Islam forced upon them by conquest. A year or more of constant warfare passed before Abu Bakr was able to reclaim the deserters and to complete the conquest of Arabia.

No sooner had the Arabs been united under the rule of the caliph than they launched upon that amazing series of conquests, which in time was to extend their empire from the Indus to Spain. It has often been said that the motive which drove them forth to conquest was religious fanaticism, the determination to force Islam upon the infidel. Mohammed's teaching did, in fact, furnish a bond to hold the Arab tribes together and his promise of paradise to those who died fighting the infidel gave them a high fighting spirit. Actually, however, the Arabs made little or no attempt to force their religion upon conquered peoples. The motives which inspired the raids into foreign countries were really economic and political. Arabia had for some time been suffering from an economic decline and the tribes were restless and discontented. The rich lands of Syria, Persia, and Egypt attracted them as the fertile provinces of the Roman Empire had attracted the Germanic barbarians. Only their lack of unity hitherto had prevented them from making the attempt. At the same time the caliph realized that to hold the wild Bedouin tribes in subjection and to check the intertribal feuds, some outlet must be given them for their warlike energy. The conquest of the rich neighboring countries offered such an outlet, combined with the promise of plunder beyond the dreams of the simple Arab. Moreover, the Byzantine Empire and the Persian King-

Motives of expansion

dom had just completed a long and devastating war, which had left both countries exhausted. The time was ripe for the venture.

The first attack was directed against Syria, late in 633. Beginning as a plundering raid, it soon became an organized invasion. The victorious Arabs captured Damascus in 635, defeated the Byzantine army the following year, and by 637 had conquered all of Syria except Jerusalem and Caesarea. The former fell in 638, the latter in 640. The Syrian provincials, crushed by imperial taxation, seem rather to have welcomed than resisted the conquerors. Meanwhile Arab armies were carrying the banners of Islam to east and west. Abu Bakr had died in 634, to be succeeded by the vigorous Omar (634–44), who pushed forward the conquests with energy and foresight. Before his death, the Mesopotamian portion of the Persian Kingdom and also Egypt had been added to the growing Moslem state. Under the next caliph, Othman (644–55), the Arabs conquered the remainder of Persia to the east and drove westward as far as Tripoli on the African coast.

First period of expansion

Further expansion was checked for a time by civil war. Ali, proclaimed caliph at Medina, was opposed by the head of the Ommiad (or Umyyad) family, one of the leading families of the Meccan aristocracy and kinsmen of Othman, who governed Syria. The assassination of Ali in 661 finally left the Ommiads supreme, and for nearly a century the caliphate was handed down in that family. As their strongest support was in Syria, the first Ommiad caliph moved the capital from Medina to Damascus.

Civil war (655–61)

As the Ommiad caliphs gradually re-established absolute control of the whole state, a second period of expansion began. The conquest of North Africa was a long, slow process, due more to the resistance of the Berber tribes than of the Byzantine government. By about 708, however, the Berbers were thoroughly conquered and soon adopted Islam. The next step in the westward march of the Arabs was the conquest of Spain from

Second period of expansion

the Visigoths, begun in 711 and completed by the aid of Berber allies within two years. From there they pushed on across the Pyrenees into southern Gaul in search of plunder, pressing steadily northward till they were turned back at Poitiers by the Franks under Charles Martel, of whom more will be said in the next chapter. Meanwhile, under the Caliph Walid (705–15) the Moslem Empire had reached its farthest extent to the east, stretching as far as the river Indus in India and to the borders of China in central Asia.[1]

The Ommiad dynasty reached the peak of its power under Walid, only to lose control of the state within a generation. **Decline of the Ommiads** During the century of Ommiad rule, a considerable transformation had taken place within the Moslem Empire. The caliphs made little attempt to convert the conquered peoples, for so long as there were infidels to tax, the faithful could be relieved of financial burdens. But the taxes themselves encouraged conversion, and by the end of the seventh century so many of the conquered had adopted Islam that the government was forced to tax Moslems as well as infidels. The Arabs, meanwhile, though still the ruling class, had become scattered and were mingling with the other races of the empire. Thus, as the majority of the subject races became Moslem, the distinction between the conqueror and the conquered, the Arab and the non-Arab, was partially lost through the growth of common religious interests. Islam, then, rather than Arab nationalism was becoming the important factor in Moslem patriotism. And the Ommiads, though acting as both religious and political rulers, had always represented Arabian rather than the broader Moslem interests.

Discontented with Ommiad rule, the more devout Arabs and non-Arabs in the empire, and especially in Persia, turned **Rise of the Abbassids** to the Abbassid family for leadership. They were descended from Abbas, the uncle of Mohammed, and could rely on their relation to the prophet's family to attract the loyalty of devout Moslems of all races. After some

[1] See map, page 154.

years of political disturbance, the Ommiad dynasty was finally overthrown in 750 and the Abbassid dynasty took its place, though an Ommiad continued to rule in Spain, separating it from the rest of the empire. Persia now took the place of Syria as the center of the empire and the capital was moved from Damascus to Bagdad on the Tigris. The Abbassids continued to stress their claims to Moslem rather than purely Arab loyalty. The Arab aristocracy were succeeded by a mixed official aristocracy drawn from all the Moslem races. The caliphs took on the character of oriental despots, with all the pomp and ceremony of the old Persian kings. And in this new Abbassid empire there grew up a civilization that was partly Arab, partly Persian, with influences from the other races of Islam. It is usually called Saracen, a name originally applied by the Greeks and Romans to the Arabs, but commonly extended to apply to the later Moslems of this period in general.

3. SARACEN CIVILIZATION UNDER THE CALIPHATE

For about seventy-five years after the fall of the Ommiads, the Abbassid caliphs enjoyed an era of absolute power and great prosperity. The **The caliphate** reign of Haroun al Rashid (786–809), whose name is familiar to all who have read the *Thousand and One Nights*, marks the point of greatest power in the history of the caliphate. Bagdad was one of the richest cities in the world, the center of an empire stretching from central Asia to the Atlantic, for though Spain was now politically independent, it still recognized the religious authority of the successors of the prophet. But that empire was too large and composed of too many varied races to be held together for long under the despotic rule of one man, unless that man were a stateman of unusual strength and genius. Shortly after Haroun's reign, the powers of the caliph declined and the empire began to disintegrate. During the ninth century, rebellious emirs or governors established independent rule in North Africa, Egypt, and Syria, while at Bagdad the caliphs fell under the control of their Turkish mercenary soldiers. The tenth century saw a further disintegration. The Om-
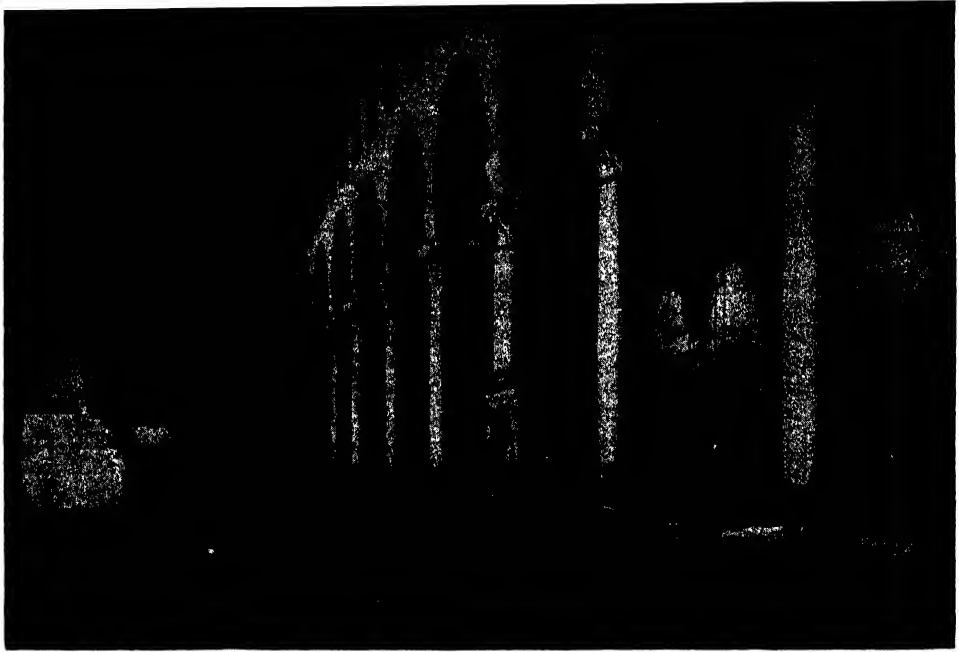
INTERIOR OF THE GREAT MOSQUE, DAMASCUS, 707–715

By 'Abd-Al-Rahman and 'Ubayd B. Hurmuz

**BAY BEFORE THE MIHRAB
MOSQUE, CORDOVA**

*Despite certain regional variations, Moslem
architecture from Mesopotamia to Spain pos-
sessed characteristics of style that were very
different from those of medieval Christian
Europe.*

MOSLEM ARCHITECTURE
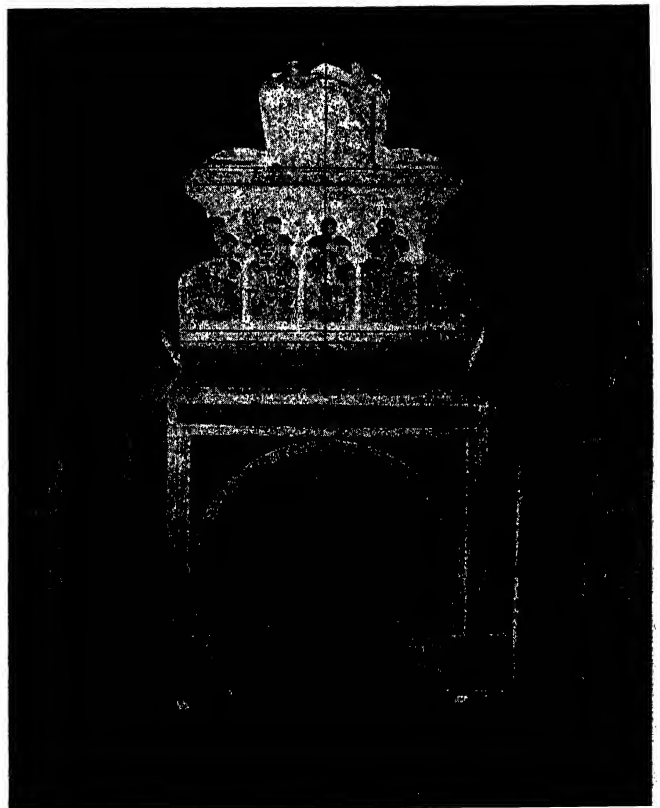
miad emir in Spain took the title Caliph of Cordova in 928, and in Egypt a member of the Fatimite family, descended from Ali and Mohammed's daughter Fatimah, founded the caliphate of Cairo in 969, which later, 988, came to include Syria. From 945 to 1055 the caliphs of Bagdad were completely dominated by a Persian dynasty of emirs, from whom they were "rescued" by the Seljuk Turks, who had come originally from central Asia and had adopted Islam with fanatical zeal. For two centuries, Turkish emirs and sultans ruled in the name of the puppet Abbassid caliphs, reviving the political strength of the empire for a time and recovering Syria. It was with them that the crusaders had to deal. At last, in the middle of the thirteenth century, they, too, were overcome by a fresh invasion from Asia, that of the Mongol hordes, and with them the Abbassid caliphate finally disappeared.

But though politically divided, there was a strong religious and cultural unity in the **Saracen civilization** Moslem world throughout this whole period, and Saracen civilization continued to thrive until it was destroyed by the Mongol invasions. This civilization is important to us for what the people of the West learned from it, especially during the High Middle Ages. A barrier of religious prejudice and sometimes hatred separated Islam from Christian Europe. Yet there were many points of contact. The Saracens were usually tolerant toward the "people of the Book," Jews and Christians, as Mohammed had commanded, so long as they paid tribute. Great numbers of them lived and prospered under Moslem rule. In Spain, Sicily, and the kingdom carved out by the crusaders in Syria, Christian met Moslem in peace or war, while merchants and pilgrims passed back and forward between the lands of the cross and the crescent.

In literature, particularly lyric poetry and prose fables and tales, the Saracens of this **Literature** age made tremendous advances. The language used was the Arabic, which developed with amazing speed from a primitive, unlettered tongue into a flexible and colorful literary language. For long superior to the contemporary literature of Europe, it undoubtedly exercised some influence on the growth of the various literatures of the West, especially of the Provençal poetry, though the exact extent of that influence is difficult to define. In more modern times, the popularity of the *Arabian Nights* and of the poetry of Omar Khayyám still reminds us of the literary debt we owe to the Moslem East.

Learning was also eagerly pursued in all centers of Saracen culture and was encouraged by the liberal patronage of **Learning** the caliphs. Theology occupied the attention of a great many Arabic scholars, though speculation in that field was often limited by tradition and orthodoxy. In philosophy, however, they enjoyed a free field. The works of nearly all the Greek philosophers were translated into Arabic. Indeed, it was from the Arabic, translated again into Latin, that the scholars of Europe first made their acquaintance with the philosophy of Aristotle in the twelfth century. In the field of law, too, the Saracens drew freely from earlier systems. Moslem law was still based on the Koran, but the needs of a complicated social system could not be met by laws framed for primitive Arabia. As was natural, then, they adopted large parts of the Roman law which they found in the lands taken from the Byzantine Empire.

To the study of science the Saracens brought an eager curiosity and keen powers of observation. The science of **Science** Greece, which had lain dormant for centuries, was brought to life again in the hands of Arabic scholars. In medicine, the works of Galen and Hippocrates were translated from the Greek into Arabic in the early Abbassid period. To this body of medical knowledge Saracen physicians later added the results of their own valuable clinical experience, embodying the whole in great encyclopedic works on the subject. The works of Avicenna (980–1037) were later translated into Latin, and he was long recognized in western Europe as one of the great masters of medicine. In the fields of chemistry, physics, astronomy, geography, and mathematics, the Saracens also took over the legacy of Greece, adding to it from their own scientific observation. Their work in chemistry,

STANDARD-BEARERS AND MUSICIANS OF THE CALIPH'S GUARD

From an Arabian miniature, 1237

وإذا أرادَ الصغيرَ نصفه فهذا الشرابُ موافقٌ لبيع للكَلَّة والجنب عَلَى اليت

والاسنوا الأقف ولمن لغم غليظ في حلقه يصفى اللون وكثرة النم

A MOSLEM CHEMIST

This miniature painting is from a Mesopotamian manuscript of the Materia Medica, *dated 1222/3. The Moslems made notable contributions to chemistry and medicine.*
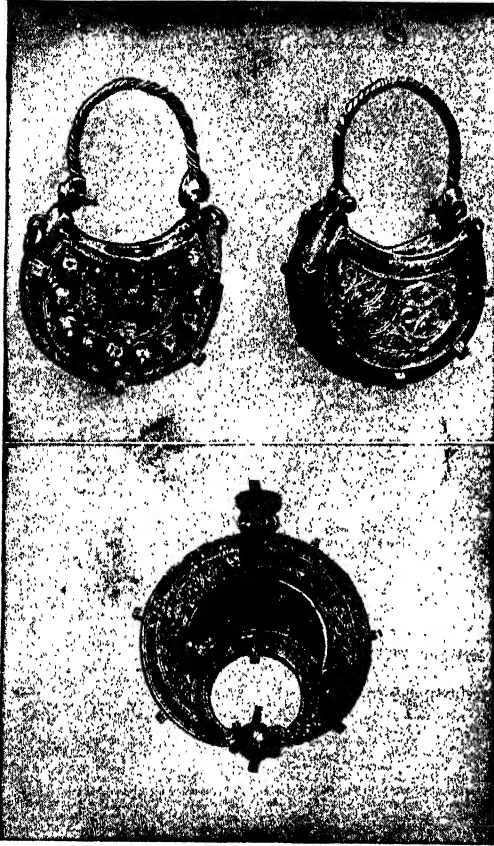
**MOSLEM JEWELRY OF THE
ELEVENTH CENTURY**

*These gold earrings and pendant with cloisonné enamel
are proof of the exquisite workmanship of the Saracen
artisans. They were made in Egypt under the Fatimite
caliphate.*

it is true, was hampered by the dominant interest in alchemy, that is, the attempt to transmute baser metals into gold. Nevertheless, much practical work was done in preparing and isolating chemical substances such as alkalis, sal-ammoniac, arsenious oxide, saltpeter, and crude forms of sulphuric and nitric acids. Finally, it was from the Saracens that the West took over the "arabic" numerals, algebra, and other fundamentals of the science of mathematics.

This flourishing civilization rested on a solid foundation of commercial and industrial prosperity, and its spread throughout the whole Moslem world was due in large measure to the freedom of commercial intercourse from end to end of the Saracen Empire. Even after the political disintegration of the caliphate, commerce circulated freely wherever Islam was recognized, with a freedom reminiscent of the old Roman Empire. There was also a great foreign trade, especially to the East. Saracen captains sailed their boats down the Tigris from Bagdad or put out from Aden and other Red Sea ports and traded with all the lands bordering on the Indian Ocean. Here they met and exchanged goods with merchants from as far east as China. At the same time camel caravans, so characteristic of Moslem commerce, struck out overland, eastward through central Asia to China and India, north into Russia, and south and west into Africa. At first trade with Christian Europe was very limited, but by the eleventh century a steady commerce had developed, mostly by way of Italy. For centuries the Saracen traders acted as intermediaries between the West and the Far East. It was through them that Europe acquired those eastern luxuries which with the growth of a more refined taste became necessities, as well as those goods, silks, damask cloth (from Damascus), muslin (from Mosul), paper, glassware, swords, steel mirrors, etc., which were manufactured by the Moslems themselves.

In this survey of the Saracen caliphate and its civilization, we have traveled far ahead of our story into the later centuries of the Middle Ages. It will be necessary to turn back now to an earlier period and to trace the history of western Europe through the centuries following the Germanic migrations. As we follow the gradual development of medieval civilization, however, we must not forget the existence of the Moslem world beyond the confines of Christendom nor the influence which it exerted on the formation of European culture.

12

The Franks, the Lombards, and the Papacy

IN THE THREE CENTURIES which followed the deposition of the last Roman emperor in the West in 476, the foundations of medieval civilization were laid in the blending of Roman and Germanic elements, under the influence of the Catholic Church, that was to make up the composite culture of the Middle Ages. We have already seen how in that period the Eastern Roman Empire became Byzantine, how Justinian in the sixth century sought to make it once more a world empire, and how in the next century the rising power of Islam stripped it of all but a fraction of its provinces. In that same period the early Germanic kingdoms, Ostrogothic, Vandal, and Visigothic, were destroyed. Meanwhile, two new powers, destined to be of supreme importance in shaping the Middle Ages, were rising to dominate the West in close alliance with each other. They were the Franks, the only Germanic nation, with the exception of the Anglo-Saxons, to found a permanent kingdom, and the Roman popes, rulers of thė Catholic Church and heirs to the tradition of the Roman Empire. And in between, exercising a strong influence on the destinies of both, were the Lombards, last of the Germanic invaders.

1. THE FRANKS IN THE MEROVINGIAN AGE — THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH CENTURIES

Early in the fifth century, when barbarian nations were sweeping across the Roman Empire to found kingdoms within its frontiers, a loosely united group of German tribes, known collectively as the Franks, had established themselves on both banks of the lower Rhine. Their early history is very obscure. They were evidently one of the most backward and barbarous of the Germanic peoples. They were divided into a number of petty kingdoms, though two general groups can be discerned, the Salian Franks who dwelt in the low country about the mouth of the Rhine, and the Ripuarian Franks who lived farther up the bank (*ripus*) of the river around Cologne. At the time when the last emperor of the West was deposed, they occupied the northern angle of Gaul between the Rhine and the sea. Between them and the Loire to the south, the Gallo-Roman provincials had formed an independent "kingdom" under the rule of a Roman patrician named Syagrius. Southern Gaul, between the Loire and the Pyrenees, was part of the great Visigothic Kingdom. Eastern Gaul in the valley of the Rhone was occupied by the Burgundians, to the north of whom, in modern Alsace between the Vosges Mountains and the upper Rhine, lay the kingdom of the Alamanni.[1]

Such was the situation in Gaul in the year

Franks in the fifth century

[1] See map, page 134.

Frankish Kingdom, 511

Frankish Kingdom, 561

481 when a fifteen-year-old prince, grandson of that Merowech after whom the royal Merovingian family were named, became king of one of the Salian tribes. He was called Clovis, the German form of the name Louis, later taken by so many French kings. He was a thorough barbarian, ruthless, treacherous, and avaricious, but endowed with great ability. He was not long contented with his little Salian kingdom. Gaul was divided and weakened by war. It was his for the taking. In 486, with the aid of other Salian kings, he defeated Syagrius and conquered his territory south to the Loire. Ten years later, he crushed the Alamanni and added their lands to his growing kingdom. Meanwhile, he had married a niece of the Burgundian king, named Clotilda, who unlike most of the Burgundians was a Catholic. When the battle with the Alamanni was going badly and his heathen gods seemed unable to aid him, he prayed, so the legend tells us, to the God of Clotilda and promised allegiance in return for victory.

The conversion of Clovis and his followers to Christianity was in itself an important event, but it was his adoption of the orthodox Catholic form of Christianity that was most significant and destined to have

far-reaching results. The story of the conversion is based on legend, none too trustworthy. It is suspiciously reminiscent of the legend regarding the conversion of Constantine the Great. In all probability Clovis, like Constantine, was motivated chiefly by political considerations. Certainly the baptism of the king with three thousand of his soldiers caused no real change of heart. All the other Germanic nations which had settled within the empire were Arian Christians, that is, heretics in the eyes of the Catholic provincials. By embracing Catholicism, Clovis became the champion of orthodoxy and gained the support of the Gallo-Romans, who still formed the majority of the inhabitants, and especially of the powerful Catholic clergy throughout Gaul. The good Bishop Gregory of Tours, whose interesting *History of the Franks* (575–94) is almost our only source for early Frankish history, stresses the fact that Clovis made his attack on the Arian kingdoms of Gaul a holy war. Every historian of the period has quoted his report of Clovis's address to his soldiers on the eve of his campaign against the Visigoths in 507. "It grieves me that these Arians should hold part of Gaul. Let us march, with the

Clovis (481–511)

Conversion and further conquest

help of God, and reduce them to subjection." They marched and, with the help of the Catholic population at least, conquered the Visigothic Kingdom as far south as the Pyrenees. In the remaining years of his life, Clovis consolidated the Frankish tribes. By a series of brutal and treacherous murders, he got rid of all the rival Frankish kings, leaving in 511 a great united kingdom to his sons.

The successors of Clovis for half a century continued his career of conquest. The kingdom was divided among his four sons according to the German custom, as though it had been a private estate. The theoretical unity of the kingdom, however, was preserved, and, though the kings quarreled frequently and murdered one another freely, they cooperated in extending its boundaries. Burgundy was conquered in 534, and Provence was taken from the Ostrogoths two years later. The Frankish kings now ruled all Gaul except a narrow strip of Visigothic territory on the Mediterranean. They also pushed across the Rhine and subjugated the Bavarians, Thuringians, and Franconians in central and southern Germany.

Conquests completed

The last surviving son of Clovis, Chlotar, had reunited the entire kingdom under his rule before his death in 561. It was then divided again among his four sons, as it had been on the death of Clovis. The next half-century was a period of anarchy and barbarous civil war, during which the conquests ceased while the Frankish kings wasted their energy in fratricidal feuds. The history of this period, as related by Gregory of Tours, is a dreary tale of cruelty, avarice, and treachery, of debauched kings and vindictive queens, for whom Gregory sought excuses because of their defense of Catholic orthodoxy. These civil wars had one very important result. From the constantly shifting divisions and reunions of territory, three fairly distinct kingdoms emerged — Neustria, which included the whole of western Gaul, and Austrasia and Burgundy, which divided the east between them, the former to the north on both sides of the

Civil war

Rhine, the latter to the south on the Rhone.[1]

From 613 to 639, Chlotar II and Dagobert, the last of the ruling Merovingian kings, in turn reigned over the reunited Frankish Kingdom, but already the royal power was weakening. A century of absolute power and unrestrained debauchery had fatally weakened the health and character of the Merovingian stock. After Dagobert, the Merovingian kings became mere puppets, powerless in the hands of their chief ministers, the mayors of the palace, who now ruled the country in the king's name. For more than a century these pathetic "do-nothing kings" dragged out a useless existence, shut up in a villa in the country and brought out once a year, riding in an oxcart, to be seen by the people and to read an address prepared by the all powerful mayor. Weak in mind and body, they made no attempt to assert their authority. Most of them died in their twenties.

Decline of the Merovingians

For a generation or more after the death of Dagobert, the civil wars between Neustria, Austrasia, and Burgundy were begun again and carried on by the mayors of the palace of the three kingdoms. At last, however, the Mayor of Austrasia, Pepin of Heristal, whose grandfather, Pepin of Landen, had been mayor under Dagobert, decisively defeated the Neustrians at Testry in 687 and reunited the whole Frankish realm under his rule. During his long reign of twenty-seven years (687–714), Pepin held the Frankish Kingdom together, repressed rebellious nobles and subjugated the frontier duchies which had become almost independent. He has been called the "second founder of the Frankish Kingdom." He was also the first of a long line of able and statesmanlike rulers of the family known as Carolingians from the most famous of their number, Charles the Great.

Pepin of Heristal

2. SOCIETY AND INSTITUTIONS IN THE MEROVINGIAN AGE

The gradual blending of the Roman and Germanic elements of medieval civilization took place for the most part under Frank-

[1] See map, page 162.

ish rule.

Fusion of German and Roman

Other barbarian nations had settled in the Roman provinces and were in time absorbed by the Roman population, accepting the culture and language of the conquered, though of course retaining some of their Germanic tradition. Others again, like the Saxons in Britain, had destroyed Roman civilization and remained stanchly Teutonic. The unique contribution of the Franks is that in their great kingdom, which came to include almost all of Christian western Europe, they held the balance between the two great sources of European civilization, so that a fairly equal blending of the two was possible. Three things favored this development. First, their conquest of Gaul was an expansion of their original holdings, rather than a migration. They did not leave their ancient base to travel among an alien people, but spread their conquests while still keeping in touch with their original homeland. Second, their conquests spread in both directions, to the south and west into Romanized Gaul and to the east and north into Germany, so that the Roman and German elements remained evenly balanced. Third, the adoption of Catholic Christianity by the Franks, and the subsequent conversion of the Arian Germans whom they conquered, placed the German and Roman on the same religious plane and facilitated the fusion of their institutions.

Distribution of the races

The Franks were always a minority in Gaul, except in the northern angle which had been their home. In the "kingdom of Syagrius," where the population had been thinned out, they seem to have taken land freely, but to the south of the Loire they confiscated none of the land belonging to the Gallo-Romans except in rare instances. They had conquered the Visigoths with the aid of the provincials and so dared not alienate them. They contented themselves, therefore, with taking the land of those Visigoths who retired to Spain, and especially of the Visigothic government. In Burgundy, too, they seem to have left private property untouched and to have taken only the lands of the Burgundian king, which in themselves were extensive enough. The population of Gaul, then, was not radically changed by the Frankish conquest. In western Gaul, which became the kingdom of Neustria, and especially in the part south of the Loire known as Aquitaine, the Roman population and culture predominated. Here the language remained essentially Latin in origin, developing in time into the French tongue. In Austrasia, the German element predominated, especially beyond the Rhine, where it was almost pure. Here the language remained Germanic. In Burgundy, which the Burgundians had already made half German before the Frankish conquest, the two elements were most evenly mixed. Throughout the Frankish realm the extent of Roman and German cultural influence varied like the colors in a spectrum, from the almost pure Roman of Aquitaine in the southwest to the almost pure German of the northeast end of Austrasia, passing through all the intermediate stages between. But because it was all under one government, all parts were affected by the blending of Roman and German institutions.

Merovingian kingship

When Clovis became king, he was the military leader of a small tribe. Before his death he had become the absolute ruler of a great state, and this development was continued by his descendants. This naturally meant a great change in the position and powers of the king and in the theory of kingship. In some respects the Merovingian monarchy borrowed from Roman precedent, in others it retained German traditions, but the blend produced a new institution. The Merovingian king had the absolute authority of a late Roman emperor over all subjects, but that authority was exercised purely by right of heredity, through his descent from the Merovingian line. The Franks never developed the conception of a state composed of citizens who had delegated supreme authority to the king, as was the original theory of the Roman Empire. On the contrary, the Frankish king regarded his kingdom as a private domain, which he had inherited and which he divided among his sons according to the German customs for the inheritance of private property. Yet even
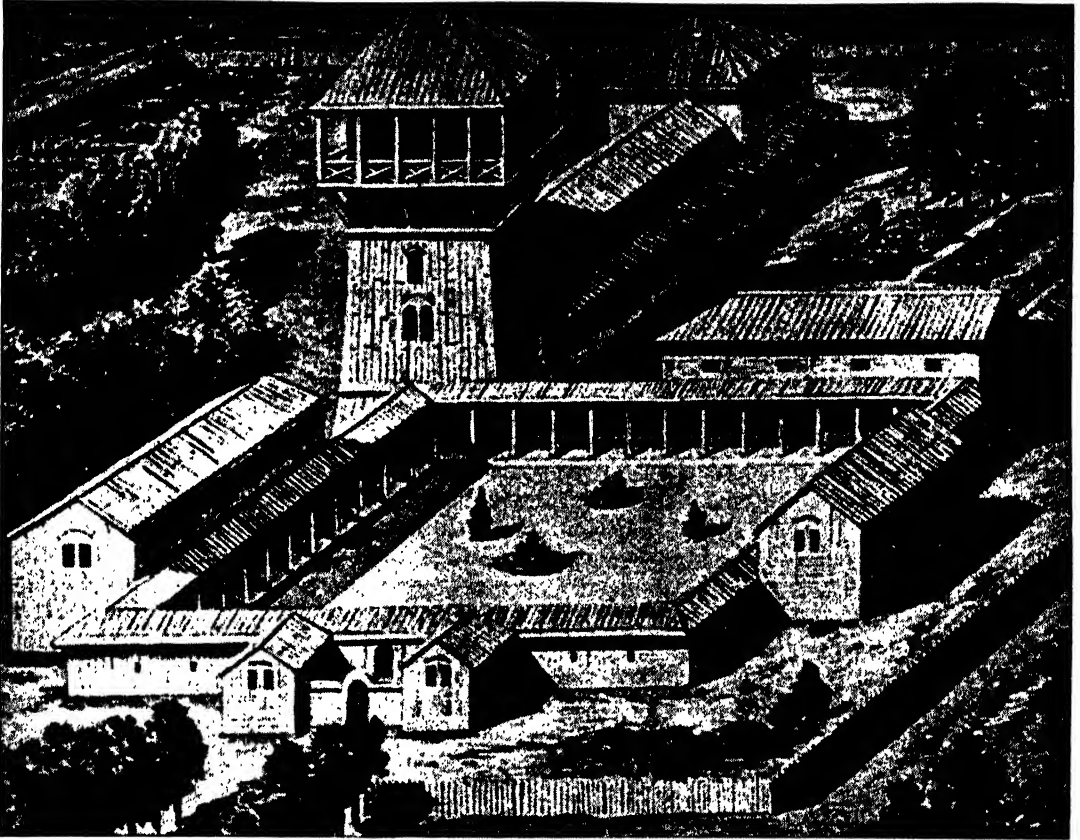
A FORTIFIED FRANKISH VILLAGE IN THE MEROVINGIAN AGE

In the lawless state of Merovingian society protection was necessary for all communities, but the later stone castles had not yet been developed. This is a modern conception of what a Merovingian village and manor house looked like.

when divided, the kingdom remained theoretically united, ruled by members of the Merovingian family, each of whom kept the title, *Rex Francorum*, King of the Franks. The only limits to the king's authority were those imposed by the growing strength of the aristocracy, who might disregard his commands, revolt, or assassinate him. While he remained in power, however, he was the sole legislator, supreme judge, chief executive, commander-in-chief of the army, and practical head of the church. These powers, it is true, were gradually taken over by the mayor of the palace, but the theory remained the same, with the mayor exercising absolute authority in the name of the king.

The administrative system of the Merovingians, if it can be called a system, grew up haphazard to meet the needs of the moment in the most convenient way. The Roman system of taxation and of administration by a hierarchy of officers was too complicated for the German mind, and indeed had broken down before the Franks arrived in Gaul. The expenses of government were small. The army and the local government were self-supporting and fines paid for the expenses of justice. The expenses of the royal court were met for the most part by the income from the king's own extensive estates. No distinction was made between the king's private purse and the state

Mayors of the palace

treasury. The king's personal servants, then, who had charge of the king's estates and income, naturally took over the financial administration of the state as well. A corps of officials administered the business of the palace for the king, and since the king had no ready-made administrative system, it was easiest for him to extend their powers from the palace to the whole state. Thus, the marshal, who had charge of the royal stables, became commander of the cavalry; the count of the palace, the king's legal adviser, became the head of the royal courts of justice; the referendary or royal secretary took charge of all documents of state. But of all these palace officials, the chief was the mayor of the palace, who had charge over all the others. It was he who became the king's chief minister and finally his master.

For local administration, the kingdom was divided into units which in Gaul usually corresponded to the old Roman **Counts and dukes** *civitates* or municipalities with their surrounding territory, and in Germany to the land occupied by a tribe. Over each of these divisions the king appointed a count, who had full jurisdiction as administrator and judge. After 614, the counts were chosen from the noble families in the county and the title tended to become hereditary. In some parts of the kingdom, especially along the frontiers, a number of counties were gathered together under the command of a duke whose duties were chiefly military. The counts and dukes were paid no salaries, but collected their income from judicial fines, fees of various kinds, and by exploiting the people. They were often half independent of the king and many of them oppressed the people cruelly. Throughout the whole of Frankish history they were a menace to king and people alike.

The church played a tremendously important part in the life of the Merovingian age, barbarous and immoral **The church; bishops** though the age was in general. The bishops, who governed the church, were among the most important administrative officials in the state. The bishop's diocese was usually coextensive with the territory ruled by a count, and his

political power within that territory was often as great as that of the count. He had great wealth at his disposal, drawn from the numerous estates bequeathed to the church, and he had an immense moral and religious prestige. He acted as judge in many cases, supervised education, gave relief to the poor, kept up roads and public works, and protected the people from the exactions of king or count. Most of the bishops were of noble family, many of them Gallo-Romans. Unfortunately, the king often interfered in episcopal elections to nominate men of his own choosing, some of whom had little savor of sanctity about them. It was perhaps too much to expect of the king that he should leave such wealthy and powerful officials free from his control, and, indeed, it was important that the church should work in close alliance with the monarchy. The effect, however, was to make the church more worldly and to lower the general level of morality among the clergy. Still the bishops were usually far superior in character to the counts and were in many ways the strongest moral force in the kingdom.

The laws in vogue in the Frankish Kingdom provide us with one of the clearest examples of the way in which Roman and German traditions **Laws** lived on side by side and eventually mingled. The Franks, like all early Germans, believed that every man had the right to be judged according to the traditional laws of his own people. Except for royal edicts dealing with specific problems, there was no uniformity of law. The Gallo-Roman retained his Roman law, while the Salian Frank, Ripuarian Frank, Burgundian, or Bavarian each had his ancestral customary code. However, the German codes did not cover many cases arising from the new conditions in Gaul and so laws were borrowed from the Roman code. As the population became more mixed, the distinction between Roman and German gradually died out, and with it the distinction between the legal systems. The result was a residue of laws in which the Roman and German elements were preserved in proportion as they suited the needs of the people and the age.

3. THE LOMBARDS AND THE PAPACY

Let us turn now to Italy, where events of great importance were taking place during this period. Part of the story has already been told. It was while Clovis was establishing the Frankish Kingdom in Gaul that Theodoric, the great Ostrogothic king, carved out for his people a kingdom in Italy, and while the sons of Clovis were conquering the remainder of Gaul, Justinian was making Italy once more a province under imperial rule. Within three years after the death of Justinian, another great change took place. A new nation of barbarian invaders, the Lombards, swept down into Italy and opened a new chapter in its history.

The Lombards were one of the East German nations. Their original home was on the banks of the Elbe in northern Germany. Thence they migrated south and east to the Danube, where they were converted to the Arian form of Christianity. In 568, they followed the track of earlier Germanic invaders from the Balkans down into northern Italy. Meeting with little opposition, for the country had been ravaged by war and plague, they occupied the great plain between the Alps and the Apennines, ever since called Lombardy. It was a thorough conquest. They made no pretense of alliance with the empire, as the Ostrogoths had done, nor did they leave the conquered Italians in possession of their estates. The continuity of Roman civilization, which had survived so many invasions, was at last broken, or at least severely strained. About 575, marauding bands of Lombards began to push farther south, and within a decade had occupied the center of Italy almost to the southern end of the peninsula. The emperors made some attempt to check the Lombards, but in vain. In 605, a truce was arranged between them. By that time, the Lombards had conquered all of Italy except the territories around Ravenna, Rome, Naples, and the extreme south. These were still ruled by representatives of the emperor, nominally under the Exarch of Ravenna, though the duchy of Rome and the other imperial possessions were so cut off from the exarchate as to be left practically independent. The unity of Italy was completely destroyed, to be recovered only after thirteen centuries had passed. The Lombard Kingdom itself was not strongly united. The Lombard dukes were always half independent and often rebellious, especially in the two great duchies of Spoleto and Benevento in the center and south, which were never firmly attached to the kingdom and where the Lombards remained in the minority.

Out of the chaos of this last barbarian invasion, one Italian power, the Roman papacy, rose with greater authority than ever before. The popes had lost much of their prestige since the days of Leo the Great, though they had gained much in wealth from estates bequeathed to them in all parts of Italy. The restoration of imperial rule in Italy had been a serious blow to their authority, for Justinian had introduced that domination of the church by the state which had long been recognized in the Eastern Empire, but had never been enforced in the West. Moreover, the pope's authority outside of Italy had suffered. The bishops of Gaul were controlled by the Frankish kings, and Spain under the Visigoths was Arian almost to the end of the sixth century. But the Lombard conquests broke the power of the emperor over the pope, and in 590 the Roman Church found in Pope Gregory the Great a leader who was to set the papacy back again on the road to independence and spiritual dominion in the West.

The papacy (to 590)

Gregory was a thorough Roman, born of a noble and wealthy Roman family. In early life he held some of the most important administrative posts in the city, but gave up his political career to retire to a monastery. He was called forth to serve the church, and finally, in 590, to become pope. In that difficult position he proved himself an able administrator, a diplomatic statesman, and a stanch defender of papal supremacy. He had an indomitable will, untiring energy, and the self-confidence of the born autocrat. And all of these qualities were needed by the man who occupied the chair of Saint Peter in those troubled times. Rome was constantly in danger from the Lombards who sur-

Gregory the Great

Lombard conquest

POPE GREGORY THE GREAT

This relief, decorating the altar of the Church of San Gregorio Magno, Rome, shows the great pope conducting service of the Mass.

rounded the Roman duchy. The imperial governor, cut off from his superior at Ravenna, was powerless. It was the pope who undertook the defense of the city, negotiated with the Lombards, and used his resources to maintain public works and relieve the poor. Though still recognizing the overlordship of the emperor, Gregory made himself the practical ruler of Rome and the land about it. At the same time he pressed his claims to universal authority over the Catholic Church with the greatest vigor. He was not always successful. The Frankish bishops were polite rather than obedient, but they learned to look more than before to Rome for guidance.

Gregory also extended the influence of the papacy by extending the boundaries of the Catholic Church. The Anglo-Saxons in England were still heathen, though missionaries from the Celtic church in Ireland had begun to work in the north. Gregory believed that the Saxons were ripe for conversion and the result proved him correct. The mission headed by Saint Augustine of Canterbury, which he sent to England in 596, met with extraordinary success. During the following century the whole of England was brought into the Roman Church.

In the midst of a busy life, Gregory found time to write, besides numerous letters, a long commentary on the Book of Job, called the *Moralia*, and a book of instructions to the clergy, entitled *The Pastoral Care*. These works, widely read during the Middle Ages, earned for him the title of Father of the
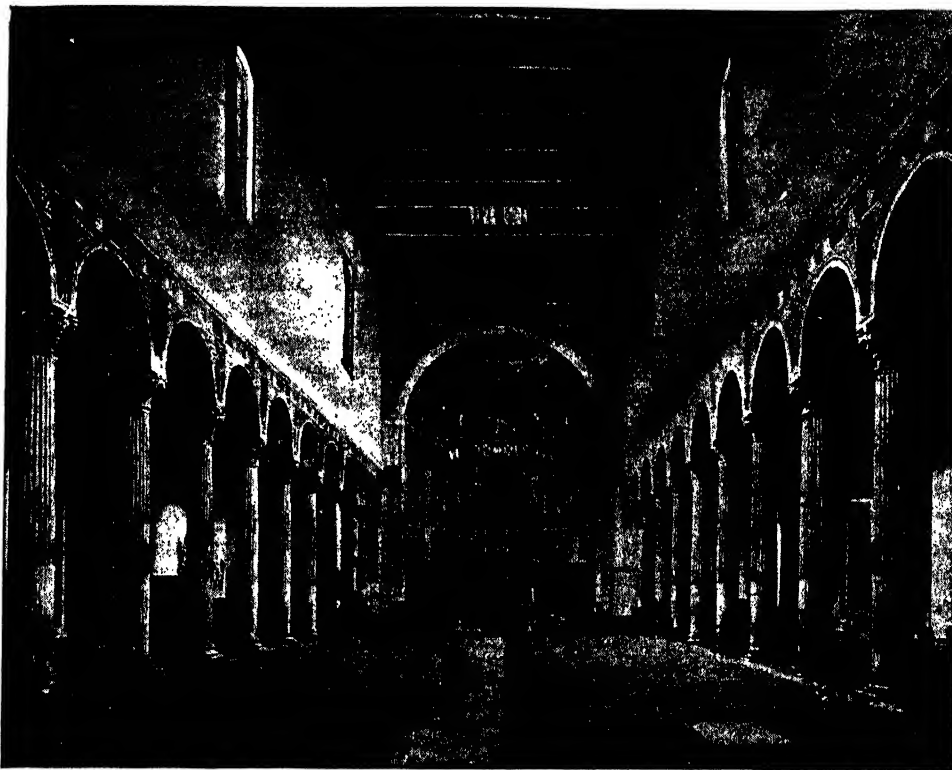
CHURCH OF SANTA SABINA, ROME, SHOWING CENTRAL NAVE AND APSE

The Church of Santa Sabina, Rome, built in 425, was one of the monuments of the age when the papacy was rising to power.

Church along with Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine. Yet in style, erudition, philosophical background, and intellectual breadth, he cannot be compared to the earlier Fathers. He knew no Greek; his Latin was far from classic; and his thought was encumbered with superstitions. Nothing shows more clearly the cultural decline that had taken place in Italy in the past two centuries than the intellectual gap which separates Gregory from Augustine. His influence, nevertheless, was very great, all the greater perhaps because he was not too far above the intellectual level of the following centuries.

The seventh century, after the death of Gregory in 604, passed with

The seventh century

little change in the relative positions of the three powers in Italy: the Lombards, the papacy, and the im-

perial government. The gradual conversion of the Lombards to Catholicism is the most important event. The emperor, absorbed in the struggle first with the Persian Kingdom and then with the rising Moslem Empire in the East, made no serious attempt to recover the land lost to the Lombards nor to re-establish his control of the papacy. The popes, for their part, kept up a formal allegiance to the emperor, fearing lest the removal of even that shadowy authority would leave them entirely in the hands of the Lombards.

Still, the relations between pope and emperor were none too cordial. For centuries the Latin West and the Greek East had been drifting apart until now they had little in common. Early in the eighth century the break came when the Emperor

The popes break with the emp:-

Leo the Isaurian attempted to increase imperial taxation in Italy, and then in 725 interfered in a matter of doctrine by forbidding the presence of pictures or images (icons) of the saints in the churches. The resulting "iconoclastic controversy" precipitated a rebellion, led by the pope as champion of both Catholic orthodoxy and Italian independence. This greatly weakened the imperial power in Italy and afforded an opportunity to the Lombard king, Liutprand, who invaded the exarchate of Ravenna and conquered all of it except the city itself. He would doubtless have taken the duchy of Rome, too, had it not been for religious scruples that made him hesitate to attack land ruled by the pope. Even so, the pope felt the danger to be so serious that in 739 he appealed to Charles Martel, the Frankish mayor of the palace, for aid. Charles, however, owed Liutprand a debt of gratitude for his help in driving back the Saracens in Gaul and so refused to serve against him. A decade later, the Lombard menace again threatened Rome. In 751, King Aistulf captured Ravenna and the exarchate was no more. Rome was now all that remained of imperial Italy, save for the Greek province at the southern tip. The position of the pope was extremely difficult and ambiguous. He still recognized the overlordship of the emperor, but was still in rebellion over the matter of the icons. He could not seek protection at the hands of the emperor without giving up his spiritual and political independence. So long as he maintained his independence, he was the real ruler of the Roman duchy, but he was also at the mercy of the Lombard king. In this emergency, he turned again, and this time with better success, to the Franks.

Let us follow his example and turn our attention again to the Frankish Kingdom, where important developments were preparing the way for a closer alliance with the church and the papacy.

4. CHARLES MARTEL, PEPIN, AND THE CHURCH (715–68)

On the death of Pepin of Heristal, the great Austrasian mayor of the palace, in 714, his title was left to an infant grandson,

under the guardianship of his grandmother. In those troubled times an infant and an old woman could not hope to rule, even had the child possessed the title of king and the loyalty of the people to a traditional house. Ruling merely as mayor of the palace, his position was impossible. Neustria rebelled and the kingdom which Pepin had reunited threatened to fall once more into its component parts. It was saved by Pepin's illegitimate son Charles, later called Martel (the Hammer), who escaped in 715 from the prison where he had been confined by the infant mayor's guardian. He was then a man in his early twenties, strong, vigorous, and warlike, the obvious heir to his father's position. Gathering the Austrasian nobles about him, he crushed the rebellion in Neustria, deposed his nephew, and by 720 was recognized as mayor of the palace in all parts of the Frankish Kingdom. Charles was above all a warrior, at a time when a fighting prince was needed. His reign was filled with campaigns, for the most part successful, against rebellious counts and dukes, against the heathen Germans to the north and the infidel Saracens to the south. The latter had invaded Gaul as far as the Loire when Martel met them at Poitiers in 732. In that famous battle the Hammer of the Franks struck the decisive blow that checked the advance of Islam to the west. Later, in 739, he drove the Saracens out of Provence with the aid of the Lombard Liutprand. At the end of his reign he left the kingdom greatly strengthened and his family firmly established in their position as the real rulers of the Franks.

One of the most difficult problems Charles had to meet, as had his father before him and his son after him, was the subjection of the German tribes beyond the Rhine who were nominally under Frankish rule. The problem was made all the more difficult by the fact that many of them were still heathen. When Charles began his reign, the Alamanni and Bavarians were already converted, but heathenism was still firmly entrenched in Thuringia, Hesse, and Frisia, as well as among the still unconquered Sax-

Charles Martel

Missions in Germany: Boniface

ons. Charles realized that they could never be brought fully under Frankish rule until they had adopted the religion of the Franks. He therefore gave enthusiastic support and armed protection to the missionaries who were working for their conversion. Of these by far the most important was an English monk, Winfrith, though better known by his Latin name, Boniface. England had become strongly Christian and firmly attached to the Roman Church since Gregory the Great had first sent missionaries there, and now English missionaries were returning to carry the Gospel to the heathen on the Continent. From about 716 till his death in 754 or 755, Boniface directed the missions to the Frisians, Hessians, and Thuringians under the orders of the pope and supported by the Frankish armies. Wherever his work progressed, he founded Benedictine monasteries as outposts of Christianity and organized the new church as part of the Roman hierarchy.

On the death of Charles Martel in 741, the Frankish Kingdom was again divided between his two sons, Pepin (misnamed "the short") and Carloman. After six years, however, Carloman renounced the world and retired to a monastery in Italy, leaving the whole kingdom in Pepin's capable hands. The latter proved himself a true member of his illustrious family, ruling with wisdom and firmness, defending his kingdom and protecting the church. He crushed rebellions in the German duchies, defeated the "wild Saxons," and in the last years of his reign completely subjugated Aquitaine, which had made a strong bid for independence. For three generations now the Carolingian mayors had ruled as sovereigns in everything but name. By 751, Pepin felt that he was firmly enough established to risk deposing the puppet Merovingian and to assume the title of king. But he would need some sanction other than that of force to offset the traditional loyalty of the people to the ancient Merovingian house. He turned naturally to the church, the greatest moral force of the age, appealing to the pope for advice. The appeal reached Rome at a crucial mo-

Pepin, mayor and king

ment. Ravenna had just fallen to the Lombard king, Aistulf, and the pope was left without a protector in Italy. Glad of the opportunity to win favor with the powerful ruler of the Franks, the pope replied that "it was better that he should be called king who had the power, rather than he who had none." Pepin, thus fortified, called an assembly of the nobles and clergy of the kingdom at Soissons in November, 751, and there proclaimed himself King of the Franks. The saintly Boniface, as representative of the papacy, consecrated him with holy oil. The consecration was a new departure and a significant one. It was a recognition of papal supremacy over the Catholic Church, it bound church and state closer together, and it placed Pepin in the pope's debt. He was soon called upon to discharge that debt in full.

Meanwhile, the pope's position was growing more desperate. The Lombards were threatening to take from him his independent government of the land about Rome. In the winter of 753–54, Pope Stephen II journeyed to the Frankish court to make a personal appeal to Pepin for aid. There he reconsecrated Pepin and his sons, giving the Carolingian house the full sanction of the Roman Church. In return, Pepin made two expeditions against the Lombards in 754 and 756, both of which were successful. After the second, he forced the Lombard king to give up to the pope, not only the Roman duchy, but also the land of the late exarchate. The gift of this land, stretching from Rome to Ravenna clear across central Italy, is known as "the Donation of Pepin." The keys to the cities included in it were laid upon the tomb of Saint Peter, together with a deed giving them in perpetuity "to the Roman Church, to Saint Peter, and his successors the popes." Thus was founded an independent principality in Italy under the rule of the pope and known as "the Papal States," or "the States of the Church." With minor changes it lasted until the unification of Italy in 1870 and during all the intervening centuries it played a very important rôle in the political history of Italy, as well as in shaping the course of papal

The Donation of Pepin (756)

policy. In making the donation, Pepin was probably influenced by a popular legend to the effect that the Roman emperor, Constantine the Great, had made a similar gift of all Italy to Pope Sylvester who had cured him of leprosy. At any rate, it was at about this time that the forged "Donation of Constantine," which purported to be the deed of that gift, first made its appearance.

The close alliance between king and pope led to a much-needed reform of the church in the Frankish Kingdom. Under Pepin's direction, regular councils of the bishops were convened and steps were taken to raise the standards of education and morality among the clergy. The rule of Saint Benedict was enforced in all the

Reform of the Frankish church

monasteries and the ecclesiastical hierarchy was reorganized so as to bring the clergy more directly under the authority of the pope.

The reign of Pepin was of great significance for the history both of the Franks and of the papacy. His fame has been somewhat obscured by the greater renown of his son Charlemagne. Yet in establishing the Carolingians as the royal family of the Franks, in suppressing rebellious nobles, in defeating the Lombards, in aiding missionaries, and in reforming the church, and finally in building a firm alliance with a greatly strengthened papacy, he laid the foundations upon which Charlemagne was to build his empire. He also laid the foundations of the pope's temporal rule.

13

The Carolingian Empire and the Northmen

THE GREAT HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS of the three centuries with which we have dealt in the last chapter, the expansion of the Frankish Kingdom, the conversion of the Germans to Catholic Christianity, the rise of the papacy to a position of unprecedented secular and spiritual authority in alliance with the Frankish rulers, all reached their culmination in the reign of Charlemagne. And in the Carolingian Empire, founded by the Frankish king and the Roman pope in the conviction that they were reviving the old Roman Empire in the West, the three elements of medieval civilization, the Germanic, Roman, and Christian traditions, were at last united. The Carolingian Empire lasted less than a century. It was too large for perfect cohesion. It was shaken by the assaults of the Northmen and torn apart by the rising feudal nobility. But the ideal of a united Christendom and of a universal empire remained. The nations which sprang from its ruins were Catholic and possessed of a homogeneity in which the distinction between Roman and barbarian no longer existed.

1. CHARLEMAGNE AND HIS EMPIRE (768–814)

Few names occupy so large a place on the pages of history and legend or in the minds of men as that of Charles, eldest son of King Pepin. Historians by common consent have called him Charles the Great, Carolus

Charles the Great

Magnus as the Latin chroniclers wrote it, and medieval legend has popularized the name in the Romance form, Charlemagne. When his father died in 768, Charles was not yet thirty. For three years he shared the kingdom with a younger brother, Carloman, but the unity of the kingdom was preserved by the death of the latter as it had been in the generation before by the retirement of the elder Carloman. Thereafter Charles ruled alone until his death in 814. Much of the credit for his achievements during that period must go to the three generations of able rulers who preceded him and who laid the foundations; but he fully justified his title of "the Great" by his clear statesmanlike perception of the needs of his age and of the course that must be taken to bring their work to completion, as well as by his untiring care for the material and spiritual welfare of his people.

We are fortunate in possessing a contemporary description of Charles, which rescues him from the obscuring mists of medieval legend and romance. In his *Life of Charles*, the royal secretary Einhard has left us a vivid pen portrait of the genial giant who was his friend as well as his king. Here we see Charles as a tall, vigorous man, so well proportioned that his stoutness was not a noticeable defect. He was fond of hunting and swimming, temperate in his use of food and drink, though in his last years persisting

Character

CHARLEMAGNE

*The bronze statuette above was made during Charle-
magne's lifetime or shortly after, and may have been a
fair likeness. The horse, however, is a sixteenth-
century replacement, and is therefore a purely imagi-
nary portrait.*

stubbornly in his preference for roast
meats against the advice of his physicians.
He was an eager student, having acquired
a fair knowledge of Latin and some Greek,
but his studies had begun too late in life for
him ever to have learned to write. Above
all he was a tireless worker, with an inex-
haustible interest in all the varied details
of government. For the rest, Einhard pic-
tures him as a kindly yet masterful man, a
good companion and a fond father, whose
only defect was the unrestrained interest in
the opposite sex which gave rise to more than
one scandal at court.

One of the first important events of
Charles's reign was the conquest of Lom-
bardy. This might be classified
as "unfinished business" left
over from his father's time.
So long as the Lombard Kingdom remained,

Conquest of
Lombardy

the pope would never be secure in his gov-
ernment of the States of the Church in cen-
tral Italy. After Pepin's death, the Lom-
bard king, Desiderius, had retaken the cities
of the exarchate which had been ceded to
the pope, and in 773 Pope Hadrian called
upon Charles to rescue the papacy as his
father had done before him. Charles
marched into Italy with a large army, de-
feated and deposed Desiderius and, in 774,
declared himself King of the Lombards.
He celebrated Easter that year in Rome and
there renewed the Donation of Pepin.

Another important conquest made by
Charles was that of the heathen Saxon land,
which extended from the Frank-
ish frontier on the Rhine north
to the borders of Denmark and
east to the river Elbe. The "wild Saxons"
had long been dangerous and lawless neigh-
bors. They clung stubbornly to their pagan
religion and their freedom, both endangered
by the great Christian state to the south.
They realized, as did Charles, that the two
were inseparable. Whether the desire to
protect and extend his frontiers or to convert
the heathen weighed more strongly with the
Frankish king cannot be determined. Cer-
tainly conquest and conversion went hand
in hand, and the invaders came armed with
both sword and cross. Charles led his first
campaign against the Saxons in 772, but
thirty-two years passed before the conquest
was completed. During that time Charles
directed eighteen campaigns into the Saxon
land, pillaging, laying waste the country,
and sometimes massacring or deporting
part of the population. The "perfidious"
Saxons would submit and swear allegiance,
only to return to their religion and their
freedom when the troops were withdrawn.
By 804, however, the task was finished and
the Saxons had become members of the
Roman Catholic Church and subjects of the
Frankish state.

Conquest of
the Saxons

Meanwhile, other wars occupied a great
deal of Charles's time and energy. He put
down revolts in Aquitaine, Lom-
bardy, and Bavaria. He also
waged war with neighboring nations. In
778 he invaded Saracen Spain, taking ad-
vantage of a rebellion there to strike a blow

Other wars

against the powerful Ommiad emir, who might again become a menace to Frankish security as in the days of Charles Martel. This campaign was a failure, though Charles later secured a strip of territory to the south of the Pyrenees, known as the Spanish March. While returning through the Pyrenees, the rear guard of the Frankish army, led by a noble named Hruodland, was cut off and destroyed by Basque mountaineers in the pass of Roncesvalles. This event is of little historical importance in itself, but is famous because it gave rise to the greatest of medieval epics, the *Song of Roland*. Against the Mongolian Avars, who had established a kingdom in Hungary and threatened his eastern frontiers, Charles had better success. In 791 he marched through their kingdom, bringing back immense booty. Later they were forced to recognize him as overlord. The protection of the newly conquered Saxon land also forced Charles into wars with the Danes to the north and the Slavs to the east across the Elbe.

As the eighth century drew on to its close, the figure of Charlemagne more and more dominated the West. He was

Charles crowned emperor

the acknowledged ruler of all Catholic Christendom except the British Isles,[1] feared and respected by his heathen and infidel neighbors. Only the Mohammedan caliph at Bagdad or the Greek Orthodox emperor at Constantinople could rival him in power or prestige, and the latter had fallen upon evil times. Scholars at Charlemagne's court who had studied the classic literature began to compare him to the ancient Roman emperors. More than three centuries had passed since there had been an emperor in the West, but the ideal of a universal Roman Empire still cast its spell over the imaginations of men. Its memory had been kept alive by the Roman Catholic Church, a universal spiritual empire, ruled by the pope at Rome, employing Latin as its official speech and with a hierarchical government modeled after the imperial administration. The church gave unity to Catholic Christendom, but many medieval thinkers felt that

[1] See map, page 176.

the divine scheme called for some secular counterpart, a political empire and a temporal ruler who would hold secular authority over all Christians (i.e., Catholic Christians) as the pope held spiritual authority. In actual fact, the King of the Franks held practically that position, yet to the medieval mind it was inconceivable that such a ruler should not be the Roman emperor. The obvious solution was to make the Frankish king emperor of a revived Roman Empire. Some such reasoning, more or less influenced by Charles's personal ambitions and by the pope's need for protection against seditious riots in Rome, must account for the amazing and epoch-making scene which occurred in Rome on Christmas Day of the year 800. As Charles knelt before the altar of Saint Peter's Church after the Christmas Mass, Pope Leo III placed an imperial crown on his head and hailed him emperor amidst the shouts of the people. Charles later denied any previous knowledge of the event. Perhaps he had not wished to receive the crown from the pope. If so, he was justified by the troubles arising from that act in future centuries. But the fact was accomplished. An empire had been created, Roman in name but more than half German in fact, and inseparably linked to the Catholic Church.

The general structure of government under Charles was much the same as that under the Merovingian kings, discussed in the preceding chapter. The addition of the im-

Carolingian administration

perial title made little difference. The monarch was absolute ruler of the state and exercised an extensive control of the church. The central administration was in his hands, assisted by the same palace officers as in Merovingian days, except that there was no longer a mayor of the palace and that the lay referendary had been succeeded by a chancellor who was usually a clergyman. The counts were still in charge of the local administration, though more closely associated with the bishops, who had become recognized administrative officers of the state as well as of the church. Much of Charles's success in maintaining his authority throughout the realm depended on the close personal check he kept on these

local officers. This was accomplished through the institution of the *missi dominici* (those sent by the king). The *missi* had been known in earlier times as representatives of the king on special missions. Charles now regularized their duties, sending them out each year in pairs to visit all parts of a given territory. The two *missi* traveling together were usually a layman and an ecclesiastic, a count and a bishop or abbot. It was their duty to examine the administration of both church and state in their territory, to see that the king's orders were carried out, to preserve close relations between the central and local administration, and to prevent injustice and oppression. This system checked the independence of the counts during Charles's reign, but it had no permanent value, for it was merely an extension of personal rule and its success in the long run depended entirely on the character and strength of the ruler.

The whole conception of Carolingian government was paternal. As father of his people, Charles felt responsible **Capitularies** for their welfare and issued innumerable decrees or "capitularies" dealing with the most varied aspects of public and private life, religious and moral as well as material, for church and state were so closely bound together that it was impossible to make any clear distinction between their respective jurisdictions. Those of the capitularies that have survived are of great value to the historian in helping him form a picture of the age. Some of them are detailed instructions for the management of the royal estates; others regulate the discipline and organization of the church; while still others are general decrees applying to the whole realm and published everywhere by the counts and bishops. Taken together they justify the description of Charles as one of the great legislators of the Middle Ages.

Many of Charles's capitularies deal with economic problems and indicate some revival of prosperity. By far the great majority of the people in this age were engaged in **Economic revival** farming or drew their income from the land. The most interesting of the capitularies are those dealing with the management of the royal estates. These show a considerable improvement in agricultural methods, which were copied on the great villas or estates of the nobles and the church. The building-up of large estates went on steadily through this period, as the small landowners lost their land and freedom under the stress of compulsory military service, which often proved too great an economic strain on the small

Charlemagne's Empire, 800

Carolingian Empire, 843
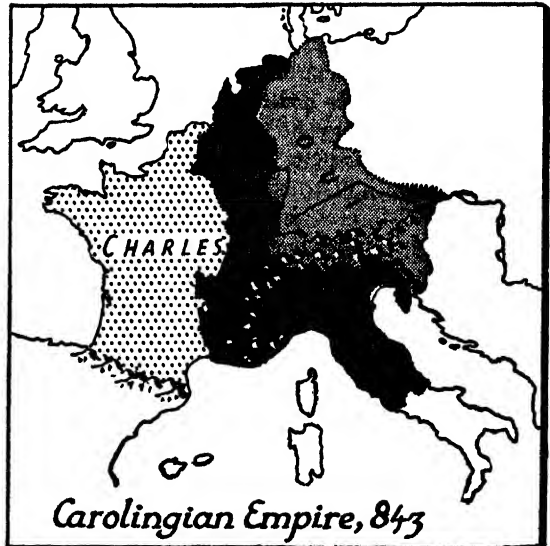
farmer. This, of course, added to the power of the nobles and the great churchmen, a fact that was to have important results in the next century. Industry was limited almost entirely to the production on the estate of the tools, weapons, clothing, and so forth needed by the people of the villa. Commerce of a general sort had declined greatly since the conquest of the Mediterranean by the Saracens, which hindered trade with the East. In fact, during the eighth century trade was limited more and more to the meeting of local needs, and "natural economy" (the barter or exchange of goods) was steadily taking the place of "money economy" (the buying and selling of goods for cash). Nevertheless, the reestablishment of order and security in most of western Europe by Charles led to a temporary revival of both foreign and domestic commerce. Jewish and Syrian traders brought luxuries from the East, and itinerant merchants carried their wares up and down the great river-ways and along the old Roman roads. Everywhere they had to pay tolls to the nobles who controlled the roads and bridges. Charles was forced to recognize the tolls already established, but tried to prevent the creation of new ones. He also aided commerce by establishing uniform standards for weights, measures, and coinage.

Despite all the multifarious activities which we have outlined or suggested, Charles still found time to take a keen interest in the education of his people and especially of the clergy. As protector of the church — and in reality its master, whatever the theory of the relation of church and state might be — he felt responsible for the purity of its teaching. The religion of the people was steeped in superstition brought over from pagan days, and the majority of the clergy were too ignorant to instruct them. Charles realized that the better education of the clergy was a matter of supreme importance. Wherever possible he encouraged bishops and abbots of monasteries to found schools for the training of priests. He himself founded a school at the palace to which he brought scholars from all parts of Europe.

Carolingian Renascence

Paul the Deacon (Paulus Diaconus), the author of the famous *History of the Lombards*, Peter of Pisa and Paulinus of Aquileia came from Italy. Theodulphus, whom Charles made Bishop of Orleans, was a Spanish Goth. Einhard was one of the few Frankish scholars. But most important of all the teachers at the palace school was Alcuin, a Saxon monk from northern England who had received his education in the school founded by the great Bede. These men devoted themselves to the study of Latin antiquity, both classical and Christian. Their work has given to the age the somewhat exaggerated name, the Carolingian Renascence, or rebirth of culture. Actually they learned little more than the rudiments of the ancient culture. They found more that they could understand in the works of the decadent or half-barbarous scholars of the intermediate period, like Boëthius and Gregory the Great, than in the masterpieces of the golden age or in the works of the great Fathers of the Church of the fourth century. But the Carolingian revival is important none the less, for it marks the beginning of the long process by which the German people assimilated the ancient classical and Christian learning and made it their own.

2. BREAK-UP OF THE CAROLINGIAN EMPIRE — THE NINTH CENTURY

The reign of Charlemagne was followed by a period of disaster, darkness, and chaos, and within three generations the Carolingian Empire had disappeared. Despite its apparent strength, there were elements of fatal weakness in Charles's empire, held in check only by the force of his powerful personality. The empire had in fact no real racial or political unity. It was held together only by loyalty to the ruler and by the common bond of membership in the Roman Church. The great size of the empire, in an age when communications were difficult and government crippled by lack of monetary income, made it almost impossible for any but a great administrative genius to govern all parts by the system of personal rule which was all that the German people had as yet

Disruptive factors

A PSALTER PRESENTED BY CHARLEMAGNE TO POPE HADRIAN I

One of the by-products of the Carolingian Renascence was the production of a number of very fine manuscripts. The figure above shows the binding of the "Golden Psalter" done in relief in ivory.

LOUIS THE PIOUS

This contemporary, if somewhat characterless, portrait of Charlemagne's son is taken from the manuscript of a work by Rabanus Maurus, a distinguished Carolingian scholar.

been able to evolve. Most important of all the factors in the disintegration of the empire was the fatal weakness of the central government. And this was caused, not only by the difficulties inherent in personal rule, but even more by the growing power and independence of the aristocracy, the counts, bishops, and great landowners, who gradually took over the rights and duties of government into their own hands. All this was included in the development of that system of society known as feudalism, concerning which more will be said in the following chapter. Its earliest origins date back to the Merovingian period. Its development was controlled but not halted by the great Carolingians, and under the successors of Charlemagne it became stronger than the monarchy. To all these disruptive factors was added the ancient Frankish custom of dividing the realm among all the heirs of the ruler. Finally, as though its internal difficulties were not enough, the weakened and divided empire was subjected to a long series of devastating raids and invasions by those fierce Scandinavian pirates, the Northmen.

Charles the Great was survived by only one son, Louis (814–40), called the Pious because of his devotion to the church. The year before his death, Charles had himself bestowed the imperial crown upon Louis, in the hope apparently of breaking the tradition of papal coronation. This precaution was nullified, however, for Louis permitted the pope to recrown him in 816. Thus far the unity of the empire had been saved, as in preceding generations, by the survival of only one heir. But almost at once the fatal principle of division began to cause trouble. In 817, Louis announced his plans for the division of the empire among his three sons after his death. Six years later these plans had to be rearranged to include a fourth son, Charles, born to Louis's second wife Judith. This strong-minded lady seems to have completely dominated her amiable husband and was determined to gain a fair share, or

Louis the Pious

more, of the heritage for her son. The remainder of Louis's reign was filled with intrigues, rebellions, and civil wars, as each of the brothers strove to hold or extend his portion, while the country was ravaged, government neglected, and the imperial authority weakened. Under normal circumstances Louis would probably have been a good ruler. But he lacked the character or ability to control his own family, to say nothing of the insurgent aristocracy and the ambitious princes of the church.

When Louis the Pious finally died in 840, the question of division was still unsettled. One of his sons had died, but the remaining three were each dissatisfied with his share. Lothair, the eldest, who had inherited the imperial title, hoped to extend his authority over the whole empire. The two younger brothers, Charles the Bald and Louis the German, as they were called, therefore united against him. In 841 they met in the deadly battle of Fontenoy. Great numbers of the Frankish people were slain, but neither side won a clear victory. Charles and Louis separated for a time, but were soon forced to reunite. They met at Strasbourg in the following year and there each took an oath of perpetual loyalty to the other. The text of the oath has survived and gives interesting evidence of the development of separate popular languages within the Frankish Empire. Louis read the oath in the Romance tongue, the ancestor of modern French, so as to be understood by his brother's troops, most of whom came from western Gaul. Charles, on the other hand, took the oath in the German dialect which alone would be understood by the men who had followed Louis from the east. The alliance proved too strong for Lothair, and in 843 peace was concluded by a treaty arranged at Verdun. Lothair was given the imperial title and a strip of territory about a thousand miles long and rather more than a hundred wide, running from north to south through the center of the empire from the North Sea to Rome. It included most of the valleys of the Rhine and the Rhone and more than half of Italy. The portions assigned to the two younger brothers, with the title

Division of the empire

of kings, had a greater geographical and cultural unity. Charles received the Romance-speaking western kingdom, while Louis took the German lands to the east. The Treaty of Verdun did not create new nations, but it did mark off the territories which were to become the countries of France and Germany and the "middle kingdom," the debatable land over which the French and German nations have fought almost to the present time.

During the remaining years of the Carolingian Empire, the chief historical interest attached to the western kingdom of Charles the Bald (843-77). They were years of anarchy and disaster. The Northmen plundered the towns and monasteries on the coast and along all the navigable rivers. The king was powerless to defend his people. Charles seems to have been a fairly capable and energetic person, but his every effort was defeated by the refusal of the nobles to co-operate or to obey his commands. He had weakened his position, as had his brothers also, by bribing the nobles with gifts of land, immunities, and privileges, in order to retain their loyalty during the civil war. There were open rebellions in Brittany and Aquitaine, and everywhere

Dissolution of the empire

Feudal Kingdoms, 888
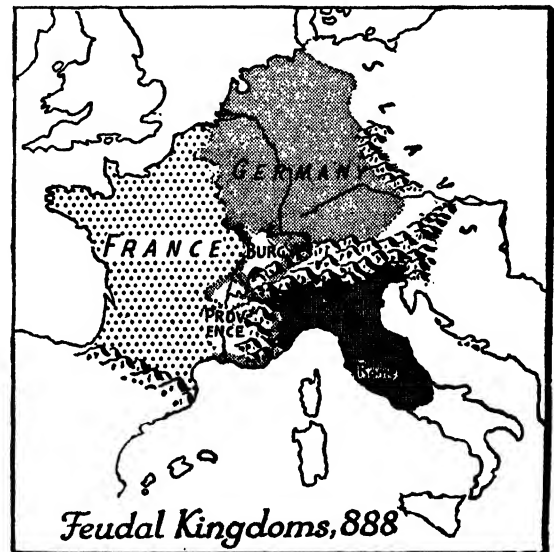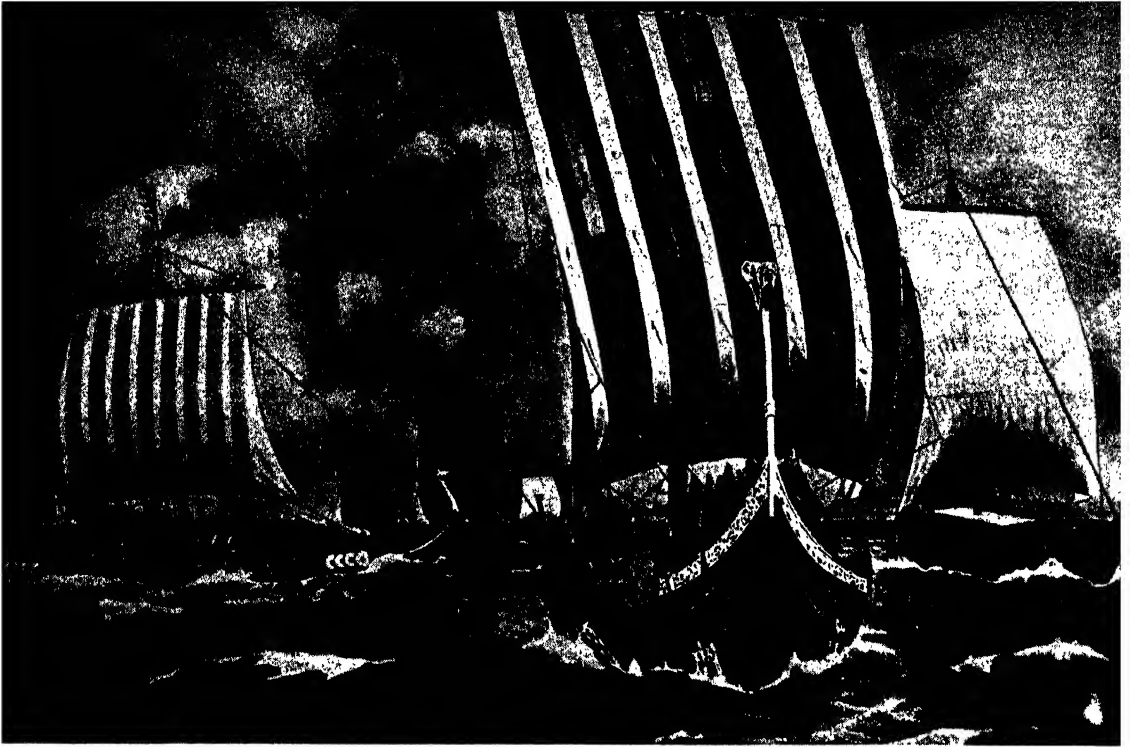
VIKING SHIPS

A modern conception of how the Viking ships looked. Note the shields hung along the thwarts. When the wind was unfavorable, the Vikings depended upon oars.

MOUNTED WARRIORS OF THE VIKING AGE

When raiding inland, the Vikings frequently took to horseback.
The above relief in wood was taken from a church door in Iceland.

the nobles were assuming greater independence, while the people were forced to turn to them rather than to the king for protection. Yet despite his inability to rule the land he had, Charles engaged in wars to win more land from the other Frankish kingdoms. On the death of his nephew Lothair II, he acquired most of Lotharingia or Lorraine by the Treaty of Mersen (870) at the end of a war with Louis the German who had also claimed it. Six years later, when the last son of Lothair I died, he claimed the imperial title and won it despite the opposition of Louis.

The later Carolingians who followed Charles were short-lived and dogged by misfortune. In 884, Charles the Fat, son of Louis the German and the only surviving adult member of the Carolingian family, reunited the whole empire under his rule. But this weak and shiftless emperor was but a poor parody of his great namesake. During the two years following his accession, the Northmen besieged the city of Paris in force. Charles proved utterly unable to cope with them and finally bought them off by offering them Burgundy to plunder. The nobles of the empire rose in indignation and deposed him. He died shortly thereafter, January, 888. With him perished the Carolingian Empire. It had reached the final *reductio ad absurdum.*

The empire now broke up into separate kingdoms, one in Italy where the imperial title lingered on for a time, two in Burgundy, one in Germany, and one in the west which from this time on may be called France. Of these the latter two were to maintain their separate existences through the centuries till they formed nations in the modern sense. In Germany illegitimate Carolingians ruled till 911. In France the western branch of the Carolingian family lasted longer. For an even century after Charles the Fat they alternated with members of the Robertian family in holding the royal title, though with little more power than the great nobles over whom they claimed to rule. But the history of the feudal kingdoms which rose from the ruins of the Carolingian Empire is another story and will be told later.

Formation of kingdoms

3. THE COMING OF THE NORTHMEN

The Carolingian Empire, like its greater forerunner the Roman Empire, decayed largely because of internal weakness, but, as in the case of the older empire, the process of dissolution was accelerated by the impact of barbarian invaders from the north. These new invaders, the Northmen, who fell upon all the exposed coastline of western Europe with fire and sword in the ninth century, destroyed much of the civilization they found, as had their Germanic predecessors, but in the end they added new energy and vitality and new elements of culture to the formation of medieval civilization.

The Northmen

The home of the Northmen was in the three Scandinavian countries of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. There, cut off by the sea from the rest of Europe and hence from the influence of Rome and Christianity, they had retained their pagan religion and ancient customs, which in many ways resembled those of the early Germans to whom they were closely akin in race. Yet in one important respect they were different from their Germanic cousins in their manner of life. The rocky hills of Norway and Sweden and the marshy sandflats of Denmark afforded little room for agriculture, though the Northmen made good use of what land they had. The sea offered a better living, and the innumerable creeks or fiords provided perfect natural harbors. Of necessity, then, the Northmen had become amphibious. They were industrious farmers, but also daring sailors, fishermen, traders, and pirates, equally at home on land or sea. From this varied life they acquired remarkable versatility, reckless daring combined with sound practical sense. Above all, they were a hardy, vigorous race, toughened by the constant hardships of northern winters and storm-swept seas. Tall, blond men, vain of their gold ornaments and scarlet cloaks, their ring-mail and carved sword hilts, never so happy as when their long-handled battle-axes clove through the ranks of their enemies — such were the Vikings, as those of the Northmen were called who set out on piratical raids in ever-increasing numbers from the end of the eighth century. What were the causes of this

The Vikings
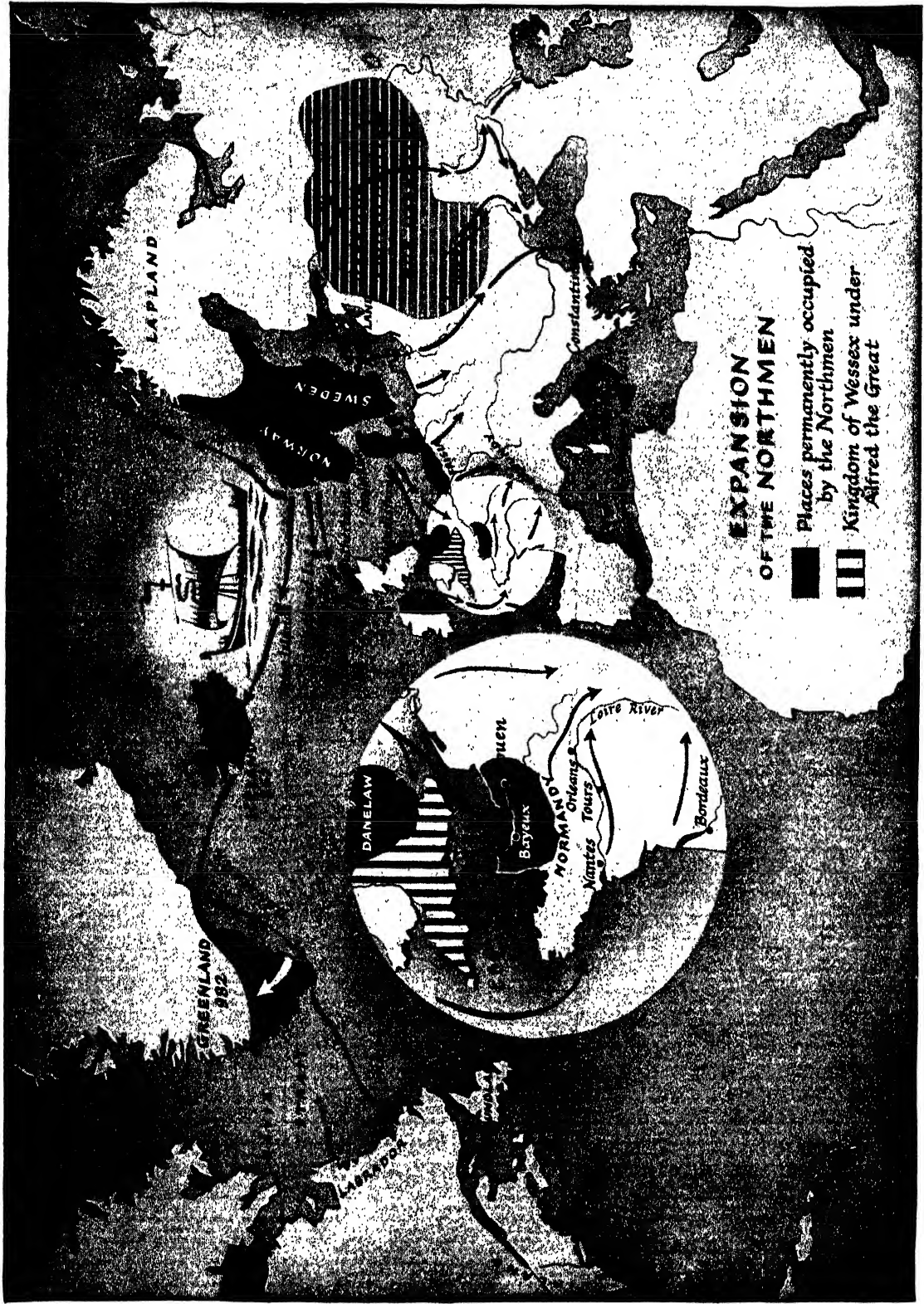
EXPANSION
OF THE NORTHMEN

Places permanently occupied
by the Northmen

Kingdom of Wessex under
Alfred the Great
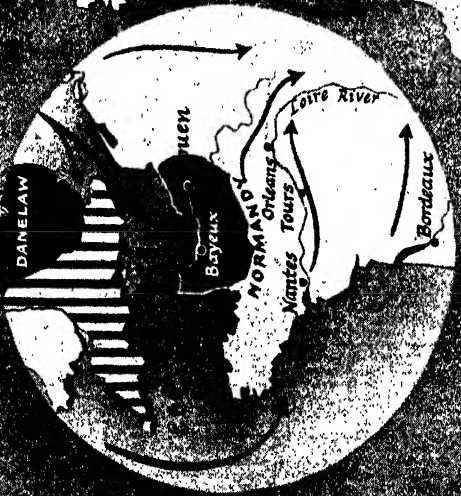
sudden activity? Probably much the same as for the migrations of the early Germans — lack of room at home due to increase in population, the lure of plunder, and the love of adventure. For centuries the sea had cut them off from the south. Now they discovered that it provided an open road for those who had the courage to take it.

The first Viking raids were directed toward the British Isles. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* mentions one as early as 787. But it was not till the beginning of the ninth century that they became general and assumed serious proportions. It was in the last years of Charlemagne that the Vikings first beached their long boats on the Frankish coast. Thereafter their raids continued, each year bringing more and larger boats, manned by more numerous, more experienced, and hence more dangerous crews. It is impossible to distinguish absolutely between the Vikings of the various Scandinavian countries. In general, however, those who sailed westward around the north of Scotland, to prey upon the coast of Scotland, Ireland, and the smaller islands, were Norwegians. Later these sailed farther west to Iceland, Greenland, and the coast of North America. The Vikings who turned south through the North Sea and the English Channel to England and the western coast of Europe were mostly Danes; while the Swedes took the eastern route by river through Russia to the Black Sea and eventually to Constantinople, where they met other Vikings who had sailed eastward through the Mediterranean from the Straits of Gibraltar. No part of Europe that could be reached by water was safe from these far-wandering men.[1]

Viking routes

The seacoast towns were naturally the first objects of their raids. Masters of the sea, they struck where they chose with all the advantage that goes with a surprise attack. Their long open boats would appear unheralded out of the morning mist, and before a force could be collected to ward them off they would have sacked the town and carried their plunder off to the safety of the sea. As they grew bolder, the Vikings struck inland,

Raids

[1] See map, page 182.

rowing their boats up the navigable rivers on which the most important towns were situated. For centuries these rivers had been the principal highways of trade. They now served the northern pirates equally well. Everywhere the Northmen sought out monasteries and churches, not so much through malice against the Christian clergy as because they had learned that there was always rich plunder to be found under the sign of the cross and that the monks and clergy had become too accustomed to the protection offered them by religious veneration to have taken the necessary precautions for defense. Great numbers of the monasteries were completely destroyed — a serious blow to learning, since the monasteries were the chief centers of education. The fear these rapacious pirates inspired is echoed eloquently in the prayer, introduced into the regular church service, "From the fury of the Northmen, good Lord, deliver us!"

About the middle of the ninth century, the activities of the Northmen entered a new phase. No longer were they content to make annual expeditions in search of movable plunder. Instead they began to settle at strategic points along the coast and to carry on their depredations at closer range. The Frankish Empire had been sadly weakened by the civil war between the sons of Louis the Pious and by the resulting division of the empire. The Danish host took advantage of the weakness of the central government to found permanent camps at the mouths of the great rivers which empty on the western coast. Toward the end of the century, however, their raids were checked as the towns improved their fortifications and the nobles began to build strong castles for defense. In 891, the German king, Arnulf, defeated a large Danish army on the lower Rhine and drove them out of that district. Thereafter the settlements of the Northmen were confined to the lower reaches of the Seine, and the raids on other parts soon ceased. In 911 or 912, the land about the lower Seine, known thereafter as Normandy, was ceded to the Northmen by the French Carolingian king, Charles the Simple. Their leader, the famous Duke Rollo, became a

Settlements in Europe

ALFRED THE GREAT

*The above figure is the knob of a royal scepter of the
ninth century, with a highly formalized representation
of the great Saxon king.*

vassal of the French king, though a very
independent one, and was converted to
Christianity. Further immigration from
Denmark continued for some time and Nor-
mandy occupied a rather anomalous posi-
tion as at once a Scandinavian colony and a
French duchy. But by the end of the tenth
century, the Normans had adopted the
religion, speech, and culture of the French
people among whom they lived. By that
time Normandy had become definitely
French, though always more than half in-
dependent of the French king.

In England much the same development

had taken place about the middle of the
ninth century. In 851, the
Danish fleet wintered at Thanet,   Settlement
and four years later a fleet of   in England
some three hundred and fifty ships spent the
winter at Sheppey. In 866, the Danes be-
gan a concerted invasion which threatened
to overwhelm all England. Mounting them-
selves on horses stolen from the coast shires,
they rode inland sweeping all opposition
before them. Anglo-Saxon England was
divided into four separate kingdoms and
failed to unite against the foreign foe.
Within five years the Northmen conquered
the kingdoms of Northumbria, Mercia, and
East Anglia. In 871, they invaded the
southern kingdom of Wessex, the last Saxon
stronghold.

Here they were finally checked by the
skillful and courageous leadership of the
young Alfred (871–900), who
succeeded his elder brother as   Alfred
King of Wessex in the midst of   the Great
the invasion. Seven years later "the army,"
as the Saxons called the Danish host, again
invaded Wessex and were again repulsed.
Later, Alfred reconquered London and part
of Mercia from the Danes. England was
now divided into two parts, the Saxon king-
dom of Wessex south of the Thames and the
"Danelaw" to the north. In the intervals
between conflicts with his dangerous neigh-
bors, Alfred turned his attention to strength-
ening his kingdom. He reorganized the gov-
ernment and the army along lines that were
to be followed by his successors, fortified the
towns, and created a fleet that could cope
with the Danes in their own element. Like
Charlemagne, to whom he has often been
compared, Alfred was vitally interested in
religion and education, though unlike the
great Frankish ruler he was himself one of
the finest scholars of his day. The heathen
"army" had destroyed the greater part of
monastic culture in northern England, in-
cluding the school at York where a century
earlier Alcuin had received the education
which made him the foremost scholar at
Charlemagne's court. Even in Wessex
learning had declined. Both people and
clergy were ignorant and were falling back
into pagan superstition. Realizing the im-

portance of educating the clergy, Alfred gave his personal attention to the founding of schools, while he himself undertook the translation of such works as the *Pastoral Care* of Gregory the Great, the *Consolations of Philosophy* of Boëthius, and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, from Latin to Anglo-Saxon. It was he, too, who was responsible for the institution of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, our best source for the history of his age. Both as the founder of the English kingdom and of English literature, Alfred fully deserved his title, "the Great."

Meanwhile, the Danes were settling everywhere north of the Thames, farming and building fortified towns or "burghs" as military and commercial centers. They were also gradually adopting the Christian religion. They failed, however, to develop any strong political organization. In the two generations following Alfred the Great, his son and grandson were able to complete his work by reconquering the Danelaw and establishing a united kingdom in England. For a time the Danes retained their own laws; but as their language and customs were not radically unlike those of the Saxons, they gradually merged with them into one indistinguishable race.

Reconquered Danelaw

Of the Vikings from Sweden who struck out to the east and south by way of the rivers through Russia we know less than about those who went to the west. We know, however, that these Vikings, whom the Slavs called "Russ," occupied Novgorod and Kiev about the middle of the ninth century and under a leader named Rurik carved out some kind of kingdom for themselves — the first Russian state. They traded from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and kept up commercial relations with Constantinople and Bagdad. In course of time, like those Northmen who had gone to England and Normandy, they adopted the speech, religion, and customs of the people among whom they lived and so disappear as a separate race.

The Swedes in Russia

The coming of the Northmen caused the partial destruction of civilization and learning in many parts of Europe, but their advent was not an unmitigated disaster. The outworn Carolingian Empire, which they helped to destroy, was succeeded by new kingdoms, the nations of the future. In England they made the union of the whole country into one kingdom possible by destroying three out of the original four rival Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. And everywhere they introduced new and vigorous blood. Moreover, they proved themselves capable of absorbing the culture of more civilized people and, in time, of adding to it. Above all, their keen interest in trade led to a revival of commerce and town life in the British Isles, Normandy, and Russia, for which later ages owe them a great debt of gratitude.

The contribution of the Northmen

14

The Feudal System

THE KINGDOMS which replaced the disrupted Carolingian Empire were feudal kingdoms; and medieval society, in which the Germanic and Roman elements had at last merged to form a new composite, was throughout a feudal society. It is feudalism that gives to the society of the Middle Ages its peculiar character, differentiating it clearly from that of Roman antiquity or of the modern age. It pervaded and gave form to every aspect of life and every institution. Economic, social, political, and judicial institutions were all parts of the feudal system — as was also the church. To understand the feudal system, then, is essential to an understanding of the life of the Middle Ages. Nor is it easy for us to understand, accustomed as we are to such radically different conditions and ideas. It is difficult for the modern man, with his conceptions of private ownership of land, to visualize a society in which no one, or at least very few, owned land outright, but instead held it as an hereditary right from some social superior in return for personal services. It is difficult, too, for us to imagine a society in which the great majority of the people, the workers, were only partly free, while the remainder formed a fighting and ruling aristocracy. It is still less easy, perhaps, to picture a state in which the body of the citizens had no direct connection with the central government and where the ordinary rights and duties of government, such as the prosecution of justice in the law courts, the enforcement of law

and order, the coinage of money, taxation, and the organization of the army, had passed into the hands of private individuals.

In this chapter we shall try to explain how such a system arose and how it functioned. But we can do so only in the most general way; for feudalism grew up gradually and according to no preconceived plan, so that what is true of one place may not be entirely true of another, and what applies to one time may not apply to another. All that we can attempt is to trace the main outlines of the feudal system and to describe what was most generally true. Broadly speaking, the eighth and ninth centuries may be taken as the age in which feudalism originated; the tenth and first half of the eleventh century as the period in which it took definite shape; and the next two hundred years as the time of its highest and most complete development, to be followed by centuries of slow decay as new forms arose to take its place.

1. ORIGINS OF FEUDALISM — THE EIGHTH AND NINTH CENTURIES

Feudalism arose because it was the only system that would satisfy the needs of the age. It came as a result, not so much of legislation or governmental policy as of a vast number of bargains and arrangements between private individuals or between individuals and the monarch — bargains in which both parties made the best terms they could according to their needs

Failure of central government

and ambitions. The fundamental cause of feudalism, then, is to be found in the conditions of the period — roughly the eighth and ninth centuries — in which it arose. Of these conditions the most important was the weakness and eventual failure of the central government, and that, in turn, was very largely the result of the economic conditions prevailing throughout Western Europe. After the beginning of the eighth century, the Western Christian lands were cut off from trade with the East by Moslem domination of the Mediterranean, while at the same time the commerce of the northern and western coasts was disrupted by the ravages of the Northmen. Lacking the stimulus of external trade, the commerce of Western Christendom, which had been declining for centuries, almost disappeared and city life of a normal kind disappeared with it. What was left was an almost purely agricultural economy carried on by barter and exchange of services, with very little money in circulation. Land became almost the sole source of wealth, and without markets there was no adequate means of turning its products into cash. Under such circumstances, taxes were difficult if not impossible to collect on any significant scale. As a result, the government, deprived of financial support, was forced either to pay for services with grants of land, which always tended to become hereditary, or to delegate its duties and privileges to those landholders who could exert effective authority over the people on their land. In addition, the Frankish government had always suffered from the weaknesses inherent in a primitive system of personal rule. Even in the best days of the Carolingian rulers, from their beginning as mayors of the palace to the death of Charlemagne, they had never provided a really adequate government. Yet feudalism made slow progress until the ninth century, when under Louis the Pious and his warring sons the central government gradually collapsed. Weakened by civil wars and rebellions, the later Carolingians were unable to protect their people from the raids of the Northmen and the violence of the nobles, and were forced to leave them, together with many of the privileges of government, in the hands of the fighting aristocracy, whom they could no longer control and to whom the people were forced to turn for the protection which the king could no longer offer. Let us see how this change worked out in relation to the different classes of society.

For the class of small landowners, the rise of feudalism meant the loss of free ownership of their land and with it the loss of freedom and independence. Since Roman times there had been many great estates worked by slaves and more or less servile *coloni*. **Small landowners lose freedom** Small farms were now added to these estates or were put together to form new ones, and their former owners sank to a position very like that of the *colonus*. One of the principal causes of this development during the eighth century, and especially under the warlike Charlemagne, was the heavy burden of compulsory military service laid on all freemen. During the summer months when his land needed the most attention, the freeman was often forced to go on campaigns at his own expense and without pay. For this and other reasons, great numbers of small landowners sank hopelessly into debt, and in order to cancel their debts or to escape military service they gave up their lands to some rich neighbor. Thereafter they worked the land as dependent tenants under the rich lord's protection. Freemen also who had no land or had lost it, and hence had no way of making a living, "commended" themselves to a wealthy lord. Henceforth they were "his men" and usually were given some land to work. In either case they became dependent on the lord and lost their freedom. During the turbulent ninth century this process was greatly accelerated. The necessity of securing protection from the only available source — the most powerful man in the neighborhood — forced the remaining small freemen to put themselves and their land under the protection of the local lord, even though it meant the loss of ownership and liberty, for in that lawless age security was more important than freedom. At the same time, many great landowners took advantage of their power and the lack of governmental control to force their poorer neighbors into this dependent position. What-

LORDS AND KNIGHTS OF THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

A scene from a southern French manuscript of the eleventh century

ever may have been the steps by which this process was completed, and they are none too clear, it is evident that by the end of the ninth century almost all the workers on the land had become unfree tenants on large estates.

While the poorer citizens were sinking in the social scale, the wealthier or more fortunate were forming a military **Rise of a military aristocracy** aristocracy. Since the early years of the eighth century, when Charles Martel had mounted part of the Frankish army in order to meet the Saracen cavalry on equal terms, military service had become more expensive. In course of time practically the whole fighting force came to be made up of mounted men. As a result, only men with sufficient wealth to provide themselves with a horse as well as with armor and weapons could afford to fight. Hence the flight from military service noted in the last paragraph, which so reduced the imperial army that Charlemagne issued edicts forcing the lords to

equip and bring into the army, under their own leadership, at least some of the men dependent on them. Thus there grew up a class of military dependents, who, however, unlike the laborers, did not lose their status as freemen, since fighting was considered an honorable occupation. In the chaos of the ninth century, fighting men were at a premium. They were needed by the king and by the lords and hence were able to secure more favorable terms for themselves than were the laborers. The warrior who commended himself to a lord would receive from him the use of enough land to provide him with the necessary income for horse and armor and the leisure to devote himself to fighting. Also the freeman who had land enough to provide himself with such an income, but who needed the protection of some great lord, would give up his land to the lord and be allowed to retain the income from it in return for military service. By the end of the ninth century, this combination of landholding and military service had become

the universal rule. It was a recognized axiom that there should be no land and no man without a lord. Like the laborer, the fighter held his land from some lord whose man he was, but his position in the social scale was infinitely higher and tended to become hereditary, thus laying the foundation for a military aristocracy.

Roman and Germanic origins The series of dependent relations established between the tenant laborers and the owners of large estates, and between the fighting landholders and their lords, which formed the framework of social feudalism, were the natural results of the break-up of the state and central government. Society was split into smaller units and men were forced to seek protection where they could find it. The actual form taken by this process, however, was conditioned by the existence of somewhat similar Roman and Germanic institutions at an earlier date. In the late and unsettled period of the Roman Empire, it was not uncommon for a freeman, who could not hold his land under the pressure of hard times and taxation, to give his land to a rich landowner, while continuing to work it as a tenant. Also poor men frequently sought the protection of a wealthy man, giving in return services as clients. The former relation is called *precarium*, the latter *patrocinium*. But these implied no military service, nor the bond of personal loyalty to be found in the relation between the feudal warrior and his lord. For an earlier model for this institution we must go back to the Germanic past, to the *comitatus*, the band of warriors who swore allegiance to their chief, fought for him and in return were provided with the necessities of life. The extent to which these institutions influenced the growth of feudalism is doubtful; but so far as feudalism did draw its origins from the past, it may be said to have been a combination of Roman methods of landholding and of Germanic methods of military service.

So far as the administration of the state as a whole was concerned, one of the most important factors in the rise of feudalism was the passing of many of the rights and privileges of government from the king to the great nobles. The legal steps by which this process took place are difficult to trace. The explanation of why they occurred is more clear. As the central government grew weaker, **Powers of state in private hands** the nobles grew stronger and hence more independent. People turned to them for the protection they no longer received from the state. Since they were strong enough to assume one of the greatest responsibilities of government, that of granting protection and preserving order, it was only natural that these nobles should assume the other rights and privileges of government over their people. Even had they not been anxious to seize power, it would have been thrust upon them; for the people turned naturally to the local lord for protection and justice, rather than to the distant and feeble monarch. In an age of general anarchy like the ninth century, he ruled who had the power to rule, regardless of legal right. The counts and dukes of the Carolingian Empire, whose offices had become practically hereditary, were the natural leaders of their administrative districts. It was easy for them to establish themselves as rulers in their own right rather than as officers of the crown, though still recognizing the king as their superior. In similar ways, lesser lords took over the actual government of their own districts, simply because they were strong enough to do so.

So far we have tried to show how feudalism came into existence. We must turn now to the description of the system in its completed form.

2. ECONOMIC FEUDALISM — THE MANORIAL SYSTEM

By the end of the ninth century, the manorial system of landholding and cultivation was almost universal throughout Europe. With a few scattered exceptions, the land was **The manor, an economic unit** divided into estates, called "villas" in France and "manors" in England, of which the owner was a lord or "seigneur" and the workers were peasant tenants, dependent on him. The manor, to use the familiar English term, was the common economic unit of feudalism, for the whole feudal system was based on landholding. It was through the organization of the

manor that the peasant laborer had his only contact with the military ruling class, who formed the upper ranks of feudal society. The lord was a member of the fighting aristocracy. He might have no more than a single manor, or he might hold hundreds. In any case the individual manor was an independent unit and the relation between the peasants and the lord would be the same. We may confine our study of the economic side of feudalism, then, to the organization of a single manor.

No two manors were exactly alike. There were infinite variations in custom and practice. Yet the general characteristics of the manorial system were sufficiently alike in all parts of Europe to justify the description of a typical manor, on the understanding, of course, that the details would vary widely in any given case.[1] At the center of the manor, on the highest point of land, stood the lord's house, fortified to give protection to the lord and peasants in case of attack. If the manor were the home of a powerful baron, it would be a strongly fortified castle — otherwise no more than a strongly built house. Around the manor house clustered the huts of the peasants, each with a little land attached, forming the village which was an indispensable part of any manor. In the village there would also be a mill, a blacksmith's shop, a small church, and a house for the parish priest. Surrounding the village were the cultivated fields and the meadows, wastelands, and woods. Part of the cultivated land, perhaps a third, was set aside for the sole use of the lord. This was called "demesne" land. It might be all in one block, or part of it might be scattered in small pieces throughout the manor. The remainder of the land was parceled out among the peasants of the village. The meadows, wastelands, and woods were not formally divided, but were considered common land, shared proportionately by lord and peasants.

The land of the manor would present a strange appearance to people of today, accustomed to seeing farms divided into permanently fenced fields. On all sides of the village,

The typical manor

Open-field system

[1] See chart, page 191.

the manor lands stretched in great open fields, surrounded by temporary fences only during the periods when the crops had to be protected from the cattle. This method of farming is called "the open-field system." When the crops were reaped, the fences were removed and the cattle of lord and villagers were turned loose to graze. For purposes of cultivation these open fields were divided into three parts to allow for rotation of the crops. One field would be reserved for spring planting of oats, barley, and pease; the second for the fall planting of wheat or rye, to be harvested in the following summer; the third would lie fallow, that is, it would be allowed to rest without crop, though plowed twice during the year, while the young grass which sprang up served as pasture for the cattle. Each year the treatment of the fields shifted in steady rotation, so that each field lay fallow once in three years. This system was necessary at a time when methods of fertilizing were crude and unscientific. The land would soon have become exhausted if it had not been allowed time to recover or if the same crop had been planted on it year after year.

Scattered through these open fields, and outside the demesne farm, were the small holdings of the peasants. Each field was subdivided into numbers of long narrow strips separated by thin ridges or "balks" of grass. The shape of these strips was fixed by the plow. Usually they ran the full length of the field so that the heavy plow, drawn by a team of four or eight oxen, would not have to turn too often. Every peasant held a number of these strips, scattered at random through each of the three fields. Sometimes the lord reserved some of them as demesne land. The amount of land held by a single peasant varied, depending on the number of strips he had inherited. This system of "intermixed ownership" may have originated as a plan for giving each of the peasants land of equal value — allowing to none the advantage of having his whole plot in especially fertile soil or near the village. Whatever its origin, the system continued because it fitted into the method of working the land employed on the manor; for, though each peasant harvested

Intermixed ownership

Wood Land

Arable Fields

Waste

Fallow Land

Spring Planting

Fall Planting

Manor House

House of
Parish Priest

Common

Lord's

Blacksmith
Barns

Church

The Village

Demesne

Mill

Pasture

Pond

Meadow

Marsh
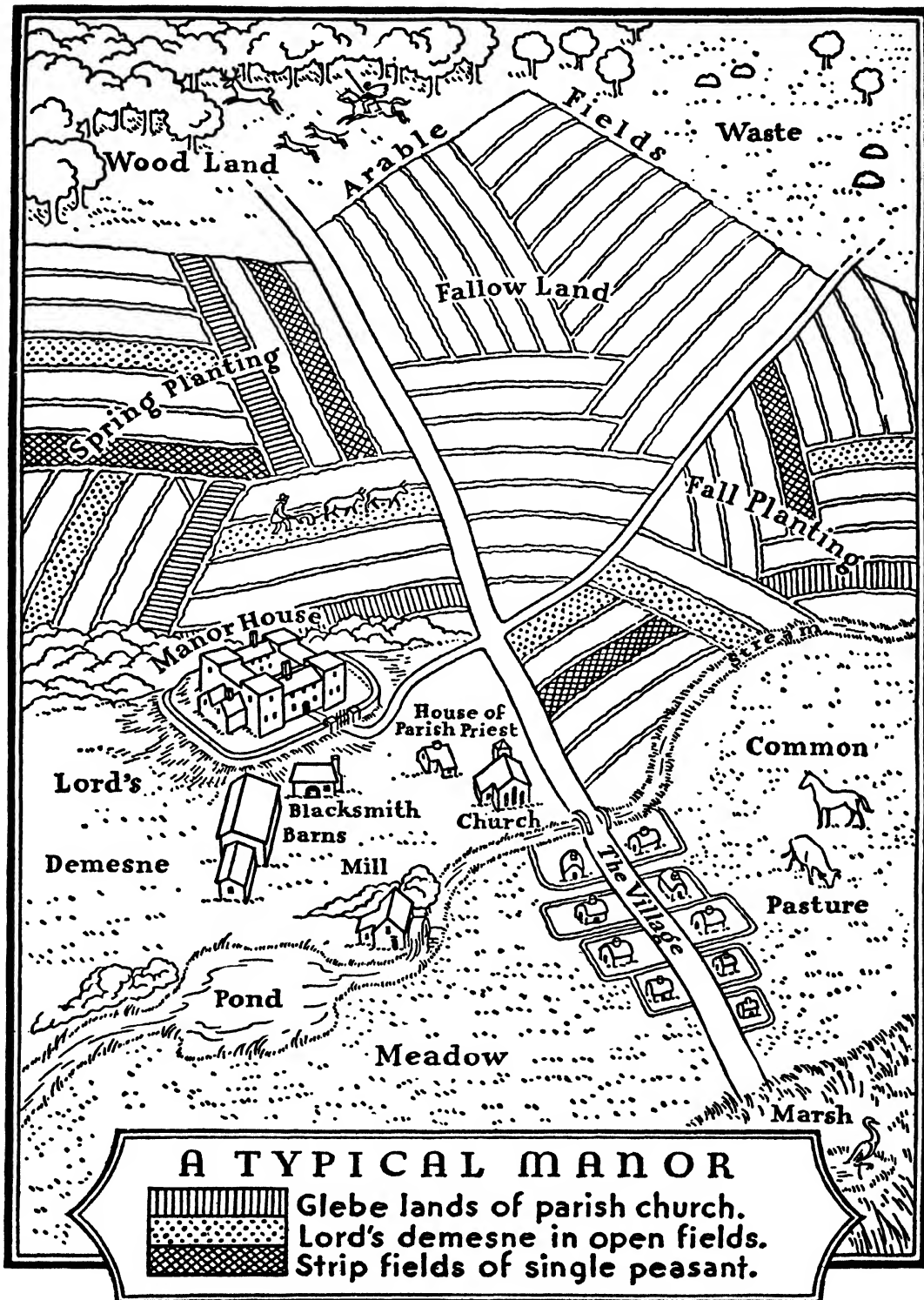
A TYPICAL MANOR
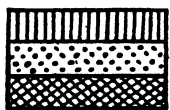
Glebe lands of parish church.
Lord's demesne in open fields.
Strip fields of single peasant.

This chart shows all the features of an ordinary medieval manor. Note especially the arrangement of the strips in the open fields showing the intermixed ownership.

the crop from his own strips, the whole village united their labor in the communal cultivation of the fields. "Medieval tillage was co-operative in character, and all the principal operations of agriculture were carried on in common. Indeed, the association of all tenants in the open fields in a general partnership was rendered necessary, in any case, by the fact that a peasant would seldom possess sufficient oxen to do without his neighbors' assistance. Accordingly, the villagers worked together, plowing and reaping every strip as its turn came around." The intermixture of the strips guaranteed the same treatment for all. At the same time, the co-operative system checked all individual initiative. It prevented the peasant from trying new experiments or from taking advantage of any unusual skill or thrift.

The inhabitants of the village who worked the fields were all members of the peasant class. They were all tenants, **The peasants** holding their land from the lord of the manor in what is sometimes called "censive" tenure; that is, in return for manual services and dues. They were all under the lord's jurisdiction and more or less dependent upon him. Yet within this class there were innumerable gradations and shades of social status and degrees of wealth and freedom — or perhaps it would be more accurate to say, of poverty and servitude. It is impossible to distinguish clearly between the various grades of peasants, as there was little uniformity throughout Europe, and even the names used to describe them are often confusing. In England the words "villein" and "serf" were used almost interchangeably for all unfree tenants, as distinguished from the higher class of "free" tenants who paid rent to their lord but owed very slight personal services. In France a distinction, not very clear, was usually made between the villeins and serfs, the latter term signifying a more completely servile class than the former. The origin of these differences in status is to be found in the manner in which the peasants' ancestors first came under the jurisdiction of the lord and in the terms of the original bargain between them; for the contract between lord and tenant was hereditary, passed on with

little change from generation to generation and fixed by custom. In general it may be said that the serfs, on the Continent at least, had no civil rights, while the villeins had all the rights of freemen, save that they were bound to the land and could not leave it without the lord's consent. The status of the English peasants was, on the whole, apparently higher than that of their continental fellows, all the unfree tenants enjoying a position more or less like that of the villein class on the Continent.

The relation between the peasant and the lord of the manor can best be described as based on an unwritten but generally understood contract, to **The manorial contract** which custom had given a legal sanction. It was not a one-sided bargain. The lord gave the peasant protection, established a court where he could appeal for justice, built a mill, and provided a church for the village. Above all, he furnished the land. All the land of the manor belonged legally to the lord; but custom forbade his taking the peasant's strips of land from him, provided the latter had fulfilled all his obligations. Nor could the lord prevent the peasant from taking his customary share of hay from the meadows or from pasturing his allotted share of cattle, swine, or geese on the common land. Thus the peasants, though in most cases not free to leave their land, had the security which came from the hereditary right to its possession.

In return for these privileges, the peasants owed certain payments and services to the lord. All but the freest peasants were obliged to work for the lord a certain number of days each week. This "week work" was utilized for the cultivation of the demesne land and for the incidental tasks, such as carrying the lord's produce to market or to another of his manors. At certain times during the year, when the pressure of work was greatest, all the peasants on the manor were forced to work on the lord's demesne. These special services were called "boon works." Labor services were an essential part of the manorial system. Indeed, the whole system may be regarded as a method of securing labor for the lord's land without the payment of money wages. All the ten-
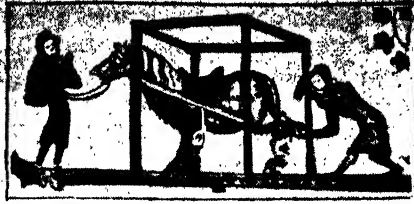
Shoeing a Horse

A Wheelbarrow
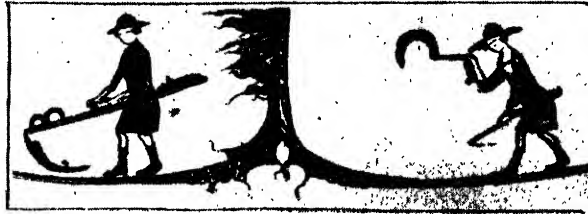
Reaping & Mowing
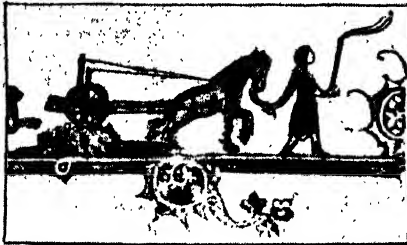
Ploughing

Digging
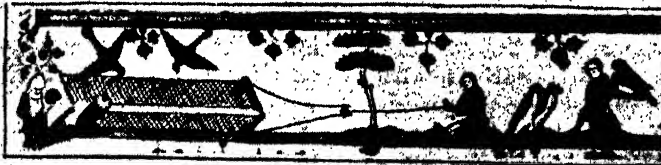
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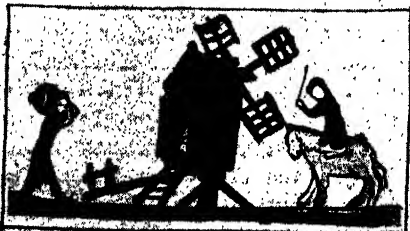
A Windmill
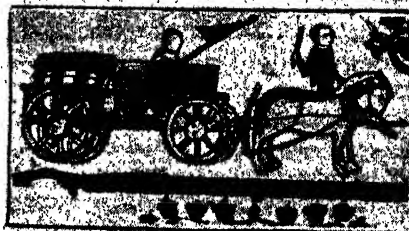
A Wagon

COUNTRY LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

*These scenes representing the varied activity of medieval peasants
were taken from a fourteenth-century English manuscript.*

ants, too, owed the lord payments as rent for their land. These were usually made in kind, that is, in produce, but might in exceptional cases be made in money. The amount of the payments was fixed by custom, though in some places the lord had the legal right to exact as much as he chose from his serfs. The villagers had also to pay for the use of the lord's mill and the great oven where all baked their bread. There were other occasional dues. On the death of a tenant his heirs had to make a special payment, called "heriot," as recognition of the lord's ownership of the land and for the renewal of the hereditary contract. The unfree peasant, too, had to make a payment, called "merchet," if his daughter married outside the manor, as the lord was thus deprived of one of his serfs.

The manor was a little economic and political world, complete in itself. The peasant had small contact with the world outside or with any higher authority than his lord. There was little commerce, and most of the peasant's needs — food, clothing, and tools — were produced on the manor. The produce of the fields was mostly consumed on the manor, though grain might be carried to another manor belonging to the lord or, after the revival of town life, might be sold in a nearby market. In short, the manorial system represented a very simple and primitive form of economy, wherein exchange of produce and services took the place of cash transactions. This remained more or less true of agricultural economy down to the beginning of the modern era, though in the Later Middle Ages, after the rise of the towns and the revival of trade had reintroduced money economy, the self-sufficiency of the manors was impaired, buying and selling began to supersede the simpler forms of barter, and cash payments gradually took the place of service or payments in kind.

Self-sufficiency of the manor

3. MILITARY FEUDALISM AND LANDHOLDING — THE FIEF

The peasants, laboriously tilling their strips of land, turning over part of their produce to the lord of the manor and cultivating his demesne farm, formed the foundation of feudal society, the widespread base on which the whole structure rested. By their unremitting toil they made it possible for their lord to live without labor and to devote his energies to the only occupation suitable for a noble, namely, fighting. The clearest distinction between social classes in the feudal system was that between the non-noble laborer and the noble warrior. Both held land in hereditary tenure from some superior, it is true, but the censive tenure of the peasant was based on "ignoble" services, i.e., manual labor, whereas the feudal tenure of the noble landholder was based on "noble," i.e., military service. The right to fight was a privilege reserved for the military aristocracy, from which baseborn men were jealously excluded, save in Germany where an intermediate class of *ministeriales* stood vaguely between the class of noble and peasant. To this military aristocracy belonged originally all who could afford to live without working, and who had sufficient income to provide them with the necessary war-horse, heavy armor, and weapons. That, of course, meant all who had sufficient land to provide such an income, for to this class almost the only possible source of income was from land. We have already seen the ways in which this class arose through the combination of landholding and military service. Whatever the nature of the original bargain between the fighter and his lord, the amount of land was necessarily greater than that involved in the contract between the laborer and the lord of the manor, and the dependent relation in the former case carried with it no suggestion of servility, but was a free and honorable bargain between two members of the same military aristocracy.

The military aristocracy

There were many variations in rank and wealth within the military class, extending from the poorest knight, who had barely enough land to furnish him with equipment, to the great count or duke, whose wide lands supported hundreds of knights who rode to battle at his command. But certain characteristics were common to them all. All were knights (warriors), set apart by that honor from the base-

The fief

born; all were in some degree lords with a greater or lesser number of dependents, for even the poorest knight was lord of at least a small manor; and each held a "fief" from some greater lord to whom he owed military service. The fief was the indispensable land unit of military feudalism. It varied in size with the wealth and importance of the holder — that of the poor knight aforementioned being merely a single manor, that of the count or duke a great territory including hundreds of manors. In any case, the holder of the fief was the "vassal" of the lord from whom he received the fief and who might be a baron, count, duke, or king, or any other lord with land enough to grant part of it to a vassal in return for military service. The vassal did not own the fief, just as the peasant tenant did not own the land he worked, but he had an hereditary right to the use of it and could not legally be deprived of it so long as he fulfilled his obligations. Fiefs composed of income from other sources than land (bridge tolls or what not) were not unknown, but they were the exception to a general rule.

The relations between the vassal and his lord, like those between the peasant and the lord of the manor, were based on a commonly understood contract, handed on with little change from generation to generation. This contract was formally renewed by a solemn ceremony, whenever the death of either party introduced his heir as a new personality into the relation. The vassal's part in this ceremony was called "homage." He knelt before his lord, bareheaded and unarmed, placed his hands between the hands of his lord, and swore to be his man (*homme*) and to be faithful to him. The lord then responded with the ceremony of "investiture," presenting to the vassal a spear, flag, or some other symbol representing the fief. The symbolical ceremony of homage and investiture constituted a binding agreement, defined by custom and enforced by public opinion. It could not be legally broken by either party unless the other had failed to live up to the terms of the contract.

The feudal contract included a number of

Homage and investiture

mutual obligations. For the vassal's part, the chief of these was to fight for his lord. Originally, no doubt, the vassal was expected to fight whenever and as long as the lord needed him. As society became more settled, however, and the need for military aid less constant, the amount of military service was usually fixed at a certain number of days (customarily forty) per annum. Each fief was valued in terms of knights' service. The holder of a single manor, rated at one knight's service, would be responsible only for his own service, whereas a baron whose fief was valued at twenty knights' service would be bound to answer his lord's call to arms accompanied by nineteen other knights, who in turn were bound to follow him because they held fiefs from him and were his vassals. Closely allied to this military obligation was the court duty. The vassal was obliged to attend the court of justice held by his lord on stated occasions, and also to do his lord honor by his presence at festive celebrations, where the number of vassals in his retinue was an indication of the lord's social importance.

Military duties of the vassal

The vassal also owed his lord certain contributions in money or produce. These were not annual payments, but were made only on special occasions. The heaviest payment in most cases was the "relief," which sometimes amounted to as much as a year's income from the fief. It was paid whenever either lord or vassal died and was succeeded by his heir. Like the "heriot" paid by the peasant tenant under similar circumstances, it was apparently a recognition of the lord's ownership of the land and a fee for the renewal of the contract, which was considered to be temporarily broken by the death of either of the contracting parties. In addition to the relief, there were three generally recognized "aids." All the vassals were obliged to contribute to making up the lord's ransom if he were captured, to defraying the expenses of the ceremony of knighting his son, and to providing a dowry when his daughter married. The vassal was also expected to house and entertain the lord and his retinue whenever he chose to visit the vassal's fief.

Relief and aids

The obligations of the lord, included in the feudal contract, were not so onerous as those of the vassal. This was natural enough, since, in theory, it was he who provided the land. The lord's most important duty was to protect his vassal from all enemies. He was also obliged to maintain a court where his vassals could appeal for justice, to act as guardian for a vassal's minor heirs, and to secure a suitable husband for the unmarried heiress of any of his vassals. These latter duties, however, were also privileges and often very remunerative. The fines imposed in his court added considerably to the lord's income. His right of wardship over minor heirs might be a still more valuable prerogative, since he was entitled to the full income from the fief, which he managed till the heir was old enough to assume the responsibility. The choosing of a husband for an unmarried heiress was also a jealously guarded right. It was important to find her a husband as soon as possible, as a woman could not perform a vassal's duties, and it was even more important to choose as her husband some man who would fulfill those duties adequately and faithfully. In case there were no heirs, the fief returned or "escheated" to the lord. He could then retain it or grant it to another vassal at will.

The personal tie between lord and vassal was the cement that held feudal society together — if very imperfectly. The great nobles, who held fiefs directly from the king as his vassals-in-chief, split the greater part of their land into smaller fiefs, granted to vassals who thus became the subvassals of the king. These in turn might grant part of their land to vassals of their own, who would be subvassals of the king's vassal, and so on down to the fief so small that it could support only a single knight. This process is known as "subinfeudation." Had it worked out according to theory, the aristocratic feudal society would have taken the form of a symmetrical pyramid, of which the knights formed the base, the barons, counts, dukes, and other great nobles the higher ranks in diminishing numbers, and the king the apex. But feudalism had not grown up according

Duties and privileges of the lord

Subin-feudation

to any preconceived theory. From the beginning, the steps in the feudal hierarchy had been uneven, and with the passage of time the natural shifts of family fortune introduced new complications with every passing generation, until the whole system was reduced to utter chaos. At the same time, western Europe was gradually becoming more civilized and settled, so that the mutual need for military service and protection was less vital and the personal tie of dependence and loyalty was weakened. In proportion as this occurred, landholding became the most important part of the feudal bargain. Thus it happened that, by marriage, conquest, purchase, or inheritance through the mother's family, nobles frequently acquired fiefs from several lords at once, to each of whom they would owe vassal's service. Again, part of such a vassal's fief might pass into the hands of a much more powerful lord, who would nevertheless become his vassal for that land. The duties of a vassal might thus become extremely complicated. Many were forced to introduce reservations into the oath of loyalty, "saving the rights of his other lords." These complications of subinfeudation destroyed all proportion and symmetry in the ranks of the feudal nobility. There were knights who held small fiefs directly from the king; counts who held fiefs from petty barons; and untitled lords whose fiefs rivaled those of counts or dukes. The Count of Champagne, to cite a well-known example, was the vassal of the King of France for part of his lands and of nine other lords for the remainder, including the German emperor and the Duke of Burgundy.

4. THE CHURCH IN THE FEUDAL SYSTEM

Thus far we have discussed feudalism only as it affected laymen — the nobles and peasants. We must turn now to consider the position of the clergy in the feudal system; for it would be impossible to understand the history of the medieval church — or of feudalism — without an understanding of the intimate connection between the two. It was inevitable that the church should become feudalized, since it was a great landholder, and landholding on a large scale was possible

Extent of church land

only by feudal tenure. Landholding in the Middle Ages carried with it political, judicial, and military responsibilities and a complex of personal relations. As a landholder, then, the church became of necessity an integral part of feudal society, bound to the secular world by innumerable personal and economic ties. The amount of land held by the medieval church seems almost impossibly great to the modern student. It has been reckoned that during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries approximately one third of the land in western Europe was controlled by the church. Even as early as the ninth century, according to one historian's estimate, there were bishops and abbots whose lands covered more than one hundred thousand acres, while even the poorest held five thousand acres or more.

These lands had been accumulated as the result of generations of pious gifts, inspired, more often than not, by the desire of a dying king or lord to reconcile himself with God and to throw some good deed into the balance to outweigh his sins. After the time of Charlemagne, most gifts of this kind were in the form of fiefs and were held in feudal tenure for the church by the bishops, as rulers of the dioceses, or by abbots, as the heads of monasteries. So much land could not be held without producing the military service expected from all vassals. Since the bishops or abbots, as churchmen, were not supposed to fight, they were forced to parcel out part of their lands to lay vassals who owed them military service, which in turn they could pass on to their lords. There was little to distinguish an ecclesiastical fief from any other. The bishop or abbot gave and received military service and the usual relief and aids like any lay noble, save that election took the place of inheritance, and land once acquired by the church could never be alienated from it. These ecclesiastical nobles were usually vassals-in-chief of the monarch, and their military support was often more important to the king than that of the lay lords, whose family ties and ambitions might interfere with their obedience.

Just as in lay society there was a clear distinction between peasant and noble, so in the ecclesiastical hierarchy there was a social distinction, though not so rigid, between the lower and the higher clergy. The parish priests were mostly of peasant stock, and those who served the manorial churches were almost as dependent on the lord of the manor as were the other peasants. The bishops, abbots, and other high officials of the church, on the other hand, were usually of noble birth. The younger son of a noble family might gain through such a position far greater wealth and power than he could hope for from his share of the family estates. As a result, the great nobles frequently interfered in ecclesiastical elections to secure a vacant bishopric or abbacy for one of their relatives, thus establishing him comfortably and gaining for themselves a wealthy and powerful ally. Still more frequently, the king would bestow an ecclesiastical office as a reward for service and in order to guarantee the faithful performance of the clerical vassal's duties by placing the office in trustworthy hands. The men who thus rose to influential positions in the church were not necessarily more religious in character or interest than the ordinary lay nobles. Their training and tastes were very similar to those of their brothers who had remained "in the world." They loved hunting and fighting and took an active part in feudal politics. Many a lusty bishop led his mounted vassals into battle, light-heartedly swinging a mace in place of a sword and thus avoiding the sin of shedding blood.

Yet, despite their worldly interests, these "ecclesiastical barons" had important spiritual duties to perform. The government of the church was in their hands. Their offices had in fact a dual character which led to innumerable complications and controversies. They owed vassal's allegiance to their overlords and at the same time owed obedience to their superiors in the church. Neither state nor church could afford to lose control over such powerful officials; yet they could not serve both God and Mammon — though the distinction between the two was sometimes none too clear. It was this conflict of interests and duties which caused the long

AN INVESTITURE CEREMONY

The king is investing his vassals with the charters for their fiefs. In the early period of feudalism symbols were used more commonly than written charters.

A KING HOLDING A FEUDAL COURT

The rather confused picture above, showing both the outside of a castle and the king holding court within, is from a fourteenth-century manuscript.

struggle between church and state, between the papacy on the one hand and the emperors and kings on the other, that for centuries disturbed the peace of Europe. The intrusion of the church into the feudal system resulted in a confusion thrice confounded.

5. THE FEUDAL STATE

We have seen how the whole fabric of feudal society was woven together by a vast number of personal relations, wherein every man — peasants, nobles, and clergy — owed obedience to some immediate superior. In this complex and decentralized system the very idea of a state, composed of citizens ruled directly by a central government, ceased to exist. Yet, through all the feudal period, the kingdoms maintained their existence and kings continued to govern, though

The monarchy

with powers sadly diminished. There was no state system of taxation, coinage, laws or law courts, and no national army. But there were the feudal equivalents, and the monarchy survived in the midst of feudalism because it had itself become feudalized. The theory of feudalism recognized the king as the supreme overlord of all lords and the final proprietor of all the land in the kingdom, though most of it was parceled out to his vassals-in-chief. He ruled, then, not as an absolute monarch, nor as a constitutional monarch like modern kings, but as a feudal overlord. In place of state taxation, the king had to depend for the expenses of government on the income from his own lands — the royal estates — and on the feudal aids and other perquisites involved in the feudal contract with his vassals. He could not raise a national army, but he could call upon

his vassals to perform their military service, accompanied, of course, by their vassals and subvassals. He could not issue legislation binding on all members of the state, but he could command his vassals and issue edicts in the pious hope that his vassals would pass them on to the people they ruled. He had no jurisdiction over the majority of citizens, but he could hold a feudal court for the trial of his immediate vassals and dependents. In practice, it is true, the vassals-in-chief obeyed the kings and performed their duties only when they felt it expedient to do so. More often than not in the early period of feudalism, they felt strong enough to ignore the royal commands. Nevertheless, the kings had an inestimable advantage over the other feudal lords, by virtue of the theory of supremacy, which was always recognized as valid even when ignored in practice. With the passage of time the kings, first of England and later of France, were able to make that theory a reality. In Germany and Italy the rise of the monarchy was complicated by unusual problems which prevented the completion of the process.

Despite the theory of feudal supremacy of the monarch, however, feudalism was by its very nature antagonistic to central government. All local government was in the hands of the **Private jurisdictions** nobles. The king's authority ended with his own vassals; it could not reach beyond them to their dependents. Within his own fief, every noble had full jurisdiction and exercised all the powers of government. As the thirteenth-century jurist, Beaumanoir, put it, "each baron is sovereign in his barony." He held courts for his dependents; levied a kind of taxation through tolls on roads and bridges; often he issued his own coinage; and he could always raise an army, composed of his vassals, to be used for any purpose he chose.

In no respect can the sovereign rights of the feudal lord be more clearly seen than in this recognized right to raise an **Private wars** army and to wage open war on other lords. Only in England, and even there not till the reign of Henry II in the twelfth century, was the monarchy strong enough to suppress private wars. The causes of feudal warfare were innumerable. Disputed boundaries, quarrels over the terms of vassalage, family feuds, personal antagonisms, greed, or sheer boredom were the most common. The nobles loved to fight. Fighting was not nearly so hazardous as in modern times, and it was often a very profitable occupation. The heavily armored knight was more likely to be captured than killed and could then be held for ransom. A further economic incentive to war was the hope of obtaining booty or land. Had there not been opportunities for profit without too great risk, the nobles would probably not have clung so tenaciously to their sovereign rights in this respect. On the whole it was the peasants who suffered most, because of interference with their work and destruction of their crops.

The church, which despite its feudal character maintained a higher social conscience than the lay world, strove as best it could to curb the warlike **Peace of God** ardor of the nobles, or at least to mitigate the evil effects of war on the poor and defenseless. In the last years of the tenth century, the clergy in many parts of Europe instituted the "Peace of God," requiring the nobles to take an oath not to harm the person or property of peasants, merchants, churchmen, or other noncombatants. The nobles themselves recognized the necessity of some such restriction, but old habits were too powerful to break and little good came of it. In the eleventh century a more effective check was applied by the church through the institution of the "Truce of God," which forbade the prosecution of private war during certain seasons — at first from Friday to Sunday of each week (the days of the death and resurrection of Christ) and during the forty days of Lent, from Ash Wednesday to Easter. Later this "closed season" was extended to include the harvest season from the Feast of the Assumption (August 15) to Martinmas (November 11), and from sundown on Wednesday to sunrise on Monday of each week. The Truce originated in France where private wars were most frequent. Thence it spread to the other countries of Europe, except England, where its place was taken by the King's Peace. It

was undoubtedly a beneficial institution, but it is difficult to determine how much of the gradual cessation of feudal warfare may be credited to the Truce and how much to the natural stabilization of society through the growth of royal power.

Feudalism has often been called a system of organized anarchy. The evils of the system are written plainly so that all who run may read. But in judging feudalism it must be remembered that organized anarchy is better than anarchy which has no organization, and that without it European society might have dissolved into complete chaos. Whatever its faults, the feudal system did at least give some order to society in a lawless age, and it held the kingdoms together until such time as the rising power of the monarchy could weld them into strong coherent states. It was a phase in the evolution of western Europe from barbarism to modern civilization.

Estimate

15

The Founding of the Feudal Kingdoms and the Revival of the Empire

IN THE LAST CHAPTER we have studied the manner in which feudalism functioned as the dominating force in the medieval state, giving form and some sort of organization to its economic, social, religious, and political life. In the preceding chapter we traced the decline and final dissolution of the Carolingian Empire at the end of the ninth century, under the shock of invasion by the pirate Northmen and through the workings of the disintegrating forces of feudalism. We saw how the greater part of England was conquered by the hordes of invading Danes, and how there and on the Continent new kingdoms were being born in the last years of the ninth century and the first of the tenth. In this chapter we shall trace the history of these feudal kingdoms through the formative period of the tenth and the first half of the eleventh centuries. It was a stormy and chaotic period, the "iron age" of feudalism. Wars, private feuds, rebellions, acts of violence and oppression were so common as to be considered the normal state of society. The menace of the Northmen subsided early in the tenth century, but the wild Magyars from the Hungarian plains took their place, and for a time added the terror of barbarian raids to the other perils of that turbulent age. In each of the kingdoms, the monarchs struggled desperately and with varying success to control their independent and warlike

vassals and to establish royal authority. In Germany, during this period, the kings were more successful than elsewhere, gradually gathering the reins of government into their own hands and suppressing the great nobles. In the second half of the tenth century, they extended their rule to Italy and refounded the empire. We may end our study of them, for the time being, with the death of Henry III in 1056, under whom the imperial authority reached its greatest height. In France, this period includes the century-long struggle between the Carolingian and Robertian families for the royal title, and the founding of the Capetian dynasty in 987. We may end it with the death of Henry I in 1060, the third and least powerful of the Capetian kings, though there was no very decided improvement in the position of the kings for another half-century. During all this time the French kings were waging a losing battle against the feudal lords. In England this century and a half saw the uniting of England under the descendants of Alfred the Great, the second Danish conquest, the reestablishment of Anglo-Saxon rule, and finally the Norman Conquest, which introduced a new era in the year 1066.

1. GERMANY, ITALY, AND THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

Feudalism in Germany during the tenth

century was at once better organized and more decentralized than in France. This was due to the existence of the great tribal duchies. The population of Germany was less mixed than that of Gaul, and the ancient tribes had maintained something of their old national traditions and coherence under their own hereditary dukes. Toward these tribal dukes the people felt a more direct loyalty than they would have accorded to mere feudal superiors. Each of the five great duchies, Saxony, Bavaria, Franconia, Swabia, and Lorraine [1] (the "stem" duchies, as they were called), formed a feudal state within the kingdom. The chief problem confronting the tenth- and eleventh-century monarchs was to control the duchies. Without such control, the king was powerless outside his own lands; with it, he had a more effective government than he would have had without the tribal organization. Even in the duchies, however, the disintegrating forces of feudalism were at work. The lesser nobles, counts, bishops, knights, and margraves (the latter were counts of the marches or frontier counties) fought for independence of the dukes as the dukes sought independence of the king. Many of them succeeded in transferring their homage from their duke to the king, thus weakening the duchies, but adding little strength to the monarchy, since their very numbers made it difficult for the king to control them. The weakening of the monarchy after Henry III was at least partly due to the breaking-up of the duchies into smaller units.

When the German branch of the Carolingian line ended with the death of Louis the Child in 911, the dukes and other magnates of Germany gathered to elect a new king. They chose Duke Conrad of Franconia (911–18). The nobles felt that it was necessary to have a king, but they were not prepared to surrender any of their authority to him. As a result, the royal title carried with it little more than honor — and none too much of that. As king, Conrad's authority scarcely extended beyond his own duchy. Realizing that the king, to make his rule effective,

The tribal duchies

Conrad I

[1] See map, page 203.

must have the support of more than one duchy, Conrad planned to improve conditions in the next reign. Before his death he made his son promise to give up his own claims to the crown in favor of his rival Henry, Duke of Saxony, and thereafter to support his government. Such at least is the story told by the contemporary chronicler, Widukind. As a result Henry I, called Henry the Fowler, was elected in 919 and founded a dynasty that lasted for more than a century. Backed by Franconia as well as his own duchy of Saxony, Henry was able to force the other dukes to at least nominal submission. Lorraine caused him the most trouble. It was part of that debatable middle kingdom, assigned to Lothair I at Verdun in 843. Its inhabitants were bilingual, as much French as German, and hitherto had been more closely allied with the western kingdom. Henry succeeded in bringing the duchy definitely into the German Kingdom. His success in defending the eastern frontiers against barbarian invaders, too, added considerably to Henry's prestige. He defeated and drove back the heathen Wends — the Slavic people to the east of the Elbe — and the Hungarians, who were ravaging the central part of Germany. He also forced the Duke of Bohemia to recognize him as overlord. On his death, Germany was still little more than a federation of duchies, but he had laid the foundation on which his brilliant son, Otto, was to build a stronger kingdom.

Henry I

All the dukes concurred in the election of Otto I (936–73) and did homage to the new king. Almost immediately, however, his attempts to establish an effective authority over the dukes drove them into revolt. Within the next two years he had to suppress serious rebellions in Bavaria, Franconia, and his own duchy of Saxony, as well as to defend Lorraine against an alliance of its duke with the King of France. Following these revolts, Otto strove to bind the duchies more closely to himself by granting them to his own kinsmen and by making marriage alliances between his relatives and members of the ducal houses. This policy was none too successful even in his own lifetime, and it

Otto the Great

GERMANY IN 962

Light gray areas indicate later expansion

PRUSSIANS

POLAND

Vistula River

Oder River

●Cracow

HUNGARY

Drave River

Danube

KINGDOM OF BURGUNDY

Drave

could have no permanent value. Even a king of so commanding a personality as the great Otto could not always depend on his kinsmen, and he had to put down another widespread and dangerous rebellion in 953–54. Rather more successful was his policy, followed by most of his successors for a century, of granting large tracts of land and great administrative powers to the archbishops and bishops. While still permitting the clergy to elect these officers in the usual manner, he reserved the right of approval and to all practical intents and purposes chose them himself. To make sure of their loyalty, he invested them not only with their fiefs, but also with the symbols of their ecclesiastical office. He thus surrounded himself with powerful and loyal vassals who, because of the rule of clerical celibacy, could not leave legitimate heirs and therefore could not establish an hereditary claim to their fiefs. For generations these ecclesiastical princes formed the strongest support of the monarchy. In these various ways, Otto gradually extended and consolidated the royal authority. Meanwhile, he was continuing his father's work in defending his eastern frontiers and conquering his heathen neighbors. He crushed the Wends and established marches (frontier counties) and bishoprics between the Elbe and Oder rivers, thus laying the foundation for the permanent extension of Germanic rule and Christianity to the east. Still more important, he administered a crushing defeat to the Hungarian invaders near Augsburg in 955. Thereafter they ceased to trouble the western kingdoms.

Like Charlemagne, Otto kept an interested eye on Italy. This country had been **Revival of the empire** for half a century in a condition of utter anarchy. The Lombard kings in the north were powerless against the great nobles. The Saracens had conquered Sicily and were ravaging southern Italy. In the central district, the Papal States, Roman nobles dominated the feeble popes and used the power of the papacy for their own ends. The country was ripe for conquest. In 951, Otto invaded Italy on the pretext of rescuing Queen Adelaide, the widow of the former king of Italy, who was being imprisoned and mistreated by her husband's successor, Berengar II. The expedition was successful so far as it went. Otto defeated Berengar and married the beautiful Adelaide, but was recalled to Germany by a rebellion there. He contented himself for the time with forcing Berengar to recognize him as his overlord. Ten years later he again invaded Italy. This time he deposed Berengar and proclaimed himself king, as Charlemagne had done. Still following in the footsteps of the great Carolingian, he proceeded to Rome where, in February, 962, he was crowned emperor by Pope John XII.

The Holy Roman Empire, founded by Otto the Great, was considered to be a revival of the Carolingian Empire, just as it in turn had been **Theory of empire** regarded as a continuation of the ancient Roman Empire. The new empire, however, was in reality quite different from its predecessor, as Charlemagne's empire had been different from that of the Caesars. Yet the theory which underlay and motivated its revival in the tenth century was much the same as that which brought it about in the year 800. Medieval people had inherited two great traditions from Roman antiquity — that of a universal empire and a universal church. The latter had survived and was incomplete without its secular counterpart. In an age when men thought customarily in terms of logic and theology, it seemed essential that there should be a universal secular ruler who, like the pope, had received his authority directly from God. Such a ruler would be at once the protector and servant of the church, the secular counterpart of the pope, with different but parallel powers over all Christians. Feudal theory, too, fitted vaguely into this conception. There should be some one ultimate overlord from whom the various kings held their land in fief. The condition of anarchy prevailing generally throughout Europe made men long for some strong, divinely appointed ruler. In actual fact, the emperors were far from being universal rulers. Though recognized as of higher rank than the kings, their government was never extended beyond the two kingdoms of Ger-

Frankish Kingdom, 511

Frankish Kingdom, 561

Charlemagne's Empire, 800

Carolingian Empire, 843

Feudal Kingdoms, 888

Holy Roman Empire in 962
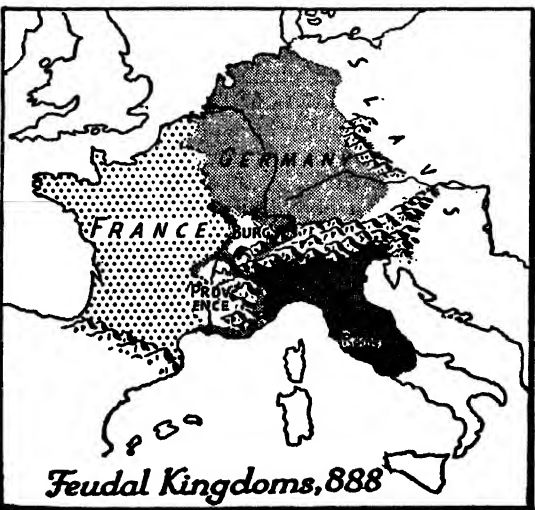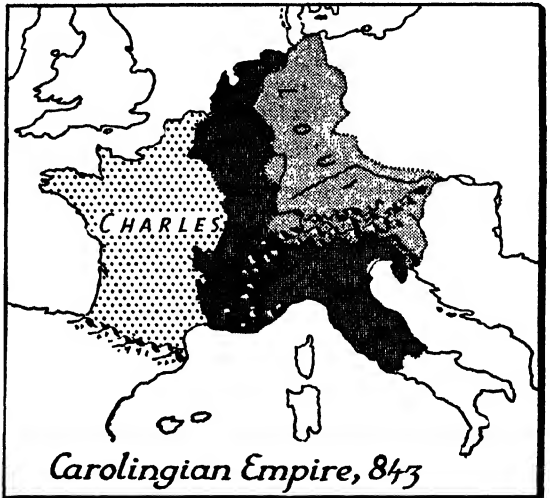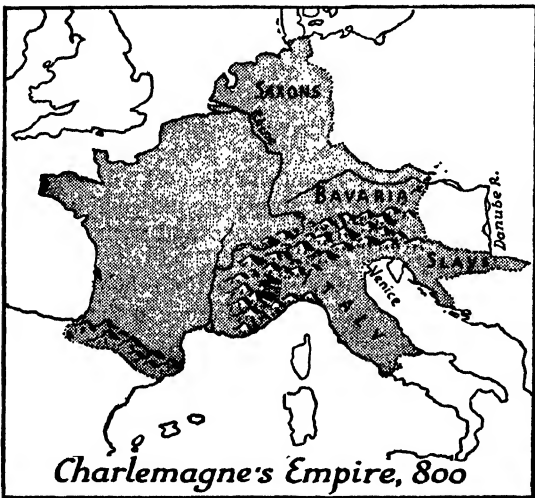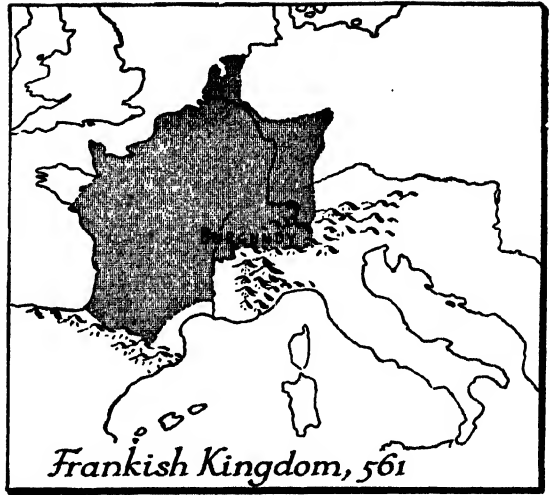
EARLY MEDIEVAL STATES

THE EMPEROR OTTO III

Picture from a contemporary manuscript. The emperor holds a globe in his hand, after the manner of the old Roman emperors, but marked with a cross.

many and Italy,[1] which Otto already held before his coronation, and Burgundy, which Conrad II inherited in 1032. The imperial title brought Otto no additional power, and future emperors were to pay dearly for that empty honor. The theory of the empire bound them to a close partnership with the papacy, which in time led to a disastrous struggle for supremacy with popes who were stronger than they.[2] Moreover, the imperial title committed them to an inevitably unsuccessful attempt to rule both Germany and Italy. As a result they finally lost what real power they would have had as kings of Germany, had they concentrated their attention there instead of trying to extend their government over an alien people, divided from Germany by the towering barrier of the Alps.

The dangers inherent in the imperial claims were demonstrated in the reigns of Otto's son and grandson. The
Otto II
Otto III
intervention of Otto the Great in Italy, successful though he was in seizing both the royal and imperial

[1] See map, page 205.
[2] See below, Chapter 16.

crowns and in showing his imperial authority by deposing a vicious pope, had been no more than an episode in his brilliant career. His power rested solidly on his control of the German Kingdom. Both Otto II (973–83) and Otto III (983–1002) wasted the results of his labor by following the lure of empire into Italy. Otto III, especially, neglected Germany in his attempt to realize a vain though glorious dream of restoring the ancient Roman Empire. He was but three years old when his father's death at Rome left him heir to three crowns. His mother, a Greek princess named Theophano, educated him in the Byzantine tradition, and as he grew up his tutor, the great French scholar, diplomat, and Archbishop of Rheims, Gerbert, impressed his mind still further with the glorious legend of the ancient empire. Otto III made Rome the capital of his empire and exercised a strict control over the papacy, nominating three popes in succession, the last of whom was Gerbert (Silvester II). He died in his twenty-second year, having lost control of Germany and with Italy rising in revolt about him.

The next two kings, wiser than the erratic Otto III, turned their attention to the slow and difficult task of rebuilding
Henry II
royal authority in Germany and re-establishing peace and order. Henry II (1002–24), a greatnephew of Otto I, was a pious, well-educated, and conscientious monarch. He depended very largely on the support of the great ecclesiastical lords, the bishops whom he himself had chosen and invested with their offices. He gave them still more land and administrative authority, and with their aid gradually suppressed the rebellious lay nobles. On his death the crown passed to Conrad II
Conrad II
(1024–39), Duke of Franconia, who founded a new dynasty. Fearing lest the clerical lords might become too strong, Conrad preferred to favor the lesser lay nobility and depend on their loyalty for aid. Otherwise he followed Henry's example in keeping order, enforcing justice, and strengthening the royal power. One event of his reign is of outstanding importance. In 1032, Conrad fell heir to the Kingdom of Burgundy or Arles, which thereafter was

part of the Holy Roman Empire. It lay in the valley of the Rhone, including what is now part of eastern France and western Switzerland.[1] It must not be confused with the duchy of Burgundy, which lay to the northwest of it and was a fief of France.

Due to the work of these two kings, Henry III (1039–56), the son of Conrad II, was able

Henry III

to gain a more complete control of Germany than had been possible for any previous emperor. So great was his power, indeed, that he was able to extend it successfully to Italy. Here the papacy had again fallen into a state of degradation in the hands of unworthy popes. In 1046 there were three rival popes at Rome, to the scandal of the faithful throughout Europe. As emperor, and therefore protector of the church, Henry claimed the right to depose these men who were disgracing the holy office. In their place, he secured the election of an earnest and high-minded German bishop, who took the title Leo IX. Emperor and pope now worked together for the reform, not only of the papacy, but of the whole church. It was a valuable and necessary work, but it had unfortunate aftereffects for the empire. Henry succeeded in so strengthening the papal power that future popes were able to engage in a bitter and partially successful struggle with his son Henry IV for supremacy. But that is another story.

2. FRANCE

In the Western Frankish Kingdom, which became the Kingdom of France, the century following the death of Charles

Robertians and Caro- lingians

the Fat and the dissolution of the Carolingian Empire was one of turmoil and constant disorder. At the beginning of that period, the Northmen were still ravaging France, to be quieted only by the gift of Normandy in 911. They were followed by the Hungarians, whose raids continued till they were crushed by Otto the Great. The kings of France were unable to cope with these invaders, or with the great nobles who took upon themselves the defense of their fiefs, where they ruled as sovereign lords. It was a century of

[1] See map, page 179.

disintegration — disintegration of the kingdom and also of the larger fiefs — and of the most chaotic development of feudalism. Across the blurred pages of French history in this age pass the shadowy figures of the Robertian and Carolingian kings, good and able men some of them, but frustrated at every turn by the independence of their unruly vassals. Of these two royal families, the Carolingians depended chiefly on the traditional loyalty of the people to their house and on the respect of the clergy for the consecrated descendants of the great Charles. The Robertians, on the other hand, had to depend on their strength as the greatest of the feudal lords and on personal ability.

The first king of the latter line was Eudes or Odo (888–98), who was elected by the nobles on the death of Charles the Fat, in default of an adult Carolingian. He was the son of Robert the Strong, Count of Paris, and holder of numerous other fiefs, who ruled most of the territory between the Seine and the Loire. Like his father before him, Eudes had gained a great reputation through fighting the Northmen. After his death, the nobles returned to the Carolingian line, for there was now an adult candidate, Charles the Simple (king 898–922; died 929). Despite his name, Charles seems to have been fairly ambitious and energetic, but doomed to failure by forces that were too strong for him. Much of his reign was spent in trying to incorporate Lorraine in the French Kingdom. In 922, the nobles, angered by his partiality for Lorraine, rebelled under the leadership of Robert, son of the late King Eudes. Robert I (922–23) was crowned king, but was killed the following year. He was succeeded by his son-in-law Raoul I (923–36), who had been Duke of Burgundy.

When the throne again fell vacant, the most powerful man in the kingdom was Hugh the Great, son of Robert I. He had added to the other titles he held as head of the

Louis d'Outremer

Robertian family, the vague but imposing one of Duke of the Franks, or more commonly Duke of France. Undoubtedly he could have been king, but he preferred the reality to the name of power and chose to
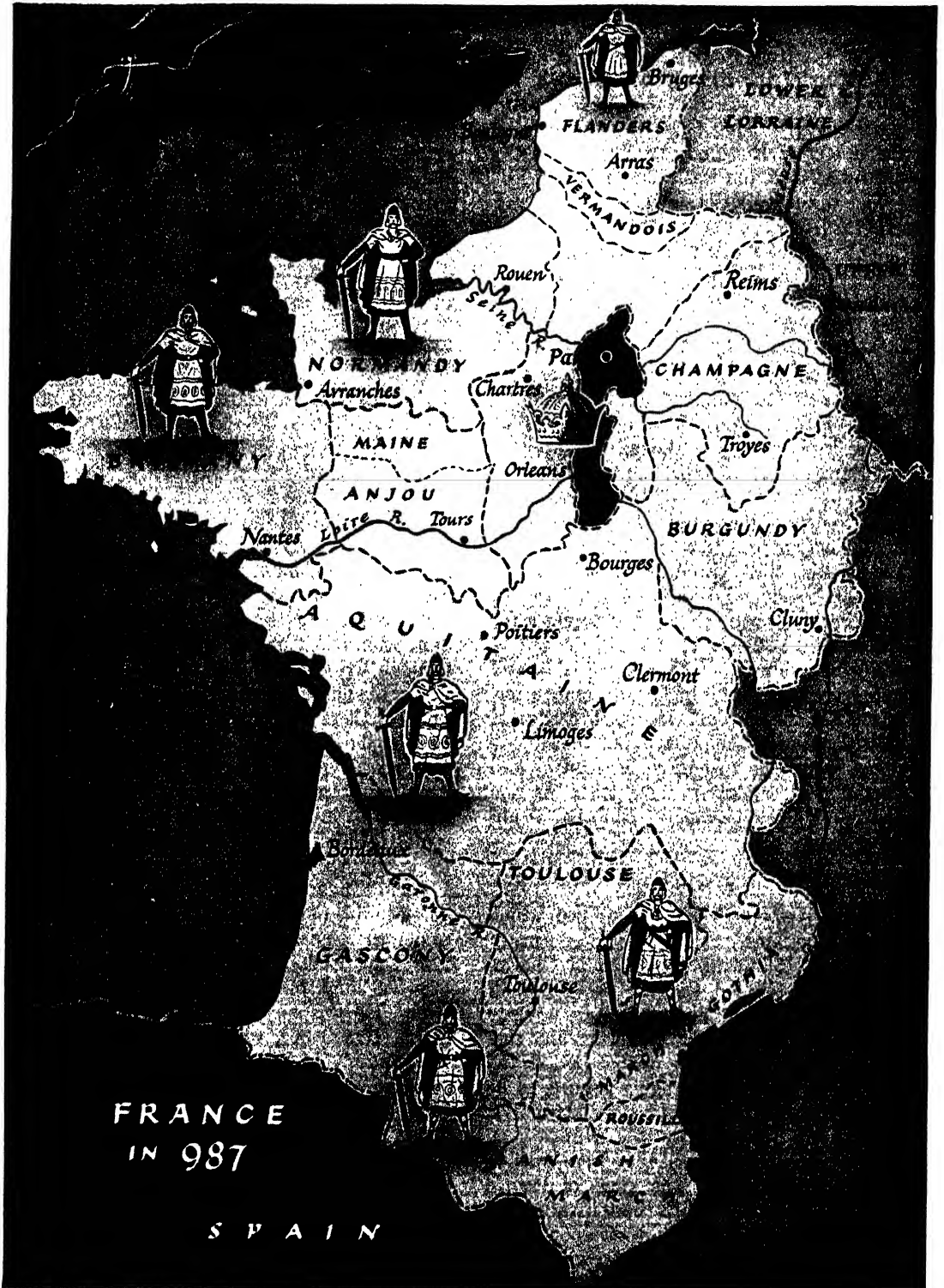
FRANCE IN 987

restore the Carolingian house. Through his influence, the son of Charles the Simple, called Louis d'Outremer (936–54), was brought back from England, where his mother had fled with him when Charles was overthrown. If Hugh hoped to rule the new king, he was disappointed. Louis ignored the powerful Duke of France and followed his own plans. In 938, he undertook to reconquer Lorraine from Otto the Great. Hugh saw his opportunity to ruin the king and formed an alliance with Otto. The emperor, however, did not want to see Louis replaced by Hugh, but preferred to keep either from becoming too strong. He therefore shifted his alliance to Louis, just as the latter was reaching the end of his resources. Louis was beginning to recover his position when his accidental death cut short the reign.

Louis's place was taken by his less capable son Lothair (954–86). Hugh the Great died two years later, but his rôle of leader of the opposition was ably filled by his son Hugh Capet. From his own wide lands Hugh Capet, Duke of France, could draw more income and a larger fighting force than the king could command; for the Carolingians had lost most of the royal domain and were forced to depend for support on the dubious loyalty of their great vassals. Hugh was the friend, too, of Gerbert, the tutor of Otto III, and through him gained the support of the emperor. After years of opposition, he was in open rebellion when Lothair died. Nevertheless, Lothair's son Louis V (986–87), who had already been crowned during his father's reign, was allowed to succeed to the throne. He was the last of the direct line of the Carolingians. His death after only a year's reign left the road to the throne open to Hugh Capet.

Last Carolingians

The election of Hugh Capet (987–96) marks the beginning of the famous Capetian dynasty. For over three centuries his descendants passed the crown on in unbroken succession from father to son, gradually changing the elective kingship to one clearly hereditary. During that period, the average length of reign was nearly thirty

First Capetian kings

years. The story of how they used their dual position as kings and feudal lords, together with the support of the clergy, who usually favored a strong monarchy, to increase their royal authority will be told in Chapter 17. For the present, however, the Capetian kings were merely nominal overlords of the feudal kingdom, actually less powerful than many of their vassals. Hugh Capet had been forced to give away a considerable part of his lands as bribes to secure his election. What little additional power he acquired through the royal title did not compensate for that loss. As king his authority scarcely extended beyond the duchy of France, shrunk now to a narrow strip of territory running north and south through central France, with Paris at its center. This was the beginning of the so-called Île de France, the land over which the king was the immediate lord. Hugh's successors, Robert II (996–1031) and Henry I (1031–60), were unable to control even this small territory. Unruly vassals, secure behind the walls of their fortified castles, defied the kings in their own domain. Throughout the remainder of the kingdom, the nobles went their independent way with no more than lip service to the king.

Feudalism in France was less well organized than in Germany and hence more difficult for the kings to grasp. There were no tribal duchies, unless Normandy with its Scandinavian national feeling might be so designated. There were innumerable great and petty fiefs, whose boundaries and interrelations shifted constantly with the shifts of family fortune. To draw a map of feudal France in the eleventh century would have been a superhuman task even for a contemporary, because of the intricacy of the feudal relations, and even if accomplished, it would have been accurate only for one point of time. There were, however, a few great fiefs which remained fairly constant, though tending to disintegrate as the subvassals became more independent.[1] To the north of the Île de France lay the half-independent counties of Vermandois and Flanders; to the west the great duchies of Normandy and

The great fiefs

[1] See map, page 208.

Brittany and the rich county of Anjou on the Loire; to the east were the county of Champagne and the duchy of Burgundy. Southern France was far beyond the reach of the eleventh-century kings, and separated from the north by radical differences of language and culture. The largest fief here — and for that matter the largest in France — was the duchy of Aquitaine, which stretched right across the country south of the Loire. The dukes of Aquitaine occupied an almost royal position in southern France, but, like the Capetian kings, they had very little real power over their vassals. To the south of Aquitaine lay the duchy of Gascony and the county of Toulouse. Most of these great fiefs were as large as the royal domain. What chance had the king to assert his authority over such powerful vassals?

3. SAXON ENGLAND

While feudal kingdoms were being formed on the Continent from the wrecks of the **England united** Carolingian Empire, a united Anglo-Saxon kingdom was taking shape in the island across the Channel. The Danish conquests of the ninth century had wiped out three of the four ancient kingdoms in England, leaving only the southern kingdom of Wessex under its hero king, Alfred the Great. Before his death in the year 900, Alfred had recovered nearly half of England, while in the Danelaw to the north the invaders were already beginning to settle down and to intermingle with the conquered Saxons. During the next half-century, vigorous kings of the brilliant Wessex family carried on Alfred's work. They gradually reconquered the Danelaw, until in 954 the whole of England was included in one Anglo-Saxon kingdom. There now followed a quarter-century of peace and prosperity — the happiest age of Anglo-Saxon England. Trade and agriculture revived. The administration of the kingdom was reorganized and strengthened. The moral and educational standards of the monks and clergy, which despite Alfred's labors had sunk deplorably low, were raised by the efforts of the kings, in co-operation with Dunstan, the reforming Archbishop of Canterbury.

But all this changed after 978, when a boy of ten became king of England. The welfare of the country depended on the **Second Danish Conquest** king, and, even after he grew up, Ethelred the Redeless (an appellation that has been translated as "lacking in common sense") proved utterly incompetent to govern or defend his kingdom. Across the North Sea the Viking Danes were still restless and eager for plunder. Soon after the accession of the child Ethelred, they began to raid the English coast, which they had discovered was no longer strongly guarded. Later, whole armies of Danes landed and marched about the country plundering. The witless king, unable to organize an adequate defense, bought off the invaders repeatedly by the payment of large bribes. The money for this purpose was raised by a special tax, called the "Danegeld." In 1013, King Sweyn of Denmark began the conquest of the helpless country in earnest. The Saxons, lacking leadership and confidence in their government, seem to have made little effort to unite against the conquering Danes. Each shire looked only to its own defense. Sweyn died before his task was quite accomplished, but two years later, in 1016, his son Canute completed the conquest. Ethelred died in that year, and by the following year Canute was recognized everywhere as king of England.

The second Danish Conquest meant no such mass migration into England as had the first in the ninth century. It **Danish kings** was little more than a political revolution — the replacing of a Saxon by a Danish king — and it left no very lasting impress on the development of England. Canute (1017–35) ruled as an English king, respecting the laws and traditions of the country, and giving to the harassed people a period of peace and order such as they had not known since before the days of Ethelred. Trade was revived by free intercourse with other parts of Canute's empire, which included Denmark and Norway. After his death, however, this empire fell to pieces, and England was once more isolated. After Canute, the line of Danish kings in England lasted for only a few years, dying out in 1042. The English were then free to return to their own native royal family.

SCENES FROM THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY

This most famous of early medieval tapestries is a pictorial narrative of the Norman invasion of England. These scenes show (top) the great fleet and (below) men carrying weapons and suits of armor to the ships.

After some indecision, the Witan (the council of nobles) bestowed the crown upon Ethelred's son Edward (1043–66), later called "the Confessor." He was a pious and peace-loving man, fitted by neither character nor training for his position. He had spent nearly all his life in Normandy and was far more Norman than English in his sympathies and interests. He surrounded himself with Norman favorites, to whom he gave high offices in church and state, thus opening the way to Norman influence in England. The Saxon nobles naturally resented this preferment of foreigners and, on occasion, expressed their resentment in open rebellion. Feudalism had been growing steadily during the troubled times of the past century, when men could not depend on the king for protection. As on the Continent, the increasing power and independence of the nobles meant the weakening of royal authority. The strongest of the nobles at this time was Earl Godwin of Wessex. For the last fourteen years of his reign, Edward was dominated by this powerful earl and his son Harold.

Saxon restoration

In January of the fateful year 1066, King Edward died, leaving no immediate heirs. The country needed a strong king, and one whose interests would be purely English. The Witan, therefore, gave the crown to Earl Harold, Godwin's energetic son, as the strongest man in England, though not of the blood royal. His election did not go unchallenged. Across the Channel in Normandy, Duke William cast covetous eyes on the English throne. He was a distant relative of Edward the Confessor, and claimed

The Norman Conquest

that both Edward and Harold had acknowledged his right to the succession. His case was strengthened by the charge that Harold had broken a solemn vow to support him. Moreover, he was given the blessing and moral support of the pope, whom Harold had antagonized by exiling the Archbishop of Canterbury from England for political reasons. William was no mean antagonist, for Normandy had become the strongest duchy in France in the century and a half since its foundation, and was now almost an independent state. Though French in religion, speech, and manners, the Normans still possessed the wandering instincts and the vigorous, adventurous spirit of their Viking ancestors. In the late summer of 1066, William crossed the Channel with an army of adventurers and landed near Hastings on the southern coast. King Harold, who had just defeated an invading army of Danes in the north, rushed south to meet him. The two armies met at Hastings in a hard-fought battle that decided the fate of England for centuries. The Saxons were defeated. That in itself might not have been fatal to their cause, but Harold and his brothers had fallen, and England was left without a leader. On Christmas Day, William the Conqueror was crowned king, and a new era in English history had opened. Thereafter, England, with a population still about ninety-nine per cent Anglo-Saxon, was to be ruled by a dominant minority of Norman and French conquerors. This small group could not materially change the racial stock of England; but they could, and did, introduce new elements of language and culture and new forms of government from the Continent.

SECTION D

The High Middle Ages

(c. 1050 — c. 1270)

By about the middle of the eleventh century, western Europe had passed the first stage in its slow development of a new civilization. The wild days of tribal migrations and Viking raids had passed, as well as the most unsettled age of feudalism. Christianity had spread north and east to include all the German and Scandinavian peoples; the empire of Charlemagne had given place to feudal kingdoms and the Holy Roman Empire; and the reformed papacy was emerging from a period of weakness and degradation to assert its authority over all Western Christendom. Everywhere there were signs of awakening energy, of spiritual and intellectual growth, of reviving economic life, in short, of a more rapid beat in the tempo of advancing civilization. The period that followed the middle years of the eleventh century, a period of a little more than two centuries, witnessed the full development of that type of civilization which we think of as characteristically medi-

eval. We shall call it the period of the High Middle Ages. It saw the long struggle between the empire and the papacy, the growth of royal authority in France and Norman England, the perennial warfare of Christian crusaders against the infidel, the formalization of chivalric society, the revival of commerce and industry and the emergence of a city-dwelling middle class, the rise of the papacy to the highest peak of its power and the full development of the church as a strongly organized universal institution, the revival of education and the rise of the universities. It was a period of vivid life and restless energy, held within the framework of a more or less stable and integrated society, whose institutions had not yet begun to decay as they did in the period of the Later Middle Ages. Above all, it was the great age of the *Respublica Christiana*, when all nations of western Europe formed parts of the commonwealth of united Christendom.

Above: EXTERIOR OF ABBEY OF
CLUNY, BURGUNDY

A reconstruction

Left: PRINCIPAL NAVE OF ABBEY
OF CLUNY

An eighteenth-century engraving

*This magnificent abbey was the home of a great
reform movement which had a profound influence
upon papal policy and clerical morality.*

16
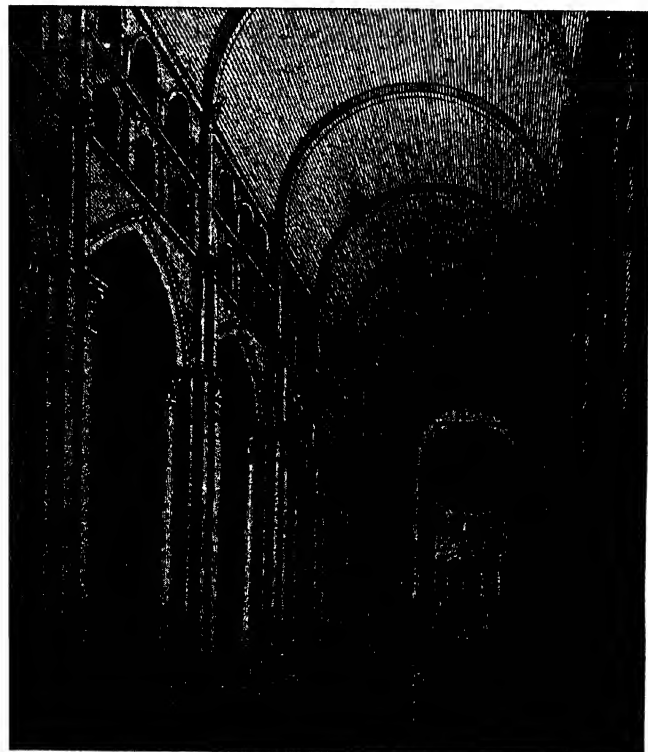
The Struggle Between the
Empire and the Papacy

FOR NEARLY A CENTURY, from the imperial coronation of Otto the Great to the death of Henry III, the emperors were the dominant members of the papal-imperial partnership which claimed universal rule over all Christendom. Vigorous emperors of the Saxon and Franconian dynasties had patiently built up a strong monarchy in Germany in opposition to the independent interests of the feudal nobles; they had asserted a spasmodic control over northern and central Italy; and they had repeatedly attempted to reform the papacy by deposing weak and degenerate popes and replacing them with men of character and ability. The popes, on the other hand, though strong in theoretical claims, were generally powerless to enforce their authority over the whole church, or even to maintain their independence from control by secular powers. Dominated by the unruly nobles and populace of Rome, they were rescued by the emperors only to fall under their more powerful control. The whole church, in fact, seemed dominated by worldly interests. The administrative officers of the church, the bishops and others, were so inextricably entangled in the feudal system that they could give no more than formal obedience to the pope, and, often enough, they took no more than a formal interest in their spiritual duties.

It was, indeed, a dark age for the church,

reflecting the evils of a turbulent and disorganized feudal society. But there were signs of returning spring in this winter of the church's discontent. There was a rapidly growing demand for reform in many places, and the purification of the papacy under Henry III made Rome the center of the reform movement. Thereafter, for more than two centuries, the popes strove to strengthen the papacy and the church by freeing them from outside influence. This inevitably brought the papacy into conflict with all secular governments, for the attempt to gain independence soon forced the popes to claim supremacy over all worldly powers. It was with the emperors, however, who ruled Italy and who shared with the popes a claim to universal rule, that the struggle for supremacy was most bitter and prolonged, ending only with the destruction of imperial authority.

1. THE INVESTITURE CONTROVERSY — HENRY IV AND GREGORY VII

The death of Henry III in the prime of life was a disaster from which the empire never fully recovered. The centrifugal forces of feudalism and local independence in Germany and Italy could be held in check only by the most alert watchfulness and by constant pressure on the part of the emperor. With

Minority of Henry IV

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Henry's death that pressure was removed for a fateful period. Henry had planñed to save the empire from the dangers of a disputed election and to confirm the hereditary principle of succession by having his infant son crowned king while he himself was still alive. Henry IV (1056–1106) thus succeeded peacefully to the throne, but at barely six years of age. For the next thirteen years, until the young emperor-elect took active control of the government, feudal anarchy ran riot. Neither his mother, Agnes, who acted as regent till 1062, nor the faction of ecclesiastical and feudal nobles who then seized the government and the guardianship of the young monarch, could maintain the pressure necessary to preserve imperial authority in either Germany or Italy.

In Germany the development of military feudalism had created numbers of hereditary

Germany

landed fiefs, held from the emperor or from the dukes by lords who no longer considered themselves royal officers and who were prepared to defy any higher authority on the slightest pretext, depending on their fortified castles and the aid of their vassals to defend their cherished independence. More and more the emperor was forced to rely for aid and counsel in peace or war on his great ecclesiastical vassals, the bishops and abbots. These the emperors had generously endowed with land, since their fiefs could not be made hereditary. They were still royal officers and it was tremendously important to the central government to secure the election of men who would be loyal to the emperor. The German towns, too, most of which were ruled by bishops, were usually loyal. But these supporters of the monarchy were useless unless led by a strong emperor.

Even more in Italy than in Germany the imperial authority depended on the constant

Imperial Italy

activity of a vigorous ruler. It almost disappeared during the minority of Henry IV. In Lombardy, numerous towns, growing rapidly under the first impulse of reviving trade, were beginning to yearn for independence and were growing restless under the rule of their bishops, who represented the imperial government. Milan was especially restless.

There the citizens gained a powerful ally in the pope by protesting against the emperor's interference in the election of their archbishop, thus giving a coloring of religious reform to their revolt. In central Italy the imperial problem was further complicated by the pope's claims to secular rule over the Papal States, dating back to the eighth-century Donation of Pepin.

In the southern part of the peninsula and in Sicily a new menace to imperial rule in Italy had been slowly rising, to grow strong during the minority of Henry IV. Here, until recently, there had been a number of little independent states — Lombard, Byzantine, and Saracen — none of them strong enough seriously to trouble the emperors, though all attempts to conquer them had failed. In 1016, a band of Norman knights landed at Salerno on their way home from a pilgrimage and discovered the possibilities for fighting and plunder offered by the frequent wars between the rival states. Thereafter each year brought more adventurers of the reckless Norman breed, eager to fish in the troubled waters of southern Italy. In course of time, as their numbers increased, their leaders built up small states of their own. At the opening of the reign of Henry IV, the famous Robert Guiscard, perfect type of the Norman conqueror, dominated most of southern Italy. He was the terror of the native populations of the south and a constant menace to imperial Italy. In 1059, he was given a legitimate title to his lands by the papacy. A revolt in Rome had forced Pope Nicholas II to seek armed support. Unwilling to appeal to the emperor as his predecessors had done, he turned instead to the Norman and invested Robert Guiscard with Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily. Robert replied by doing homage to the pope and assuming a vassal's obligation to protect him. Nicholas justified this rather startling gift of land by the supposed cession of all Italy to the pope in the Donation of Constantine. By thus aiding in the establishment of a strong Norman state to the south, the pope hoped to free himself from the necessity of depending on the emperor for defense and, at the same time, to acquire an armed ally to use against

The Normans in Italy

him if necessary. Here as elsewhere in Italy, the hostile attitude of the papacy was to prove the most serious obstacle to the re-establishment of imperial domination.

The opposition of the popes to Henry IV grew out of a movement for the reform of the church, which had been active for some time before it gained weight at Rome. It had originated as a monastic reform in the Burgundian monastery of Cluny. This monastery, since its foundation in 910, had been exempt from the rule of the local bishop. Its abbot owned no superior except the pope. Under a series of able and pious abbots, it acquired a great reputation for holiness and strict observance of the monastic rules. It was joined by a number of other monasteries, new and old, in all parts of Europe, all of which were under the rule of the abbot of Cluny. This "congregation" of monasteries was a new departure in monastic organization. Through it the demand for reform, not only of the monasteries but also of the whole church, gained a wide hearing. The pious Emperor Henry III and his appointee Pope Leo IX took up the reform movement under papal direction, but with the emperor still in full control.

The Cluniac reform

After the death of Henry III, a succession of reforming popes carried on the work, but no longer in co-operation with the emperor. During all this time, till he himself was elected pope as Gregory VII, the monk Hildebrand was the most active agent of reform at Rome, the power behind the papal throne. It was he who formulated most perfectly the program for reform and finally put it into effect. The spiritual character of the church had suffered greatly through its close connection with feudal politics and worldly interests. The majority of the higher clergy were little more than royal officers or feudal barons, while the morals of all ranks of the clergy had degenerated deplorably. Any attempt to raise the general spiritual level of Christendom must begin with a reform of these blind leaders of the blind, to whom the care of souls was entrusted. This, as Hildebrand saw it, could be accomplished only by preventing laymen, whether nobles or kings,

Hildebrand's reform program.

from influencing the choice of ecclesiastical officers and by enforcing absolute obedience from the clergy to the pope as head of the church. Thus only could the church be emancipated from secular control and be left free to perform its true duties. The reformers concentrated at first on the suppression of two abuses: first, simony, that is to say, the sale of church offices or bribery in church elections (so called from Simon Magus who had attempted to buy the gift of the Holy Spirit from Saint Peter), and second, the marriage of the clergy, which though commonly practiced was contrary to church law. Both were condemned on moral grounds, but also because simony was often the means by which outsiders influenced clerical elections while the marriage of the clergy tempted them to give more attention to providing for their children (often at the expense of the church) than to their religious duties. Further, the papacy must itself be freed from outside influence, especially from control by the emperor. It was for this reason that Nicholas II made his alliance with the Normans in 1059, and the same year issued the Election Decree, providing for the free and independent choice of future popes by the college of cardinals.

When Hildebrand ascended the chair of Saint Peter as Gregory VII (1073–85), the reform program was given a new impetus and wider scope. The character of Gregory dominates the history of Europe in these years. From a peasant home he had risen by sheer force of character and ability to the most important office in Christendom. Small and unprepossessing in appearance, he yet commanded respect by his integrity and the burning zeal that threatened to consume his frail body. He had an iron will and was inspired by an unshakable determination to do what he considered right for the church, regardless of consequences or of the means employed. For two years he strove without much success to force the bishops, especially of Germany and northern Italy, to strict obedience. Then, in 1075, he published the first papal decree definitely forbidding lay investiture. It had long been the recognized right of the feudal overlord of a bishop or

Gregory VII and lay investiture

abbot to invest him with the insignia of his fief and office, just as he would any other vassal. The insignia of an ecclesiastical office, however, had a spiritual significance, and the pope now claimed that no layman had the right to bestow them. There was, of course, more than a mere question of symbols involved. The right to confer the investiture carried with it the right to refuse, and so to cancel the election of an unsatisfactory candidate. Gregory's prohibition of lay investiture struck at the heart of secular control over the church. It was bound to precipitate an open conflict with the emperor, for Henry IV was now of age and determined to recover his father's authority. Other rulers might compromise; the emperor could not afford to. More than any other ruler in Europe, the emperor depended on the support of his ecclesiastical vassals. To give up the right to choose them would have crippled his power beyond hope of repair, leaving him at the mercy of rebellious lay nobles. The crux of the difficulty lay in the fact that the loyalty and obedience of the bishops was of vital importance to the pope as head of the church and to the emperor as ruler of the state.

This practical question of control of the church at once brought to the fore the broader and more serious problem of supremacy, which had all along been present in the theory of the Holy Roman Empire, waiting only for an open conflict between a strong pope and a determined emperor to be brought out into the open. The emperor admitted the universal spiritual authority of the pope, while the pope, in turn, admitted the universal secular authority of the emperor. They had parallel powers, both divinely ordained. But in case of conflict, which had the higher authority? History favored both equally. The popes had always given the crown to the emperors, but the emperors, including the pious Henry III, as guardians of the church had frequently deposed bad popes and had chosen their successors. Faced by the necessity of establishing his supremacy in order to force the emperor to do his will regarding the investitures and other reform measures, Gregory

Rival claims to supremacy

took an exalted stand, asserting that, as the soul is more important than the body, so the spiritual is higher than the secular authority. Moreover, as the successor of Saint Peter, the pope is responsible to God for the souls of all men, including kings, and it is his duty to admonish a wicked ruler and, if he is unrepentant, to free his subjects from their allegiance lest they, too, be led astray. With Gregory, the papal claim to supremacy may have been largely a means to a practical end, but he nevertheless stated it firmly.

Henry's attempts to re-establish imperial authority in Italy had already caused a breach with the papacy before Gregory was elected, but a rebellion in Saxony in 1073 forced him to make peace with the new pope. Henry did not reopen the conflict until two years later when he had restored peace in Germany. He then challenged the pope by investing his own candidate with the archbishopric of Milan, to which Gregory replied with the decree against lay investiture. With the aid of his bishops, most of whom were loyal and also opposed to the pope's strict reforms, Henry took the offensive and declared Gregory deposed. But he had reckoned without the restless lay nobles. When the pope replied by excommunicating the emperor and freeing his subjects from their oath of allegiance, many of the German nobles took the opportunity to rebel. Again Henry was forced to conciliate the pope in order to have a free hand against rebellion at home. Hastening to Italy, he met the pope in the castle of the Countess of Tuscany at Canossa in January, 1077. He pleaded for absolution as a penitent sinner, a plea that the pope, as a priest, could not refuse, especially when the emperor, as Gregory himself recounts, showed his contrition by standing for three days barefoot in the snow before the barred gates of the castle. The absolution of Henry, freeing him from the ban of excommunication, caused a strong reaction in his favor. The pious returned to their allegiance and the insurgent nobles lost their excuse for rebellion. Nevertheless, the emperor had set a dangerous precedent in his dramatic recognition of the pope's spiritual authority, a precedent that was to have

Gregory VII and Henry IV

more influence on later generations than in his own day. Still, it was an immediate victory for the emperor, though the disaffected nobles persisted in their rebellion and elected Rudolf, Duke of Swabia, as an anti-king.

It was the pope who reopened hostilities. Henry had continued lay investiture, and in 1080 Gregory took the decisive step of definitely deposing him and recognizing Rudolf in his place. This time general public opinion was against the pope. He was the aggressor and it was generally considered that he had exceeded his powers. With the aid of the German and Italian clergy, Henry deposed him and procured the election of an anti-pope. The emperor then besieged Rome and entered it in 1084. There he was crowned by the anti-pope Clement III. Gregory was forced to flee to his Norman allies in the south and died in exile.

Defeat of Gregory VII

Gregory's successors, especially Urban II (1088–99), continued his program of reform and his struggle with the emperor. They were generally recognized in the lands outside the empire where reform had been effected without so much conflict. Henry's pope was accepted only where the emperor could enforce obedience. Yet the schism (the split in the church between the adherents of the rival popes) continued until the emperor's death. Henry's life ended in tragedy. His last years were embittered by the treachery and rebellion of his son Henry V, in alliance with the papal party.

The struggle continues

With the accession of Henry V (1106–25), the schism was ended and for a time the pope and emperor were at peace. But the new emperor was no more ready than his father had been to give up the control of ecclesiastical elections, of which lay investiture was the symbol. Through the reigns of three popes the controversy continued, often accompanied by violence. The imprisonment of the pope in 1111 and intermittent rebellion in Germany from 1112 to 1121 were the high lights of the struggle. At last, worn out by the long strife, both parties agreed to settle the investiture question by a compromise, arranged at Worms in 1122.

Henry V

According to the Concordat of Worms, signed by both emperor and pope, bishops and abbots were to be invested with the insignia of their secular office only (that is, their fief) by the emperor, not with the ring and the staff which symbolized their spiritual authority. In Germany the investiture was to precede consecration and the emperor was to be represented at elections. This left him still in practical control. In Burgundy and Italy, however, where the emperor had lost real authority, the imperial investiture was to follow consecration, and so was not a necessary preliminary to taking office. In France and England the question had already been settled by the monarch's giving up actual investiture, but retaining a dominant influence in elections. The emperor had retained what was most vital to him — control over the German clergy. But the compromise was really a papal victory. The emperor had given up a recognized right, while the pope had merely stopped short of the full assertion of his theoretical claims.

Concordat of Worms

The papacy had, indeed, made great advances during the course of the controversy. The popes had strengthened their position as rulers of the international church and had made sweeping claims to universal authority. When the conflict with the emperors was revived, it was to be a struggle for supremacy, considered as an end in itself. Meanwhile, through his quarrel with the pope and the schism in the church, the Emperor Henry IV had lost a great opportunity in being unable to take his place as the leader of Christendom in the First Crusade, thereby surrendering that position to his opponent Pope Urban II.[1]

Papal gains

2. THE STRUGGLE FOR SUPREMACY — FREDERICK BARBAROSSA AND HENRY VI

During the three decades of uneasy peace between the empire and the papacy, following the Concordat of Worms, the chief interest in German history centers around the rivalry of two great feudal families, the Welfs and the Hohenstaufens. Later this feud was

Welf and Hohenstaufen

[1] See below, page 247.
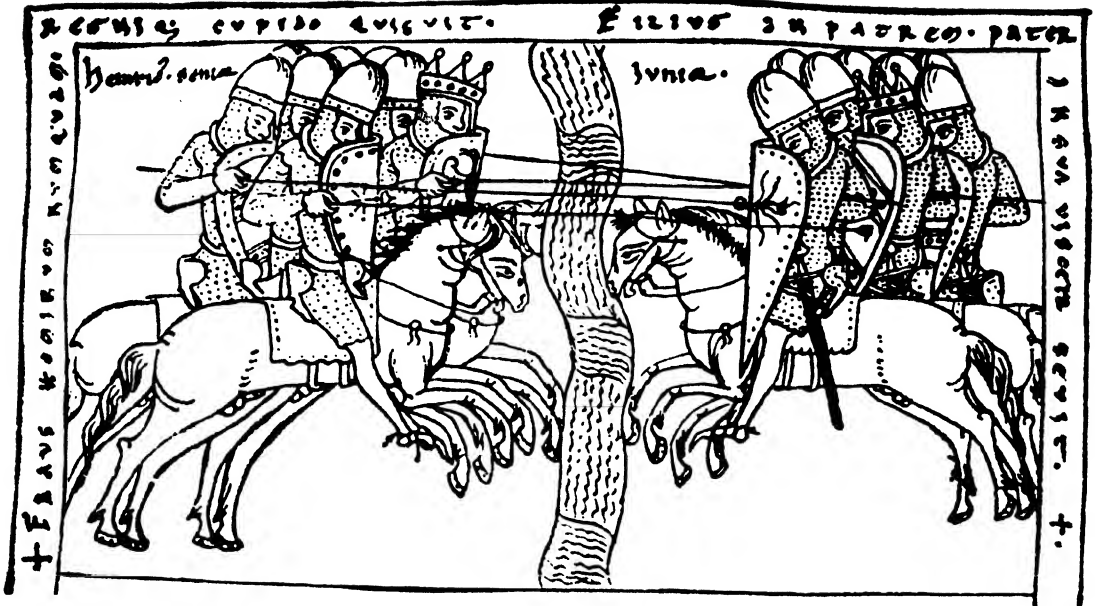
BATTLE BETWEEN HENRY IV AND HIS REBELLIOUS SON

The above is a twelfth-century representation of the conflict between the Emperor Henry IV and his son Henry V when the latter had sided with the papal party.
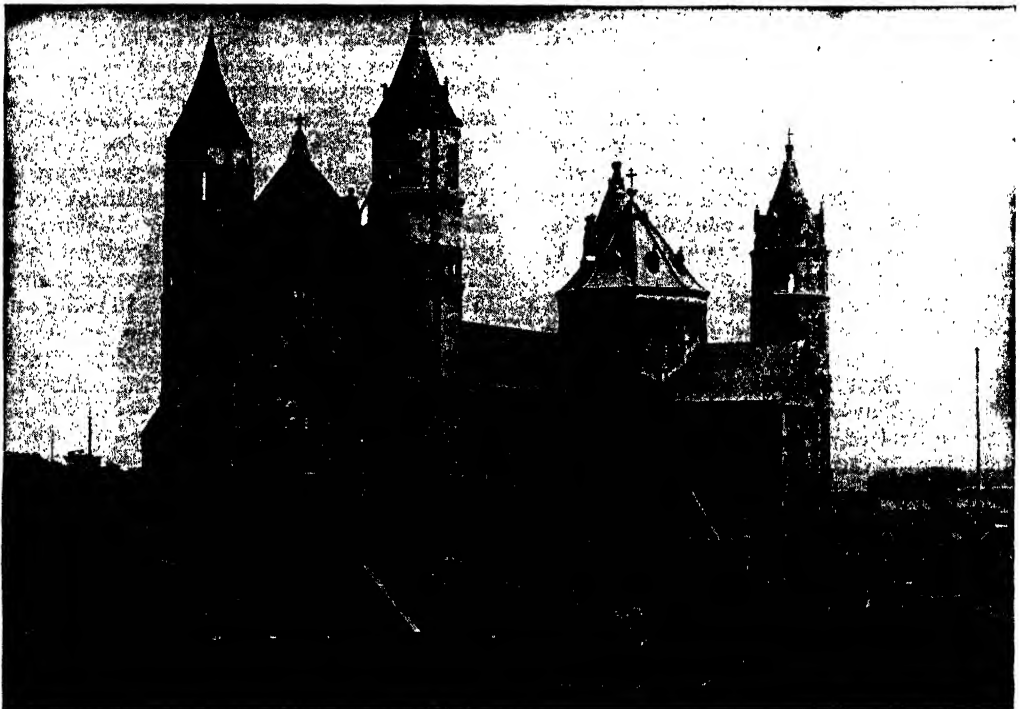
THE CATHEDRAL OF WORMS

This cathedral, one of the finest Romanesque churches in Germany, was consecrated, though not completed, when the Concordat of Worms was signed. It may have been the scene of the deliberations which led to the peace treaty.

to spread to Italy, where the party which favored the papacy and fought for local independence called themselves Guelfs from the German name Welf, while the imperial party were called Ghibellines from the German Waiblingen, the name of one of the Hohenstaufen family possessions. This Italian feud persisted for centuries, long after the rivalry of the two German families had subsided. The feud had its origin in 1125, when, on the death of Henry V without direct heirs, the nobles asserted their right to elect the emperor regardless of hereditary rights. Passing over Frederick of Hohenstaufen and his younger brother Conrad, nephews of Henry V, they chose a Saxon noble, Lothair III (1125–37), who had no shadow of hereditary claim. This election, incidentally, set an important precedent. It was a significant victory of the elective over the hereditary principle of succession. The Hohenstaufens were bitterly offended and were soon in open rebellion. They were thus brought into conflict with the Welfs, for Henry the Proud, head of that family, was the son-in-law and heir of Lothair. The rebellion was crushed, but the feud continued. By the end of Lothair's reign, Henry the Proud was Duke of Bavaria, Saxony, and Swabia, and Count of Tuscany in Italy, in fact so powerful that the nobles feared he might dominate them too strongly if he were to become emperor. They therefore elected his rival, the Hohenstaufen Conrad III (1138–52). It was the Welfs who were now in opposition to the emperor, and throughout Conrad's reign Germany was kept in a turmoil. Innumerable family feuds and private wars added to the general anarchy. The disturbed state of the empire during the investiture controversy had given a new impetus to feudal independence. Strongly fortified castles had sprung up everywhere. Conrad's prestige was also shaken by his failure to accomplish anything in the Second Crusade. When he died, he left the imperial title almost completely stripped of its authority.

The empire was rescued from disintegration by the next Hohenstaufen emperor, Frederick I, called Barbarossa (1152–90). From the first the new emperor inspired hope

FREDERICK BARBAROSSA

This illustration from a manuscript of about 1180 shows the famous red-bearded emperor with his sons. At the emperor's right is Henry, then King of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and later emperor as Henry VI. At the emperor's left is his younger son, Frederick, Duke of Swabia, who accompanied his father on the Third Crusade and died in 1191.

and confidence in all who longed for the restoration of peace, order, and strong government. Well-built, handsome, and genial, the red-bearded monarch charmed all who knew him. Frederick was, indeed, the perfect type of the chivalrous ruler of the Middle Ages. He was a first-class soldier, with a full-blooded love of battle, but he was also a just and conscientious monarch, bent on enforcing law and order in his harassed realm. In one respect only did he fail to appreciate the needs of his age. He failed to understand or to realize the importance of the growing commercial and industrial life in the towns. For feudal Germany, however, his

Frederick Barbarossa

reign marks an era of comparative peace and of imperial authority such as had not been seen for a century. The feud between Hohenstaufen and Welf was buried, to be resurrected for a brief period only toward the end of his long reign. Frederick was himself half Welf, a nephew of Henry the Proud through his mother, as of Conrad III through his father. The current head of the Welf family, his cousin Henry the Lion, Duke of Saxony and Bavaria, was his friend and comrade in arms for twenty years. Lesser feuds were suppressed, at least so long as the emperor was present in Germany, by the enforcing of a "landpeace" forbidding private wars. The emperor's activity, however, could not be limited to Germany, and as a result his rule did not have as permanent results there as it might have had. He suc-

ceeded in re-establishing the overlordship of the emperor over his eastern neighbors, Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary. He also reasserted imperial authority in Burgundy, where it had long been ignored. Finally he strove to recover imperial control of Italy — there to meet the only failure of his career.

Frederick's first expedition into Italy in 1154-55, for the purpose of receiving the imperial crown, brought him face to face with the two powers which were to unite in successful defiance of his authority — the papacy and the Lombard cities. With the former he was at first friendly enough, for the pope needed his aid against the citizens of Rome, who had tried to revive the ancient freedom of the city under the leadership of a reformer named Arnold of Brescia. Frederick showed his willingness to aid the pope by securing the execution of the heretical rebel before his own arrival in the papal city. The first meeting, however, between the ambitious emperor and the equally strong-minded and determined pope, Adrian IV (1154-59), proved that their friendship was no more than skin deep. Frederick haughtily refused to act as squire to the pope and to hold his bridle and stirrup. The two potentates almost parted in anger. Frederick finally submitted to what he considered an affront to the imperial dignity only when it was pointed out that there was ample precedent for the act. Two years later a similar incident brought about another strained situation, which further illustrated the real antagonism between emperor and pope. Frederick was holding a Diet at Besançon in Burgundy when he received a letter in which the pope referred to the imperial crown as a "benefice," "conferred" by him on the emperor. Frederick construed the terms, as they were probably intended, in the feudal sense, and indignantly denied that he held the imperial crown as a fief (that being the usual sense of the word benefice) from the pope. One of the papal legates replied, "From whom then does he hold it if not from the pope?" The pope was forced to explain away his words as meaning merely a benefit or good deed, but the incident was not forgotten.

Frederick and the papacy

ARCHBISHOP FREDERICK OF MAGDEBURG

Portrait from the tomb of one of the emperor's great ecclesiastical vassals during the period of the Welf-Hohenstaufen feud. The archbishop died about 1155.

Behind these apparently trifling incidents lay the whole question of supremacy of emperor or pope, which once more became a paramount issue. Both parties had greatly strengthened their theoretical claims since the days of Gregory VII, and the issue of supremacy as an end in itself was now more clearly stated. A host of writers on both sides had discussed the question thoroughly. The enthusiastic study of Roman law, which resulted from the great revival of learning during the twelfth century, afforded the emperor some telling arguments. Frederick based his claims to supremacy on historical precedent and on the Roman conception of the emperor's absolute authority. But the papacy, too, had been strengthening its claims by the development of a legal code, modeled after Roman law, based on the Scriptures and on the decrees of popes and councils. A full compilation of this "canon law" was completed during the reign of Conrad III by Gratian, a teacher of law at Bologna. It was known as the *Decretum* of Gratian. The church was rapidly becoming a great international state, of which the pope was the absolute ruler, with an administrative system, laws and courts of its own, and basing its claims to supremacy over secular governments on legal as well as moral grounds.

Question of supremacy revived

The popes found allies against the emperor in the Lombard cities. Since the middle of the eleventh century, the Italian towns had been growing rapidly as the result of a great revival of international trade. The crusades had further stimulated trade, and by the middle of the twelfth century the numerous cities that dot the Lombard plain were busy centers of industry and commerce. Originally these cities had been governed by their bishops, acting as imperial officers. But with increasing prosperity, the citizens began to demand freedom of self-government. During the investiture controversy, both emperors and popes had sought their aid and had paid for it with concessions of liberty. When Frederick made his first expedition into Italy he found

The Lombard communes

HENRY THE LION AND HIS WIFE

The figures of Henry the Lion, head of the house of Welf in the time of Frederick Barbarossa, and his wife are from their tomb in the Cathedral in Brunswick.

the cities, with the land around them, organized as "communes," practically self-governing republics. He found them also in a shocking state of anarchy, each city divided by turbulent political factions and engaged in feuds with other cities. The emperor was surprised to find these non-knightly burghers as independent and as aggressively warlike as the feudal nobility. He realized that he must crush their independence before order and imperial government could be re-established in Italy.

In 1158, Frederick made a second expedition into Italy with a large army. After capturing Milan, the strongest of the Lombard cities, he called an imperial Diet at Roncaglia. There he publicly asserted his

Italy in the 12th Century
★ Cities of the Lombard League

MARCH OF TREVISO
Vicenza ★ Treviso
Bergamo
Milan ★ Brescia Verona ★ Venice
Vercelli ★ Padua
Turin ★ Pavia
Asti ★
Alessandria ★ Parma
Modena
Genoa

★ Florence
Pisa ★
Siena ★ Arezzo

Milan Venice
Genoa
Florence

KINGDOM
OF
Naples
SICILY

imperial rights, as defined by the jurists on the basis of Roman law and medieval precedent. Disregarding the privileges of the communes, he claimed all rights of sovereignty, the "regalia" as they were called, including the appointment of officers and collection of taxes from tolls, markets, mints, law courts, etc. Never had the medieval empire seemed so strongly established in Italy. But the imperial officers were unpopular and taxes oppressive. Milan revolted and with her several other cities, supported by the pope. At this point Adrian IV died and there was a hotly disputed election. A majority of the cardinals elected Alexander III (1159–81), while a minority declared for Victor IV. It was the latter, more favorable to him, whom the emperor chose to recognize, thus assuring the continuance of the schism, since he was not accepted as pope anywhere outside the empire. Meanwhile, with the aid of Pavia and some other cities which were loyal to him through fear of Milan, Frederick con-

The Lombard League

tinued the war against the rebellious communes. In 1162 he completely destroyed Milan, banishing its citizens. The discontent in Lombardy still persisted. In 1166, Frederick had to make a third expedition to Italy to crush a league of cities, which had united against him and had so far forgotten their jealousy of Milan as to aid the Milanese in rebuilding their city. Alexander III, now in possession of Rome, was the heart and soul of the resistance to the emperor. Frederick, therefore, marched against Rome and captured it. His success was immediately followed by disaster, however, in the form of an epidemic that destroyed his army and forced him to retire to Germany, where domestic affairs kept him busy till 1174.

The Lombard League, led by Milan, used the years while the emperor was in Germany to gain the adherence of nearly all the North Italian cities. The league also built a new and heavily fortified city, called Alexandria in honor of the pope, where it would command the Alpine passes into

Triumph of the Lombard League

Lombardy. When Frederick returned, this city withstood all his attempts to capture it through the winter of 1174-75. The war dragged on till 1176, when the emperor was disastrously defeated by the Lombard army at Legnano. Frederick accepted defeat with as good grace as possible. He made peace with Alexander III, thus ending the schism, and the following year he arranged a truce with the Lombard League, which was later confirmed by the Peace of Constance, 1183. The emperor surrendered the regalia, leaving the cities almost complete self-government. They in turn recognized the imperial sovereignty and swore allegiance. It was a decided triumph for the Lombard communes. So far as the pope was concerned, however, the results of the struggle were indecisive. Frederick had been forced to abandon his anti-pope and to recognize Alexander; but he had retained control of the church in Germany, and neither emperor nor pope had surrendered his claims to supremacy.

Having failed in Italy, Frederick was free to concentrate his attention on Germany, where only one serious problem arose to mar his declining years. A breach in his long friendship with Henry the Lion revived the old Welf-Hohenstaufen feud. Henry had been building up a strong feudal state in Bavaria and Saxony and in the Slavic lands north and east of the Elbe. Unlike the emperor, he was much interested in the rising commercial towns and founded the fortunes of Lübeck and Munich. His government was enlightened, but it bore heavily on the lesser nobles. These brought charges of oppression against him in the imperial courts in 1179. Frederick, who had been estranged from his cousin for a number of reasons, summoned him to appear to answer the charges. Henry refused. After a year he was outlawed on a charge of treason and his fiefs were confiscated. He retired to England to the court of his father-in-law, King Henry II. His duchies of Saxony and Bavaria were partitioned, split up into smaller units. This marks the end of the preponderant importance of the great duchies, and the rise in their place of a number of

Last years of Frederick

smaller principalities. What remained of the duchy of Bavaria was given to Otto of Wittelsbach, whose descendants held it until very recent times. Frederick's reign was brought to a close by the Third Crusade. Like so many of his contemporaries the aged emperor was fascinated by the hope of recovering the Holy Land, and in 1189 he set out with some twenty thousand knights. The story of the crusade will be told elsewhere. The gallant old fighter did not live to meet the Saracens, but perished in the icy waters of a stream in Asia Minor.

During his brief reign, Henry VI (1190-97), Frederick's unprepossessing son, revived the family feud with the papacy and achieved a remarkable, though brief, success. Cruel and treacherous, Henry had none of the personal charm that had made his father so popular, but he had qualities of astuteness, learning, and determination that made up for the lack. With him the struggle for supremacy enters a new phase. The emperor's goal was now the political isolation of the pope in central Italy. Northern Italy had been won over by the grant of practical independence to the Lombard cities. The next step was to gain control of the Norman kingdom of Sicily, which included all southern Italy below the Papal States. Henry had a claim to Sicily through his wife Constance, a Sicilian princess who became the heiress to the kingdom on the death of King William II in 1189. However, Henry had to fight for the inheritance. The Sicilian nobles had given the crown to one of their own number, who was, of course, supported by the pope, the titular overlord of the kingdom. Meanwhile, a new Welf rebellion, led by the aged Henry the Lion, distracted the emperor's attention from Italy. It was not till 1194 that Henry was able to win his Sicilian kingdom. Then, however, he was in a strong strategic position. The papacy was completely surrounded by imperial lands. Henry then proceeded to establish his own vassals in the Papal States, reducing the land subject to the pope to the duchy of Rome. Hohenstaufen power was growing steadily in Italy when it was suddenly destroyed by the premature

Henry VI

death of the emperor, not yet thirty-three years old.

3. TRIUMPH OF THE PAPACY — INNOCENT III AND FREDERICK II

Seldom has history seen a more abrupt and thorough reversal of fortune than that which followed the sudden death of Henry VI. While rival candidates were disputing for the imperial crown, and Sicily was cut off from the empire under the rule of a child, the papacy came into the hands of the strongest of all medieval popes, Innocent III (1198–1216). His pontificate marks the highest point of actual power ever exercised by the papacy. Trained as a jurist in the schools of Bologna and Paris, Innocent was thoroughly versed in canon law and ecclesiastical tradition. He was but thirty-seven years old, unusually young for a pope, and in the full prime of his vigor. For eighteen years he ruled the nations of western Christendom as the successor of Saint Peter, to whom God had given authority, "not only over the universal church but also over the whole world." Never before had the papal claims to sovereignty over church and secular governments alike been stated with such absolute conviction. Yet Innocent did not regard himself as an innovator. He based his position on the time-honored theory of the papacy, embodied in tradition and canon law, which had been studied so carefully during the twelfth century. His position was different from that of Gregory VII by the measure of the legal and institutional growth of the church in the century and a quarter that lay between them. In claiming a potentially unlimited universal sovereignty, he felt that he was merely asserting the recognized "rights" of the papacy. He did not, it is true, claim direct authority over secular government in all cases. But he did assert a spiritual authority which might incidentally include secular authority, since it was his duty to judge of the sins of all Christians, including rulers, and any act that had a moral significance (as what human act does not?) came within his jurisdiction. At the same time, despite his absolute theories, Innocent was a practical diplomat.

Innocent III

He would make concessions when it seemed expedient in order to attain his ultimate goal.

As a universal sovereign, Innocent's interests were many and various. He followed them all with inexhaustible energy. His interference in the affairs of France and England, his instigation of the Fourth Crusade and the Albigensian Crusade, his work for the suppression of heresy and for the reform and reorganization of the church will be dealt with in later chapters. Here we shall consider only his activity with regard to the empire and Italy.

Innocent had been pope only a few weeks when a majority of the German nobles elected as emperor Philip, Duke of Swabia, the younger son of Frederick Barbarossa. They had passed over Henry's son Frederick, who had inherited the kingdom of Sicily, on the ground of his extreme youth. Not all the nobles, however, agreed to the election of another Hohenstaufen. In western Saxony and the lower Rhineland there was still a strong Welf faction. In July, 1198, they gathered to elect Otto of Brunswick, the younger son of Henry the Lion. The rival emperors, who were the protagonists in this revival of the old Welf-Hohenstaufen feud, were of about the same age — in the early twenties — but of very different character. Philip was a gentle, amiable soul, always popular, but not a great statesman or soldier. Perhaps he was too fine for success in a rough age. Otto, on the other hand, had little natural refinement. A contemporary writer described him as a reckless soldier, "roaring like a lion's whelp, incited by the desire for plunder, eager for the battle." He was, however, even less a statesman than his rival. Philip had the advantage of being supported by the large majority of the German princes, while Otto was forced to depend on Cologne and his own Welf lands, and on financial aid from his uncle Richard the Lion-hearted of England, who hoped to use him against Philip Augustus of France. The death of Richard in 1199 greatly weakened Otto's position. Meanwhile, both candidates appealed to the pope, who alone had the right to confer the

Philip of Swabia and Otto IV

imperial crown, though not to interfere in the actual election.

Innocent III had taken immediate advantage of the opportunity offered by the paralysis of imperial government during the civil war to build up a strong political position for the papacy in Italy. As leader of an anti-imperial party, he ousted the German representatives of the emperor from the Papal States and Tuscany. Late in 1198, Queen Constance of Sicily died and left him as guardian to her infant son Frederick. The pope now dominated central and southern Italy. To retain his power there, he had only to prevent the re-establishment of a strong imperial government. For three years he refused to recognize either Philip or Otto, while at the same time asserting his right to decide the issue by conferring the crown on the most suitable candidate. At last, in 1201, he declared openly for Otto IV, after securing from him an admission of his right to decide the election and a full renunciation of all imperial claims to the Papal States, which were now defined at the most extreme limits ever claimed, including Tuscany. Otto was the weaker candidate, and hence the less dangerous. He was also a Welf, traditionally friendly to the papacy. Moreover, Innocent considered it vitally important for the papacy to break the Hohenstaufen bond which tied Sicily to the empire. Despite the pope's aid, however, Otto could make little progress. By 1207 his cause was lost and he fled to England. Innocent was bitterly disappointed, but forced to make the best of a bad situation. In 1208 he recognized Philip of Swabia as emperor, just before that unlucky ruler was murdered.

With Philip dead, Otto easily made good his claims. The country was tired of civil war. In 1209 he was crowned at Rome. Here he renewed his guaranty of the Papal States and made further concessions to the pope, including the practical surrender of imperial control over the German church. But promises meant little to Otto. Within a few months he had adopted the Hohenstaufen imperial policy and was threatening
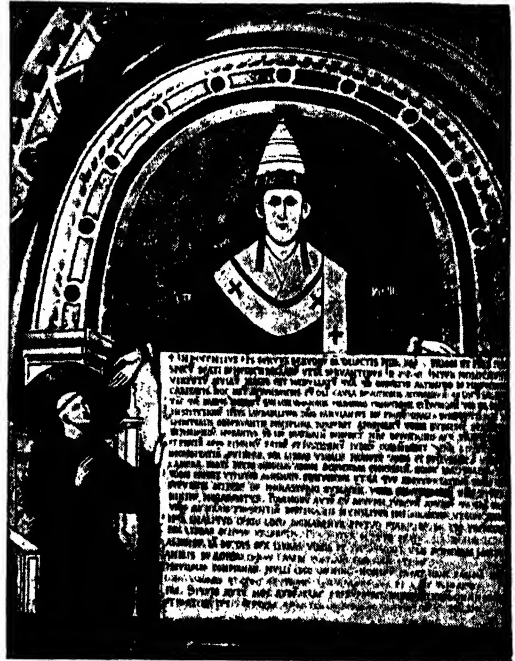
POPE INNOCENT III

This portrait, from a mural fresco of the thirteenth century, gives no very clear impression of the most powerful of medieval popes, but we have nothing better.

the independence of the Papal States. In 1210 and again the following year, Innocent excommunicated him and freed his subjects from their allegiance. The result was a Hohenstaufen rebellion in Germany in favor of the young Frederick of Sicily, son of Henry VI, who was now of age. In December, 1211, he was elected by the rebels, with the pope's blessing. Innocent had been forced to support Frederick, much against his liking, by the lack of any other available candidate to use against the perfidious Otto. Before giving his consent, he made Frederick confirm all the promises made by Otto and also made him promise to give up the kingdom of Sicily to his infant son, Henry, as soon as he was crowned emperor, thus providing for the continued division of Sicily from the empire. Meanwhile, civil war had begun again in Germany. It continued till 1214, when Otto was disastrously defeated by Philip Augustus of France on the field of Bouvines.[1]

[1] See below, page 238.

In the year 1220, Frederick II returned to Italy, the land he had always considered

Frederick II
his real home, there to stage the last act of the Hohenstaufen drama. It is difficult to estimate the character of this last great member of a great family, so contradictory and even hysterical are some of the judgments passed on him both by his contemporaries and by later writers. His enemies of the papal party saw in him an arch-heretic and a monster of depravity, while his admirers hailed him as "the wonder of the world." Even modern scholars have been moved to superlatives in describing him. Some have referred to him as "the first modern king," and one, writing in the *Cambridge Medieval History*, has asserted that, "among the rulers in the centuries between Charlemagne and Napoleon he has no equal." Certainly there was genius in this descendant of German emperors and Norman kings. Brought up among the intrigues and plots of a turbulent court, he had learned to trust no one but himself. He had learned all the uses of deceit and had acquired a self-confidence based on a fairly just assurance of his own mental superiority to those about him. Sicily, where he passed his youth, was a cosmopolitan country, made up of mixed Italian, Norman, Greek, and Saracen peoples, including every possible shade of social and religious opinion. As a product of that varied society, Frederick had developed a keen, skeptical mind, with little religious or moral conviction, but with an enthusiastic interest in literature, science, and philosophy, and a sanely enlightened appreciation of the needs of his kingdom.

Whenever he was free to do so, Frederick devoted his attention to his Sicilian king-

Government of Sicily
dom, and it was there that his genius as a ruler showed itself most clearly. Before returning to Italy, he had persuaded Pope Honorius III to let him keep it, while surrendering the German crown to his son Henry. His first care was to recover the royal domains, which had been lost during his youth. He then took stringent measures to re-establish absolute government, building up a system of administration by royal officers who would be superior to the feudal nobles. He reorganized the royal courts and councils, recruiting his ministers from men of common birth who had been trained in law, rather than from the nobility. In 1231 he issued a new legal code, based on the principles of Roman law, to supersede the tangle of feudal laws and local customs throughout the kingdom. He also reformed the system of taxation so as greatly to increase his income. This bore heavily on the people, but was more than compensated by his intelligent encouragement of industry, commerce, and agriculture. Frederick also did much to raise the intellectual level of Sicily. He founded the University of Naples, and his liberal patronage to writers and scholars made his court the intellectual center of the West. Under his rule, despotic though it was, Sicily became the most prosperous and civilized country in Europe.

As a true Hohenstaufen, however, Frederick could not concentrate all his attention on Sicily. He seems to have cared little for Germany, but

The papacy and the Lombards
he was determined to keep Sicily and the empire together, and to unite Italy, if possible, under his rule. This brought him into conflict with the two ancient enemies of his house, the papacy and the Lombard cities. The latter were still, as in the days of Barbarossa, independent, disorderly, and constantly at war with one another. Like his grandfather, Frederick II felt it necessary to enforce order upon them through imperial authority. But, despite their mutual jealousies, they could still unite to defend their freedom from a superior power and the emperor's first attempts to rule them were met by the formation of a new Lombard League in 1226. Again the pope joined the Lombards in opposition to the emperor. The grounds of disagreement, however, were not quite the same as they had been in the previous century. Innocent III had triumphantly vindicated the papal claims to universal sovereignty, and the emperor had practically lost control of the German church. The issue of supremacy was still present, but the struggle was in reality more for territorial rule in Italy. Despite his

promises, Frederick was threatening the pope's control of the Papal States, while the pope, for his part, could still assert his feudal overlordship over Sicily. The pope had a weapon against Frederick in the latter's rash vow, made in 1215, to go on a crusade. Pope Gregory IX (1227–41) demanded the fulfillment of the vow immediately after his election. Frederick agreed to sail in that year, but falling sick at sea, he turned back. Gregory thereupon excommunicated him. In 1228, the emperor did finally go on the crusade and by diplomatic negotiations won Jerusalem, but still without mollifying the pope, since he had undertaken the holy war while under the ban of excommunication and had, moreover, treated peacefully with the infidel sultan. It was not till after another year of warfare that pope and emperor signed a peace treaty in 1230, which kept an uneasy truce for eight years.

Meanwhile, Frederick continued with varying success his attempts to suppress the

The conflict revived

Lombard cities. In 1235, he was called to Germany to put down a rebellion led by his son Henry. Returning with German troops, he announced his intention of establishing his authority over the whole of Italy. By 1238, the pope was openly allied with the Lombard League, and in March of the following year he again excommunicated the emperor. From that time on, Gregory and his successor Innocent IV (1243–54) were the relentless leaders of the opposition to Frederick. Both were canonists, fighting for the rights of the church, which they defined more absolutely and with greater claims to secular power than even Innocent III had done. The war dragged on indecisively until the death of Frederick in 1250 brought final ruin to the imperial cause.

The papacy still continued in implacable enmity to Frederick's descendants, while

Great Interregnum

the empire fell to pieces. Pope after pope carried on a ruthless war to stamp out "the viper brood of the Hohenstaufens." In 1265, the pope called in a powerful French noble,

Charles, Duke of Anjou, younger brother of Louis IX, to win the kingdom of Sicily from Frederick's son Manfred. The following year Manfred was defeated and slain. Two years later, the last Hohenstaufen, Frederick's grandson Conradin, was captured and executed. In Germany, meanwhile, the imperial government had completely collapsed. While Frederick II was busy in Italy, the nobles had successfully asserted their independence. Rebellion after rebellion had marked the last years of his reign, and when, the year after his death, his son Conrad IV left to carry on the war in Italy, the country was in a state of complete anarchy. After the death of Conrad IV in 1254, there was no generally recognized emperor for nineteen years, until the election of Rudolf of Hapsburg in 1273. This period is called "the Great Interregnum." During those stormy years the German nobles acquired an independence that they were never again to surrender to any emperor.

The papacy had at last triumphed in the long and bitter struggle with the emperors — at least to the extent of temporarily destroying the em-

Results of the struggle

pire, and leaving it permanently weakened. In these two centuries of conflict, the popes had also built up a great international sovereignty, with arrogant claims to spiritual and secular authority, and with a territorial state in central Italy under their immediate rule. At the same time, the struggle had prevented the development of a strong centralized government, or even of national unity, in either Germany or Italy. Centuries were to pass before either became a national state. But the papal victory was not as permanent as it seemed. For, while the popes were fighting with the emperors, the kings of France and England had been steadily increasing their power and were gradually building centralized territorial states out of feudal chaos. In the Later Middle Ages, the popes were to find these national monarchs more dangerous enemies than the emperors had been.

17

The Growth of the Monarchies
in France and England

DURING THE PERIOD which we have called the High Middle Ages, the society of western Europe was still organized according to the feudal pattern. Nationalism and national states, as we know them, had not yet evolved. Most men were conscious primarily of the loyalty they owed to their local feudal lord. Yet they had also much in common with all the peoples of Catholic Europe — a common social system and a universal church. Medieval society, then, was at once more local and more international than that of modern times. In the last chapter we have seen how the results of the long struggle between the emperors and the popes helped to prolong this condition, on the one hand by establishing the popes as undisputed rulers of an international church with claims to secular powers, and on the other by destroying the central government in Germany and Italy. In this chapter we shall see how in the other two great countries of the West, France and England, the reverse development was taking place during the same period. There the monarchs, less troubled by the conflicting claims of the papacy, were slowly centralizing the loose feudal government and were laying the foundations for future national states.

1. FRENCH KINGS INCREASE THEIR PRESTIGE
(1060–1180)

By the middle of the eleventh century the royal house of Capet was almost eclipsed in the midst of its great vassals.

The king's actual power was limited almost entirely to the royal domain, the Île de France, **Weakness of the Capetian monarchy** a narrow strip of territory running north and south from Paris. From this land he drew his chief financial and military support. Even there, however, his authority was none too great, for rebellious barons defied him from behind their castle walls or issued forth to prey upon the peasants or passing merchants and clergy. Outside the domain, the lords of great fiefs like Normandy, Champagne, Anjou, Burgundy, Toulouse, or Aquitaine, though recognizing the king as their overlord, were practically independent, each ruling his own county or duchy as a feudal sovereign.[1] The king had less real power than many of these vassals, but he had one great advantage over them. He was their overlord and he was also the consecrated king. At the time this meant little, but it might be made to mean more. The first step in the rise of the monarchy would be to exercise both royal and feudal rights as far as possible so as to raise the prestige of the king. The next step would be to use that prestige to expand the royal domain, and then to use the increased power drawn from a wider domain to assert control over the outlying fiefs. In accomplishing

[1] See above, pages 209–10, and map, page 208.

this, the kings could usually count upon the support of the clergy, who were more closely attached to the monarchy than the lay nobles.

The long reign of Philip I (1060–1108) marks the first slight advance in the power of the monarchy. A practical if rather ignoble king, Philip succeeded in adding several small fiefs to the royal domain, and he suppressed at least some of the unruly barons of the Île de France. He also succeeded in maintaining control over his ecclesiastical vassals. The French kings could not influence the election of all the high church officers as the emperors could in Germany, since the Duke of Normandy and some of the other great lords had taken over that right in their own fiefs, nor was the king strong enough to combat the movement for reform in the church, which the papacy was urging so strongly during all of Philip's reign. Nevertheless, he managed to hold his own in the investiture controversy. The question was settled by a compromise in 1107. The king gave up the formal investiture of bishops and abbots, but retained control over ecclesiastical elections. Thereafter, the French kings were usually in close alliance with the papacy, but kept a firm hand on the French church. The support of both was often of great advantage to them.

Philip I

Philip's son, Louis VI (1108–37), called "the Fat" for obvious reasons, carried on the Capetian program with far greater success than had his father. It was he who really laid the foundations of royal power, first, by suppressing the barons of the Île de France and establishing a secure position for the monarchy there, and second, by vigorously asserting the right of the king to enforce justice throughout the kingdom. Despite the growing weight of flesh, which even his tall and powerful frame carried with difficulty in his later years, Louis was constantly on the move. A king who took his duties seriously had no time for leisure in that violent age, and Louis had all the qualities needed by a medieval monarch. He was a born soldier and a just and conscientious judge. He never thought of inter-

Louis VI asserts royal authority

fering with the feudal rights of his vassals, but he did consider it his duty as king and overlord to see that feudal laws were obeyed and justice guaranteed to all. Year after year, this "ironclad judge" heaved his great weight into the saddle and rode forth to defend the clergy, the weak, and the oppressed. His life was one long battle against feudal tyranny and rebellion, filled with sieges of castles and hand-to-hand fighting, in which the king himself, in his egg-shaped steel helmet and chain mail, swung as lusty a sword as any knight in the royal army. He left the monarchy with greatly increased prestige and a new moral ascendancy over the feudal nobles.

The greatest danger to the French monarchy in this century came from the union of Normandy — the great duchy which touched the western border of the royal domain — with England, and against this coalition Louis was able to do no more than hold his own. Henry I of England, though in theory his vassal for Normandy, was a much more powerful ruler than Louis. Both his kingdom and his duchy were better organized than France, and besides he had strong allies. His nephew, Theobald, Count of Champagne, whose fiefs bordered the Île de France on both the east and west, aided him in any action against the French king. The Emperor Henry V, too, was his son-in-law, and on one occasion formed an alliance with him against France. This danger was averted by an unprecedented rising of the French nobles in support of their king, but until the death of Henry I in 1135 the situation was always tense.

The Anglo-Norman menace

With the death of Louis the Fat, the rise of the monarchy was checked, though not entirely stopped. Louis VII (1137–80) was less wise, less decisive in action, and certainly less fortunate than his great father. At the very beginning of his reign, he added greatly to the territory of the royal domain by marrying Eleanor, heiress to the duchy of Aquitaine. However, this was not as great a gain as it might seem, and it proved to be only temporary. Aquitaine, in southwestern France, was too far away and its

Louis VII, early years

nobles too independent for it to add very much to the king's resources. During his first years as king, Louis showed more energy than later, but it was sadly misdirected. After a long and useless feud with Theobald of Champagne, he left France to take part in the ill-starred Second Crusade. After his return in 1149, he settled down more seriously to the business of ruling; but by that time the Anglo-Norman menace had taken a new and more dangerous form through alliance with the house of Anjou.

Seven years before his death, Henry I, who had no surviving son to succeed him, had married his daughter Matilda, the widow of the Emperor Henry V, to Count Geoffrey of Anjou and Maine. He hoped in this way to provide an heir who would not only succeed to the English throne, but would also unite to Normandy the two neighboring counties of Anjou and Maine. When Henry I died, however, his grandson, Henry, later nicknamed "Plantagenet," was too young to take the throne, which passed instead to Henry's nephew, Stephen of Blois. In the following years, Geoffrey of Anjou conquered Normandy without serious opposition from either of the weak monarchs, Stephen and Louis VII. When Geoffrey died in 1151, his son, Henry Plantagenet, was eighteen years old, and already a keen and vigorous statesman. The following year, Louis VII, who was always swayed more by personal emotions than by motives of policy, divorced his flighty southern wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine. Henry married her almost immediately, thus adding Aquitaine to his already formidable collection of fiefs. The acquisition of Aquitaine meant more to Henry than it had to Louis, since it bordered on his Angevin domain, forming with it a solid block. In 1154, the Plantagenet became King of England as Henry II, and four years later acquired Brittany. He was now lord of more than half of France and much more powerful than his overlord Louis VII.[1] For his part, Louis had weakly allowed this dangerous collection of fiefs to take place without serious opposition, and later, when he real-

Rise of the Angevin house

[1] See map, page 239.

ized the seriousness of the menace, his attempts to lessen Henry's power were feeble and irresolute. Henry remained the practically independent ruler of the lands he had acquired.

In the rest of his kingdom, however, Louis was more successful. He carried on his father's work of defending the oppressed and dispensing justice. He frequently answered appeals for justice against feudal law-breakers outside the royal domain and summoned even the more powerful vassals to answer charges in his court. All who desired peace and order were on the king's side against the nobles. The clergy supported him strongly, and in 1159, Pope Alexander III, who had been driven out of Italy by Frederick Barbarossa, appealed to him for protection. Thus, despite the danger from Anjou, Louis added considerably to the moral authority of the monarchy in France and to its influence abroad.

Growth of royal prestige

Much of this success was due to the work of the king's ministers. Louis VI had instituted a policy, which his son continued, of entrusting royal business to clerics or to men of low birth rather than to the great nobles who had earlier filled the offices of the king's household. These men, chosen for their wisdom, training, and ability, were not only more efficient than the ruder nobles, but were devoted to the king's interests, since they had no power of their own independent of the king and had no family ambitions to serve. Abbot Suger of Saint Denis, who served father and son faithfully from about 1130 till his death in 1151, was typical of this class. Honest, sane, and tactful, this bald-headed little man gave direction to the warlike vigor of Louis VI and saved the kingdom from disaster in the early years of Louis VII. During the king's absence on the Second Crusade, it was Suger who prevented the feudal nobles from asserting complete independence. Save for this change in the character of the ministers, the royal administration had developed very little since the early days of the monarchy. The king still drew his chief income from the royal domain, and his direct govern-

Royal administration

SCOTLAND

NORTHUMBERLAND

BERLAND

DURHAM

YORK

York

LANCASTER

CHESTER

DERBY

NOTTINGHAM

LINCOLN

STAFFORD

LEICESTER

NORFOLK

SHROPSHIRE

WORCESTER

WARWICK

NORTHAMPTON

HUNTINGDON

CAMBRIDGE

SUFFOLK

HEREFORD

BEDFORD

WALES

GLOUCESTER

OXFORD

BUCKINGHAM

HEATFORD

ESSEX

Bristol

BERKSHIRE

MIDDLESEX

London

WILTSHIRE

HAMPSHIRE

SURREY

KENT

SOMERSET

SUSSEX

DEVON

DORSET

CORNWALL

MEDIEVAL
ENGLAND

ment was limited to it. Beyond the domain, he had only the feudal jurisdiction of an overlord. His court was composed of household officers, who were his personal advisers, and on special occasions the vassals-in-chief who owed him feudal service. Whether as king or as overlord, his government was purely personal and there was very little system about it. His ministers were merely people whom he had chosen to assist him and their duties were not clearly defined. It was only in the next century, when the royal domain was greatly expanded, that a more regular system of administration began to evolve.

2. ENGLISH KINGS ORGANIZE A ROYAL GOVERNMENT (1066-1189)

Let us turn now to England and see how the monarchy had been faring there. The position of the English kings at the beginning of this period contrasted strongly with that of the kings of France. At the time when Philip I was unable to exercise any authority outside the Île de France, and none too much there, William the Conqueror was master of all England. He had the tremendous advantage that the whole country was his by right of conquest. He kept a large amount of land himself, and the rest he allotted to the Norman barons who had helped him in the conquest and to the church. This land was granted out in fiefs to vassals, who held it directly from the king as tenants-in-chief, giving in return a stipulated amount of military service. This military service was provided for by regranting part of the land to knights, who thus became subvassals of the king. In theory this is the continental system of military feudalism. But in practice the new Norman feudalism in England was far better organized, and the king retained far more control, than anywhere on the Continent. The land had been given by the king to the barons, not merely in theory as confirmation of their hereditary possession of land won by their ancestors as in France, but in actual fact. Moreover, most fiefs were composed of pieces of land scattered in various parts of the kingdom. No single baron was strong enough to defy the king

Norman feudalism in England

successfully. William collected all feudal dues to the last penny, and there was also some sort of national taxation. This, added to the income from the extensive royal estates, guaranteed the financial independence and stability of the king's government. Finally, William and his successors insisted on the principle that the vassals who held land from the barons owed their first loyalty to the king rather than to their immediate lords. From the first, Norman feudalism in England was a fairly centralized system.

William I had his full share of the peculiar Norman genius for organization and for adapting all available means to his own ends. He retained the old Anglo-Saxon system of the shires, as territorial divisions of the kingdom for administrative purposes, under royal officers called sheriffs. He also kept alive the shire courts, with their Saxon law, to offset the feudal courts of the baron or lord of the manor. To this system he added other elements brought over from the Continent. The most important of these new institutions were the itinerant ministers from the royal court (somewhat like the old Carolingian *missi*) and the sworn inquest or jury (so called from the French *juré*, because composed of men who had sworn to give true information). Perhaps the best example of how these worked can be found in the collection of information for the famous Domesday Book in 1086, that amazing survey of the land and chattels of the whole kingdom, compiled for the purpose of making sure of full payment of feudal dues and royal taxes. Ministers from the royal court, mostly educated clergymen, were sent out with writs empowering them to summon a group of freemen from each community, who were to testify under oath as to the exact wealth of each estate. In later times, these itinerant "justices," as personal representatives of the king, and the sworn jury were to be used extensively for all sorts of administrative purposes, and also for the prosecution of justice.

Administration

Along with his other reforms, the Conqueror made a thorough reorganization of the English Church. The Hildebrandine re-

form movement was at its height, and William, always a pious man, was thoroughly in sympathy with the aims of the reformers, so long as they did not lessen his authority. With the aid of his friend Lanfranc, whom he made Archbishop of Canterbury, the king enforced discipline upon the lax Saxon clergy. He replaced nearly all the bishops and abbots by new men who had been trained in the stricter tradition of the Continent. He took steps to enforce the celibacy of the clergy and to do away with simony. William also set up special ecclesiastical courts, where the clergy could be tried by their superior officers. Nevertheless, he would not accede to all the demands of Gregory VII. He clung to his right of investing the bishops and abbots, who were among his most important vassals; but Gregory was not inclined to make an issue of the matter in England as he had in Germany. The pope was interested in reform above all else, and so long as William was using his control of the church to such good purpose, Gregory did not feel it necessary to interfere.

William I and the church

For thirteen years after the Conqueror's death, his son William Rufus (1087–1100) proved that royal power might be dangerous in the hands of a tyrannical king. However, his reign was not long enough to cause permanent damage. He died unlamented, shot by an arrow while hunting in the New Forest, and the crown passed to his younger brother, Henry I (1100–35). Henry was a hard, cool-headed, systematic man, of the true Norman breed, with a strongly legal bent of mind and a passion for order and justice. His primary motive, no doubt, was to strengthen his own power, but he did so in ways that benefited the whole kingdom. Traveling justices, sent out from his court, investigated complaints of feudal oppression, examined the conduct of the sheriffs, and heard numbers of judicial cases, which the king claimed fell within his jurisdiction as breaches of the "king's peace." Henry was perhaps too much interested in his continental possessions for the good of England — he spent more than half his

Royal administration under Henry I

reign in Normandy — but he chose able ministers to carry on his work during his absence. One of these, the "justiciar" Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, was probably responsible for the origins of the famous court of exchequer. The central government was regularly handled by the king, or his justiciar, and the king's court, called the *curia regis*. This was normally composed of a fairly small group of ministers and any of the barons whom the king chose to summon. On special occasions all the king's vassals-in-chief might be summoned to it to form the "Great Council." It was only natural that out of this shifting court the specialized task of looking after the royal finances should be given to a more or less permanent group of experienced men, who received the taxes, audited the sheriffs' accounts, and noted expenditures. These men came to be known, from the chequered table at which they sat to reckon their accounts, as the lords of the exchequer. It was the first of several such courts, which later grew out of the shifting and formless *curia regis*. Like his father, Henry I kept a firm hand on the English Church, but now the abolition of lay investiture had become the primary point of papal policy. The question was finally settled in 1107, as in France, by a compromise wherein the king gave up nothing but the formal investiture with the ring and staff.

Henry's strong rule was followed by two dreary decades of anarchy and civil war under his nephew, Stephen (1135–54), of whom one contemporary chronicler writes, "he was a mild man, and soft, and good, and did no justice." Henry's daughter Matilda asserted her claim to the crown, while the nobles and great church officers took advantage of the civil war to throw off all royal control. It was a good day for England when young Henry Plantagenet of Anjou restored the hard but just government of Henry I and the Conqueror.

Anarchy under Stephen

We have seen already how Henry II (1154–89) collected his great feudal dominion in France before he became King of England at the age of twenty-one. Though he continued to spend much of his time in

his continental fiefs, it was his work in England that justified his reputation as one of the greatest of medieval rulers.   Henry's energy was remarkable, even in a family noted for that quality.   His superabundant vitality wore down the ministers who were forced to keep pace with him. He was constantly active, traveling from end to end of his domains, a terror to evildoers, for despite his violent temper which occasionally burst all bonds of restraint, he had all his grandfather's love of order and justice.   Every part of England knew the short sturdy figure of the homely red-headed king, the powerful set of the shoulders, and the bow legs, warped from a lifetime in the saddle.   He kept in personal touch with the sheriffs whenever possible, and by developing the powers of the exchequer brought them under closer control by the central government.   The anarchy of Stephen's reign had made a reassertion of royal authority very necessary.   Though he added very little that was actually new to the system of administration, he developed every part of the machinery of government, until he had established a permanent centralized system that would survive the neglect or mismanagement of weaker kings.

Henry II a great administrator

Henry II had inherited the legal mind of that "lion of justice," Henry I, and his most permanent contributions to English institutions were in the field of judicial and legal procedure.   He greatly extended the jurisdiction of the royal courts by adding to the list of cases that were recognized as "pleas of the crown" or breaches of the king's peace, and by throwing open his courts to all freemen in civil suits regarding the ownership of land, while at the same time he used the system of itinerant justices in a much more systematic way than before, so as to make royal courts easily available in all parts of the country.   The regular use of these traveling justices led to the transference of a large number of cases from the local feudal or shire courts to the royal courts.   Royal justice was surer and more fair than that in the local courts and so became more popular.   It should also be noted that the king had good financial rea-

Royal courts

sons for doing everything in his power to extend the jurisdiction of his courts at the expense of others, for fines, payments for writs, and so forth were an important part of the king's income.   At the same time, the royal courts did much to raise the king's prestige and to unify the kingdom, for the king's justices were gradually developing a system of common law for the whole country, which would eventually take the place of varying local customs.   No parallel to this development could be found anywhere on the Continent.

Perhaps the most important of Henry's innovations was the regular use of the jury as part of the machinery of justice in the royal courts.   This was an evolution from the sworn inquest used by earlier Norman kings and now put to a new judicial use.   In Henry's time the jury was used chiefly for the accusation or indictment of criminals.   Freemen in each locality were summoned by the king's justices and were forced to tell, under oath, if they knew of any criminals in their neighborhood.   Criminals thus accused were summoned to the king's courts for trial, no matter who would otherwise have had jurisdiction over them.   A further use of the jury, which in some degree foreshadows the later development of the trial jury, was the "assize," a trial in a royal court to settle disputes over the possession of land, in which the jury not only gave evidence, but also rendered a decision on the basis of their previous knowledge of the circumstances.

The jury

Henry's desire to extend the jurisdiction of royal courts wherever possible caused his one serious conflict with the church, when he tried to encroach on the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts and canon law.   We have already noted [1] the great growth of canon law in the twelfth century and the increasingly arrogant attitude of the church toward secular governments.   Some conflict between the church and a king so absolute and legal-minded as Henry II was almost bound to occur, though the pope himself was too busy with his fight against Frederick Barbarossa to press the issue in England.

The quarrel with Becket

[1] See above, page 223.
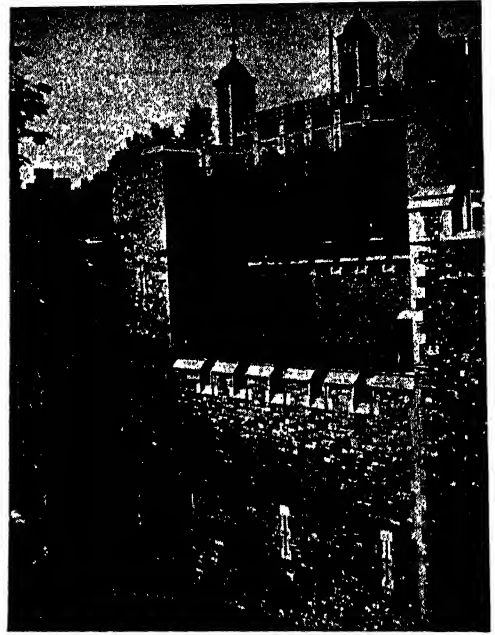
THE TOWER OF LONDON

The Tower of London was a grim symbol of royal authority from the days of the Norman kings. It is shown here in a fifteenth-century painting and as it is today.

Henry claimed that "criminous clercs" (clergymen who had committed crimes) should be tried in the regular royal courts, like other criminals, rather than in the ecclesiastical courts where punishments were notoriously light. He also objected strongly to the appealing of cases to the papal court at Rome. In 1162, he made his most trusted minister, Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the hope that he would be a pliant tool. He was disappointed. Now that he was head of the church in England, Becket became the most violent opponent of royal encroachment. He opposed the Constitutions of Clarendon — a statement drawn up by the king in 1164 of the restrictions to be placed on ecclesiastical courts, and papal interference in England — and fled to France rather than give in. The quarrel dragged on for six years. It was ended only when Becket was murdered before the altar of his cathedral at Canterbury, by four knights who had apparently taken too literally some things said by the king in one of his towering rages. Becket was considered a martyr and people began to make pilgrimages to his tomb. The king was forced to do public penance and to withdraw

the constitutions so far as they affected the trial of "criminous clercs" and the appeals to Rome.

Henry's last years were saddened and embittered by the perennial quarrels and rebellions of his four sons. The old king could rule successfully everywhere but in his own family. Two of his sons died before he did, and at the time of his own death, the other two, Richard and John, were in rebellion against him.

Last years

3. FRENCH KINGS EXPAND THE ROYAL DOMAIN (1180–1270)

Let us turn again to the history of France with the reign of Philip II (1180–1223), surnamed Augustus, who opened a new era in the history of the French monarchy by greatly expanding the royal domain at the expense of the English kings. The French kings had already acquired considerable moral authority. It was time to give that authority a solid backing, based on real power drawn from a wide domain under the king's immediate government. Philip was well suited to carry out that task, and fortune favored him. He had a far more decided character

Philip Augustus

than his good-natured father, Louis VII, and, though he lacked the reckless chivalrous spirit of his grandfather, he had other qualities that were equally useful to a king in his difficult position. Sane, clear-headed, and unscrupulous, he kept his eye fixed firmly on his most important objective and seized every opportunity to forward his schemes. He was a politician and a statesman, rather than a feudal warrior. In the first years of his reign, while he was still very young, he suppressed the rebellion of a powerful coalition of nobles, and gained some territory. Then by asserting an hereditary claim to Vermandois and a claim through his first wife to her fief of Artois, he paved the way for further expansion of the royal domain to the north. By steady pressure he gradually added to it until his lands stretched north in a solid block to the English Channel, including the ports of Boulogne and Calais.

Philip's greatest ambition was to take over the fiefs of the house of Anjou, which at the beginning of his reign were three times the size of his own domain. He was largely responsible for stirring up the sons of Henry II to rebellion, but on the old king's death he had to make peace, as both he and Richard I (1189–99) had sworn to go on the Third Crusade. They went together, but soon quarreled, and Philip returned to urge John to rebellion and to begin the conquest of Normandy. Richard was captured by the Emperor Henry VI on his way home and did not return till 1194. Once back, however, the soldier-king soon won back his land, and had formed an alliance with the Welf Otto of Brunswick against France, when he was killed while besieging a castle in Aquitaine. With John (1199–1216) King of England, Philip's chances were much better. At first he supported the claims of Arthur, the son of John's deceased elder brother, Geoffrey, to the Angevin inheritance. Then, in 1202, he declared that John had forfeited his French fiefs as a contumacious vassal. John was generally unpopular and became much more so when the rumor was circulated that he had murdered the young Arthur. Philip met with little opposition from John's vassals. By 1205, he had taken possession of

Philip takes Angevin fiefs

Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and part of Poitou, and had conferred Brittany on a friendly vassal. These were the richest and best organized of the Angevin domains. John was left with only the southern part, the disorderly and half-independent territories of Aquitaine, Gascony, and part of Poitou.

John was prevented from continuing the struggle for some years by his quarrel with Innocent III. It was not till 1214 that he was free to take the offensive. He then revived the old alliance with the Emperor Otto of Brunswick, which was joined by a number of French and German lords of the lower Rhineland, against Philip Augustus, who was supporting the Hohenstaufen Frederick II in his attempt to take the imperial crown. John hoped that while Otto was occupying Philip's attention in the north, he would be able to take back some of his lost land. However, the defeat of Otto at Bouvines proved decisive. John was unable to stand alone against the French king and had to return empty-handed to England.

Battle of Bouvines

Like his contemporaries, John and Otto, Philip came into conflict with the arrogant claims of Innocent III to supremacy over secular rulers, but on one occasion only was he forced to submit, and then on a moral issue where he was clearly in the wrong. In 1193, Philip had married the Princess Ingeborg, daughter of Canute VI of Denmark. Almost at once, for reasons which he himself apparently could not understand, he took a profound dislike to her and repudiated the marriage. Three years later, he married again, though the pope had not recognized the annulment of his previous marriage. As soon as he became pope, Innocent took up the question with his usual determination and commanded Philip to take back Ingeborg as his lawful wife. In 1200, he enforced his command by placing an interdict on all France except the Angevin fiefs, which were recognized as belonging more to the King of England than to Philip. An interdict meant the suspension of all normal church services in the country. The pressure of public opinion forced Philip to submit and take back

Philip and Innocent III

FLANDERS

BRITTANY
ANJOU
BURGUNDY
Paris

POITOU

AQUITAINE

GASCONY

France, c. 1100

CHAMPAGNE
Paris
BLOIS

France, 1180
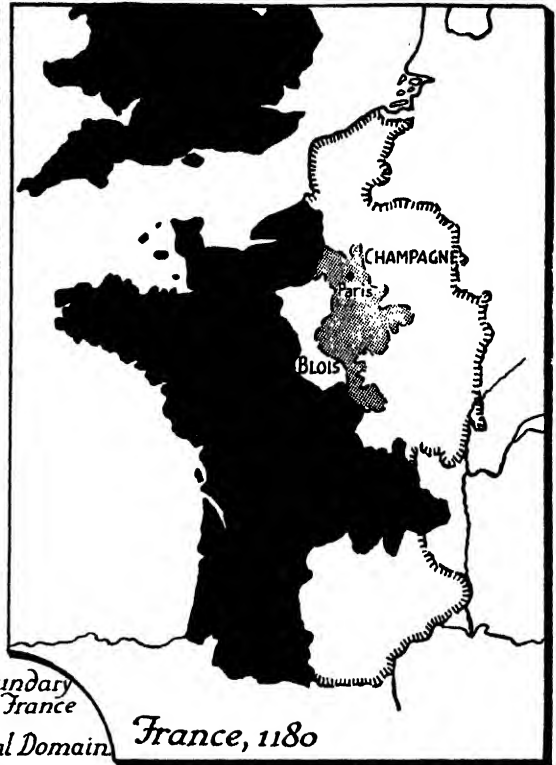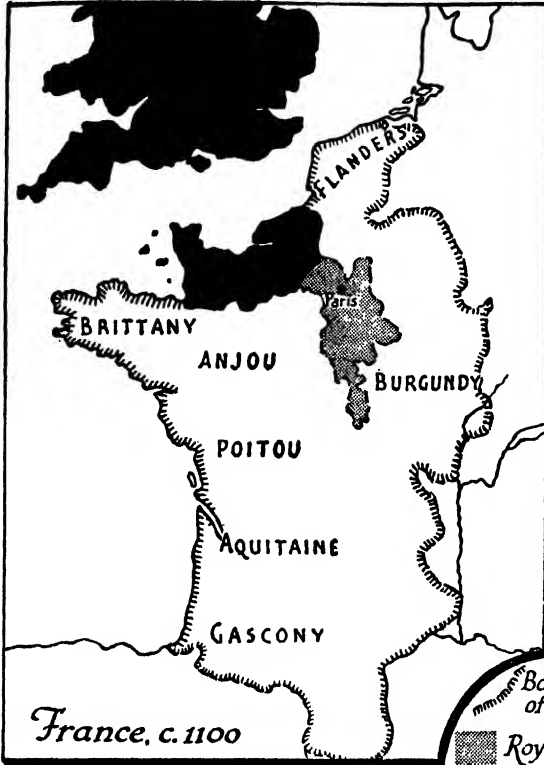
Boundary
of France
Royal Domain
Fiefs held by
the Kings of
England

GUYENNE

France, 1223

Paris

France, 1270
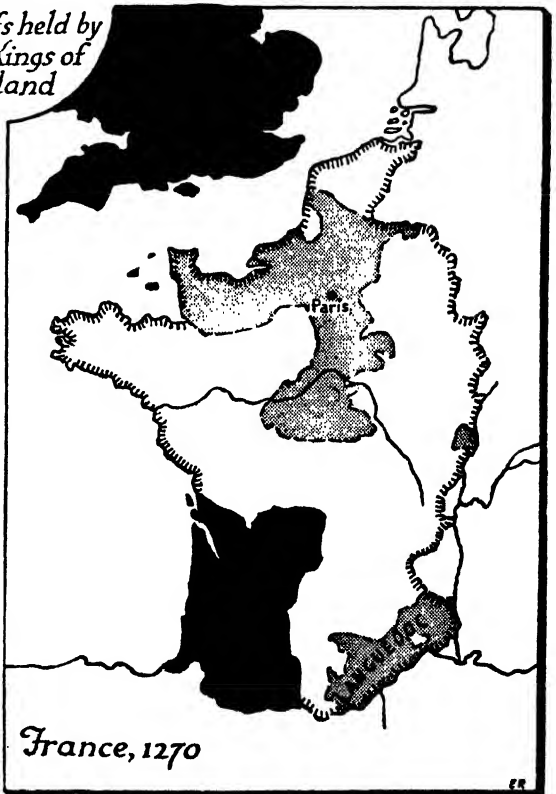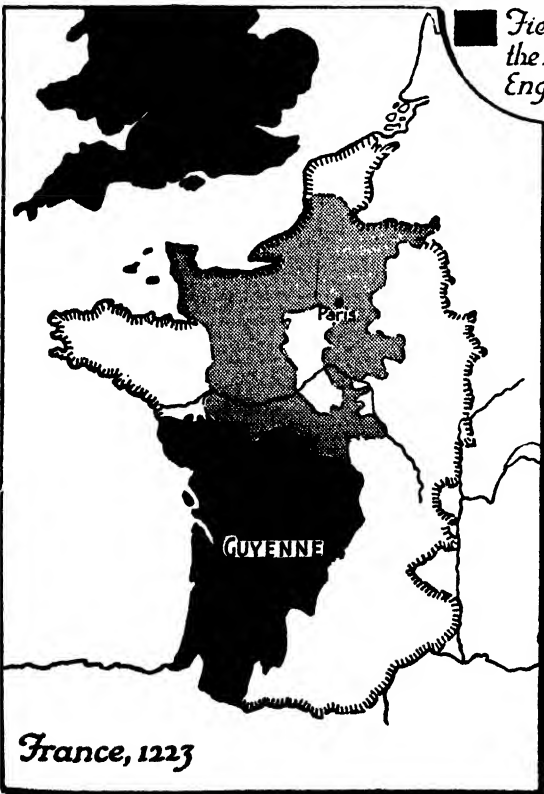
Ingeborg. For the rest, Philip refused to allow Innocent to dictate his policies. He persisted in the conquest of John's French lands despite the strong opposition of the pope. Later he was occasionally allied with the pope against John or Otto, but for reasons of his own. Not the least of Philip's services to the French monarchy was his insistence that the pope had no right to interfere in purely French affairs.

It was typical of Philip's attitude toward the papacy that he refused to waste his strength by taking part in the **Albigensian Crusade** crusade, which Innocent had organized against the Albigenses of southern France in 1207,[1] until he saw a chance of using it to extend his domains. Knights and barons from all parts of Europe joined this crusade against the heretics. After years of fighting and bloody massacres, which destroyed the glorious cul-

[1] See below, page 298.

SAINT LOUIS

Though damaged, this statue of Louis IX in the Cathedral at Rheims gives a striking impression of the vigorous royal saint.

ture of the rich southern land and left it desolate, the leader of the crusaders, a Norman baron named Simon de Montfort, succeeded in taking over nearly all of Languedoc from the Count of Toulouse. Philip's only part in the undertaking was to allow his son Louis to make a brief expedition after the death of de Montfort in 1218. In the last year of Philip's reign, Simon's son, Amaury de Montfort, found himself unable to defend his lands against Count Raymond VII of Toulouse and offered them to the king. Meanwhile, Philip had been gradually extending his domain south into Auvergne and Aquitaine.

The work of Louis VIII (1223–26) during his brief reign was merely a continuation of his father's expansion of the royal domain. He made a tri- **Louis VIII** umphal march into Aquitaine and turned what was left of the Albigensian Crusade into a royal conquest of Languedoc. He died before his task was completed, but he had accomplished so much that his son, Louis IX, was able quite easily to add Languedoc, Aquitaine and Poitou to the king's domain, leaving the King of England only Gascony and Guienne.

Louis IX (1226–70) was only twelve years old when his father's death made him King of France. His mother, Blanche of Castile, ruled as regent till **Louis IX** he came of age, and continued to have a great deal of influence until her death in 1252. The early years of his reign were troubled by occasional rebellions of the great nobles, who feared the rising power of the monarchy, and by feeble attempts on the part of Henry III of England to recover the lost fiefs. After 1243, however, he had no further trouble with either. For the rest of his reign, he kept France at peace and strove to make peace wherever possible in Christendom. Few kings have been as popular as Louis IX, and it is safe to say that no other king ever impressed his subjects so strongly with his essential goodness. He was popularly regarded as a saint during his lifetime, and the church officially conferred upon him the title of Saint Louis shortly after his death. His mother, who was a sternly pious woman, may have been responsible for some of his
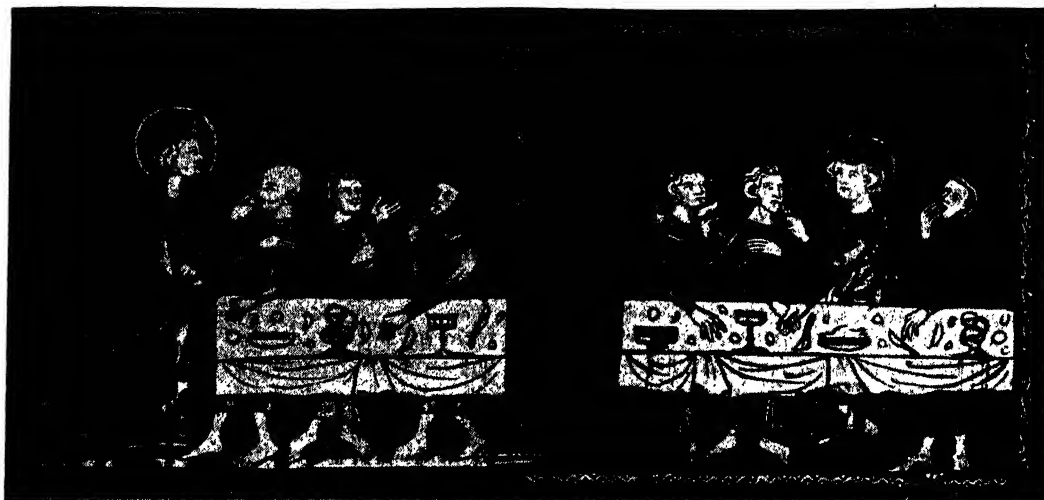
SAINT LOUIS FEEDING THE POOR

*These pictures from a fourteenth-century manuscript recall the tradition of
King Louis's kindly interest in the poor as well as his saintly humility.*

strong religious devotion and strict sense of duty. He spent much time in prayer, fasting, and ascetic practices. Yet he was no pious recluse, shutting himself away from the world. Despite his saintly mysticism, he was a very practical ruler, and did his duty as king with never-failing energy, though constantly troubled by bad health. He had also a great deal of personal charm. In every way Saint Louis, indeed, was the perfect representative of the ideals of his age — as the chivalrous knight, the just ruler, and the pious saint. He was true to the ideals of his age, too, in his fanatical religious intolerance. He persecuted heretics with the greatest severity, and he would sacrifice anything to wage war against the infidel.

Louis's greatest ambition was to win back the Holy Land from the Saracens. His two **His crusades** expeditions mark the last gasp of the real crusading ardor. His first crusade lasted from 1248 to 1254. It began with a disastrous campaign against the Sultan of Egypt, in which Louis himself was captured and nearly died. He was a fearless fighter, despite his weak physique, but he was not a good general. The second crusade came sixteen years later and Louis's part in it was cut short by his death within a few months.

Under Saint Louis the French monarchy of the old feudal type completed its development. The first steps in the rise of the Capetian monarchy had already been taken. The kings of the twelfth century had **Louis IX and the monarchy** gained for themselves a moral ascendancy over their vassals. Then Philip Augustus and Louis VIII had converted that ascendancy into real power by expanding the royal domain over the greater part of the kingdom. Now Louis, during his long and peaceful reign, was able to consolidate those gains, to win the affection and loyalty of the people, and to strengthen the system of royal government. When he died, the way was open for the evolution of a more truly national monarchy of the modern type. Louis himself, however, still clung to the old feudal conceptions of government. His administrative and judicial reforms were limited to the royal domain, and when he interfered in the government of the fiefs outside, he did so in accordance with feudal law and custom. He even gave new life to feudalism within the domain itself by granting Artois, Poitou, Anjou, and other fiefs to his brothers as "appanages," in accordance with his father's will. However, they were still subject to the crown and did not weaken the central government very much, though with each generation they became farther removed from re-

lation to the king. Yet he felt more strongly than any of his predecessors that his consecration as king gave him special sacred rights and duties. He never hesitated to assert his will in what he considered a just cause. In many ways Louis IX was one of the founders of absolute monarchy in France.

As might have been expected from his character, Louis was greatly interested in the enforcing of order and jus-

Judicial reforms

tice. He tried to secure equal justice for rich and poor in his courts, and he himself frequently acted as a judge. He did away with the trial by combat, which he considered barbarous, and abolished the old custom whereby the defendant in a trial might challenge his judge to combat if he considered the sentence unjust. Deprived of this right, the defendant's only alternative was to appeal to the royal court to rehear the case, which added considerably to the king's power and prestige. Louis also prohibited private warfare among the nobles, but even he could not stamp out that most cherished right of the nobility.

During the thirteenth century a system of royal administration was gradually taking shape in France, along lines

Royal administration

somewhat similar to that developed in England the century before. Philip Augustus had done a great deal to systematize the government of the royal domain, by dividing it into administrative districts under royal officers, called bailiffs (in the north) or seneschals (in the south). These royal officers had great powers, which they sometimes abused. Louis IX tried to supervise their activities more closely by sending out representatives, somewhat in the manner of the English traveling justices. The king's court or *curia regis*, that vague body which aided the king in the central government, was also developing along more systematic lines during this period. There was a *chambre des comptes* (though not so named till 1309), corresponding roughly to the English exchequer, and a permanent law court, called the Parliament of Paris. These specialized courts were not yet composed of a definite or permanent set of ministers, but were merely a part of the *curia regis*, sitting to hear the bailiffs' reports or to try cases. Still, there were some more or less permanent

members of each, trained men who began to form a professional class of ministers and judges.

During the thirteenth century, France enjoyed greater prosperity than she had ever known before. Commerce and industry were flourishing, and were causing a great growth of town life. In the towns, a new

Thirteenth-century France

class of independent "burghers," who were neither noble nor villein, were beginning to form an important part of society. During the twelfth century, many of the towns had gained independence from the local feudal lord; before the end of the thirteenth, most of them had come under the direct jurisdiction of the king. The burghers were usually inclined to favor a strong monarchy, because they needed security and order for their business. This was also a period of great educational and cultural advance, fostered by the increasing prosperity. The University of Paris was the center of philosophical and theological learning for all Europe. French lawyers were eagerly studying Roman law, and were drawing from it arguments in favor of absolute monarchy. The great epic poetry in the French language, begun in the previous century, reached its height in this period. Local dialects were beginning to give way before a common French language. True, local differences were still strong, even within the king's domain. The north and the south still spoke languages so different that they could scarcely understand each other. Men from Toulouse were foreigners in Paris. Normans were still Normans before they were Frenchmen. Nevertheless, men in all parts of France were beginning to think of themselves as Frenchmen, and to take some pride in the fact.

4. THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION DEVELOPS DESPITE WEAK KINGS (1189–1272)

We must turn now to see what was happening in England, during the period when Philip Augustus and Saint Louis were building up the French monarchy, partly at the expense of English kings. There, despite a series of absentee, unjust, or weak kings, the system of central government, which had been so strongly organized by the great Nor-

man and Angevin kings of the past century, continued to develop steadily. England was a far more united nation than France, and when the barons rebelled against a bad king, it was not to establish their own independence, but to force the king to rule justly and according to law. In this age of weak rulers, the English people rebelled against absolutism and laid the foundations of the English Constitution.

Richard I
Richard I (1189–99), the "Lion-hearted," who succeeded his great father Henry II on the English throne, was an absentee king. He spent only a few months of his ten-year reign in England. The career of this irresponsible knight-errant belongs more to the history of the Third Crusade or of France than to that of his own kingdom. The royal government, however, under the justiciar Hubert Walter, who was also Archbishop of Canterbury, continued to function as efficiently as if the king had been present, though the justiciar had often a hard time raising the large sums of money demanded by the king for his campaigns. Many towns took advantage of the king's need to purchase charters giving them greater freedom of self-government. The Great Council (the full meeting of the barons in the *curia regis*) also took advantage of the king's absence to assert a little more authority. Otherwise, the strong system of royal administration left by Henry II continued with very little change.

John and Innocent III
The royal government was put to a much more serious test under Richard's younger brother John (1199–1216), whose reign was marked by constant oppression, injustice, and failure. John did not entirely lack the ability shown by so many members of his family, but his energy was fitful and spasmodic. He was avaricious, as indeed others of his family had been, but he had neither Richard's romantic charm nor Henry's love of justice to balance it. On the contrary, he seemed to have a special genius for making enemies, and he was apparently lacking in any moral sense or appreciation of the moral sense of others. It was his misfortune, too, to be pitted against powerful adversaries and to be placed in difficult situations, which his own folly usually made worse. The first

disaster of his reign was the loss of most of his continental fiefs to Philip Augustus, as has already been noted. Immediately thereafter, he rushed into an unnecessary quarrel with the powerful Pope Innocent III, who up to that time had been very favorable to him and had supported him against Philip. The occasion of the quarrel was a dispute over the election of an Archbishop of Canterbury to fill the place of Hubert Walter, who had died in 1205. Two candidates were elected, one secretly by the canons of the cathedral, the other openly by the clergy, but under the command of the king. Innocent set both aside and gave the post to Stephen Langton, a very able and learned English cardinal. John refused to accept him. The pope applied pressure by laying an interdict on England in 1208, the action that had earlier forced Philip Augustus to obedience, and followed it up the next year by excommunicating the king. John retaliated by taking over the lands of the church, thus alienating the English clergy. The nobles were also becoming discontented under his oppressive government and excessive taxation, and there were threats of rebellion. Finally, in 1213, when Philip Augustus prepared to invade England in his own and the pope's interest, John was forced to submit. He not only accepted Stephen Langton, but did homage to the pope for his kingdom, which he agreed to hold as a fief from the papacy.

Magna Carta
John's submission to the pope did not end the discontent in England. When he returned from his disastrous campaign against Philip Augustus, which had ended with the defeat of his ally, Otto of Brunswick, at Bouvines, he found the nation united against him. The barons, who were the fighting force of the kingdom, took the initiative, actively supported by the clergy and the citizens of London. In June, 1215, they forced John to set his seal to the famous Magna Carta or Great Charter. The importance of that historic document was much greater for later times than for its own day. Throughout the next century, until Parliament was definitely established, every despotic act of the king was protested as a breach of the Great Charter, and when, in the seventeenth century, the Stuart kings
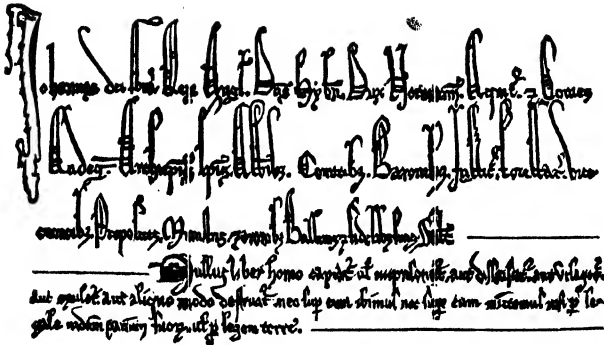
FACSIMILE EXTRACT FROM MAGNA CARTA

The last three lines complete, when translated, read: "No free man shall be taken or imprisoned . . . or in any way destroyed, nor will we go upon him or send upon him, except by the legal judgment of his peers or the law of the land."

Right: PART OF THE "ARTICLES OF THE BARONS," THE LIST OF GRIEVANCES ON WHICH MAGNA CARTA WAS BASED
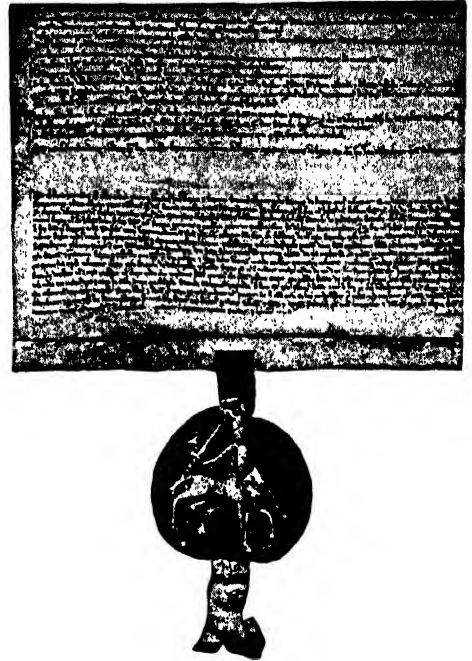
strove to revive absolute government, the parliamentary opposition cited Magna Carta as the original guaranty of liberty, fair trial, and representative government to all Englishmen. This was, of course, a misreading of what was in reality a feudal agreement. In actual fact, the charter was merely a promise that the king would observe the law in dealing with his vassals, though some vague phrases mention the rights of all free men. The demands of the barons, tempered by the sage advice of Stephen Langton, were moderate and conservative. They asked no more than that the king should observe the law in exercising the royal powers built up by Henry II, and that he should govern justly. Perhaps the greatest significance of the charter was the implication that the law was above the king, and that the barons, as representatives of the whole nation, had the right to force the king to obey it.

John had no intention of observing the terms of the charter. Innocent III, as his overlord, refused to recognize it and absolved him from his oath. The barons, however, were determined. They rebelled again and offered the crown to Prince Louis of France, the later Louis VIII, whose wife,

Louis invades England

Blanche of Castile, was a granddaughter of Henry II. Louis accepted the offer, against the opposition of the pope, but with the secret support of his father. His invasion of England was cut short by the death of John in 1216, the same year that saw the end of Innocent's great reign.

The opposition of the rebellious barons had been directed against John personally. After his death it was not difficult to reconcile them to his young son, Henry III. The regents, who ruled in the name of the infant king, reissued the charter and promised better government. Conditions in England were fairly normal again, when Henry came of age in 1227 and began to misgovern the country on his own authority. Henry's personal reign runs very closely contemporary with that of Louis IX, who was his brother-in-law, since they both married daughters of Raymond Berengar of Provence. Like Louis, Henry was very pious. But there the resemblance ends, and even his piety was of a very different sort from that of the saintly French king, having very little beneficial effect on his character. He was childish, vain, easily influenced by his favorites, but weakly stubborn at the wrong

Misgovernment under Henry III

times. He was always hopelessly extravagant. His brilliant but unbalanced imagination conceived magnificent and expensive foreign policies that were quite impossible of fulfillment. Two characteristics of his government especially aroused the resentment of the English people, aside from the constant burden of royal taxation. These were, first, the large number of important offices he gave to foreign favorites from Poitou or Provence, who were always dishonest and usually incompetent, and second, the supine manner in which he permitted the popes to tax the English clergy and to give the richest offices in the English Church to papal favorites, usually Italians. This was the period when the popes were carrying on their last desperate struggle against Frederick II and his descendants. As a result they needed more money than ever before. Only the king could protect the clergy and people from papal exactions, and he was too pious to protest, as even Saint Louis would have done.

Henry's insane foreign policy — including a promise to aid the pope in crushing the Hohenstaufens, and to pay all the expenses of the war, in return for the recognition of his second son, Edmund, as King of Sicily — and defeats in Scotland and Wales finally aroused the barons to definite action to control the king's irresponsible government. The Provisions of Oxford, which the king was forced to accept in 1258, handed the real powers of government over to a small group of the greater barons. This provisional government failed because it gave too much power to a small feudal group who did not represent the nation. The opposition party then tried to put into effect a much more sweeping reform under the leadership of Simon de Montfort, a younger son of that Simon who had led the Albigensian Crusade. He had come to England years earlier, had been made Earl of Leicester, had married the king's sister, and had become thoroughly English in his sympathies. After defeating the royalist army at Lewes, Montfort controlled the government for a year (1264–65), until he in turn was defeated and killed. During that time he summoned a meeting of the Great Council to approve his adminis-

Attempts to check royal absolutism

tration. To it were summoned, not only two knights from each shire, which had been done before, but also two citizens from each chartered town. Aside from the representation given to the towns, this "parliament" was not a great innovation. The name was already in common use for similar meetings of the Great Council. Nor did it accomplish much for the present. De Montfort's experiment failed because he tried to force changes too rapidly. However, it did bear fruit in the next reign; for Edward I had learned that it was easier to govern with the co-operation of the people's representatives than against the opposition of the nation.

England in the thirteenth century was politically a much more closely united state than France. But in one respect the nation was still divided. The upper class were still cut off from the rest by their Norman blood, and still spoke French. Even they, however, were much more English than in the previous century. The loss of the Norman and Angevin lands had separated them from their kinsfolk on the Continent. Throughout the thirteenth century they were rapidly becoming more insular; their French language was losing its purity and was beginning to mix a little with the native Anglo-Saxon of the great majority of Englishmen; and they were as jealous of foreigners as though they themselves had been indigenous to the country. The royal courts, which continued to function well despite the weakness of Henry III, were gradually building up a common law for the whole land — and it was a law more English than French. Norman barons and Saxon burghers united to oppose royal tyranny. The rise of the towns, most of which had bought charters of self-government from Richard, John, or Henry III, gave the Saxon element in the nation a new importance. For in England, as in France, this was an age of prosperity and rapidly increasing commerce, industry, and town life. Everything indicated that when this transitional period was over, there would emerge a nation in which Norman and Saxon elements were fused into something which might be regarded as characteristically English.

Thirteenth-century England

18

The Crusades and the Expansion of Christian Europe

SO FAR, in dealing with the High Middle Ages, we have concentrated our attention on the great European countries, Germany, Italy, France, and England, and on the growing power of the universal church. We have mentioned only incidentally those infidel or heathen countries, Saracen or Slav, which lay in a menacing ring about Christian Europe to south, east, and north. For centuries the great Mohammedan states had dominated the Mediterranean, firmly implanted in Spain, Sicily, North Africa, and the Near East. The half-barbarous people of Christendom could do no more than hold their own against the Saracens, whose civilization was so far in advance of their own. But with the beginning of the eleventh century, the tide began to turn. Islam had lost its political unity, and the aggressive driving force of Mohammedanism had begun to decline. On the other hand, Christian Europe was emerging from the dark ages. Its people were gaining a new strength and energy. It was their turn now to be the aggressors. During the eleventh century, the Saracens were driven out of Sicily and the long warfare against the Moslems in Spain was begun. Then, at the end of the century, the pope summoned the people of Christendom to carry the war boldly into the enemy's territory in the East, and to recover Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the infidel. This expedition was the first and most successful of a long series of crusades, which occupied much of the attention of the western races for two centuries. Generation after generation, ironclad nobles left their quarrels with the king or their neighbors to ride eastward against the Saracens; farsighted Italian merchants plied a busy trade between the homeland and the Christian outposts in Syria; and popes gave reality to their claims of universal supremacy by organizing the fighting forces of Europe in a holy war. Meanwhile, in Europe Christian knights were carrying on steady warfare against the Saracens in Spain and against the Slavs to the north and east, and were gradually expanding the frontiers of Christendom.

1. THE FIRST THREE CRUSADES (1095-1192)

The Abbassid caliphs, who had once ruled a great Mohammedan empire from Bagdad, had lost their power long before the crusaders came to the East. In the middle of the eleventh century, the barbarous Seljuk Turks took over what remained of their empire, though continuing to recognize the nominal authority of the caliphs as religious leaders. The Turks were brutal but effective warriors. They gave new strength to the Moslem state

Moslems and Christians

and made it a greater menace to Christendom. Driving westward, they took Syria from the caliphs of Cairo and most of Asia Minor from the Byzantine Empire. European pilgrims, returning from Jerusalem, brought tales of Turkish atrocities, which were probably exaggerated, and told of the defilement of the holy places. Europe, then, was already aware of the Turk and in a mood to be easily aroused, when the Byzantine emperor, Alexius Comnenus, appealed to the pope for aid against the infidel who had been threatening Constantinople. The time seemed ripe for a counter-attack. Three years before, in 1092, the death of the Turkish sultan, Malik Shah, had thrown the whole Turkish Empire into civil war and anarchy. Asia Minor and Syria were left under independent and antagonistic princes.

Pope Urban II gave enthusiastic response to the emperor's appeal. Indeed, it is possible that he may have taken up the idea of a crusade on his own initiative, without urging from the East. Certainly he planned to do more than merely send aid to Alexius. A great council of churchmen and nobles was summoned to meet at Clermont in France. There Urban issued a stirring call to arms. In a masterly speech, he played upon every emotion of his hearers, holding out every possible inducement to those who would join the expedition — remission of sins, protection of their land till their return, and the hope of plunder. He was answered by shouts of "God wills it!" Most of those present at once donned the cloth cross which signified that they were pledged to the crusade. Preachers, of whom Peter the Hermit was the most famous, traveled through France and other parts of Europe, carrying the message and arousing great enthusiasm everywhere.

Urban II preaches the crusade

The pope's reasons for urging the crusade are clear enough. The papacy had gained greatly in prestige since the days of Gregory VII. Save in Germany, where Henry IV was still in violent opposition, the pope's claims to universal supremacy were generally recognized. By placing himself at the head of a great international movement like the cru-

Motives of the pope

sade, Urban demonstrated that he, not the emperor, was the real leader of Christendom. There was also a more powerful motive. Urban, like most of the popes after him, sincerely wished to expand the church of which he was the ruler, and to make it as nearly as possible a world church.

But why should rough feudal barons, knights, and even merchants and peasants have been stirred by the pope's call to take part in such a perilous undertaking? No single answer to that question can be adequate. In any great popular movement of the kind, many mixed motives must work together. The prime motive was, of course, religious. The Cluniac and papal reform movements had done much to stimulate popular piety. It was an age of violence, but also of strong religious feeling, with a decided bent toward asceticism. To the medieval man, the life of the monk was the only truly religious life. He was deeply conscious of sin; he feared eternal damnation; and he felt the necessity of doing some act of voluntary suffering as penance or atonement for his sins. Great numbers of men, to whom the regular life of the monk was impossible, did penance for their sins by going on pilgrimage to holy places, even as far as Jerusalem. The crusades were in essence super-pilgrimages. But the religious appeal went farther than that. The feudal warrior's conception of loyalty was simple. A man fought for his lord against his enemies. And how could a man show his devotion to God better — or more congenially to his natural tastes — than by fighting for Him against His enemies, the infidels who had defiled Christ's sepulcher? The crusader believed that God had called him to arms through His representative, the pope, and he answered gladly. All the adventurous spirit and love of fighting, that was so characteristic of the medieval knight, urged him on to a glorious enterprise where fighting was no sin. Besides, feudal Europe was becoming somewhat overcrowded. There were landless knights, and younger sons who were short of land. In the rich East, of which they knew little but rumor, there were tempting opportunities for plunder and land to be had for the

Motives of the crusaders

KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM AFTER THE FIRST CRUSADE

taking. It must not be forgotten that, from the practical point of view, the crusades were expeditions for the conquest of Syria. As for the Italian merchants, who constantly aided the crusaders, their interests were obvious. They wanted to establish safe trading posts in the Near East under Christian governments. The Emperor Alexius had hoped that an expedition from the West might aid him in recovering Asia Minor. The crusaders had much larger plans.

None of the great rulers of Europe — the Emperor Henry IV, Philip I of France, or William Rufus of England — **The leaders** was sufficiently at peace with the church or his own nobles to take part in the crusade. The leadership, then, was left to a group of great barons, chiefly from France and the lands bordering closely upon it. The royal domain was represented by Philip's brother, Hugh of Vermandois, central France by the wealthy Count Stephen of Blois, whose son later became King of England, and southern France by Count

Raymond of Toulouse, whose descendants of the same name ruled Languedoc till their house was ruined by the Albigensian Crusade more than a century later. From the Rhineland came Count Robert of Flanders and the more famous Duke Godfrey of Bouillon, together with his brothers, Baldwin and Eustace, and his nephew, Baldwin II. The knights of Normandy, to whom expeditions of this kind were second nature, followed Robert, the reckless son of the Conqueror; while Bohemond, the son of Robert Guiscard, and his kinsman Tancred led a formidable band of Normans of the same adventurous breed from Sicily and southern Italy. These last were a valuable addition to the crusade, not only because of their character, but because they had already had experience in fighting the Saracens and knew something of the Moslem world.

Time was needed for preparation, so by mutual agreement the crusaders from the various parts delayed their start till the late summer of 1096, though some disorganized

bands had already preceded them. They traveled by different routes, arriving in Constantinople during the following winter. The Emperor Alexius, who was rather alarmed at the size of the army, persuaded the leaders to take an oath of allegiance to him, on the understanding that they would hand over to him any land conquered or hold it as his vassals. He then aided them on their way into Asia Minor. There they captured Nicaea. Moving on, they left the city, together with most of Asia Minor, in the emperor's hands, thus accomplishing for him about as much as he could have hoped from their aid. Their next objective was Antioch, the most important coast town in northern Syria. On their way, they swung farther east through Armenia, where the friendly Christian population aided them in taking the Turkish strongholds. There Godfrey's brother Baldwin remained behind to found the county of Edessa. The siege of Antioch occupied all the winter of 1097–98. When at last, after great hardship, the crusaders broke into the city, they were themselves besieged by a Turkish army. They were in a desperate position, but their courage was revived by the miraculous discovery of the Holy Lance, or what they believed to be the lance that had pierced Christ's side on the cross. Heartened by this sign, they sallied out and defeated the Turkish army. Quarrels among the leaders and a dispute as to whether they should hand Antioch over to the emperor delayed them for some months. Finally, as Alexius failed to appear, they left Bohemond in possession of Antioch and moved on down the coast. They met with no strong opposition, for the inhabitants of the country were accustomed to conquest and cared little who ruled them. When they arrived before Jerusalem in the summer of 1099, they found that it had been taken from the Turks by an Egyptian force and was not strongly garrisoned. The taking of the city was followed by scenes of pious joy and bloodshed. "The celebration in the church of the Holy Sepulcher, where men wept together in joy and grief, and the merciless slaughter of the inhabitants, well expressed, in combination, the spirit of the crusade."

The First Crusade

After the capture of Jerusalem, many of the crusaders returned home, feeling that they had accomplished their immediate purpose. The remainder stayed to spread their conquests and to organize the land they had taken as a feudal state. The first ruler chosen by the barons, Godfrey of Bouillon, refused the royal title, preferring that of "Defender of the Holy Sepulcher." His brother Baldwin, however, who succeeded him in 1100, took the title "King of Jerusalem." The work of conquest continued for a quarter of a century, greatly aided by fleets from the Italian commercial cities and by a constant stream of fighting pilgrims from the West. The result was the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, a ready-made feudal state, stretching from the southern end of Palestine all along the Syrian coast and into Armenia in the northeast. It was divided into four large units — the kingdom of Jerusalem proper (the royal domain), and three great fiefs, the county of Tripolis, founded by Raymond of Toulouse, the principality of Antioch, founded by Bohemond and Tancred, and the county of Edessa, founded by Baldwin I and Baldwin II.[1] The lords of these great fiefs recognized the king as their overlord, but were practically independent sovereigns. Within the kingdom and the three large fiefs, there were lesser baronies and knights' holdings, granted to vassals in return for military service, according to feudal custom. In the coast towns, merchants from Venice, Genoa, and Pisa built permanent trading posts and were given special privileges. The original inhabitants, of course, still made up the bulk of the population. The crusaders were never more than a small minority. The latter made themselves at home in the new land, gradually adopting the clothing and many of the customs of the natives, as more suited to the climate, which was so different from that they had known in the West.

The kingdom of Jerusalem

The kingdom of Jerusalem was essentially weak. It was a long thin stretch of territory, open to attack all along the flank. Moreover, it was weakened by the rivalries and jeal-

The Second Crusade

KNIGHTS DEPARTING FOR A CRUSADE

The crusading host shown above is taken from a Burgundian miniature painting.

FREDERICK BARBAROSSA ON HIS WAY TO THE HOLY LAND

Frederick and his men are here shown cutting their way through a Hungarian forest.
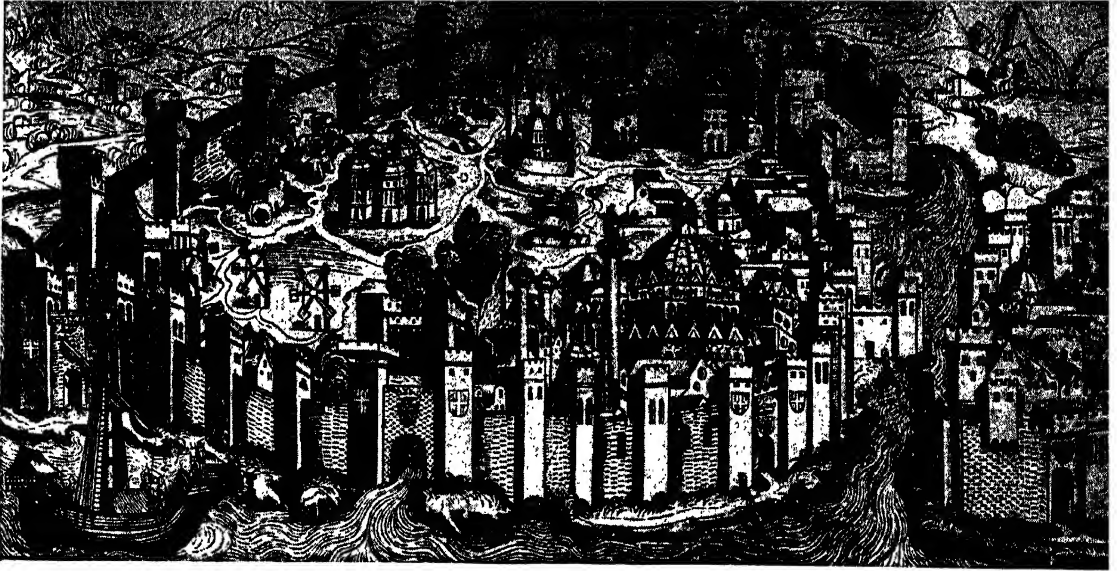
CONSTANTINOPLE IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

*This view of Constantinople is from the "Chronicle" of Hartmann Schedel (1493). Perhaps
all it tells us is what a fifteenth-century German thought the Byzantine city should look like.*
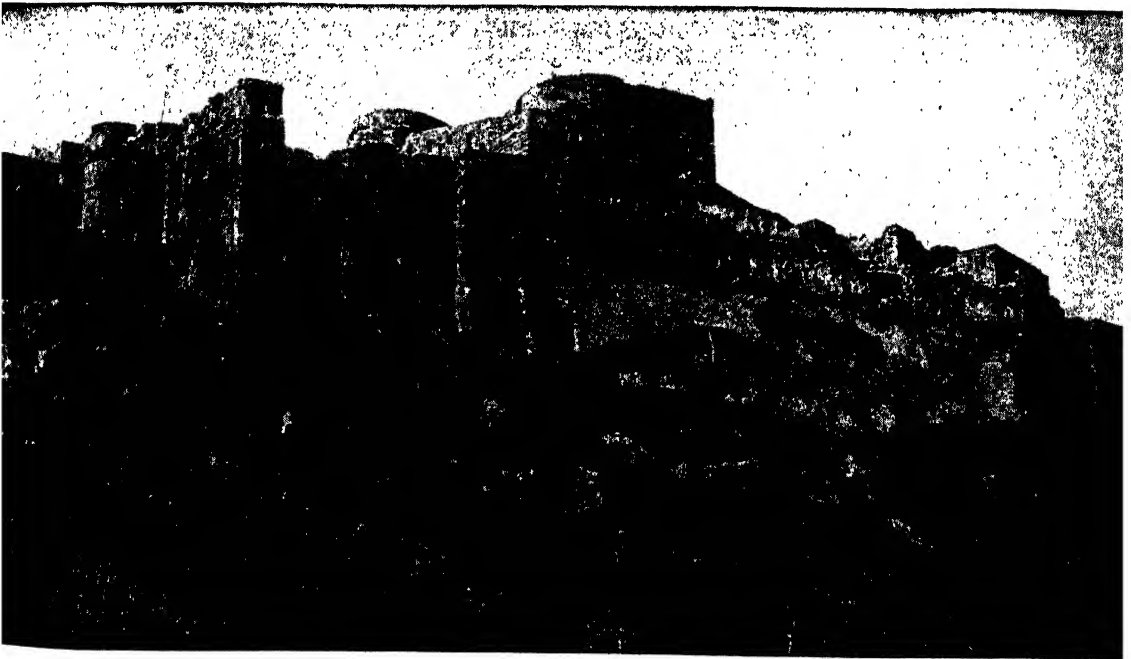
A CRUSADER'S CASTLE IN SYRIA

*The castle known as Krak des Chevaliers, or in the Arabic,
Qala'at Al-husn, was one of the outposts of the county of Tripoli.*

ousies of the great lords, of the merchants from the different Italian cities, and of the two great religious military orders, the Hospitalers and Templars, who had acquired a great deal of land since they were founded in the early days of the conquest. There was always feeling, too, between the older settlers and the new arrivals from the West. All that saved them was an equal lack of unity among their Moslem neighbors. The latter, however, were slowly uniting. In 1144, they reconquered Edessa without much difficulty. News of this disaster led to the organization of the Second Crusade. Moved by the preaching of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, Louis VII of France and the Hohenstaufen emperor, Conrad III, led large armies to the East in 1147, where they accomplished little or nothing. Their failure was due largely to the jealousy and bad faith of the Syrian Latins whom they had come to aid.

The suicidal divisions among the resident Christians multiplied during the next genera-

Saladin takes Jerusalem tion, while on the other side the great Saladin was uniting both Egyptian and Syrian Moslems under his rule. In 1187, he overran Palestine, took Jerusalem, and occupied all of the kingdom proper, leaving the Latins only the county of Tripolis and the principality of Antioch.

The fall of Jerusalem, after nearly a century of Christian rule, shocked Europe and

The Third Crusade aroused new enthusiasm for a crusade. This time the three greatest rulers of Christendom took the cross and led their countrymen to the East. The aged emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, was the first to start. He was drowned while crossing a mountain stream in Asia Minor, and most of his followers returned home. The kings of France and England, Philip Augustus and Richard the Lionhearted, arrived later. It was not until 1191 that the latter, who had stopped on the way to conquer the island of Cyprus, joined the crusaders who were besieging the city of Acre on the coast of Palestine. Philip and Richard were of very different character and were natural enemies. Quarrels soon broke out between the two kings and their follow-

ers, nearly paralyzing the effectiveness of the crusading army. One of the chroniclers of the period asserted that "the two kings and peoples did less together than they would have done apart." Philip returned home soon after the fall of Acre, leaving Richard to carry on the war against Saladin. Innumerable romances have been woven about the campaigns of these two warriors, each so typical of his race. Both were courageous and both could be magnanimous, but Saladin showed himself the more civilized of the two. Richard won a place for himself in both Christian and Moslem legend by his reckless daring, but was unable to capture Jerusalem. In August, 1192, he concluded a truce with Saladin, whereby the Christians gained a strip of the Palestine coast from Acre to Ascalon and the right of free entry for pilgrims to Jerusalem.

2. LATER CRUSADES — THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

The thirteenth century, which opened with the great pontificate of Innocent III, might have been expected to produce some successful cru- **The Fourth Crusade** sades. There were a good many crusades, but they were all rather inglorious affairs, and the very first one, inaugurated by Innocent himself, was shamefully diverted from its purpose. Germany at the beginning of the century was preoccupied by the civil war between the rival emperors. The knights who gathered at Venice in 1202, therefore, were mostly French. They had bargained with the Venetians for transportation, but were unable to raise the stipulated price. After much discussion they arrived at a compromise. They would pay for their passage by capturing for the Venetians the rival trading city of Zara, across the Adriatic. Europe was shocked by the use of a crusading army against a Christian city and some of the crusaders refused to serve. But worse was still to come. Zara was taken, but the Venetians drove a hard bargain and the crusaders were still short of funds. The Doge of Venice, who seems to have been the evil genius of the crusade, again tempted the crusaders by pointing out the rich plunder to be had from the sack of Constantinople, provided an excuse could be found for attacking

it. The excuse was presented by a pretender to the throne of the Byzantine Empire, who promised the French knights everything they asked if they would aid him. Accordingly, they moved on to Constantinople, captured the city, and looted it amid scenes of wanton violence. Then, when the new emperor was unable to fulfill his promises, they ousted him in turn, and elected one of their own number, Baldwin of Flanders, as emperor. Venice was given special trading privileges and a good deal of territory along the coast and in the islands, as her share of the plunder. The Latin Empire of Constantinople lasted till 1261, when it was retaken by the Byzantine emperor who still held Asia Minor. That half-century greatly weakened the Eastern Empire.

Latin Empire

Intermittent crusades continued through the greater part of the thirteenth century, but they accomplished very little. Innocent III, who had been bitterly disappointed by the results of the Fourth Crusade, organized another just before his death. It started in 1217, led by the King of Hungary. The crusaders marched through Syria to Egypt, where they took Damietta, only to lose it two years later. The next crusade was that of the Emperor Frederick II in 1228. As has already been told,[1] he gained Jerusalem by peaceful negotiations rather than by warfare. Other crusades followed, the most important of which were the two, mentioned in the last chapter, led by the saintly French king, Louis IX. His first crusade met with disaster in Egypt. The second, in 1270, was crippled by the death of Saint Louis in Tunis, after which Prince Edward of England, who had accompanied him, went on to Syria, but accomplished nothing. It was the last serious crusade.

Later crusades

What was left of the Latin states in Syria dragged on a precarious existence until the last decade of the thirteenth century, but they were pitifully weak. The internal quarrels, factions, and jealousies that had proved so dangerous to them in the twelfth century were now multiplied. It was clear

End of the Latin states in Syria

¹ See above, page 229.

that they could not defend themselves for long without aid from the West — and the extent of that aid was steadily decreasing. After 1270, it practically ceased. Jerusalem was retaken by the Moslems in 1244; Antioch fell in 1268; and by 1291, the last of the Latin possessions in Syria had been wiped out. The Latin kingdom of Jerusalem had come to an end, after an existence of nearly two centuries. As wars of conquest, the crusades had achieved no permanent results; but they had served a great purpose by checking for a long time the westward advance of the Turks.

The failure to hold the lands won in the East was due not only to the weakness and folly of the Latins in Syria, but also to the gradual decline and final disappearance of the crusading spirit among the western peoples. The repeated calls issued by the thirteenth-century popes for new crusades to defend or rescue the Holy Land were answered with ever-diminishing enthusiasm. Expeditions against the Mohammedans in Spain, the Albigensian heretics in southern France, or the heathen Slavs in Prussia gave the European knight a more convenient opportunity for fulfilling his crusading vows than did the long voyage to Syria. More important than this, however, was the general feeling of disillusionment about the crusades. The diversion of the Fourth Crusade against the Greek Christians of Constantinople, and the uniform failure of the later expeditions, did much to dampen popular zeal. Tales told by the returning crusaders of the selfishness and dissensions of the Christians in Syria had the same effect. Popes and sovereigns, too, had often misused the crusading enthusiasm of the people, raising funds for crusades that were never begun. For more than a generation, the popes who followed Innocent III were more interested in their struggle with the Hohenstaufen emperors in Sicily than in the war against Islam, and preached crusade after crusade against them. Finally, and this is perhaps the most fundamental reason for the decline of the crusading spirit, the peoples of the West were developing new interests that absorbed all their attention. Military feudalism was

Waning of the crusading spirit

declining before the rising power of the monarchies and of the commercial middle class. In a thousand imponderable ways, the spirit of Europe was changing. The crusades fitted into the peculiar civilization of the High Middle Ages. As that age passed, the crusades died with it, though pious people dreamed of reviving them for two centuries longer.

The crusades undoubtedly acted as a stimulus to the awakening economic, social, and cultural life of western Europe. They run parallel in time to a period of intellectual ferment and expanding social energy. But to what extent were the crusades a cause, and not themselves merely an outgrowth, of the rising civilization of the Middle Ages? That is a question to which many answers have been given. It is difficult to specify any single development that would not have taken place in some degree without the crusades. The Italian cities, and through them the other towns of Europe, certainly benefited directly by the trade with the Christian states in Syria and by the carrying of pilgrims and crusaders to and from the Holy Land. But trade with the Near East had begun before the crusades, and would inevitably have increased without their help, though not perhaps so rapidly. Europe in this period borrowed largely from the science, philosophy, luxuries, and general culture of the Saracen world. But the most direct contact between Christendom and Islam came through Spain and Sicily rather than the East. The medieval popes undoubtedly gained in prestige from their leadership of such great international enterprises as the crusades. But their supremacy was won on other grounds. Almost the only results for the papacy that can be traced directly to the crusading movement were the institution of the clerical tithe, a direct papal tax levied on all the clergy, and the sale of indulgences. Both of these methods of raising money were continued by later popes after the crusades, which were the original excuse for them, had ceased. The monarchies in France and England probably gained something from the diversion of the fighting energy of the feudal nobles to a distant field.

Effect of the crusades on Europe

But the rise of the monarchies was due far more to other causes.

Nevertheless, despite all possible qualifications, and even though its effects may have been more in the nature of a stimulus to developments that would have taken place anyway rather than of an original cause, a movement that involved so many people over a period of two centuries must have made a strong impression on the life of the age. The effects of travel depend entirely on the mental equipment and powers of observation of those who travel, and many who made that perilous journey probably learned little or nothing from it. Still, some among the many crusaders and pilgrims must have returned with a broader mental horizon and with new ideas. Aside from what they may have learned from the infidel, knights from all parts of Europe met together and learned the customs of one another's countries. The manners and customs of chivalry became more universal and more highly formalized. The romantic adventures of the crusaders were retold in song and story, giving rise to a new popular literature for the knightly class. Above all, the crusades shook up a fairly settled society and made it less provincial.

3. THE EXPANSION OF CHRISTIAN EUROPE

While the crusaders were carrying Christianity into the distant lands of the eastern Mediterranean, other Christian soldiers were waging a more permanently successful war against heathen and infidels within Europe itself. Christianity had already spread widely in the centuries preceding the crusades through the teaching of Greek Orthodox missionaries in Russia and of Roman Catholic missionaries in the lands bordering the Holy Roman Empire. We need say nothing further here of the Christianization of Russia, but perhaps it would be well to pause at this point to note the conversion of those countries which entered the Roman Church, before going on to study the armed conquests made by Catholic Europe.

The conversion of the Slavs of Bohemia — the modern Czechoslovakia — was begun as early as the ninth century by Byzantine missionaries. But the Bohemians, unlike

the Russian Slavs, did not remain in the Greek Orthodox faith. They turned instead to the Roman Church. After the middle of the tenth century, when the German emperor, Otto the Great, forced the Czechs to recognize him as their overlord, Bohemia faced definitely westward. It became a fief of the empire, though it always preserved a separate government of its own, and its duke, who after 1158 bore the title of king, had greater power over his people than had any other of the emperor's vassals. Poland, the other great Slavic country to the east of the empire, was not converted to Christianity until the second half of the tenth century, and then through the work of Roman missionaries. Unlike Bohemia, Poland did not become a permanent part of the Holy Roman Empire, though it did remain within the Roman Church. It covered a large territory, but seldom enjoyed strong government and was always open to attack from its powerful neighbors. Hungary, the eastern neighbor of the empire to the south of Poland, was still later in receiving Christianity. There were many Slavs in Hungary, but the dominant race were the Magyars, a nomadic people who, like so many others, had drifted into Europe from western Asia. After ravaging Germany for years, they were defeated by Otto the Great in 965 and forced to settle down. Nearly half a century later, they were converted and brought into the Roman Church by their king, Saint Stephen. During the thirteenth century, Poland and Hungary formed an invaluable bulwark for western Christendom against the attack of the fierce Mongols, who swept out of Asia across eastern Europe and founded the vast empire called the Golden Horde, which for long dominated Russia.

It was not till the eleventh century that Christianity was firmly established in the Scandinavian lands to the north of western Europe. The Danes were the first to be converted by Catholic missionaries, but there were many heathen still left there at the time when King Canute (1017–35) ruled a great empire that included England and Norway as well as his own country. Norway

soon followed, and finally Sweden, though not without stubborn resistance from the devotees of the old heathen gods.

Very different from this process of conversion was the expansion of Christendom to the northeast of the empire during the period of the crusades. Through most of the twelfth century the Germans of Saxony, Holstein, and the North Mark carried on a war of conquest against the heathen Slavs who dwelt to the south of the Baltic, between the rivers Elbe and Oder. It was a war of conquest and extermination. As German authority moved eastward to the Oder, the land was resettled by German colonists. Much of the final success of the struggle was due to the leadership of Henry the Lion, Duke of Saxony and head of the Welf party, of whom we have already had cause to speak.[1] Meanwhile, farther east in Pomerania, between the Oder and the Vistula, the Poles had extended Christianity to the Baltic by similarly forceful means. But the Prussians, a wild and warlike people of Letto-Lithuanian stock who occupied the territory between Poland and the Baltic beyond the Vistula, were still heathen and were a constant menace to the Poles. Early in the thirteenth century, the Poles appealed to the crusading order of Teutonic Knights, who had already done good work in the Holy Land, to aid them against the heathen Prussians. They were promised whatever land they could conquer and the donation was ratified by the emperor. The Knights began their campaign in 1230, and thereafter pressed the crusade, as they considered it, so strongly that by 1283 they were masters of Prussia. They thus founded a German state on the eastern Baltic, cut off from the empire only by the strip of Polish Pomerania.[2]

Still greater interest attaches to the expansion of Christendom by the conquest of the highly civilized Mohammedan country in Spain. The collapse of the caliphate of Cordova in 1034, due to internal dissensions, provided a good opportunity for the little Christian kingdoms in the north to ex-

Side notes:
Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary

Conversion of Scandinavia

Expansion to the northeast

Christian conquests in Spain

[1] See above, pages 221 and 225.
[2] See map, page 312.
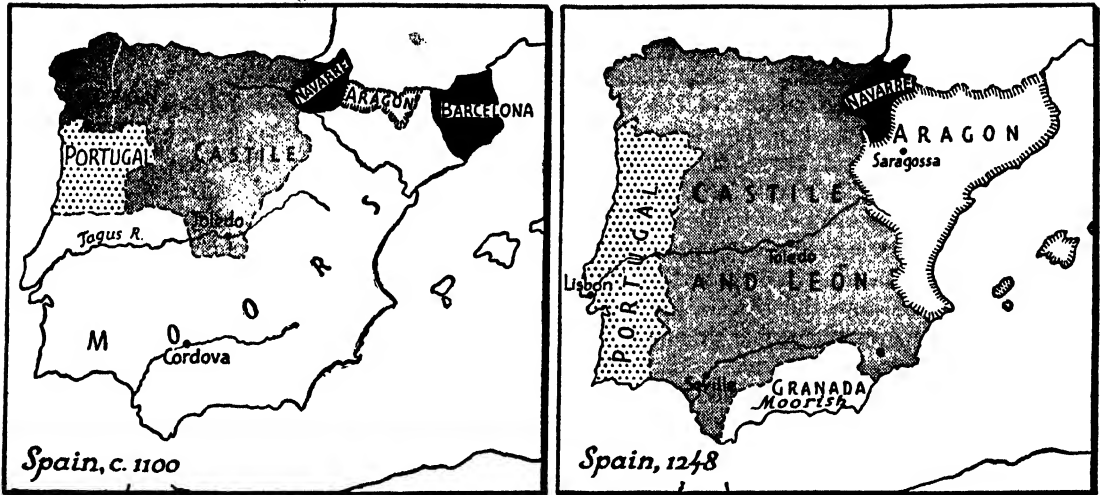
CHRISTIAN TERRITORIES IN SPAIN

pand at the expense of the infidels. For more than two centuries they continued the struggle with varying success, often aided by crusaders from France and the other parts of Europe. Sometimes civil wars and conflicts among themselves checked the advance of the Christians, and twice, after 1086 and again after 1146, they were driven back when their Moslem enemies received reinforcements from the fierce Berber tribes of North Africa. In the end, however, the Christians were almost completely successful in their perpetual crusade. By 1248, only the little kingdom of Granada in the south remained in Mohammedan hands. The rest of Spain was divided amongst four Christian kingdoms. Castile, to which Leon had been permanently united since 1230, was the largest, occupying most of the central and western part of the peninsula. Aragon, the next largest, occupied a triangle, of which one side extended along the Pyrenees from

the east and the second stretched down the eastern coast below Valencia. The King of Aragon, who had become a vassal of the papacy in the days of Innocent III, also ruled the Balearic Islands and some territory in southern France. In between Castile and Aragon on the northern border was the little kingdom of Navarre, which had been unable to expand because surrounded by its two powerful neighbors. It fell somewhat under French influence in the thirteenth century, when the crown went to Count Theobald IV of Champagne in 1234. Finally, in the southwest was the newly founded kingdom of Portugal. Spain's period of stress was now past, and she was prepared to take her place in the main current of European history. In the fifteenth century, the union of Castile and Aragon and the extinction of Granada gave her unity and strength and made her one of the great powers of the West.

19

Feudal Society — the Peasants and Nobles

IN THE PRECEDING CHAPTERS, we have traced the main outline of the political events in the feudal kingdoms during the High Middle Ages. We have also described feudalism as a system of society, dwelling on its laws and institutions. It is now time to investigate the manner of life of the men who made up feudal society. For the lives of human beings are the essential material of history, and it is as important to know something of the daily life of the undistinguished individuals who form the great mass of society as it is to follow the careers of famous men or to study the institutions of the age. In this chapter we will try to show how the men of the two great feudal classes, the peasants and the nobles, lived. We will leave to the next two chapters the townsmen and the clergy, who, though living in the midst of feudalism, had yet a separate life and special interests of their own.

1. GENERAL CONDITIONS OF MEDIEVAL LIFE

Life in the Middle Ages was hazardous to a degree almost impossible for us to imagine, accustomed as we are to a settled society, police protection, swift and safe transportation, and the services of medical science. The life of the average man in that age was a short one and uncertain. He was a constant prey to disease, to the malign forces of nature, and, above all, to the avarice and brutality of his fellow men. Save in England, where the monarchy was usually strong enough to

Lack of security

prevent the worst disorders, there was little security for life or property. Elsewhere, the central government was seldom strong enough to give protection to the people outside the largest cities or the immediate royal domain. The feudal nobles, whose duty it was to protect those dependent upon them, were often too earnestly engaged in pursuing their own interests to bother with police duty or justice — or were themselves a menace to the defenseless. Robbers and brigands infested the roads and made travel dangerous for all but numerous and well-armed parties. Bands of mercenary soldiers, temporarily out of employment, wandered about the country, robbing, burning, and slaying at their will. Avaricious nobles rode down from their hilltop castles to rob the merchants, pilgrims, and priests who passed upon the highway, or to hold them for ransom. Not content with that, they often fell upon the villages of the defenseless peasants or upon the outlying monasteries, where there was always a chance for plunder. In time of peace, the nobles were often little better than brigands. In time of war, they were usually worse.

Warfare, private and public, was indeed the perennial curse of feudal society. Everywhere on the Continent the nobles had the right to wage private warfare on their neighbors, and they exercised that right freely.[1] The petty campaigns arising from private

Hazards from war

[1] See above, pages 199–200.

quarrels were, of course, smaller in scope than the national wars, but they were far more numerous and, in the long run, did much more damage. There were few great battles fought in the Middle Ages; but there were innumerable skirmishes and frightful destruction of the lives and property of non-combatants. It was the peasants and to a lesser extent the monks and the inhabitants of the smaller towns who suffered most from medieval warfare. The chief aim of the fighting noble was to weaken and impoverish his enemy by destroying the productivity of his land and, second to that, to acquire plunder. Consequently, he ravaged his enemy's fields, destroyed the standing crops, burned the villages after carrying off the cattle and anything else of value, and massacred or held for ransom the peasants, who were themselves valuable property and the chief source of his enemy's income. Saint Peter Damian summed up the situation when he wrote that, whenever two nobles quarrel, "the poor man's thatch goes up in flame." The following description of feudal warfare from the *chanson* of the *Lorrains* is abundantly confirmed by less poetic documents:

They start to march. The scouts and the incendiaries lead; after them come the foragers who are to gather the spoils and carry them in the great baggage train. The tumult begins. The peasants, having just come out of the fields, turn back, uttering loud cries; the shepherds gather their flocks and drive them towards the neighboring woods in the hope of saving them. The incendiaries set the villages on fire, and the foragers visit and sack them; the distracted inhabitants are burnt or led apart with their hands tied to be held for ransom. Everywhere alarm bells ring, fear spreads from side to side and becomes general. On all sides one sees helmets shining, pennons floating and horsemen covering the plain. Here hands are laid on money; there cattle, donkeys and flocks are seized. The smoke spreads, the flames rise, the peasants and the shepherds in consternation flee in all directions.

And after the campaign is over, "windmills no longer turn, chimneys no longer smoke, the cocks have ceased their crowing and the dogs their barking, . . . briars and thorns grow where villages stood of old." This is what war might mean to the peasants. And

in many parts of Europe, war was almost the normal state of society.

Nor was war the only hazard of life in the Middle Ages. The medieval man was far more at the mercy of the elements than we are today. Floods often did terrible damage, sometimes wiping out whole towns or villages. Even today, there are occasional disastrous floods; but in that age they were far more numerous and more deadly, for there were no means of controlling them nor of bringing relief to the victims. More terrible than the floods were the famines that usually followed them, or that resulted from any other adverse weather condition. Medieval methods of agriculture were very crude and unscientific. Too much rain or too little, unseasonable heat or cold, an unusual number of insect pests, or any of the other natural hazards of farming, which today can be combated by scientific means, might destroy the peasant's whole crop. In the eleventh century, the chronicles record forty-eight famine years. By the end of the twelfth century, conditions had improved, but there were still eleven famines in France during the reign of Philip Augustus. There were also countless local famines; for roads were so bad that it was difficult to transport food even a short distance to places where local weather conditions, floods, or the depredations of a campaign had destroyed the crops. These famines did not mean mere shortage of food for the peasant and poor townsman; it frequently meant death by starvation. The year 1197 saw terrible famines in France. A chronicler of Liège wrote that even the rich suffered great privation, and "as for the poor, they died of hunger." The chronicler of Rheims recorded that "a countless throng of persons died of hunger."

Epidemic diseases often accompanied famines, spreading like wildfire among the people weakened by starvation. **Disease** Even in good years epidemics were common. The crowded towns, with their narrow, filthy streets and complete lack of sanitation, were perfect breeding places for disease, nor were the country villages much better. The chronicles of the period are filled with records of the "plague"

or "pest." These were generic names for diseases which the people had not sufficient knowledge to describe more accurately. They lacked, too, any scientific knowledge of preventive or curative measures. Harsh experience had taught them that many diseases were contagious, though they did not know why. People often fled from a plague-stricken town, but as they knew nothing about disinfection, they might easily carry the disease with them and spread it through the countryside. Aside from epidemics, the death toll from other diseases or from injuries, which today can be prevented or cured by medical or surgical science, was terribly high. Simple infection of wounds alone led to countless unnecessary deaths.

One should not imagine, however, that the medieval man took no steps to combat the **Superstition** evils that befell him, but his methods were not those approved by modern science. He believed that all disasters, whether caused by the weather, insects, or disease, were of supernatural origin, a divine punishment for his sins or the malign work of the devil and evil spirits. His method of coping with disaster was everywhere the same — an attempt to obtain divine aid or forgiveness by public prayers, penance, processions, and supplications to the saints who were noted for their healing powers or who were recognized as the special protectors of the district. When his fields suffered from insect plagues, the helpless peasant turned for aid to the church, and, if he were in good standing with the local clergy, received its full co-operation; for the priest, though somewhat better educated, was as superstitious as the peasant. A solemn anathema issued by the Bishop of Troyes against the "locusts and caterpillars and other such animals that have laid waste the vineyards" of his diocese, which has survived, shows the church giving spiritual aid to the peasants on a large scale. Indeed, the "excommunication of caterpillars" was not uncommon.

When the church failed him, the peasant often turned to ancient superstitions of pagan origin, that had lasted on through centuries of Christianity, sometimes vaguely colored by Christian forms. Magic incanta-

tions, witchcraft, and sorcery held a powerful appeal for medieval men, despite the efforts of the church to eradicate them. But this magic was not always invoked to aid men. Often it was used as a threat, for there was black magic as well as white. Thus, to the normal fears of a hazardous life were added superstitious terrors — fear of malign spirits, of old women who were believed to have sold their souls to the devil and who could bewitch children or put a plague on the cattle, or of the "evil eye" which still terrifies the Italian peasants. Yet the church provided strong counter-charms — the sign of the cross or a *pater noster* — and those who were able to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of a famous saint or to touch the casket containing a relic of his body felt well-armed against the powers of darkness.

We must not, however, draw too dark a picture of the life of the Middle Ages. Despite ignorance, poverty, and the dread disasters of flood, **Progress** famine, pestilence, and war, there was a great deal of stirring and vigorous life. The population of Europe was steadily increasing; the lower classes were gaining greater freedom; and, as we shall see in the next chapter, in the growing towns a new free class was re-creating wealth through the revival of commerce and industry. Finally, the High Middle Ages was a period of great progress in education, literature, and philosophy. But we must turn now from the general conditions of life in the Middle Ages to those that especially affected the peasants, who bore the full brunt of the hazards of medieval life and were only slowly affected by the progress made during that period.

2. THE PEASANTS

The lines dividing the social classes in the Middle Ages were far more clearly drawn than they are today. Between the two great classes of common **An inferior social class** and noble there stood a wide gulf that was rarely crossed. All the instincts of medieval men, and especially of the ruling classes, were opposed to change of any kind in the social system. Custom and tradition had the force of law and were supported by the religious teaching of the age. The gener-
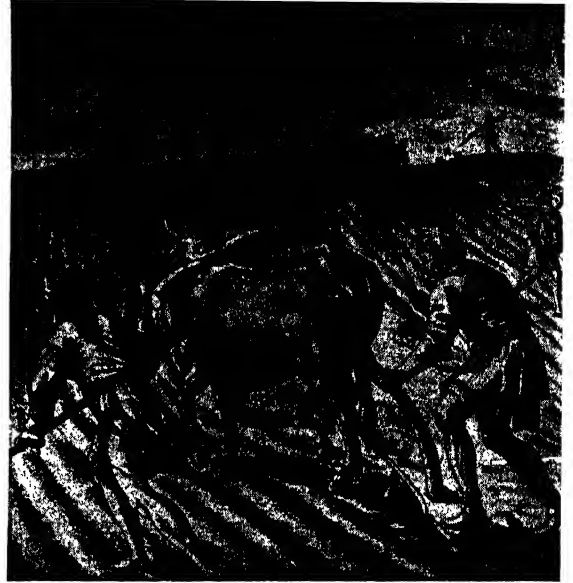
PEASANT LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

*The scenes of peasant life above are taken from late medieval illuminated manuscripts, but
the conditions they depict were probably not greatly different in the High Middle Ages*

ally accepted theory of society, as propounded by generations of theologians, recognized three great classes, each of which had a definite function to perform for the good of the whole social body. These were, first, the clergy, whose duty was to pray and to care for the salvation of their fellow men; second, the nobles, whose duty was to fight in defense of the helpless and to keep order; and finally, the peasants and artisans, whose function was to work and to provide the necessities of life for the whole of society, as well as luxuries for the upper classes. These functions were not always faithfully performed, save perhaps by the workers who had little choice in the matter, but the distinction between the classes was not merely a theory. It was based on a clear recognition of existing conditions, and from that very fact was believed to have the sanction of Divine Will. For it would be blasphemy to maintain that society could be so constituted unless God had so intended it. The duty of the peasant, then, was clear to all. He was to work and to make no rebellion against his lot. The following pious statement from a contemporary chronicle expresses the opinion of noble and cleric alike: "God forbid that the peasants, whose proper lot is daily toil, should abandon themselves to sloth and indolently spend their time in laughter and idle merriment." And toil, unfortunately, carried with it a stigma of social inferiority, for in the early feudal ages almost all the workers on the land were to some extent unfree, and even after they obtained personal freedom, their class bore the stamp of servile origin.

The freeborn, fighting noble, therefore, had nothing but contempt for the servile, laboring peasant. He was neces-

Attitude of the nobles sary to the comfort and prosperity of his master, but as an individual person he scarcely existed. He was regarded as distinctly an inferior being. The romantic literature of the period, composed for a noble audience, reflects this attitude. When an individual peasant is mentioned, which is not often, he is described as physically grotesque, stupid, and horribly unclean — as, indeed, he very probably was. The peasant who appears in the romance of

Aucassin et Nicolete may be taken as an example:

As Aucassin rode along an old grass-grown road, he raised his eyes and saw in the way a great fellow, wondrously hideous and foul to behold. He had a shock of hair blacker than coal-dust, and more than a hand-breadth between the eyes, and thick cheeks with a huge flat nose and great wide nostrils, and blubber-lips redder than roast flesh, and great hideous teeth. He was clad in hosen and shoes of cowhide, bound round with linden-bast up to his knee; he was wrapped in a thread-bare cloak and leaned on a great knotted staff. . . .

It is not surprising to find that the nobles exploited the peasants to the limit of their ability. There were, of course, good lords who felt responsible for the security of their peasants and acted justly according **Exploitation of the peasants** to their lights, as well as bad lords who squeezed every possible penny from them. But even the best of lords demanded full payment of the heavy manorial dues from their own peasants and were utterly merciless to the peasants belonging to their enemies. "All that the peasant amasses· in a year by stubborn work, the knight, the noble, devours in an hour." So wrote Jaques de Vitry, with no more than the customary exaggeration of the moralist. The greatest of medieval popes, Innocent III, gave similar testimony in his *De Contemptu Mundi.*

The serf serves; he is terrified with threats, wearied with *corvées* [forced labor], afflicted with blows, despoiled of his possessions; for, if he possess nought, he is compelled to earn; and if he possess anything, he is compelled to have it not; the lord's fault is the serf's punishment; the serf's fault is the lord's excuse for preying on him. . . .

The peasants often suffered, too, from the rapacity and dishonesty of the lord's officers. Under a careless lord, the bailiff who acted as his agent, the forester whose duty was to see that the peasants did not cut more than their share of wood or poach the lord's game, and the other petty officials of the manor had a good deal of power, which they frequently abused to extort money from the peasants. These manorial officials themselves sprang from the peasant class, but opportunities for

advancement were so few that the desire to take full advantage of such as did arise usually outweighed any fellow feeling they might have retained for their old neighbors.

The clergy were not far behind the nobles in the exploitation of the peasants. True,

The church and the peasants

they did not rob and kill, as the nobles did in time of war, and they did do much to aid the peasants by checking the lawlessness of feudal warfare. But they were one of the two privileged classes whom it was the duty of the peasants to support, and they clung tenaciously to their rights. The parish priests were often merciless in collecting their tithes, and seldom hesitated to use the dread threat of excommunication to force payment. Moreover, the church held a great deal of land, and ecclesiastical lords, in general, were no more lenient with their peasants than were the lay nobles. Indeed, modern research has shown that customary dues were retained with less amelioration and that serfdom lasted longer on monastic estates than elsewhere.

The daily life of the peasant was a monotonous round of unremitting toil, broken only

The peasant's work

by the religious holidays prescribed by the church. These were fairly numerous, but as a rule only the most important were observed — and those somewhat unwillingly, for every hour of work was valuable to men whose margin of subsistence was as narrow as that of the average peasant. The working day began at dawn and did not end till dark. Often the best part of the day had to be spent working on the lord's land. Plowing, cultivating, and reaping, caring for the oxen and cattle, hedging, ditching, and carrying produce to market — these filled the day of the ordinary peasant. Others had special tasks which occupied most of their time, as the shepherd, cowherd, swineherd, hayward, and so forth. Women and children worked with the men in the fields at the reaping or any other task within their strength.

The peasant's tools were crude and simple. Even the plow, which was too expensive

Tools

for the poorer peasant to own by himself, was a clumsy affair made of wood, though some had iron at the

point. The usual substitute for a harrow was a thorn tree weighted down by logs. An inventory of a peasant's tools in the year 1301 mentions only "a hoe, spade, axe, billhook, two yokes for carrying buckets and a barrel; total estimated value, 10 *d.*" Wealthier peasants doubtless had more tools, for scythes, sickles, flails, etc., were used, but the custom of communal labor probably relieved the individual peasant from the necessity of himself owning all the tools needed for the year's work.

The peasant's house was merely a rough wooden hut, with a thatched roof. It was a squalid and filthy dwelling. In it we would find what one

Houses and clothing

modern historian has characterized as "poverty unadorned." Usually there was no chimney. Cooking was done out-of-doors in the summer. In the winter, when a fire had to be lighted in the house, the smoke escaped, if at all, by the door, and must have nearly suffocated the inhabitants. Few of the peasants had ovens. They sent their bread up to the manor house to be baked in the great oven there. Even those who had ovens of their own had to pay the customary fee for the use of the lord's oven. Sometimes the hut would contain a rough bed, where all the family slept. More often there was merely a pile of straw, alive with vermin, in one corner. Geese and hens wandered freely about the house, and the oxen were usually stabled in a lean-to beside it. In summer, the peasant was probably comfortable enough, for his standards were not high, but the winters must have been terrible. We know all too little about what clothing he wore, save that it was mostly hand-made by the women of the family. The description of a peasant, already quoted, from *Aucassin et Nicolete*, will furnish a rough idea of his dress. It was almost certainly inadequate protection against the cold of a northern winter.

What evidence we have as to the ordinary food of the peasant illustrates better than anything else the extent of his

Food

poverty. Modern farmers, however destitute, have usually enough to eat. The medieval farmer, on the other hand, ate poorly even in good years, and starved in

years of famine. Meat of any kind was apparently a rare luxury. A fifteenth-century writer, Hans Behan, described the food of the peasant thus: "They feed on brown bread, oatmeal porridge or boiled peas; they drink water or whey." In some places the thirteenth-century peasant was probably better off, but all the evidence shows that the same foods — porridge and black bread made of rye or oatmeal, simple vegetables, cheese and whey, with perhaps an occasional egg — were the staples of diet. Beer was available at times, but not by any means universally. Of course, on feast days the peasant was sometimes admitted to the lower hall of the manor house, where he would gorge himself on richer food at the lord's expense.

The peasant's toilsome life was not entirely unrelieved by color or diversion, though there was little enough. On the **Diversions** great religious holidays, when he was forbidden to work, he might have some share in the excitement that attended the celebrations of his betters. He might be admitted to the feast at the castle or be allowed to watch the knights disporting themselves at the tournament. If he were fortunate enough to be sent with produce to a nearby town during a fair, he might watch the jugglers and tumblers or listen to some wandering minstrel, or have his pocket picked while he gaped openmouthed at the antics of a performing bear. On Sundays and holidays, too, he might join in the dance on the village green or engage in a rough — often very rough — game of football, with the people of two neighboring villages making up the opposing sides. Frequent prohibitions of dancing and football appear in the records of the period, especially on monastic estates. The following entry in the records of a fourteenth-century monastic manor court may suggest the reason: "From the aforesaid John, John, William and Robert the servant of Thomas Butler, because they played at ball, through which grievous contention and contumely arose between the lord prior's tenants, as was found by the twelve jurymen, of the penalty elsewhere prescribed, 20 s."

On the whole, the peasant was evidently not a person of great refinement or sensibility. We have evidence of his material destitution. According- **Morals and religion** ing to contemporary writers, it was matched by an equal spiritual poverty. He was totally uneducated; his morals were often little better than animal; and his religion was grossly material and more than half superstition. Ecclesiastical writers railed against the peasant for his indifference to religion — he neglected the saints' days; he sometimes worked on Sundays; he showed small respect for the parish priest; and he was unwilling to pay the tithe. They described him as avaricious, quarrelsome, dishonest, suspicious, and sullen. Considering his life of grinding poverty, toil, oppression, and terror, it would be surprising if he were not.

Unhappy as the peasants' lot was, it was not as bad at the end of the thirteenth century as it had been two centuries before. The rise of new markets **Gradual improvement** in the growing towns, the opening-up of new land, the increase in general prosperity and the reintroduction of money economy [1] gave the peasants an opportunity to improve their conditions. In many places they acquired personal freedom and their services to the lord were commuted to fixed money payments. In England serfdom disappeared almost entirely before the end of this period. On the Continent it was also disappearing in some places, though still persisting in others. And almost everywhere the lord's free right to exploit his peasants at will was being restricted.

3. THE NOBLES

As has already been indicated in this chapter, and more fully in the earlier chapter on the feudal system, warfare was the normal occupation of **Warlike character** the feudal noble. He was before all else a soldier. Fighting was the function assigned to his social class by the theorists of the Middle Ages. It was his duty and also his privilege. Everywhere on the Continent the nobles clung to their right to wage private war on their neighbors; and they guarded as jealously their exclusive right to wear the

[1] See below, page 290.

heavy armor of the mounted knight, which made them the effective fighting force of the Middle Ages. Foot soldiers played their part in feudal warfare, probably a larger part than the records show, but they were generally disregarded and despised. The mounted noble trampled even those of his own side under foot when they got in his way, and neither the chronicles nor the romances paid them much attention. To understand the life and character of the medieval noble, one must keep in mind this essential fact, that he was raised from his youth up to a life of battle, plunder, and pillage. In the last analysis, his political power and his privileged position in society depended on his war-horse, his heavy armor, and his military training.

They depended only slightly less on the strength of his fortified castle. So long as it stood, his position was secure. **The noble's castle** He could defy the king or his overlord, or sally out light-heartedly to wage private war on his neighbors. If the war went against him, he could retire behind the safe protection of his castle walls, pull up the drawbridge, and wait till the opposing army was forced to give up the siege. His crops might be destroyed, and those of his peasants who could not get into the castle might be massacred or taken prisoner; but that was merely an economic loss that could be made up by a plundering expedition at some more favorable time. The castle was essentially a fort, but it was also the noble's home in time of peace as in war. It was the scene, therefore, of every aspect of the noble's life.

The site of the castle was chosen for its defensibility rather than for convenience or ease of access. A hilltop, a **Description of a castle** rocky promontory, an island, or any similar position would provide a suitable site. We will take as a typical example a baronial castle of the reign of Philip Augustus, set in the acute angle where two rivers join, such as is so vividly described by William Stearns Davis in his delightful book on *Life on a Medieval Barony*. The castle was open to attack only from the landward side. Approaching from that direction, the enemy would have

to overcome a series of cunningly contrived obstacles, which could easily hold off any but a very large and well-equipped army, with plenty of time on its hands. And such armies were rare, for it was difficult to hold feudal vassals to more than forty days' military service in one season. First, they would meet a palisade of sharpened wooden stakes, the "barbican," running across the front of the castle from one river-bank to the other. Between it and the castle was a large open court, the "lists" where horses were exercised and tournaments held. The barbican was designed to be merely a momentary check to allow the garrison time to prepare its defenses. The first serious obstacle was the moat at the foot of the castle wall. It was some twenty feet wide and filled with water. It was spanned by a drawbridge, which could be swung up at the first sign of danger. Above it towered the wall of the castle, twelve feet thick or more, from which round towers jutted out so that archers could maintain a cross-fire on any-one who might succeed in crossing the moat. In the center of the wall was the great gate. It was protected by a heavy iron grille, called a "portcullis," fitted into grooves in the masonry and dropped down from above. The heavy oaken gate, reinforced with wrought-iron bands, was in itself no mean obstacle, even without the portcullis. If the enemy succeeded in battering it down, they would find themselves in a narrow, low-arched passage, where there was little room for fighting and where numbers were no ad-vantage. Meanwhile, the defenders in the guard-room above might pour down boiling water or oil through cracks in the roof of the passage. But suppose the besiegers won through. They were still only in the outer courtyard of the castle and would be sub-jected to a withering fire from the encircling walls. This court was the "bailey" where in normal times the servants and animals lived and where the daily work of the castle was done. The inner court was protected by still higher and more formidable walls and towers. Within it was the palace, in it-self a fortress, where the baron lived. And beyond it, in the extreme point of the angle between the rivers, stood the ancient "keep."

SCHLOSS ELTZ, ON THE MOSEL RIVER, GERMANY
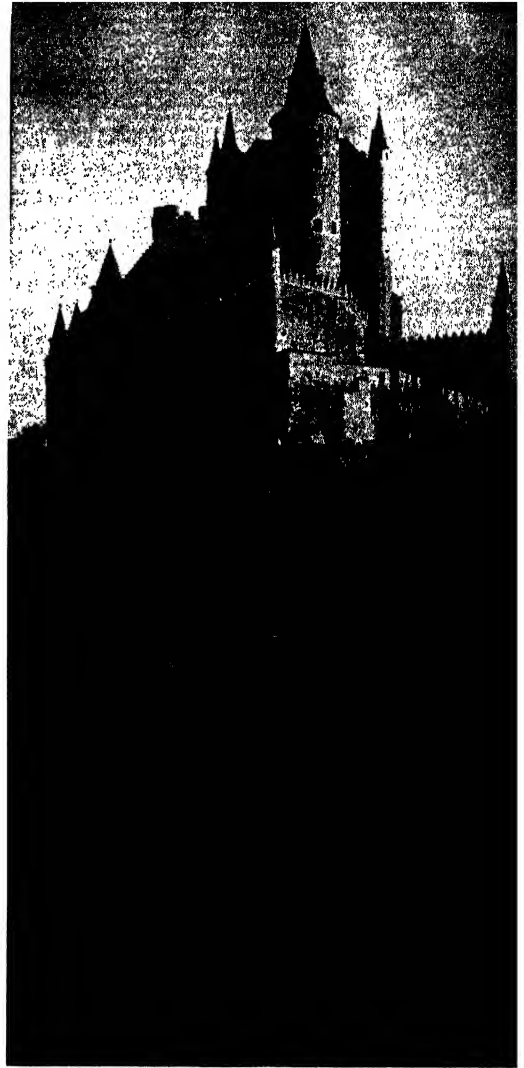
THE ALCAZAR, SEGOVIA, SPAIN

These two castles, one German, the other Spanish, demonstrate the defensive advantages of the hilltop site. They also suggest that such a location might be inconvenient.

This was the oldest part of the castle, built by the lord's ancestors in the days when the Northmen were raiding his lands. It was a great stone tower, the last resort of the beleaguered garrison.

Compared to the ingenuity expended on making the castle an impregnable fortress, relatively little thought was given to making it a comfortable habitation. The living quarters in a baronial castle of the better sort, such as we have been describing, were a great improvement over the old keep and

Life in the castle

were more luxurious than the small castles of the lesser nobility, but they were still dark, damp, and inconvenient. The windows in the outer walls were mere arrow-slits, set deep in the masonry. They let in very little light, but a good deal of wind, for they were without glass. There was little privacy in the castle. It was crowded with servants, men-at-arms, and transient guests, and there were very few rooms. The great vaulted hall was the center of the social life of the castle. There the lord and his family and their noble guests ate at a table set on a

raised dais at one end, while the less important folk sat at long tables stretching down the hall. There, too, after the evening meal a wandering minstrel might sing or recite one of the interminable epic poems of medieval chivalry. When the lord had retired, those who had no other place to sleep spread their cloaks on a table or on a pile of straw on the floor. In winter a great fire was lighted in the huge stone fireplace, but the hall must have been cold and drafty when one got beyond the range of its heat. The floor was flagged with stone and covered with rushes, which must have become rather foul by spring. Hunting dogs wandered about freely and gnawed the bones thrown to them by the diners.

Besides eating and drinking, the castle offered few diversions in time of peace. Of course, the lord and his lady **Diversions** found some occupation in looking after the business of the estate and in overseeing the work of the servants. Still, they were left with a good deal of time on their hands. In fine weather, hunting with hounds or hawks was the favorite amusement of both sexes. The nobles loved the chase second only to war, and guarded it as their exclusive privilege. Peasants who poached the lord's game were harshly dealt with. Then, too, the young noble would spend much of his time in practicing the use of arms, and on special occasions there would be tournaments, of which more will be said hereafter. In winter, the noble inhabitants of the castle enjoyed a variety of indoor games, most of which have a strangely modern sound. Chess was very popular, as also checkers, backgammon, various dice games, and the simple round games now relegated to the nursery. But reading, which fills so many hours for the modern man of leisure, was literally a closed book to most of the medieval nobility. Small wonder that the noble, as he sat listening to the wind howling about the castle walls, longed for spring and hoped that when it came there would be a good war, with plenty of excitement and plunder. Sometimes, the arrival of company broke the monotony. Any noble visitor, whether friend or stranger, was eagerly welcomed and entertained with lavish hospitality, no matter how large a retinue he might have accompanying him.

We may ask where the baron found the money to pay for all this picturesque, if somewhat comfortless, magnificence — the great castle, the **The noble's finances** host of servants, horses and hounds, the tournaments, the open-handed hospitality and the ruinous expenses of war. Achille Luchaire, one of the greatest of modern historians of the period, gives us the answer:

In order to keep up this style of life, it was necessary to oppress subjects cruelly and take much booty from the enemy. Even so, one could not make both ends meet. And it is one of the striking and characteristic traits of feudal life that the noble, great and small, appears to be constantly in need of money, poor, on the watch for financial expedients, always indebted, and a prey of usurers of all kinds.

The reckless extravagance of the noble was nearly always balanced by a rapacious greed for money. When he could extort nothing more from his peasants, he levied toll, legally or illegally, on the merchants, pilgrims, or clergy who passed his castle on the highway. When specially hard pressed, he might raise a fairly large sum by selling a charter granting freedom to a town or village still under his feudal jurisdiction. Or he might borrow from the Jews or from Christian merchants at enormous rates of interest, running anywhere from twenty-five to forty-five per cent per annum. His favorite expedient, however, was to engage in a private war in the hope of securing plunder. But this in the long run merely aggravated the poverty of his class, for war destroys wealth and cannot create it. More than anything else, war was responsible for the poverty, not only of the poor peasants who were plundered, but also of the nobles who had to bear the expenses of equipment and who were dependent on the peasants for their income.

Hitherto, we have said little about the lady of the castle. She was not, in contemporary opinion, as important as her husband or sons, yet her position **The noble lady** was steadily improving throughout the High Middle Ages. Feudal

DINING IN A FIFTEENTH-CENTURY CASTLE

No castle, no matter how courtly, would have been as luxurious as this in the High Middle Ages.

DANCING SCENE IN A MEDIEVAL CASTLE

This rather sober but quite courtly dance scene was depicted in a fourteenth-century Italian illumination.

MEDIEVAL MINSTRELS

his fourteenth-century illumination shows the st popular of medieval musical instruments.

COURTLY LOVE

The two lovers in this fifteenth-century illumination are most efficiently chaperoned.

COURT LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

society was becoming more civilized, and in the more cultured courts of the higher nobility, at least, the feminine influence was strongly felt. The lady of the castle had, indeed, great responsibilities. When her husband was absent, she took command, and if the castle were besieged, she would manage the defense, often as bravely and skillfully as her lord could have done. Under ordinary circumstances she was responsible for the work of the female servants, overseeing the spinning, weaving, embroidering, and sewing. She was also the hostess, and mingled freely with the knightly visitors to the castle. She had a good deal of social freedom, but in the most important event of her life she had no voice. The feudal lady had no initiative in the choice of a husband. That was done for her by her relatives or her overlord. Feudal marriages were always marriages of convenience, involving the transfer of land or the union of two noble houses. If the lady had no brothers, she would inherit her father's fief, and it was vitally important to the overlord to see that the fief, and incidentally the heiress, were given to someone who would make a suitable vassal. Or if she were not the sole heiress, she would at least carry a dowry of money or land to her husband. This was far more important than any romantic consideration. The noble lady was far from enjoying equal rights with the men of her class in practical matters; but, in compensation, she benefited to some degree at least from the idealization of women that sprang from the ideals of chivalry, which were slowly transforming the barbarous noble warrior into the knight and were giving him some of the manners and ideals of a gentleman.

4. CHIVALRY AND THE KNIGHTS

Every noble, if he could afford it and if he did not enter the church, was made a knight as soon as he came of age.

Meaning of chivalry

He was then recognized as a member of that great international society of fighting gentlemen, the Order of Chivalry. The word chivalry, as applied to the Middle Ages, is often loosely used with a variety of connotations, but always in reference to the heavy-armed and mounted knights called in France *chevaliers* and in Germany *Ritter*, both words meaning originally horsemen. The word is sometimes used, as above, to denote an international order with fairly definite customs and rules, or again in referring to a band of soldiers of that class, as "the chivalry of France." More commonly today, it is used to refer to ideals of honor, gallantry, and loyalty that were supposed to belong exclusively to men of the knightly class. Chivalry as an order, and to a lesser extent as an ideal, throve in the environment provided by feudalism. It reached its highest development in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, fading gradually thereafter as it fell out of harmony with changing social conditions and became increasingly artificial. For practical purposes, nobility of birth and knighthood were almost inseparable, since men of common birth seldom attained that honor and nearly all nobles did, but a noble was not born a knight. No matter what his rank, he could achieve knighthood only after a long period of training and after he had come of age to bear the full responsibilities of a feudal warrior.

The education of the future knight was begun at an early age. When he was still a child, he was sent to the castle of his father's overlord, or some other friendly nobleman, to be

Education of the knight

"nourished," that is, cared for and trained in all the arts of knighthood. For the first few years, his education would be in the hands of the lady of the castle, whom he served as a page, and who taught him polite manners and the social arts that were already becoming known by the name of "courtesy." At fourteen or thereabouts, he began the really essential part of his training — the handling of arms. He then became one of the squires of the lord who had undertaken to nourish him. He accompanied his lord everywhere, serving him at meals and when he rose in the morning or retired at night, keeping his weapons and armor polished and in good repair, and riding with him on the hunt. He also followed his lord when he rode to war; carried his shield, helmet, and spear; and led the great war-horse, which was not mounted till the time came to
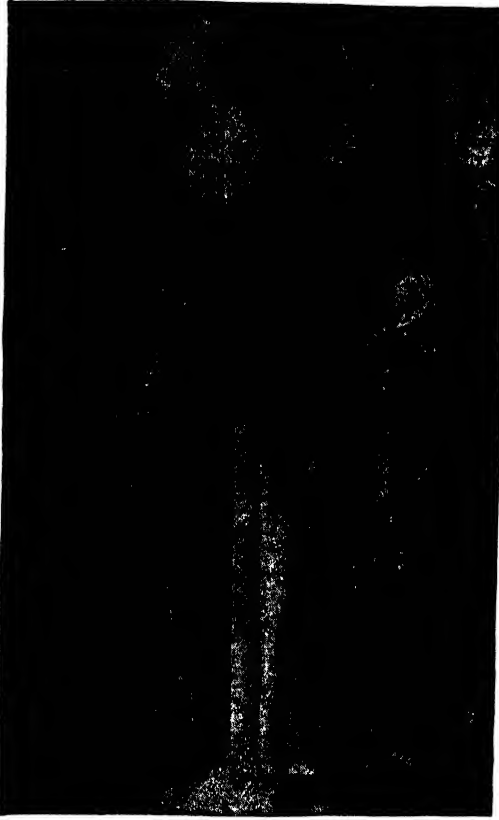
COUNT EKKEHARD AND COUNTESS UTA

These life-size statues stand in the choir of the Cathedral of Naumburg.

charge. If his lord were thrown from his horse in a battle or tournament, he was expected to rescue him and help him back into the saddle. He was not, however, expected to take part in the fighting, except in an emergency. Meanwhile, his lord was giving him constant training in all the arts of war and was teaching him the duties of a feudal lord. At the age of twenty or twenty-one, after years of this practical education, the young squire was considered ready for knighthood.

Save on the rare occasion when a squire was dubbed a knight on the field of battle as a reward for signal bravery, **Ceremony of knighting** the ceremony of conferring knighthood was reserved for one of the great religious holidays or some other special occasion, which would help

attract throngs of guests and provide an additional excuse for elaborate feasts. The young knight must be started on his career with all due magnificence, and any penurious counting of the cost would shame him. Providing for the knighting of his son was, indeed, one of the most ruinous expenses in the feudal lord's budget, even though a contribution toward it was one of the regular feudal aids to be paid by all his vassals. Some lords were unable to afford it, so that their sons were forced to remain squires indefinitely. The church had its part in the ceremony, though not so large a one as in the Later Middle Ages. After a ceremonial bath the youth spent the whole night in a vigil before the altar of the chapel. In the morning he heard the Mass; his sword was blessed by the priest; and he was charged to be true to his religion, to aid the church, and to defend the oppressed. He was then clad in new armor, while one of his relatives buckled on his great sword and golden spurs. After that came the really essential part of the ceremony, the "accolade," a blow on the neck delivered by one of the important guests, usually the lord who had nourished him, though in theory any knight might bestow the accolade. Finally, the young knight mounted his horse and ran the "quintain," driving his spear at full gallop against a shield or hauberk fastened to a post. The ceremony was now complete. The young knight was emancipated, recognized as an adult no longer under paternal authority, and entitled to a share in the family estates sufficient to support him.

After the ceremony of knighting, there would be feasting and in all probability a tournament, for no great cele- **Tournaments** bration was considered quite complete without one. Tournaments were highly valued by medieval chivalry, not only as their favorite sport, but also as a training school for young knights. Even seasoned knights must have constant practice to keep their hand in. The tournament was usually divided into two parts. On the first day, pairs of knights "jousted" together, riding toward each other at full speed and shattering their lances, if they were lucky, against each other's shield. The
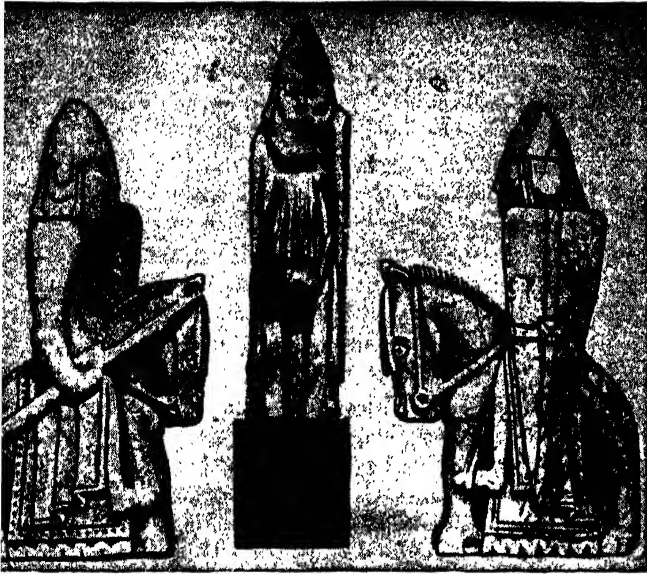
KNIGHT IN FULL ARMOR

From a twelfth-century ivory figure

FRENCH KNIGHT

Showing beginnings of plate armor superimposed upon mail. From a thirteenth-century bronze statue.
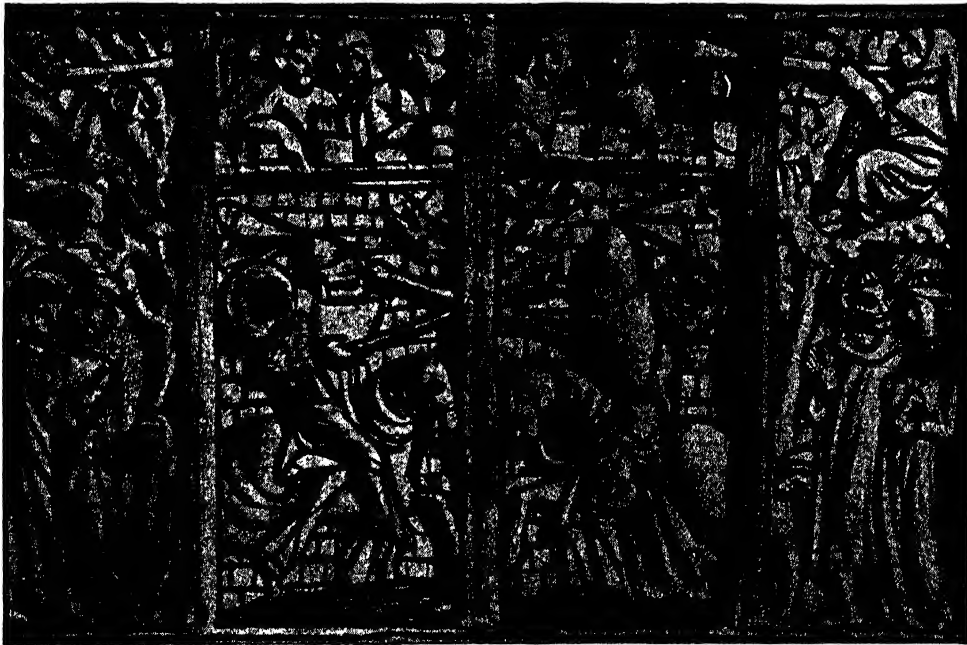
THE JOUST

This scene is from a fourteenth-century French ivory carving.

knight who was hurled from the saddle or whose lance did not break fairly was declared the loser, and his horse and armor were forfeited to the winner. The next day, there was a general *mêlée* between two groups of knights, which in almost every way resembled a real battle. Knights were wounded, unhorsed, taken prisoner, and sometimes trampled to death. The prisoners were held for ransom as in actual combat. The money to be won from the ransom of prisoners, horses, and armor was one of the attractions of this hazardous sport. But, if some knights made money, others lost it, and all of them flung their money about recklessly in gifts or *largesse* to heralds, minstrels and servants. The whole tone of the tournament was one of picturesque and careless magnificence — and few of the onlookers ever gave a thought to the poor peasants, whose labor made it all possible.

Whether in the tournament or in actual battle, the knight's success and safety depended a good deal on the **Armor and weapons** quality of his weapons and armor. Accordingly he took great care in their selection, and was willing to mortgage his patrimony, if necessary, to secure the best. Many a noble thought more of his heavy and finely tempered sword than he did of his wife. In addition to the sword, a knight would carry a lance for the charge, a mace or battle-axe for fighting at close quarters, and a dagger, called a "misericorde," to put a hopelessly wounded enemy out of his agony. The armor of a twelfth-century knight was made up of a cone-shaped steel helmet, a shield, and a hauberk. This last was a loose cloak of linked mail, covering the whole body from the helmet to the knees. Later, toward the end of the thirteenth century, helmets with closed visors to protect the face, and partial plate armor came into use. The full plate armor, so often shown in modern illustrations of knightly scenes, did not appear until the Later Middle Ages. Thanks to this heavy armor, fighting was a reasonably safe sport for the knight. He was more likely to be captured and held for ransom than killed.

The knight occupied a privileged position in society, but he had also greater responsibilities than had the commoner. He was expected to **Knightly virtues** maintain a higher standard of conduct along certain lines, and to make some effort to conform to the ideals of chivalry, as they were slowly taking shape. Courage, loyalty, and liberality were his prime virtues. He was also expected to cherish his honor more dearly than his life. Just what the knight meant by honor is a little difficult to define, save that he should do nothing that would bring disgrace on himself, his family, or his class, according to the current standards of the age. He must not take unfair advantage of his equals, act meanly in any way, or break his oath; but he could grind down his peasants, run hopelessly into debt, or cheat tradesmen. The laws of chivalry, too, did something, if not very much, to limit the brutality of feudal warfare. In this the church helped a good deal. Indeed, in building up the ideal of the Christian knight, as exemplified by the crusading orders or by a Saint Louis, the church did much to soften and refine the barbarous character of the medieval warrior.

But the refinement of chivalry was due, in all probability, more to the ladies than to the church. It was their growing influence in noble society that imposed "courtesy," **Chivalric love** the manners of the court, on the knights. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries witnessed the first flowering of chivalric love. Gallantry took its place beside the more primitive virtues in the knight's code. Feudal marriage, with the fief as the first consideration, left little room for romantic sentiment between man and wife. But any knight might swear devotion to a noble dame, wear her colors in the tournament and fight in her honor without giving offense, provided he followed the conventions and maintained his devotion on a spiritual plane. The highest idealization of women, combined with a practical recognition of their inferior position in the general scheme of society, was characteristic of medieval chivalry. It found expression in, and was in turn encouraged by, the romantic literature of the age.

In the High Middle Ages, all serious writing was still done in Latin, but there was also a growing popular literature in the language of the people. Mostly it was intended for a noble audience and reflected their manners. In southern France, courtesy and the cult of chivalric love made their appearance earlier than in the rude northern lands. There, in the twelfth century, the "troubadours," wandering poets many of whom were knights of noble birth, composed and sang delightful little love lyrics for the delectation of the most cultured society in Europe. Though limited in scope, their lyrics treated courtly love with delicate subtlety, combining intricate rhyme and graceful meter. But this southern poetry was destroyed in its prime by the terrible devastation that accompanied the Albigensian Crusade.

The troubadours

Meanwhile, in northern France, and spreading from there to England and Germany, a different kind of literature was appearing. There the warlike *chansons de geste* were recited by professional *jongleurs* or minstrels for the amusement of the rough feudal barons. These long epic poems dealt with semi-historical characters, centering around the court of Charlemagne. Some seventy or eighty *chansons* made up what is known as the "Charlemagne cycle." In actual fact, there was little historical truth about them. Their value to the historian lies in the description of customs which were purely contemporary to the composers. In the *chansons*, Charlemagne and his peers act in every respect like twelfth-century nobles. The earliest and finest of the *chansons*, the *Chanson de Roland*, composed before the end of the eleventh century, is a grand martial poem based on Charlemagne's invasion of Saracen Spain and the massacre of his rearguard in the pass of Roncesvalles. The spirit of these epics was purely feudal. They dealt with battle, feudal loyalty and rebellion, and hatred of the infidel. But the

Chansons and romances

north, too, was falling under the influence of courtesy, and this softer sentiment found expression in the "romances of adventure," centering around the court of the mythical King Arthur of Britain. Here, in verse and prose, we have tales of knights-errant who fought bravely and often, but from devotion to their ladies or to rescue distressed damsels from ogres and magicians, rather than for the simpler feudal reasons that motivated the heroes of the *chansons*. The legends of the knights of Arthur's Round Table are still the common property of all European literatures. Many of these romances were the work of accomplished poets, like Chrétien de Troyes, who composed the romance of *Perceval* in the reign of Louis VII. The same story appeared again, in a more perfect literary form, from the pen of the German Wolfram von Eschenbach. The romance of *Tristan and Iseult*, perhaps the finest of them all, also appeared in French as well as in the German of Gottfried of Strasbourg. Sir Thomas Malory translated many of the romances into vigorous English prose. There were also other cycles of romances, dealing with the Homeric story of the siege of Troy or the adventures of Alexander the Great, as well as the more historical tales arising from the crusades.

All this contemporary literature is immensely valuable to the historian. But it is easy, and dangerous, if one thinks only of the troubadour lyrics or the romances, to idealize the medieval knight unduly. Their influence, after all, was limited to a fairly small circle in the greater courts. And one must not forget the grim brutality of the *chansons*. Respect for women was a sentiment most often honored in the breach, and religion could check only the worst excesses. It might inspire the noble to go on crusade, to leave lands to the church, or to free his serfs in a fit of deathbed repentance, but it did little to change his daily life. Despite everything that the church, the ladies, or the ideals of chivalry could do, "the majority of lords loved only war and pillage."

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The Cities and the Middle Class — Commerce and Industry

THE CENTURIES of the High Middle Ages, which saw generations of crusaders ride east to the Holy Land, and in which chivalry and feudalism reached their most perfect development, witnessed also the beginning of one of the greatest economic and social revolutions in the history of Europe. This revolution was brought about by the revival of commerce and industry and the resulting growth of cities and of an urban middle class. The burghers, as the new middle class were called because they lived in walled towns or *burgs*, did not fit neatly into the scheme of feudal society. They were neither servile workers of the soil nor noble-born warriors. They were something new — free men, though of common birth, who made an independent living by trade and industry, using money as the means of exchange, and who banded together for mutual protection in more or less self-governing associations. Their numbers were still small, compared to the great number of peasants. The fighting nobles looked down on them as baseborn upstarts. The church regarded them with a suspicious eye, as men given over to worldly concerns that were dangerous to the soul. But they had the Midas touch. They could produce wealth, and through the power of money they were in time destined to destroy the old feudal society based on hereditary land tenure and to create in its place a new society based on wealth. In those small and crowded cities, rather than in the rockbound castles of the nobles, lay the seeds of modern society.

1. THE MEDIEVAL CITY

The medieval city must have presented a very picturesque appearance to the wandering merchant who plodded down the dusty road leading to the city gate. First he would see the high encircling wall of heavy stone, surrounded by a moat and surmounted by towers very like those of a baronial castle; for strongly fortified walls were as necessary to the security of the townsfolk as they were to the feudal lord. At sunset the great gates would be closed, and if the merchant were too late, he would have to stay out till dawn. Beyond the wall, he would see a tumbled mass of roofs, sloping at every imaginable angle, and crowned with chimney pots in which storks built their nests. Here and there would arise thin spires of parish churches, and in the center, if it were an episcopal city, the tall cathedral tower would shoot up high above the surrounding roofs, dominating the whole town.

External appearance

Once through the gate, the visitor would find himself in one of the main thoroughfares

The streets of the city, which led to the marketplace and thence on through the city to the opposite gate. This would be one of the widest streets, though still narrow according to modern standards, probably not more than fifteen or twenty feet from house to house. The other streets were mere alleys, few of them even ten feet wide. They twisted about aimlessly in a crooked maze, as though they had been laid out purely by chance — as indeed they had. The streets were necessarily narrow, because every available inch of space in the city must be utilized. The walls hemmed the city in and prevented normal expansion. Moreover, they had been built around as small a space as possible, in order to make them easily defensible and to save labor and expense. Hence the amazing congestion of population within any medieval city. The streets were usually unpaved, though the main streets in a large city might have a rough paving of cobblestones. There were no means of draining them, so that most of the year they were ankle-deep in mire. They were also befouled by the accumulation of garbage and refuse thrown out of the houses. Medieval ideas of sanitation were, to say the least, primitive. As there was seldom any system of sewage, and no garbage collection, the task of clearing away the refuse was left to the pigs who wandered freely through the streets. Small wonder that infectious diseases often swept through the city, decimating the population. All in all, the sordid reality of the streets must have been in strong contrast to the picturesque appearance of the city from without.

The streets were made more narrow, dark, and airless than they need have been by the

Houses efforts of the burghers to make use of as much space as possible for their houses and shops. The houses were often four or five stories high, and each successive story jutted out beyond the one below, so that the eaves of the houses across the street almost met. If the house belonged to a merchant or artisan — and most houses in the city did — the ground floor would be occupied by a shop, with a hori-

zontal shutter across the front, which in the daytime was let down into the street to form a counter for the display of wares. The houses were built mostly of wood with thatched roofs, and were very inflammable. By the thirteenth century, the wealthier burghers were beginning to build stone party walls and to use tile for the roofs as a protection against fire. Even so, fires were frequent and once started often swept over large parts of the city, for there was no way of fighting the flames except by a bucket line from the nearest well. The city of Rouen was burned six times in the first quarter of the thirteenth century.

Churches abounded in every quarter of the city, for the burghers were pious folk. The great cathedral in the center of the city was the pride **Churches** of the pious and patriotic burgher's heart. It was a magnificent building, built of solid stone and adorned with intricate carvings, high-arched stained-glass windows, and soaring towers. The cathedrals of the "Gothic" type were the artistic masterpieces of the Middle Ages, never since surpassed for sheer architectural beauty. Within the cathedral there were peace and a "dim religious light" in strong contrast to the noise and bustle of the marketplace outside. The only open space in the city was the square in front of the cathedral or the largest church. There the town market was held, and there the people congregated for all public ceremonies, so that the great church was the center of the life of the city.

The busy life of the crowded city was limited to the daylight hours. At sunset the shops were closed and barred. A little later, the great **The city at night** bells of the cathedral rang the "curfew" as a signal to cover all fires, and the city settled down to quiet and darkness. There were no street lights and seldom was there even a light in the houses. When there was a full moon, a little light might filter down between the overhanging eaves, but it could make little impression on the inky blackness of the street below. No honest man traveled the street at night, save on important and unusual business. Then he would take as many armed servants with
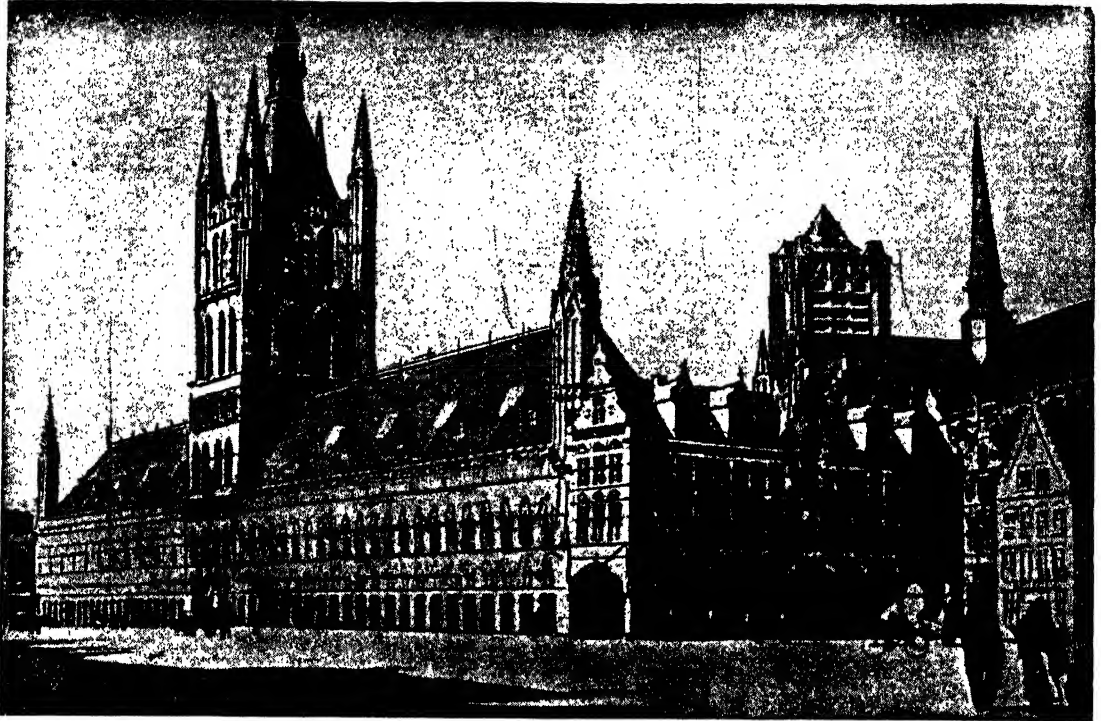
THE CLOTH HALL AT YPRES

Churches and cathedrals were the glory of the medieval cities, but there were also some magnificent secular buildings. The cloth hall above was completed about 1300.
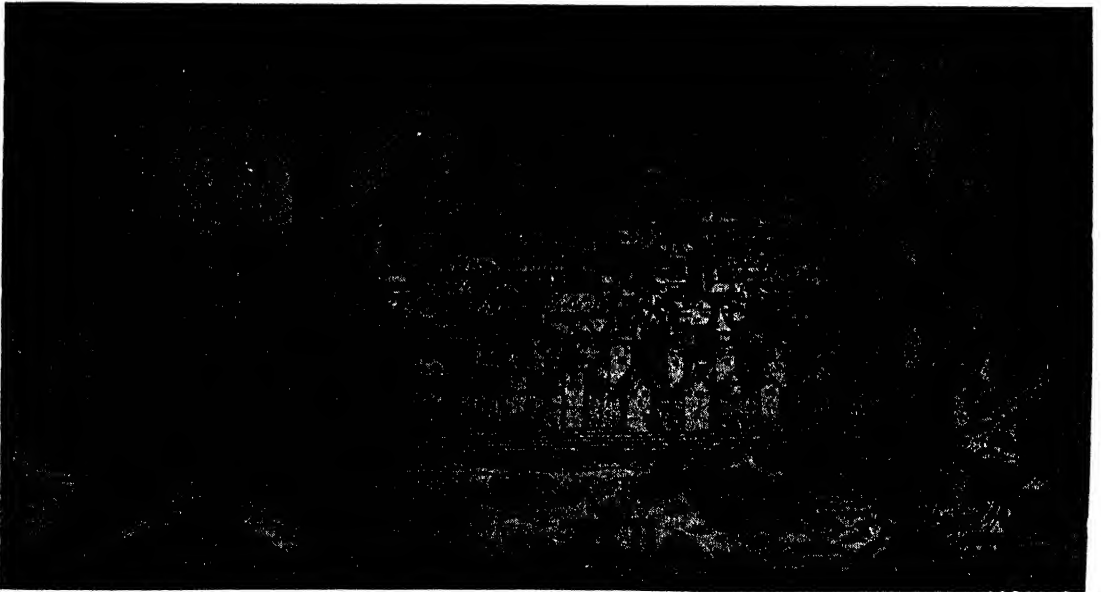
NURENBERG AT THE END OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

This illustration from Hartmann Schedel's "Chronicle" gives a striking impression of the appearance of a medieval city from the outside.
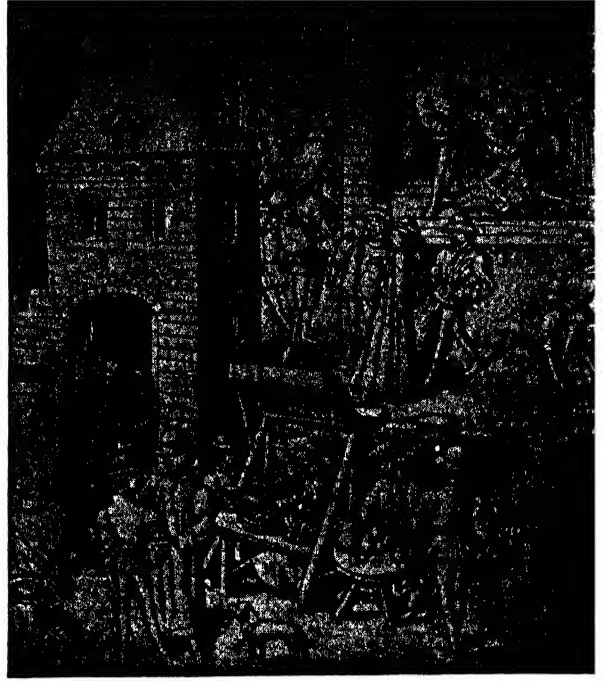
STREET SCENES

The two pictures of medieval streets at the top are taken from fifteenth-century miniature paintings. The one at the left has the fronts of the shops cut away to show the interior, a common practice of medieval illuminators. At the bottom is a medieval German town (Nördlingen) as it looks today.

him as possible, carrying torches to light the way. The streets of any medieval city were dangerous after dark, for robbers abounded, and the police force, if any, was totally inadequate.

But if the nights were quiet, the days were filled with bustling activity. The whole city wakened at dawn. Shops were opened and business was begun with the first full daylight. The medieval city was not cursed with the heavy vehicular traffic of its modern counterpart, but the narrow streets were none the less crowded and filled with active life. Merchants did their business practically on the street. Peddlers added to the confusion with the raucous cries characteristic of their trade through the centuries. In the marketplace and at street corners, jugglers and fortune-tellers gathered a crowd about them and collected a few pennies. As in our own time, the life of the city seemed intense and exciting to the peasant lad, raised in the quiet monotony of a rural manor. Then, as now, the thirst for a more varied life as well as for greater opportunities led young men to leave their country homes to seek their fortunes in the city.

The city by day

2. THE REVIVAL OF COMMERCE AND THE RISE OF THE CITIES

But how had this thriving city life come into existence in the High Middle Ages, after centuries during which cities had almost disappeared? What was the force that had given new life to old cities and created new ones? The answer is, undoubtedly, trade. Roman civilization, which had been largely urban, had depended on a wide-flung commerce. But Roman trade declined with the break-up of the empire and the cities declined with it. Only in the part of the Eastern Empire that survived about the great commercial city of Constantinople did it continue to flourish. In the West there were too many forces working against it. First the barbarian invasions from the north took their toll. Then, in the seventh and early eighth centuries, the westward thrust of the conquering Moslems cut off the Christian lands of the West from the

Trade in the early Middle Ages

Mediterranean, and hence from all contact with world trade. A century later, the pirate bands of Northmen threw western Europe into chaos and blocked the seacoast to west and north. Throughout the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, western Europe was practically landlocked. Only a little trade, borne by adventurous Syrian merchants or by Northmen who alternated trade with piracy, trickled through to the interior. Lacking the stimulus of foreign goods, even local trade declined to the vanishing point. Each manor produced what it needed and, in turn, consumed its own products. Under such circumstances, cities served no useful purpose and consequently died of inanition. Where they survived, it was with population sadly diminished, as centers of episcopal or civil administration or as fortified strongholds. In short, cities disappeared when trade was cut off. They appeared again when trade was revived in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

European commerce revived by re-establishing contact with the outside world. The first impetus came from Italy, where Venice and the Greek cities of the south had never lost contact altogether with the Byzantine Empire. When, in the eleventh century, Christendom began to take the offensive against Islam, their trade with the East increased rapidly. Finally, the First Crusade, at the end of the century, completed the opening-up of the Mediterranean to European traders. The ports of the Levant and the islands were now in Christian hands, and there was a clear road to the East. Venice, cut off from the mainland by her lagoons and forced to make her living from the sea, took the lead in the mercantile revival. She was the trading city *par excellence*, the Queen of the Adriatic, the wealthiest city in the West. But before the end of the eleventh century, Genoa and Pisa, on the other side of the peninsula, were already formidable rivals. Like Venice, they acquired trading posts in the newly conquered kingdom of Jerusalem. Meanwhile, in the north the ports of Flanders, fortunately situated on the deep estuaries where the Rhine, the Scheldt, and the Meuse flow into the

Revival of international trade

North Sea, were becoming the focal centers of a similar revival of international trade. The original agents here were the far-wandering Northmen, who, after destroying the commerce of the western seas by piracy, restored it again when they turned to legitimate trade. Their long boats plied the coasts of the Baltic, the North Sea, and the Atlantic and called at English ports. This trade naturally centered about Flanders, for there the wine and other products of the interior could be exchanged for wool from England or wax, furs, and amber from the Baltic.

From these two focal centers to south and north of Europe, trade spread gradually inland. During the eleventh century, commercial relations with Venice, Genoa, and Pisa gave a great stimulus to the growing towns of the Lombard plain and Tuscany. By the beginning of the twelfth century, the commercial revival had spread to the ports of southern France and Christian Spain. From there and across the Alpine passes from Lombardy, merchants followed roads and rivers into France and Germany, until they met the northern merchants coming down the rivers from the Flemish coast. For a long time, the plain of Champagne, halfway between Italy and Flanders, was the meeting-place for merchants of all lands. The penetration of trade into the interior went on slowly, but before the end of the twelfth century all the main trade routes had been opened up, and merchants traveled constantly to all parts of Christian Europe. A glance at the map will show the lines along which this inland trade flowed most commonly.[1]

Trade spreads inland

Medieval commerce was conducted largely by itinerant merchants, who carried their wares with them on long journeys. It was a hazardous life, but the profits, when fortune smiled on them, were proportionately large. When they traveled by sea, they were exposed to the attacks of pirates or commercial rivals and to the ever-present danger of shipwreck. The medieval mariner knew too little about navigation to venture far from

Traveling merchants

[1] See map, page 278.

shore, and his ship was too unwieldy to make much headway against a strong wind. There was always danger, therefore, of being blown onto a lee shore. Once stranded, he was lost, even though his ship were not destroyed; for the law of wreck, universally recognized, permitted the owner of the shore to confiscate the goods of any wrecked ship. Inland trade was equally hazardous. Few governments were strong enough to guarantee security of life or property to the traveler. The roads were infested by robbers, by mercenary soldiers who were often worse than the robbers, and perhaps worst of all, by the impoverished knights and barons who felt that the merchant was their legitimate prey. Whenever possible, merchants traveled together in caravans for mutual protection or joined with bands of pilgrims. Sometimes, too, a merchant would attach himself to the armed retinue of a powerful lord who was traveling in the same direction.

Aside from the dangers from human violence, the state of the roads made inland travel extremely hazardous. Whenever he could, the merchant preferred to travel by river, but often he had to take to the road. Then there was nothing for it but to load his goods on pack animals — horses or mules — or in rude carts, pray to Saint Nicholas and hope for the best. Even the best roads were merely rough dirt tracks, deeply scored by ruts and pitted with sinkholes. In rainy weather the carts sank axle-deep in the mud or bogged down completely. Bridges were in equally bad condition. Sometimes they were swept away by floods and not replaced for years. Frequently they were quite unsafe for heavy traffic. Sporadic attempts were made by kings, nobles, monasteries, or religious associations to repair roads and bridges, but with little permanent result. The responsibilities of government were too thoroughly divided under the feudal system to make any consistent or widespread program of public works possible. What legislation there was worked more often to the disadvantage than to the advantage of the merchant, for at every bridge and ferry and on every road he was forced to pay a burdensome toll to the local lord for their upkeep —

Roads and tolls

usually without visible results. In winter, and when the roads broke up after the spring thaws, merchant travel practically ceased. At any time it was very hazardous for the lone merchant. As a result, trade fell into definite periods, when at one place or another it was concentrated at fairs to which merchants flocked in large bands.

Almost to the end of the Middle Ages, fairs were the most important element in inter-regional trade. Without them, **Fairs** the exchange of foreign goods would have been greatly restricted, if not impossible. In the twelfth century, the fairs of Champagne were the meeting-place of merchants from all parts of Christendom, but there were innumerable others in every country of Europe. Fairs were normally held in cities, but they were usually under higher authority than the municipal government, being controlled by the king, or by a bishop or abbot or great feudal lord, who guaranteed "the peace of the fair." The ordinary government of the city was temporarily set aside, and the exclusive monopoly on trade enjoyed by the merchants of the city — which, as we shall see, greatly hindered the trading of foreign merchants at other times — was broken for the time being. While the fair lasted — a fixed period, varying in different places from three or four days to a month or more — any merchant who paid his toll and the rent for his booth could trade freely and securely. He set up his booth in the market square or in the open fields outside the city, exchanged goods with other merchants from distant lands, or sold his wares to the local tradesmen and smaller merchants or to the burghers of the city and the nobles of the surrounding countryside. When the fair was over, the foreign merchants packed their goods and set out in groups once more to face the perils of the highway in the direction of another fair. Commerce under medieval conditions was necessarily periodic. The fair was the perfect setting for it.

Not the least of the advantages which attracted foreign merchants to **Law merchant** the fairs was the guaranty of sure and speedy justice. Ordinarily, the mills of justice ground slowly in the

Middle Ages, and they did not grind so very fine. Moreover, each city had its own laws and customs which foreigners — and any merchant not of that city was a foreigner, even though he came from the same country — could not be expected to know. Above everything else, the traveling merchant needed the protection of dependable courts, of laws with which he was familiar, and of speedy trials so that his departure for other parts might not be delayed. All these he found in the jurisdiction of the lord of the fair and in the special merchant courts, called in England "pie powder" courts, a corruption of the French *pied poudreux*, from the dusty-footed merchants who frequented them. These courts met "from hour to hour" during the fair, as they were needed. The law meted out in them was not local or royal law, but a common commercial law, the "law merchant" recognized in all parts of Europe. This body of mercantile law had grown up by custom from the needs of the traveling merchants. It remained largely unwritten, and varied but little from one country to another. Its special field was suits for payment of debts, fulfillment of contracts, and other civil cases arising from trade.

The revival of commerce necessarily led to a renaissance of city life. In the first place, the traveling merchants could not be always on the road. **Commerce creates cities** They needed a permanent base for their operations, and that base must be at some place where they could form an association with others of their kind for mutual protection against the dangers of a lawless society that provided little security for the trader. In the second place, foreign trade stimulated local trade and broke up the isolated production and consumption economy of the manor. By introducing foreign goods and skillfully manufactured articles, the traveling merchant created a demand for commodities that could not be obtained on the manor; and this demand remained to some extent constant throughout the year. At any rate, it could not be entirely satisfied by the annual or semiannual fairs. There was, then, an opportunity for resident merchants to ply their trade all the year

ROADS AND TRAVEL

At the top, workmen are building a road to connect two nearby Flemish cities. At the lower left, a stone bridge is being built in the city of Berne. The scene at the lower right shows merchants arriving at an inn and the rather cramped sleeping quarters inside. All are from illuminations in fifteenth-century manuscripts.

round; and these, like their traveling con-frères, sought association with their fellows and so added to the growing nucleus of the town. Finally, commerce created skilled industry. Someone had to make the clothes, weapons, armor, and so forth that the merchant sold to satisfy the demand for more skillfully made goods than could be produced by manorial workmen. So skilled artisans appeared, and they, too, congre-gated in places where opportunities for trade and protection had already gathered groups of merchants. Indeed, the artisan was often himself a local merchant and *vice versa*. Here, then, we have the nucleus of a town. As it grew, it became less dependent on the country about and provided a growing market in itself for its own products. But it always depended on trade. That cities followed trade is clearly shown by a glance at the economic map of Europe. All along the trade routes — at seaports, on the rivers, and at crossroads towns sprang up. To trace the rise of the cities, one has only to trace the main channels of trade and follow their spread throughout Europe.

This still leaves the problem, and one much disputed, as to just how any individ-**City origins** ual city originated and why in any particular place. Very little evidence has survived as to the early history of the towns, and local conditions must have varied widely. In general, how-ever, the most reasonable explanation, and one borne out by such small evidence as is available, is that merchants and artisans congregated under the protection of any fortified place which was so geographically situated as to be favorable to trade. Many old Roman cities, which, thanks to the Roman genius for commerce, were usually situated on natural trade routes, had sur-vived as centers of an episcopal diocese. They were walled and the prestige of the bishop made them relatively secure. There were also fortified *burgs*, built as centers of military and civil administration, like the "five boroughs" founded by the Danes in England to hold the conquered population in subjection. Feudal castles and monasteries, too, offered protection. Around the walls of any of these that were favorably situated

for trade, merchants and artisans congre-gated. In time of danger, they could retreat within the walls. They made up the popu-lation of a "new *burg*," and it was to them that the term *burgenses* or burghers was applied. The new *burg*, in France called a *faubourg*, was in time also encircled by a wall. As it grew, it gradually engulfed the original *burg*, castle, or city, whose walls were usually destroyed as no longer necessary. The burghers were originally under the jurisdic-tion of the lord whose protection they sought. Such jurisdiction carried with it many oner-ous feudal restrictions and services, which often interfered with freedom of trade. Everywhere, therefore, we find the towns-folk working together to secure greater free-dom and a larger share of self-government. In the next section we shall see how the full-grown city was governed and what was the status of the burgher class when the cities were well established.

3. THE BURGHERS AND CITY GOVERNMENT

The burghers formed a new social class, and they had to work out for themselves a new social status, new laws and **The burghers** customs, new systems of gov-ernment, and new methods of regulating business. They had to experiment, for there was no precedent to guide them. Sometimes the experiments led to disaster. In any case they produced a wide variety of custom, depending on local conditions. Neverthe-less, in main outline the status of the burghers and the internal government of the cities were fairly uniform in all parts of Europe, for they arose naturally from the needs of a mercantile and industrial community, which were much the same everywhere. Everywhere the burghers acquired personal freedom, and this was the most essential point in determining their social status as a privileged class. Many of the merchants who founded the early towns must have been free from the beginning, though they probably sprang from villein or servile stock. Having in some way escaped from the ancestral manor or the jurisdiction of their lord, they were free because no man knew whence they came and no lord could claim them as his own. At first, however, there

were also serfs and villeins of the local lord in the town, but before long these apparently gained the same freedom as their lordless neighbors. Once the new cities were firmly established, personal freedom was recognized as the right of all permanent dwellers within the walls. If a serf could escape from his manor and live for a year and a day in a city, he could not be reclaimed by his late lord. Next to freedom from hereditary servitude, the burghers needed freedom as individuals from the annoyances of feudal jurisdiction and laws, which having been designed for farm workers were not adapted to the needs of commerce and industry, and, finally, they needed enough self-government to enable them to regulate their own economic life. But such freedom was seldom won without cost or struggle, and only a few cities acquired full independence.

In northern Italy, the struggle began in the second half of the eleventh century. We have already seen [1] how the Lombard cities fought for freedom against their bishops and the emperors for a century and a half, until they had forced even the powerful Frederick Barbarossa to recognize their right to self-government as practically independent city-republics. Nowhere else did the cities obtain such complete independence, though the great Flemish cities came close to it, and in Germany a few of the largest cities acquired the status of free imperial cities, subject only to the nominal authority of the emperor. In most places the burghers were content with less. They were willing to acknowledge the political authority of the king or their lord and to pay taxes. All they asked was that their obligations be defined and limited, that the town as a corporation and not individuals should be held responsible for them, and that, within the town, the burghers should be left as free as possible to manage their own affairs. Often these concessions were obtained peacefully by the purchase of a charter from the king or one of the great lords. This was particularly true in England and on the royal domain and the great fiefs in France.

Struggle for self-government

As a rule, the nobles, save for a few rulers of great fiefs like the counts of Champagne, were less favorably disposed toward the cities than were the kings. But they were often forced by poverty to sell charters, and they were gradually discovering that free cities were likely to be more prosperous and could pay them more taxes than those whose freedom of action was hampered by feudal restrictions. In France, many lords founded new towns on their estates, offering very liberal terms to attract settlers, in order to augment their income from the prospective taxes. The towns that had grown up under the jurisdiction of a bishop or abbot had the greatest difficulty in securing freedom. Here there was no opportunity to take advantage of the weakness of a minor or of a careless or absent lord; nor was the church so likely to be in pressing need of money. Besides, bishops who might have been personally willing to grant concessions were loath to do so, lest they seem to be surrendering traditional rights of the church which had been entrusted to them. When the burghers could not secure concessions peacefully by purchase, they were prepared to fight for them. A number of towns in France formed "communes" during the twelfth century; organized their own government; and wrested recognition of their freedom from their lord, whether bishop, abbot, or noble. Later, in the thirteenth century, most of them came under royal government and lost much of their independence, but they still retained a fair measure of self-government.

The government of the typical medieval city was in the hands of a council and a number of executive officers or magistrates (they went by a variety of names), who were nearly always burghers of the city and were chosen by their fellow burghers freely or in collaboration with the lord, depending on the extent of the freedom they had obtained. Their principal duty was to levy and collect taxes. There were usually direct taxes on income and indirect taxes on the sale of goods. From the money raised in this way, the city government maintained the defenses and public works and the cost of government, and paid whatever taxes the city owed to

City government

[1] See above, pages 216 and 223–225, and map, page 224.

the king or its lord. The growing, political power of the cities and their influence with the monarchy depended largely on this ability to raise money taxes, which had no parallel in the feudal system. The city had also its own system of civil and criminal law and its own courts and judges. City laws and judicial procedure were usually much more enlightened than the ancient customs still enforced in the feudal courts. At least, they were better suited to the needs of men who made their living from commerce and industry. The right to take part in the government of the city was seldom open to all inhabitants. It was limited normally to men of property who were legally recognized as burghers, a privilege which they defended jealously against the poor of the city or outsiders. In some places a small oligarchy of the wealthiest burghers succeeded in gaining control of the government and shutting out the rest.

Among the duties of the city magistrates was the supervision of the town market and **Markets** the collection of market tolls, which formed an important part of the city's revenues. Nearly every city had the legal right to hold a market, though they often had to pay dearly for it. In thirteenth-century France, and earlier in England, the kings asserted their exclusive right to issue charters granting that privilege. The markets must not be confused with the fairs. The former were purely municipal institutions for local trade. They were held for one day only, once or twice a week. Here the peasants from the countryside displayed their produce for sale to the burghers. In some places, in order to augment the tolls, even the merchants of the city were forced to close their shops and sell on the market during market days.

It was not only in the markets that the municipal government supervised the city's **Control of trade** trade. Since it was their duty to protect the interests of the whole body of citizens, the magistrates felt justified in exercising a minute control of all business within the city. Perhaps because the city existed in the midst of a hostile environment, wherein the citizens were forced to depend upon one

another for aid, the medieval burgher felt that the interests of the individual should be subordinated to the welfare of the whole community. He had, therefore, no objection to a paternalistic government which set prices, supervised methods of manufacture, determined the quality of goods, regulated wages and hours of labor, and prevented any individual from taking unfair advantage of his fellow citizens. The purpose of medieval economic legislation was to guarantee to the worker or seller a fair living and to protect the consumer against fraud or undue cost. Often the city government delegated the actual supervision to the guilds, of which more later, but the final responsibility remained with the magistrates.

The medieval man had no confidence in the economic law of supply and demand as the source of prices, nor in the principle that free competition is the greatest stimulus to trade. If he thought of them at **Medieval economic theory** all, he considered them immoral. Instead, he believed that for every commodity there was a "just price," which should be the same in time of shortage as in time of plenty. This just price was set by custom, based on the normal price of raw materials, plus the "reasonable" profit necessary to permit the workers and the merchant to live in the style recognized by public opinion as suitable to their status. The church had a good deal to do with evolving and enforcing this theory, but secular authorities accepted it implicitly as the basis for all legislation regarding price. The statute books of every city were filled with laws designed to enforce the sale of goods at "just" or "reasonable" prices, and the guilds, too, did their share. Of course this legislation did not always accomplish its purpose. The principle of the just price was too vague, and the severe penalties constantly re-enacted against "engrossing, forestalling, and regrating" — three kindred methods of cornering the market and withholding goods until the demand had raised the price — show that not all medieval business men allowed moral theories to interfere with their desire for gain. The condemnation of "usury" — that is, the taking of interest for money lent — arose from a similar

principle. It was believed that money was not an active force, and that to exact a price for its use was to take unfair advantage of the needs of one's fellows. But this was even less observed than the theory of the just price. Despite everything that the church and secular governments could do, money continued to be lent at interest thinly disguised.

The efforts of the city government to supervise trade in the interests of the whole community were limited strictly to the city itself. The burghers formed a very exclusive body. They had no interest whatsoever in the prosperity of the nation at large or, indeed, of anyone outside the magic circle of the walls. All municipal regulations of trade from without were designed to put the foreign merchant at a disadvantage in his dealings with the burghers. The merchants of the city were assured a monopoly of its trade, and the monopoly was broken only when it was to their own advantage to do so. This exclusiveness had, as its reverse side, a very strong feeling of corporate responsibility and mutual interdependence among the burghers of the city. They called on one another for aid, shared in one another's bargains, and were responsible for one another's debts. If a merchant defaulted payment of a debt contracted abroad, the creditor might legally seize the goods of any other merchant from the debtor's city. The medieval city was an independent economic unit, whose citizens were banded together in a close fraternity, presenting a united front to all outsiders. And within the city, the merchants and artisans were ordinarily organized in still more closely knit and exclusive associations, known as guilds, through which, as a rule, the city government exercised its control of business.

4. THE MERCHANT AND CRAFT GUILDS

A merchant guild was founded quite early in the history of most cities. It was mentioned in the original charters of many of them. Indeed, the guild was often largely responsible for the success of the city's struggle for a charter. The merchant guild was an association, in which membership was compulsory, of all the burghers of the city who made their living by selling goods, including, in its early days at any rate, the artisans who made goods and sold them directly to the consumer. No one who was not a member of the guild could buy or sell at retail within the city, though foreign merchants might be permitted to sell to the guildsmen or buy from them at wholesale, on payment of a toll, since it was to the advantage of the local merchants to secure raw materials from abroad or to dispose of their surplus stock. A strong bond of fellowship and corporate responsibility existed among the members of the guild. They were pledged to mutual aid in any time of need, and every effort was made to guarantee equality of opportunity and to prevent unfair competition. Acting as a corporation, the guild often bought wholesale cargoes of raw materials or goods, at a lower cost than any individual could have procured them, and reallotted them to the members at the purchase price. Or, if one guildsman obtained an especially favorable bargain, he might be compelled to share it with his fellows. When a merchant traveled, his credit was supported by that of the whole guild, since it was responsible for his debts. Finally, the guild regulated prices, the quality of goods, wages, and hours of labor.

These manifold duties of the merchant guild were in many respects the same as those of the city government. There was, indeed, so close a connection between the two that it was often difficult to distinguish between them. The guildsmen were the most active burghers and frequently controlled the government of the city. Often the same men served as city and guild officers. But the city government had always wider powers and was superior to the guild, which merely administered the economic side of government and exercised a monopoly of trade. In course of time, as the merchant guilds began to decline, their powers were taken over in many places by the city administration. The twelfth century was the period of greatest power for the merchant guilds. When industry became

MEDIEVAL WORKERS

*Top left: Fourteenth-century workers in stone and wood giving evidence of their skill
before the consul of the guild at Florence*
Top right: Workers hoisting barrels of wine with a crane in Flanders (fifteenth century)
Bottom left: A group of London workers, about 1400
*Bottom right: The weight master (Nuremberg, 1497).   The medieval city government supervised
the weighing of goods.   Frequently they had their own standards of weights and measurements.*
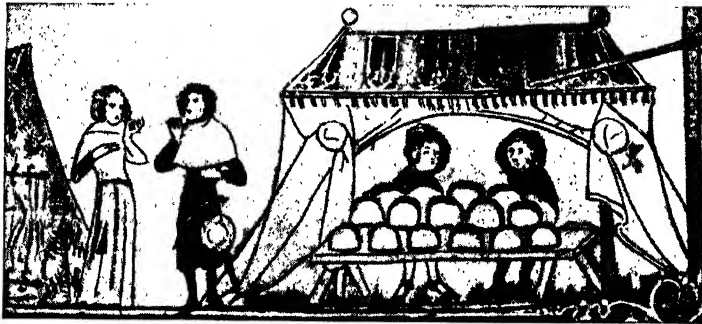
SHOPS IN A MEDIEVAL TOWN

Top left: *A corn dealer's shop, from an early fourteenth-century manuscript in the Laurentian Library*
Top right: *A tailor's shop, from a miniature about 1500*
Bottom left: *A baker's shop, from a manuscript in the Bodleian Library*
Bottom right: A dyer's establishment, at the end of the fifteenth century

more highly specialized, their place was largely taken by the various craft guilds. The merchant guilds or companies, which reappear in the Later Middle Ages, were of a different character, dealing usually with some particular line of trade.

The craft guilds were essentially industrial, but they had also a mercantile character.

Craft guilds

They were composed of artisans of a given trade or craft, who manufactured or prepared goods and sold them, usually directly to the consumer. The type of work which each guild could undertake was strictly defined. In the larger cities, where there were a great many craft guilds, they were very highly specialized. For example, there might be two separate guilds for the making of men's and women's shoes. In smaller places, on the other hand, several allied crafts might be lumped together. Each guild exercised a monopoly of its particular trade in the city. The right to sell their goods must have been transferred to them in some way from the merchant guild which had exercised a blanket monopoly on all selling. The history of the relation between the two types of guild is very obscure and no doubt varied from place to place. In general, it seems that the monopoly and other powers of the merchant guild were parceled out to the craft guilds, and that the merchant guild either continued a vague existence as the aggregate of all the guilds or was merged with the city government.

The craft guilds were exclusive bodies, limited to the skilled trades, and one could

Apprentices

become a member only after a long period of thorough training. The first step in the making of a guildsman was the apprenticeship. Apprentices usually began their training quite early, at ten or twelve years of age. The lad's parents would enter into a contract with a master of the craft — that is, a full-fledged member of the guild — to undertake their son's training. In most cases they paid him a small fee. The apprentice then went to live in the master's house. He was expected to do whatever work he could. In return he received full instruction in all the arts of the craft and also his food, clothing, and

lodging. Later, as he became a valuable worker rather than a liability to the master, he might receive a small wage. The bond between apprentice and master was very close. The latter acted as a foster-father and exercised a father's authority. The apprentice, however, was not entirely at the master's mercy. The guild supervised the training of apprentices and protected their rights. It fixed the length of the period of training, which varied in various guilds from two or three to ten or twelve years, depending on the amount of skill required for the craft. The average was perhaps about seven years. The guild also limited the number of apprentices, usually to two or three, whom any one master might take. This was done partly to ensure the proper care and training of the apprentices, partly to prevent any master from gaining an advantage over his fellows by the employment of a large number of cheap workers, and also to cut down competition by limiting the number of men trained in the craft.

When the apprentice had completed his period of training satisfactorily, he was promoted to the status of journeyman (so called from the

Journeymen

French word *journée*, meaning a day). He was now a free worker, paid by the day, and could hire with any master who wanted his services. During the next few years, he was expected to acquire more experience and skill and to save enough money to set himself up in a shop of his own. The next step was to apply for full membership in the guild. He must then undergo a strict examination at the hands of the masters, and submit a sample of his work, his "masterpiece," together with proof of good character and orthodoxy. If he passed this test, he was received into the guild as a master.

The master was at once a worker, employer, and retail merchant. In the little shop on the ground floor of his house, in full view of those who

Masters

passed on the street, he manufactured his goods with his own hands, supervised the work of his journeymen and apprentices, and displayed his products for sale. No permanent class distinction cut him off from his employees, since they themselves ex-

pected to become masters in course of time. He was not a capitalist in any real sense of the word, since the restriction imposed by the guild on the price and quality of his goods and the number of men whom he could employ prevented him from making more than a decent living for himself. These restrictions were, in part, self-imposed, for the master was a full member of the guild and had his share in choosing its officers and in making its rules. But if those rules prevented him from rising above his fellows, they also protected him from the competition of others who might try to do the same.

In this we find the chief purpose of the craft guilds. They were designed to limit competition and to keep any **Purpose of the craft guilds** member from doing anything that would be to the disadvantage of the rest. At the same time, they exercised a local monopoly and protected their members from outside competition. The sense of social solidarity and corporate responsibility, the conviction that the interests of the individual should be subordinated to the good of the whole community, which we have already noted as characteristic of the medieval cities, was felt very intensely within the guilds. Hence all the minute regulation of industry. The craft guilds fixed prices, regulated wages and hours of labor, and demanded a fixed standard of quality in the goods produced. These regulations were strictly enforced by the guild officers, who regularly inspected the shops of the masters. So far as was humanly possible, each guild member was guaranteed equality of opportunity. He was given a share in the wholesale purchases of raw materials made by the guild. No other master could tempt his workers away from him. Indeed, in many guilds, the other masters were forced to lend him workers in case of special need. A regulation of the guild of White Tawyers of London shows this spirit of co-operation: "And if anyone of the trade shall have work in his house that he cannot complete, or if for want of assistance such work shall be in danger of being lost, those of the said trade shall aid him that so the said work be not lost." But the guild regulations did more than protect the guild members; they also protected the consumer, and assured to him sound workmanship and fair value. The city government, which held the final authority, would see to that, though the guildsmen themselves took a pride in their craft and realized that it was to their advantage to have a reputation for selling sound goods at a just price.

Aside from their economic functions, the craft guilds had a distinct social purpose in caring for their members in time of adversity. They were friendly societies. If a guildsman fell ill or through any other mischance was poverty-stricken, he was cared for from the guild funds. When he died, the guild paid the expenses of his funeral and, if necessary, undertook the support of his widow and children. All the social life of the city centered in the guilds. The great feasts in the guildhall relieved the monotony of daily toil and drew the guild members closer together. The guilds had also certain religious functions. They took part in religious celebrations and processions, like the English mystery plays, and often supported a chapel or shrine. And almost everywhere they guarded against heresy among their members.

The guild system offered many advantages to the medieval worker and consumer, but there were also disadvantages which became more apparent **Advantages and disadvantages** as the economic life of Europe assumed larger proportions and as the need for protective associations became less acute. The system maintained a high standard of quality in the goods produced, guaranteed honest value to the purchaser, and at the same time ensured a fair living to the guildsman, with little chance, it is true, of becoming wealthy, but also with little chance of being ruined. On the other hand, the minute supervision of work and the innumerable regulations tended to check individual enterprise and retarded invention or progress of any kind. Even the social solidarity of the guild was not an unmixed blessing to society. The guildsmen helped each other, but they were intensely jealous of other guilds which infringed on their monopoly, and they suppressed ruthlessly all competition from those who were not members. One modern his-

torian has compared the guild in a vivid metaphor to a feudal castle, which protected but imprisoned those it sheltered and which might easily degenerate into an instrument of tyranny over those without.

The guild system survived the Middle Ages, but before the end of that period it had begun to disintegrate and capitalistic tendencies had already begun to warp its original character. In many guilds the masters gradually formed an hereditary oligarchy and used the guild monopoly to their own advantage. They relaxed the regulations limiting the number of apprentices or journeymen whom any master could employ and prevented journeymen who did not belong to the guild families from becoming masters. In other cases, especially in large industries like the cloth trade, where goods were produced in large quantities for export, an exclusive guild of merchants gained control of the manufacturing guilds and reduced the masters to the status of hired laborers. But the break-up of the guilds came later than our present period and will be dealt with in a subsequent chapter.[1]

5. INFLUENCE OF THE CITIES ON EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION

The growth of the cities and the rise of the burgher class with its active economic life, in the midst of feudal society and yet apart from it, were bound to have tremendous effects on every aspect of European civilization.

In the first place, they created a new kind of wealth and new methods of acquiring wealth. In the earlier feudal ages, when nearly all wealth sprang directly from the cultivation of the soil, there was very little money in circulation. It was not needed to any large extent, for feudal dues were mostly paid in services or produce and trade was carried on largely by barter; that is, by the direct exchange of goods, on a local scale. Opportunities for profitable investment were scarce and what money did exist was usually hoarded. The revival of commerce and industry made great changes in this respect.

Money economy

[1] See Chapter 32.

Money once more circulated freely wherever merchants bought or sold. Opportunities for investment arose and money began to breed money. Because they were the centers of trade, a large part of the money in circulation flowed to the cities. In its possession lay the power of the new burgher class. Their use of it revolutionized the social and political as well as the economic life of Europe.

The burghers were not consciously interested in the fate of their peasant neighbors. Yet unwittingly they aided them to obtain better conditions **The peasants** and greater freedom. The burghers did not produce their own food, but they had money to buy it. They provided the peasants with a constantly growing market for their produce outside the narrow confines of the manor. This made it worth while for the peasants to increase the production of their crops and enabled them to amass a little money, with which they might purchase freedom or concessions from their lord. It also encouraged the lords to clear wasteland and place it under cultivation. During the two centuries of the High Middle Ages the amount of land under cultivation in western Europe was almost doubled. In order to attract workers to the new land, the lords were forced to offer very liberal terms, including more or less complete freedom. This in turn reacted favorably on the status of the peasants on the old estates. There, many lords had to make concessions, which often took the form of emancipation and the commutation of personal services into cash payments, in order to keep their peasants from running away to seek a better living or greater freedom on new land or in the cities. This was, of course, a gradual process and not uniform everywhere. But by the end of the Middle Ages, in all the most civilized parts of Europe, a fair measure of the personal freedom and the money economy of the towns had spread to the rural manors.

The nobles, on the other hand, lost rather than gained through the rise of the cities. It was difficult for the manorial lords to increase their income **The nobles** to any great extent, since it was fixed by

custom. At the same time, prices were rising due to the increased circulation of money, and foreign trade had accustomed the nobles to expensive luxuries, which they came to regard as necessities. The relative wealth of the nobles, then, was in general declining, while that of the burghers whom they despised was increasing. In proportion as the burghers rose in wealth and political power, the nobles lost their dominating position.

Anything that tended to weaken the feudal nobles was to the advantage of the monarchy. This was certainly true of the rise of the cities. In the new middle class, the kings found valuable allies to aid them in building up a strong centralized government. To maintain such a government, the kings needed money, and money in sufficient quantities could be obtained only by taxing the cities, for feudalism made no provision for regular money taxes. The burghers, for their

The monarchy

part, needed a strong central government to protect trade and preserve order, and were willing to pay for it. The burghers were in no small degree responsible for the rise of the monarchies and the decline of feudalism.

The influence of the cities on medieval culture is less easy to appraise than their effect on social and economic conditions. The burghers were hard-working business men, and for long they were not particularly interested in art, literature, or philosophy. Yet they felt the need for education and, as some of them acquired wealth and leisure, they began to develop a secular culture that was characteristically their own. It was in the cities that the secular spirit of the Renaissance arose, and there, too, that the Reformation was born; and in the meantime they had done more than any other class to stimulate that growth of material prosperity without which the great cultural advances of the High Middle Ages would have been impossible.

Culture

21

The Church, Religion, and Culture

ONE CANNOT READ far in the history of the High Middle Ages without realizing something of the vast importance of religion and the church in the daily life of men. The medieval man lived in constant and intimate contact with the supernatural. He believed that the world was the physical center of the universe, and that God had created the whole mighty structure in order that the earth might serve as the stage on which men played their brief mortal drama, until death should furnish the cue for their final exit. The central theme of this human drama was the struggle between divine grace and the evil wiles of the devil for the souls of men. And, after that last mortal exit, began the new and grander drama of eternity, with the scene shifted to heaven or hell, accordingly as the individual man had played his part on earth. Every act of the drama was played under the direction of a host of spirits, good or evil, saints or devils, who did not hesitate to use all the forces of nature to protect or destroy men, to lead them to salvation or tempt them to perdition. The struggle was a close one, and the end of each man's drama was uncertain. There were bad men as well as good — and in abundance — but all were religious in the sense that they believed in the reality of the drama and strove, so far as their character permitted, to foil the devil and win for themselves a happy ending.

But if the drama of human salvation was controlled ultimately by supernatural pow-

ers, it had also its earthly directors, men to whom God had entrusted the care of souls. These were the clergy, one of the three classes into which society was divided. It was their function to aid men to secure salvation. This function was so vitally important to all men that the clergy, who exercised it, had acquired greater powers than were possessed by any merely worldly government, and these powers were vested in the church. For the priest who cared for men's souls did not stand alone. He was a member of a great international institution, which was in itself a kind of state, superimposed on all secular states and having an administrative system, laws, property, and taxes of its own. The pope was the ruler of this state; the clergy were its officers; and the laymen in all Christian countries of western Europe — for the Greek Orthodox peoples of the East stood apart from it — were its subjects.

It is the purpose of this chapter to describe briefly the organization of the church as an institution and to indicate as far as possible the part played by religion and the church in the formation of medieval culture.

1. THE CHURCH AS AN INSTITUTION

In earlier chapters we have shown how the organization of the church first took shape and how the Bishop of Rome became its recognized head in the days of the declining Roman Empire, and, later, how the church became involved in the feudal system, while the popes

fell for a time under the domination of the emperors.[1] Finally, we have told the story of the long and successful struggle of the popes, from Gregory VII to Innocent III, to establish their supremacy over secular rulers. At the same time the popes were working with equal success to enforce their authority over all the clergy and to centralize still further the administration of the church. The bishops, who were royal officers and feudal barons as well as ministers of the church, presented the most serious problem. The popes, however, gradually succeeded in strengthening their control over the bishops by the condemnation of lay investiture and simony (which had given kings and nobles an opportunity to influence episcopal elections) and by asserting their right to confirm all elections and to settle those that were disputed. Further, by encouraging the lesser clergy and the monks to appeal from the bishops' jurisdiction to the papal court, the popes lessened the authority of the bishops, who were still too often controlled by their kings, and at the same time brought the whole body of the clergy more directly under papal control. In an increasingly large number of cases, too, the popes were taking from the bishops the right of appointing archdeacons and other diocesan officials to their benefices and were reserving it for themselves.

As the administration of the church became more highly centralized, a tremendous mass of business was referred to Rome, which the pope could not deal with single-handed. He was assisted by a host of subordinate officers and clerks, who made up the papal *curia* or court. He had also an advisory council in the college of cardinals. The cardinals were appointed for life by the pope and ranked second only to him in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Their importance depended largely on their exclusive right to elect the popes, which had been guaranteed to them by the decree of Nicholas II in 1059.

The curia and the cardinals

Outside of Rome, the principal administrative officers were the bishops, each of whom was the head of the church in his diocese. The diocese was the most important territorial unit for church administration.

A number of dioceses grouped together formed a province and the bishop of the principal diocese of the province was called an archbishop. He outranked his brother bishops and had some vague authority over them, but his relation to them was that of a chief among his equals. In the Early Middle Ages, the bishops had been almost independent rulers of the clergy in their dioceses. By the thirteenth century, they had lost a good deal of that independent power to the pope. However, they had still to attend to all the business of the diocese, to supervise the morals of the clergy, to administer the sacraments of ordination and confirmation, and to preside over the ecclesiastical courts, though, of course, some of their executive duties could be delegated to archdeacons or other subordinate officers. They had also important secular duties to perform as feudal lords or royal ministers. They were frequently sum-

The bishops
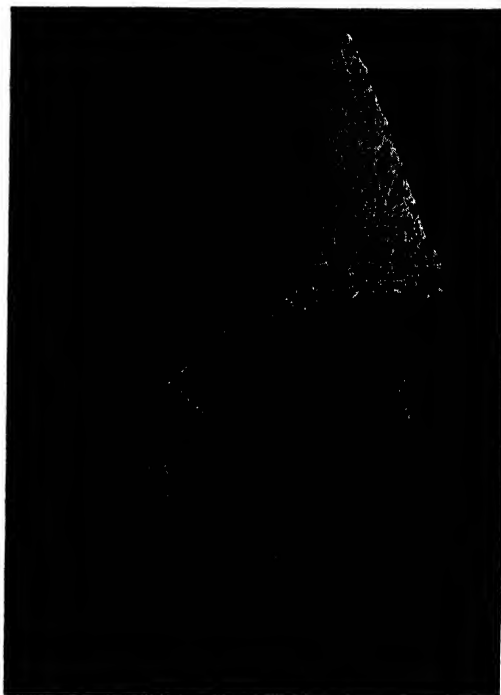
HEAD OF A POPE

From Rheims Cathedral, thirteenth century

moned to the royal court or to accompany the king on a military campaign. So much of their time, indeed, was taken up with worldly affairs that many pious folk doubted whether any bishop would be saved. Still, arduous though its duties were, the episcopal office carried with it great wealth and power, and it was eagerly sought by ambitious men. Most of the bishops were nobly born, and many of them had undoubtedly entered the church from motives of ambition rather than piety. There were bishops who took their religious duties seriously and whose life was an example to the people, but there were also others whose manner of living could scarcely be distinguished from that of the ordinary lay noble.

In the principal city of each diocese there was a cathedral, which was the bishop's church. Here there was a

The canons

"chapter" of canons, who were responsible for the conduct of the services. The cathedral canons bore much the same relation to the bishops that the cardinals did to the pope. They assisted him in the administration, acted as an advisory council, and had the sole right, according to canon law, of electing a new bishop, though their choice was, in practice, frequently dictated by the king or some other feudal superior. At the head of each chapter there was a dean, elected by the canons. By the thirteenth century the cathedral chapters had acquired a good deal of land, which, with the support of the popes, made them fairly independent of their bishops. With each canon's "prebend" or office went the income from a definite piece of land. As a result, prebends were often sought by young nobles who had no particular religious interests. The popes were forced to issue frequent edicts, usually in vain, ordering canons to remain in residence and to attend to their duties. As a measure of reform some chapters were organized on a monastic basis with a rule of communal life.

The smallest unit of ecclesiastical administration was the parish, and it was the parish

Parish priests

priest who came most directly in contact with the people. In country districts the parish was usually identical with the village or manor.

The parish church was endowed with land, a fixed share in the cultivated fields of the manor. The priest drew his income from this land and also from offerings and the tithe. The last, which had originally been a free offering for any religious purpose, had become a definite tax on the income of all parishioners, enforceable by law. However, the priest was not permitted to keep all or even the largest part of his income. Part of it went to the bishop in various forms of ecclesiastical tax and part to the "patron" of the church. The latter was usually the lord of the manor whose ancestors had originally endowed the church with its land. In the feudal age the parish church, like almost everything else, had become feudalized. The church, with its lands and tithe, was a "benefice" or "living" which the patron bestowed upon the priest, while retaining a share of the church's income for himself. The patronage of a church was, therefore, a lucrative property and, where the patron was a lay lord, it might be passed on by inheritance or alienated by sale or gift. The patron had, in addition, the right of "presenting" or nominating the priest, though the presentation must be confirmed by the bishop of the diocese. This naturally produced many abuses. Lay patrons often gave the living to favorites or sold it to the highest bidder, with little regard for the suitability of the candidate for his office. Of course, many churches were on ecclesiastical estates, where the patron was a bishop or abbot, from whom greater care for the spiritual character of the appointee might be expected. Also, in many cases, the patronage of churches was given or sold by pious laymen to a bishop, a monastery or a cathedral chapter. But clerical patronage also led to abuses. The clerical patron — bishop, abbot, or dean — might hold the office of priest for himself and appoint a "vicar" as a substitute, who did all the work and received only a small proportion of the income for himself.

Under such circumstances, a high standard of character and training could scarcely be expected, es-

Character of the priests

pecially among the priests or vicars of the poorer country parishes. They were

recruited mostly from the peasant class and were poorly educated, if not actually illiterate. Both secular writers, who had little love for the clergy, and reforming preachers agree in condemning the priests for carelessness and immorality, or at least for conduct unbecoming their sacred office. We read that some neglected the church services or absented themselves entirely and hired an unfit substitute. Others misused their power in order to extort money from their parishioners, defrauded the church, or engaged in secular businesses such as money-lending. Priests could no longer marry, but there can be no doubt that the law of celibacy was frequently violated. When specific charges are omitted, the writers accuse them of being more worldly than religious, as well they may have been, considering the manner in which many of them obtained their position. "Our priests," writes a contemporary preacher, "immersed in material things, disturb themselves little about those of the spirit. They differ from laymen in dress, not at heart; in appearance, not in reality. They belie by their deeds what they preach from the pulpit. Tonsure, garb, and speech give them the superficial varnish of piety; underneath the sheep's clothing are concealed hypocrites and ravening wolves." We must beware, however, of taking the strictures of the reforming preachers too literally, for they were likely to take for granted the numerous priests who did their duty quietly and to generalize from the most notorious examples.

Aside from all its other activities, the church had wide judicial powers. These were exercised in the episcopal **Ecclesiastical courts**, which administered ecclesiastical or canon law rather than the civil law of the secular courts. The bishops claimed jurisdiction over all persons who in any way could be classed as clergy, including students and deacons who had not been ordained priests, as well as widows, orphans, and crusaders who were regarded as wards of the church. They also claimed a variety of cases, not involving the clergy, in which the dispute was of a moral or religious nature. In this latter class fell all cases having to do with marriage, with business deals sanctioned by an oath, and testaments

witnessed by a priest, as well as offenses against religion, such as violation of church property, heresy, and blasphemy. The sentences prescribed in criminal cases by canon law, which always avoided the shedding of blood, were notoriously lighter than those of the civil courts. Hence, despite the opposition of secular governments, the episcopal courts were sought by all who could claim "benefit of clergy." Fines were the most common punishments inflicted, with the result that the courts furnished a considerable part of the bishops' revenues. This fact also goes far to explain the opposition of the kings, especially in France and England, to the transference of cases from the royal to the ecclesiastical courts. They were still more opposed — and in this they had the support of the bishops — to the growing custom of appealing cases from the local church courts to the papal *curia* at Rome. The appeals to Rome not only took a good deal of money out of the country; they also removed important cases from the jurisdiction of the bishops, whom the kings could more or less control, to a distant and independent court.

By the thirteenth century the popes had so far succeeded in the centralization of authority that they were able to draw a large income from the **Papal revenue** clergy of all parts of Roman Christendom. It was not till the Later Middle Ages, however, when the spiritual character of the papacy had declined still further, that the popes worked out fully the various methods of adding to their revenue. We will leave the subject, therefore, for further discussion in a later chapter.[1]

2. THE SACRAMENTS, POPULAR RELIGION, AND HERESY

The preceding outline shows the church as a great human institution, a spiritual state, separate from and superior to the lay world, which it taxed and governed with legal authority. But how did it acquire and maintain its authority? What did religion mean to the ordinary layman who knelt before the priest? And was there no revolt? These are significant questions and must be answered in some fashion if we are to understand the religion of the Middle Ages.

[1] See below, page 346.

A partial answer to these questions can be stated briefly. To the mediêval man, religion and the universal church, with its sacramental powers, were inseparable. He could not conceive of one apart from the other. The pope was the vicegerent, the representative of God on earth, and to him and his subordinate officers God had entrusted the salvation of mankind. Could any man defy such authority with eternity at stake? Even the most thoughtless man lived under the shadow of eternity. Before him lay the awe-inspiring alternative of heaven or hell, and of these two he thought more often and more vividly of the latter. He could scarcely imagine the bliss of heaven, but hell was a place of eternal physical torment as real to him as was the land of a neighboring county. Indeed, a Norman peasant had probably a clearer mental picture of the topography, climate, and general living conditions of hell than of those of Burgundy or Aquitaine. And he believed, as the church had taught since Saint Augustine, that no man, because of the original sin inherited from Adam and the sins which he himself would inevitably commit, could by his own unaided efforts win salvation and avoid damnation. He must depend on divine grace, which was administered through the sacraments of the church. The fear of hell was somewhat softened by the development of the doctrine of purgatory, which was an intermediate state between heaven and hell, where those who were not hopelessly damned but were not yet ready for heaven might spend an indeterminate period of further penance and purgation through suffering. But even purgatory could not be reached without the sacraments.

Heaven and hell

The doctrine of the sacraments had developed slowly since the early days of Christianity. It was not fully developed till the twelfth century. There were seven sacraments in all. That of baptism, administered as soon as possible after birth, cleansed the child of original sin and signified his entry into the church. Without it there could be no hope of salvation. The sacrament of confirma-

Sacraments

tion, administered by a bishop, came later, during adolescence, and marked the communicant's conscious acceptance of the faith, thus confirming his baptism. Extreme unction was the final sacrament, the last rite performed for a dying man to prepare his soul for eternity. These three, in the normal course of events, were administered to every man and woman once. The other two universal sacraments were more frequent. The sacrament of penance, following confession and proof of repentance, washed away the guilt of sin and left only the necessity of doing some act of penance in this world or in purgatory to prepare the soul for salvation. Finally, and most important of all, the Eucharist, administered during the service of the Mass, admitted the communicant to a share in the saving grace resulting from Christ's supreme sacrifice. The two remaining sacraments, marriage and ordination, were administered to laymen and clergy respectively. Each was considered indissoluble, the former so long as both parties lived, the latter for life, though either might be broken by a special dispensation from the church.

The power of the clergy and the authority of the church rested securely on the sacramental system. For, with the exception of baptism which in an emergency could be administered by any Christian, only a priest, who had himself received the sacrament of ordination from a bishop, could administer the sacraments. The clergy, in other words, held a monopoly that guaranteed their position. They alone could purvey to the people the precious gift of salvation. The wealth, political influence, and legal authority of the church followed naturally on that fact. Disobedience or rebellion could be met by excommunication, which cut the offending person off from membership in the church, and hence, unless the ban were lifted, from all hope of salvation. Moreover, the priest was kept in close touch with his parishioners through the confession, which must precede the sacrament of penance. He thus gained an intimate knowledge of their affairs and could wield a great influence over their lives.

Power of the clergy

The important part played by the sacra-

ments in the scheme of salvation tended to make them appear to the popular mind as the only essential factor in religion. The average man of the Middle Ages, illiterate and not too far removed from barbarism, was no theologian. He might easily fail to grasp the spiritual significance of the sacraments and come to view the actual ceremonies as a sort of mechanical process sufficient to secure his entry into heaven. Despite the warnings of devout churchmen, people came to regard the material acts of the sacraments as having a supernatural power in themselves. This tendency to reduce spiritual concepts to material terms was characteristic of all aspects of popular religion. Uneducated men, whose minds were not trained to think in abstract terms, demanded physical symbols that they could see and touch, or objects of adoration to which they could give a local habitation and a name — and often they forgot that the symbol was not itself the reality.

Popular religion

The veneration of saints and the popular belief in the constant participation of saints and devils in the events of daily life arose in part from this natural mental process. God seemed far removed from human affairs and Christ was too often pictured as a stern judge. Men felt the need of some more human and understandable figures to act as intermediaries between man and God. This rôle was admirably filled by the Virgin Mary and the saints, who had been human and might still retain human characteristics or at least have sympathy with human frailties. From the veneration of the saints came much of the warmth, color, and simple piety of medieval religion, but it also led to a good deal of materialistic superstition. The activity of the saints was not limited to keeping men from temptation or enabling them to escape punishment for their sins. They also came to the assistance of men in purely material ways, curing their sickness, protecting their crops, finding lost articles and performing a host of beneficent services for those who sought their aid. To people who believed that the universe was governed by supernatural rather than natural laws, there

Saints and devils

was no inconsistency in such supernatural interference in the ordinary sequence of cause and effect. It was a natural consequence of a literal or material interpretation of the eternal conflict between good and evil forces in the universe, which was the essential plot of the divine drama. For there were innumerable demons or devils as well as saints, and these were quite as active. They tempted men into sin; ruined their crops by storm or insect pests; afflicted them with sickness; struck the steeple of the churches with lightning; or, more ingenious in their rage against the church, caused the choir to doze or the priest to stutter during the service of the Mass.

The demand for material and tangible objects of adoration was expressed most clearly in the veneration of relics of the saints. Having once been men on this earth, the saints had left behind relics of their mortal existence — their bodies as well as their clothing and personal belongings. These relics of famous men would at any time have a sentimental value, such as today we should give to the pen used by Shakespeare, and would be eagerly sought by collectors. But the relics of the saints meant much more than that, for they shared the miraculous powers of the saints themselves. To touch them was enough to heal one's illness or to keep one from harm. The bones of one of the major saints were worth more than a king's ransom, and pilgrims came from far places to seek aid or comfort at the shrine that housed them. Pilgrimages, too, were often undertaken as a full or partial performance of penance prescribed by the church. All through the medieval centuries, bands of pilgrims might be met daily on any of the main roads of Europe.

Relics and pilgrimages

The great majority of medieval men undoubtedly accepted the authority and teaching of the church without question, and could not think of religion apart from it. But there were some heretics who rebelled, and their numbers increased during the twelfth century until they had become a serious menace to the church. We know less than we should like to know about the opinions of medieval

Heretics

heretics, since we are forced to rely mostly on accounts written by their orthodox opponents. It is clear, however, that, though different groups held quite different opinions, all the more popular heresies can be accounted for by the same general causes. They were due, in one way or another, to the failure of the church to provide satisfactory spiritual inspiration, and were motivated by dissatisfaction with the mechanical nature of the sacramental system and, still more, with the character, wealth, and power of the clergy. They were nearly all anti-sacramentarian and anti-clerical.

The two most important heretical sects, the Albigenses and the Waldenses, flourished chiefly in southern France, **Albigenses and Waldenses** though they spread also into neighboring countries. The former, who were also called Cathari, were the most numerous and made their appearance as early as the eleventh century. Their central doctrine seems to have been a very literal and rather morbid identification of everything physical or material with the forces of evil in the universe. This led to the rejection of all material symbols of religion — sacraments, crosses, relics, or images — and an extreme asceticism, at least among the inner circle of the "perfected," who were sworn to abstain from marrying, owning property, eating flesh, or shedding blood. The ordinary "believers," who made up the greater part of the sect, were allowed greater freedom. The Waldenses seem to have been much more normal and their doctrines were closer to true Christianity. Save in the south of France, where they were included in the mass persecution of the Albigenses, they were not rigorously pursued by the church, and remnants of them survived for centuries in Piedmont, Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, and even in orthodox Spain. Their founder was a rich merchant of Lyons, Peter Waldo, who about the year 1170 gave away his property to the poor and began preaching in an effort to recall men to the simple doctrine of Christ· as found in the Gospels. Neither he nor his followers had at first any thought of heresy, but their vigorous condemnation of the wealth and worldliness of

the clergy soon led to their being condemned by the church. Forbidden to preach, they were forced to separate themselves from the church and to justify their position by the claim that any good Christian had the right to preach and that the sacraments were not necessary to salvation. Their protest against the clerical monopoly was never entirely forgotten. It undoubtedly did something, though how much is uncertain, to prepare the way for Wyclif, Huss, and Luther.

Throughout the twelfth century the church had made fitful efforts to suppress heretics, but it was Innocent III who first devoted the full au- **Albigensian Crusade** thority of the papacy to the task of destroying these enemies of the faith. In 1207, he summoned the chivalry of Europe to take part in a crusade against the Albigenses. The story of that crusade, which was led by Simon de Montfort, has been recounted briefly in Chapter 17. The northern knights laid waste the rich lands of southern France and slaughtered thousands. They struck a mortal blow to the flourishing culture of Languedoc and Provence as well as to heresy, but the latter at least would soon have revived had the work of the crusaders not been followed by the preaching of the newly founded orders of friars and by the steady persecution of heresy carried on by the Inquisition or Holy Office, now for the first time firmly established. Inquisitorial procedure — that is, the searching out and trying of heretics — was not new. It had been a regular part of the bishops' judicial duties. But the bishops were busy men and often none too zealous. In 1233, therefore, Pope Gregory IX gave a permanent commission, later more fully developed, to regular inquisitors who were to set up special courts, though still in formal co-operation with the bishops, for the discovery and trial of heretics. The methods of the Inquisition — the secrecy of the trials, the refusal to divulge the names of the accusers so that the accused might answer them, the full and accurate records kept by the court, and the use of torture to extort confessions — inspired dread wherever the institution was established, and in the long run succeeded in stamping out open

heresy. The sentences imposed ranged from public penance to life imprisonment. Stubborn heretics, however, who refused to recant, or those who later relapsed into heresy, were turned over to the secular government to be burned at the stake.

3. THE MONKS AND FRIARS

Aside from the laymen and the "secular" clergy, who made up the active Christian community, there were large numbers of "regular" clergy, as the monks and nuns were called who lived apart from the world in accordance with the monastic rule. The rule followed by most of them was still that of Saint Benedict, or a variation upon it, and the monastic ideal had changed very little since the early days of monasticism.[1] The monks were often called simply "the religious," for their way of life was considered the most truly Christian, more likely to win salvation than that of either layman or secular priest. But the very popularity of the monastic life had led to the relaxation of discipline in many monasteries or to the observance of the letter rather than the spirit of the rule. Thousands of men and women entered the monastery or the convent for reasons that had little to do with religion — and not all of them willingly. Sons and daughters of noble families who could not be provided for from the family estates were sometimes relegated to the cloister. Weaklings who could not hold their own in a violent society, and men who sought only leisure and security found in it a refuge. Ambitious youngsters saw in it an opportunity for advancement; for the monasteries possessed wide lands and the abbot was a feudal lord with a large income and great political power. It is not surprising, then, to find many monks who lived in luxurious idleness or who left their monasteries on every possible pretext to renew contact with the world they had forsworn, so that contemporary preachers complained that one could not go anywhere without stumbling over a monk. Even had they wished, the abbots and monks could not have remained cut off from the world. They were often better educated than the laymen, and

The regular clergy (margin)

kings and lords used them constantly as ministers, messengers, or negotiators. Even Saint Bernard had to spend most of his life outside his beloved walls.

Yet, despite the worldliness of the majority of monks and the tendency both in the monastery and outside to an easy acceptance of the forms of religion, there were still many earnestly religious people in the Middle Ages to whom the monastic ideal made a strong appeal and who strove to put it into practice. In one monastery after another the rule was for a time rigidly enforced or was made still more stringent, until the fame of the monastery spread abroad and brought a shower of pious gifts. Eventually the reformed monasteries would become wealthy and lax. The enthusiasm for reform would die down and they would settle back into the ordinary routine. Several of the reformed monasteries founded numbers of branch houses or priories, thus forming a "congregation" under the rule of the abbot of the home monastery. The results of the reform were in this way spread over a large territory. The great Congregation of Cluny included more than two thousand houses by the middle of the twelfth century. Like most of the congregations, Cluny was exempt from episcopal control and subject only to the pope. Its influence on the general reform of the church and the establishment of papal supremacy has already been noted.[1] As its prestige declined, its place of leadership was taken by the Cistercian Congregation, founded at Cîteaux in 1098. The latter owed much of its fame to Saint Bernard, who wielded a greater spiritual influence than any other man during the first half of the twelfth century. Among the other reformed congregations the most important was the Premonstratensian order of regular canons, founded at Prémontré in 1120, who followed the Augustinian rule.

Monastic reforms (margin)

The monastic reforms raised the spiritual level of the monks, temporarily at any rate, but they could have no more than an indirect influence on the people outside the monasteries. The monks were hampered by the rule, strongly enforced

The friars (margin)
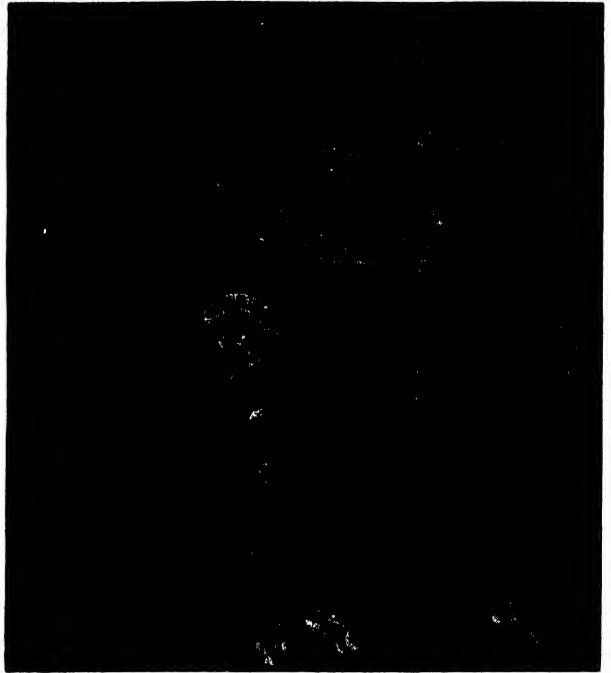
SAINT FRANCIS AND THE FRANCISCAN LEGEND

The figure of the Christ-like saint and the stories that grew up about him furnished inspiration and subject matter for some of the finest religious art of the Renaissance.

in the reformed monasteries, which bound them to their houses. In order to win heretics back to the faith and to give spiritual inspiration to the people at large, what was evidently needed were the services of men who combined the unworldly devotion of the ideal monk with the ability to move freely among the people and preach directly to them. It was in answer to this need that the two great orders of friars (brothers) were created in the early years of the thirteenth century. The Franciscans and Dominicans were a new kind of monk. Strictly speaking, they were not monks at all, for they did not live in monasteries, but wandered freely among the people getting their living by begging, whence they were called the mendicant orders.

Saint Francis of Assisi (1181 or 1182–1226), who founded the Friars Minor or Franciscans, was one of the most

Saint Francis

lovable of the medieval saints. His father was a rich Italian merchant, but Francis, with his romantic temperament, cared little for business. In his youth he lived a gay, irresponsible existence, loving poetry and gallant gestures. His conversion from this frivolous life came suddenly, when he was still in his early twenties. With characteristic whole-heartedness, he gave what money he had, including some of his father's, to repair a ruined chapel; cut himself off from his business-like family; and set out in absolute poverty to preach to the poor, confident that the necessities of life would be provided. In his new way of life, Francis lost none of his joyous spirit, his love of poetry and nature, or the personal charm that had always attracted men to him. He adopted poverty gaily, not as a penance but as a liberation from the ties that bind men to earth. He soon acquired followers and, in 1210, secured the verbal sanction of Innocent III for this nucleus of an order. Thereafter the brothers grew rapidly in numbers and were given a complete rule, which was confirmed by Pope Honorius III in 1223. Before long, the gray-cloaked friars were familiar figures on every highway and in every crowded slum of western Europe. They were a universal order, exempt from the authority of the bishops.

Their general was subject only to the pope. As they became more popular, the ideals of the friars began to change. They accepted gifts of houses and furniture, despite the rule of poverty on which Saint Francis had insisted so strongly, and their high standard of character gradually declined. A few, however, clung to the spirit of the rule, with the result that after a long and bitter controversy the order was finally divided.

Saint Dominic (1170–1221), the founder of the order of Preaching Friars named after him, was a native of Old Castile.

He was well-educated and be-

Saint Dominic

came a canon and later a subprior of the Augustinian order. In 1205, he accompanied his bishop on a mission into southern France. There he was shocked by the amount of heresy he found and soon began to preach in an effort to win back heretics to the orthodox faith. For the next eleven years he continued his preaching, though often in danger from the violence aroused by the Albigensian Crusade. Like Saint Francis, he gathered a group of followers about him. He received papal recognition for his order in 1216, though the final rule was not drawn up till four years later. Saint Dominic was a man of admirable character, gentle and kindly and absolutely fearless; but he lacked the rare spiritual charm of the Italian saint, and his main purpose was the more limited one of converting heretics rather than giving spiritual inspiration to the orthodox, who often needed it quite as badly. He, too, insisted on the vow of poverty, but he valued it not as an end in itself, as Saint Francis did, but because it would increase the prestige and influence of the preaching brothers. When poverty seemed a disadvantage rather than an asset, the Dominicans departed from the rule without the conflict which tore the Franciscan order on that point. Friars from both orders were frequently entrusted with the conduct of the Inquisition, but it was naturally the Dominicans who gave most time to the grim task of suppressing heresy, from which came the name of *Domini canes* (the hounds of God) often applied to them.

During the first century after their foundation the mendicant orders exercised a tre-
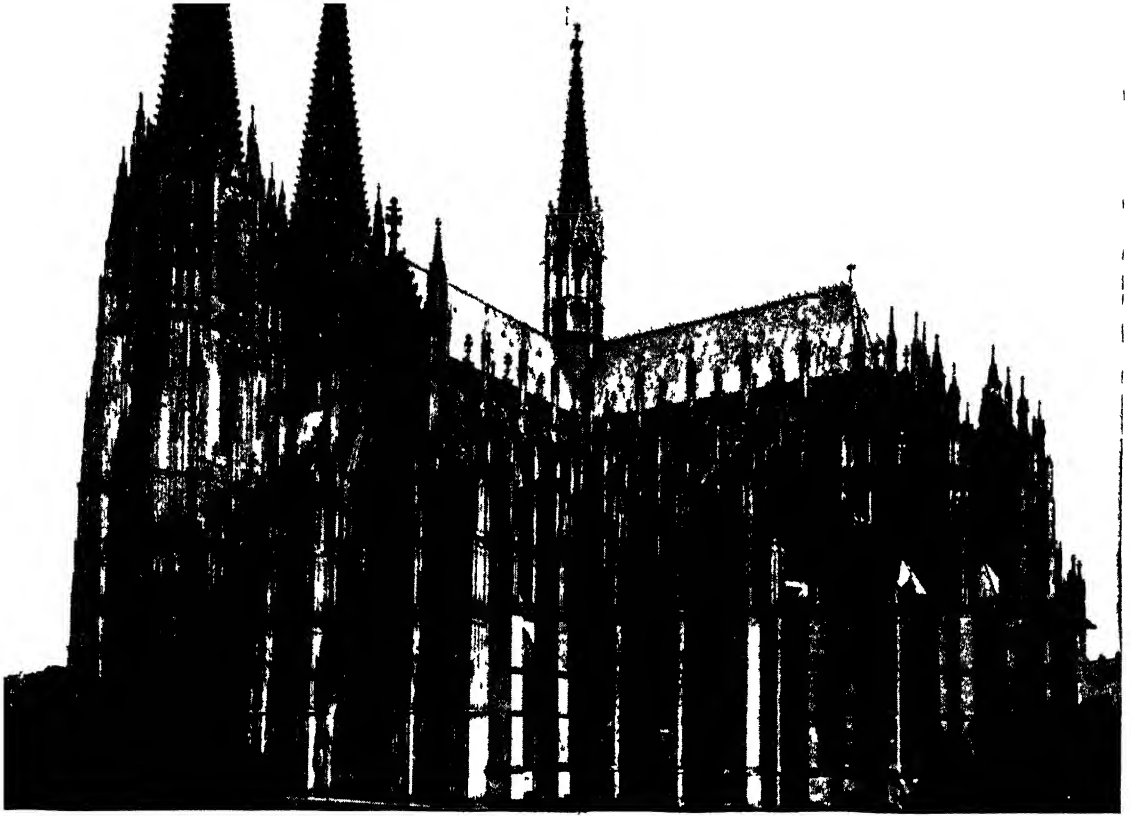
GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE. COLOGNE CATHEDRAL

SAINT STEPHEN   SAINT FIRMIN   SAINT MATTHEW

The saints, who played such a large part in medieval religious life, were the subjects of some of the finest Gothic sculpture.

Above: CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN

THE VIRGIN OF VILLENEUVE-LES-AVIGNON

Right: As the picture suggests, Gothic sculpture had at times a realistic quality which made the saints seem very real and human.
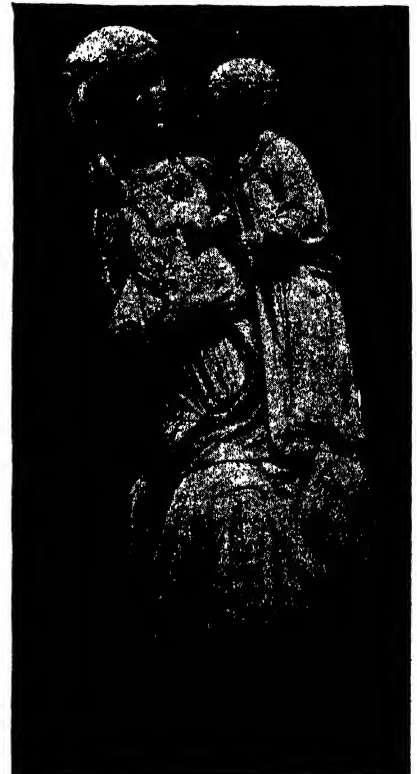
FRENCH GOTHIC ART, THIRTEENTH CENTURY

mendous influence that fully justified their

unrivaled popularity. They converted thousands of heretics and gave new life and fervor to popular religion everywhere. The friars were given full power to hear confessions, independent of the local clergy who had so often proved unfit for their duties, and they were successful in restoring frequency of confession to a remarkable degree. In the Later Middle Ages, however, when the character of the orders had begun to decline, their confessional power frequently led to abuse, and the parish priests complained that they were both lax and avaricious, granting easy absolution in return for gifts. But the influence of the friars was not confined to popular religion. They did great services also to the cause of learning. The Dominicans were from the first devoted to education, as befitted an order created for the combating of heretical opinion. Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, who were largely responsible for shaping the scholastic philosophy which sought to base the articles of faith on a firm foundation of reason, were both Dominicans. Nor were the Franciscans far behind, though Saint Francis had warned them against too much education. The names of Saint Bonaventura, Alexander of Hales, Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, and William of Occam witness that the Friars Minor were fully equal to their rivals in learning.

4. RELIGIOUS ART — THE CATHEDRALS

In an age when religion was so powerful a factor in everyday life, and when the church so largely dominated society, it is not surprising that the art which best expressed the emotions and aspirations of the people should be religious art. Not that all medieval art was religious, but religion did inspire the finest products of artistic genius because it appealed so strongly to the artist's imagination, and also because religious art was encouraged and financed by the most powerful institution of the age, the church. This is particularly true of architecture, the most highly perfected art of the Middle Ages, to which all the other arts were subordinated. There were magnificent castles and elaborate guildhalls, but none of them can compare for richness of beauty with the cathedrals.

All the most vital forces in medieval society were concentrated in the building of the cathedrals. They were monuments to the pride and authority of the church and

also to the piety and municipal patriotism of the citizens, for both bishops and burghers contributed freely to their construction. The cathedral owed its existence to both the church and the city, and it belonged to both. Priest and guildsman alike raised their eyes in pride and veneration to its soaring towers, rising high above the central square, and ordered their day by the regular pealing of its giant bells. The cathedral, too, was the product of the collective artistry of master builders and of countless carpenters, stone masons, painters, and makers of stained glass. These nameless artists, or artisans as they were more likely to consider themselves, sharing the emotions and beliefs of their fellows and working together for a grand purpose, succeeded in creating a work of art that expresses in perfect form the religious aspirations of their age. Nothing else that remains from that time expresses so clearly what religion meant in the age of faith as the Gothic cathedral with its high pointed arches, its flying buttresses and tall spires, all leading the eye upward, and its wealth of sculptured figures, ranging from saint to gargoyle, that often caused the eye to linger on the way. It expresses both the inward yearning of the soul toward God and the outward splendor of the earthly church. Spiritual ideals and the tendency to convert them into material symbols are both there. The great age of the cathedrals was the period of the church's greatest power, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Thereafter the forces that had combined to build the cathedrals were drifting apart.

Sculpture as an independent art scarcely existed in the Middle Ages, but it was highly developed none the less, being employed in lavish fashion for the decoration of cathedrals

and churches. Painting was also used for the same purpose, though not so extensively, for in the Gothic cathedrals the stained-glass

windows occupied most of the clear wall space and themselves furnished color and picture. The purpose of both painter and sculptor was to edify and instruct an illiterate people, as well as to add to the beauty of the building. Their work was often cramped by tradition and conventionalized by the necessity of fitting it into the architect's plans.

It was not only through the beauty of line and color, carved stone, and stained glass,

Liturgy that the cathedral expressed and satisfied the artistic instincts of medieval people. It was also the scene of the colorful services of the church, the drama of the Mass, accompanied by the solemn cadences, the grand rhythms and verbal beauty of the Latin liturgy. The prayers, chants, and hymns of the Latin service satisfied the universal human craving for music and poetry, and combined it with religious emotion.

From early times, the singing of hymns had formed an important part of the church

Hymns services. During the High Middle Ages, a large number of new hymns were added, some of which still stand as the finest poetry written during that period. Every special service for a saint's day or for one of the great seasonal festivals, as well as each of the daily "hours," had its hymns. These hymns were written in the medieval Latin that was the universal language of the church. Though not the language of the common people, it was still a living, spoken language. In poetry, frequent rhymes and a stressed accent had taken the place of the classical quantitative meter and unrhymed stanzas. But, though not classical, the Latin of the medieval hymns was far from being barbarous. It had a richness of melody and feeling that was its own justification.

5. THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING AND THE UNIVERSITIES

During the High Middle Ages, in every field of human endeavor, the half-barbarous

The revival of learning peoples of the West emerged from the darker ages into the full light of medieval civilization. The great revival of learning, which took place during that period, was the intellectual counterpart of the economic and social energy that produced the new trade and town life, of the religious force that built the great structure of the medieval church, and of the tendency toward social stability that was gradually imposing order upon feudal chaos. The inspiration for the new learning came largely from the Greek and Saracen East, partly through the crusades, partly through Italy, but still more from Mohammedan Spain. The scientific and philosophical works of Aristotle, the writings of the ancient Greek mathematicians and physicians, usually from the translations and commentaries made by Saracen scholars, and also the body of Roman law codified by Justinian, all of which had been almost completely lost sight of during the earlier Middle Ages, were now eagerly studied. The bare bones of the *trivium* and *quadrivium* (the elements of grammar, rhetoric, and logic, and of arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, and music, respectively), which had made up the sum of early medieval education, paled into insignificance before this mass of new material. The old monastery and cathedral schools were no longer adequate to cope with the demands of this enlarged curriculum. They gave way gradually before the rising universities.

The twelfth century was the period in which the earliest universities took shape. By the end of the century those of Bologna, Paris, Montpellier, **Rise of the universities** and Oxford, at least, were well established. We do not know just when to date their beginnings, for they were not founded. They simply grew, evolving slowly from the need for protection of students and teachers and from the natural tendency of men with common interests to organize themselves and to form institutions. The official charters granted by king and pope in the early years of the thirteenth century were merely the recognition of an accomplished fact. The University of Paris served as a model for all northern universities, including Oxford, which owed its origin to the recall of English students from Paris about 1167, Cambridge, founded by a migration from Oxford in 1209, and the German uni-

versities which sprang up in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Early in the twelfth century, Paris became a famous center of learning, drawing students and teachers from all parts of Europe. The fame of the brilliant young philosopher, Peter Abelard, attracted hundreds of students, and after his departure the theologian, Peter Lombard, and scores of other teachers maintained the reputation of the city. Originally, these teachers had given private courses independently. But this proved unsatisfactory to both students and teachers for a variety of reasons. Some form of organization was obviously necessary.

The formation of a university or guild (the words originally meant the same thing) of **Organization** teachers and students was the logical solution of the problem. In order to prevent unqualified men from teaching, the chancellor of the cathedral was empowered to grant licenses to those who had passed a satisfactory examination, which, of course, necessitated the fixing of a curriculum of studies so that the candidates would know on what material they were to be examined. Those who were granted licenses were called masters of arts and formed the governing body of the university, the faculty of arts. Following the analogy of the guild, the students may be considered as the apprentices, and the bachelors as the journeymen with a limited license who were permitted to teach in certain elementary courses. Since the only sure test of mastery of a subject is ability to teach it, the organization of education as a training for teachers was logical enough. The master's degree was accepted as the guaranty of proficiency, sought by all, even though all did not intend to use it for active teaching. After becoming a master of arts, if the student wished specialized training in one of the professions, he might pursue a further course of study leading to the degree of doctor and admittance to the faculties of theology, medicine, or law. The University of Bologna, famous for its law school, was organized somewhat differently, for there the governing body was the society or university of students, who had first organized for mutual protection against teachers and townspeople alike. The facul-

ties were there subordinate to the students. Most of the southern universities followed this model rather than that of Paris.

Despite the analogy between its organization and that of the craft guild, the university was essentially a clerical institution. Both teachers and students were classed as clerics or clergy, and so were exempt from ordinary civil jurisdiction. The charter granted to the University of Paris by Philip Augustus in 1200 recognized this exemption from the jurisdiction of royal or municipal courts. Further independence of local authority was acquired shortly after by papal edict. The university, as a corporation, was freed from the jurisdiction of the bishop, and disciplinary powers were vested in the faculty, subject only to the pope. The same arrangement was also made in regard to the other universities, thus giving them a remarkable degree of corporate independence, while at the same time adding to papal power by giving the popes the supervision of all higher education.

The continental universities were all very cosmopolitan. There was no language difficulty to deter foreign students, for Latin was the language of education everywhere — whence the name "Latin Quarter" for the student section of Paris. In Paris, as in most universities, the masters and students of the faculty of arts were divided into four "nations"; the French, including also the southern Latins; the Normans; the Picards, including students from the Netherlands; and the English, in which nation were also included the Germans and Scandinavians. The nations were organized as societies and between them chose the rector, who was the chief administrative officer of the university for a brief term. Quarrels between the nations led to almost as many violent brawls as did the perennial conflict between students and townspeople.

The students were, indeed, a riotous lot at times. The medieval university provided no organized sports or student **Student life** activities to serve as an outlet for youthful energy and high spirits, and it was an age when men resorted easily to physical violence. Despite all prohibitions,

many a student carried a knife concealed under his gown, and used it on the slightest provocation. Contemporary preachers raised their hands in horror at the drunkenness, violence, and immorality of the students, all the more because they were legally clerics, and the student poems and "Goliardic" songs, which celebrate the less respectable joys of life in charming but inaccurate Latin, bear out the indictment. Undoubtedly the medieval students were more undisciplined than those of modern times, but otherwise they were very much like students in all ages. In the letters and records that have survived, we can find all the recognizable types — students rich and poor, diligent and lazy, those who were earnestly laying the foundations of a career, and those who were merely enjoying a vacation from home. Letters written home for more funds to meet unexpected expenses, none too well itemized, were evidently as common then as now. So were letters from parents complaining that their sons were wasting their time and their parents' hard-earned money in irresponsible pleasures.

The medieval university had very little of the physical equipment that seems so important in its modern counterpart. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it had no buildings, except an occasional residential college for poor students, no laboratories, no library, and even no regular classrooms. A staff of teachers was all that the university possessed, or rather, the masters were the university. Classes were held in a room in the professor's house or in a hired hall. In Paris, the students sat on the floor, which was covered with straw, while the professor lectured from a platform with a desk to hold his notes. The classes were long, beginning often at daybreak, and the rooms must have been cold and uncomfortable. The sole method of instruction was the lecture, based on a definite textbook. Medieval scholars had great respect for authoritative books, of which there were still relatively few, and the business of the professor was to explain and comment on the authorities in his field. Books were scarce and expensive, since all had to be copied by hand. Few students

Method of instruction

could afford to own their texts, though they could often rent them. As a rule, however, the method of lecturing made the possession of texts by all the students unnecessary. Taking the text passage by passage, the professor read it slowly so that the students could copy it verbatim. He then expounded it sentence by sentence, drawing upon his knowledge of the subject for every possible ray of light that could be shed upon its meaning. At the end of the course, the student's notes, if he were diligent, would comprise a complete copy of the text with the lecturer's gloss or explanation.

The course in the faculty of arts leading to the M.A. degree, normally a six-year course with the bachelor's degree somewhere along the way, was the essential part of the university curriculum. It was taken by all students, including those who intended to enter the higher faculties later. The *trivium* and *quadrivium* still formed the framework of the curriculum, but the proportion of emphasis had shifted. By far the most time was given to the former, and of the three subjects included in it (grammar, rhetoric, and logic), logic far outstripped the rest. In the first half of the twelfth century, there had been a considerable revival of interest in classical Latin literature; but the introduction of Aristotle's *Logic* at about the same time and of his *Metaphysics* in the early years of the thirteenth century turned the attention of scholars more and more to logic and philosophy, while grammar and rhetoric sank back into second place. They became merely a means to the end of teaching enough Latin to understand the more important subjects, and the classics were used simply as examples of grammatical construction. The Latin of the medieval universities was strictly utilitarian. It was used to convey information and hence remained a living tongue, changing and adapting itself to fit the needs of the age in a way that would have been impossible had it remained bound to classical precedent. Logic and philosophy were also used for practical purposes, furnishing a method of study that could be applied to medicine, law, science, and theology. They were the universal tools

The arts faculty

A UNIVERSITY LECTURE IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

This painting by Lorenzo de Voltolino shows Henricus de Allemannia lecturing on ethics to a more or less attentive class.
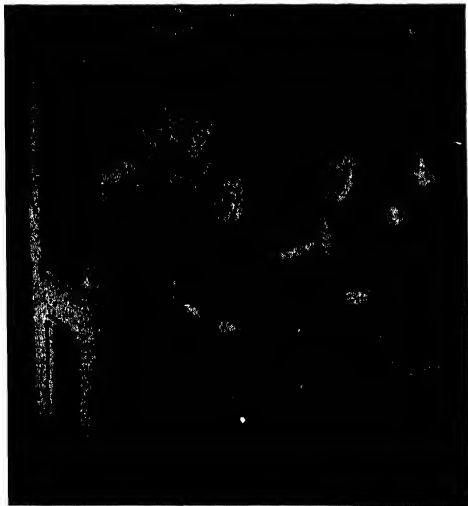
A PROFESSOR AND STUDENTS

*'his simple classroom was probably more character-
‌tic of the Middle Ages than the one above.*

A MEDIEVAL MONK COPYING MANUSCRIPTS

*The Scriptorium had probably not changed since the High
Middle Ages. From a fifteenth-century miniature.*

MEDIEVAL LEARNING

of the medieval scholar, who was more given to close, hard reasoning from authoritative texts and to metaphysical speculation than to experiment or to observation of natural phenomena.

The science of medicine, like the other natural sciences, suffered greatly from this **Medicine** method of study. The works of the ancient Greek physicians Galen and Hippocrates, usually from Arabic translations retranslated into Latin, and the commentaries of famous Saracen doctors like Avicenna, were accepted as authorities. From them the medieval physicians drew logical conclusions that were often totally erroneous because not checked by practical experiment or observation. The study of medicine was also complicated by the general belief in the influence of supernatural forces. The oldest medical school was that at Salerno in southern Italy, where Saracen influence was strongest, but there were also thriving medical faculties at Bologna, Montpellier, Toulouse, Paris, and elsewhere.

The logical method was much better suited to the study of law. Feudal law, with its **Law** infinite variations in practice, was largely ignored and the schools concentrated on a close study of Roman civil law, as embodied in the Justinian Code, and the canon law based on Gratian's *Decretum*, compiled about the middle of the twelfth century. Here the medieval scholars were dealing with authorities and principles, a field well suited to the method of logical deduction in which they excelled. The results of their work were of immense value both to the kings, who were trying to build up a system of royal law to take the place of feudal custom, and to the church, whose authority they placed on a firm legal foundation. The law schools attracted large numbers of students, since a degree in canon or civil law or, better still, in both, opened the way to a lucrative career. The University of Bologna was the most famous center of legal studies, but Padua, Montpellier, and Orléans were not far behind.

Theology was the "Queen of the Sciences" **Theology** in the Middle Ages, for it was the science that explained religion and showed men the way to salvation. Its

development in this period was for the most part the work of men who were teachers in the universities, hence called "schoolmen" or "scholastic" theologians. The majority of them were connected with the University of Paris, which far outstripped all other schools in this field. Two problems especially interested the scholastic theologians. The first was the problem of conflicting authorities, for in theology more than in any other subject the basic method of study was logical deduction from close study of unquestioned authorities, of which the Bible was the chief, with the works of the Fathers and the canons of the church ranking a close second. That these authorities did not always agree was brought forcibly to the attention of the theologians in the first half of the twelfth century by that rash and brilliant young teacher, Peter Abelard, who is now remembered chiefly for the story of his tragic love of Héloise. His arrangement of conflicting authorities in direct opposition to each other in a work boldly entitled *Yes and No (Sic et Non)* challenged the logical subtlety of the schoolmen to bring them into harmony. Among the scholars who undertook that task, the most successful was Peter Lombard, whose *Sentences* became the standard textbook of theology.

A second and still more controversial question was the problem of universals. It is a problem so far removed from modern modes of thought as to **The problem of universals** be almost incomprehensible to the average man today, but to men trained in philosophy, as were the medieval theologians, it was a question of fundamental importance. The question is, briefly, whether the type or the individual, for example the idea of mankind or the individual man, is the ultimate reality. The Realists, as those who followed Aristotle and Plato in holding the former view were called, triumphed for a time in the thirteenth century. Using the philosophical concept of the idea as the universal reality, Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) in his *Summa Theologiae* presented logical proofs for the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, the authority of the church, and all the fundamental articles of faith. This effort to base religion on a foundation of

reason and scientific proof was probably one of the most important intellectual contributions made during the Middle Ages. In the fourteenth century, however, the opposing school, the Nominalists, gained headway under the leadership of Duns Scotus and William of Occam. The Nominalists asserted that the reality is particular, that, to quote the example mentioned above, the individual man and not the idea or type of mankind is the only reality. It follows from this that the only ideas are the ideas of individual men, the only reason the reasoning of mortal minds. In the field of theology, the eventual triumph of Nominalism destroyed that system of thought which made possible the conclusive, logical proof of those things which the Christian believes, and threw men back upon faith, thus preparing the way for the ideas of Luther and the Protestant Reformation. In a wider field the Nominalist mode of thinking was a step forward toward the modern preoccupation with individual things, to the historians' interest in things as they have actually occurred, and to the scientists' interest in things as they actually are and as they individually behave.

SECTION E

The Later Middle Ages and the Renaissance

(c. 1270 — c. 1517)

No accurate dates can ever be assigned to the beginning or end of a period in the development of history, save for purposes of convenience and with the understanding that the dates chosen are purely arbitrary. Since dates are convenient, however, and having allowed for every sort of qualification and mental reservation, we have taken the year 1270 as marking the end of the High Middle Ages. That year saw the last crusade and the death of that very medieval saint-king, Louis IX, with whom passed the predominantly feudal monarchy in France. Two years later, Edward I of England began the reign that was to found Parliament and to mark the longest step yet taken toward fashioning a centralized monarchical state out of medieval feudalism. And in 1273 the shattered Holy Roman Empire was revived in the weakened form characteristic of its later history with the election of the first emperor of the house of Hapsburg. Europe was now about to enter upon an unsettled period of social, political, economic, and intellectual change, marked by the steady decay of medieval institutions and medieval culture. During the following two and a half centuries, feudalism, the guild system of commerce and industry, the universal authority of the papacy, and the scholastic methods of thought and education declined, while in their place arose institutions and ways of thinking of a new and distinctly modern character. When this period of the Later Middle Ages was over, Europe stood on the threshold of the modern age. Centralized territorial states had replaced the local autonomy of feudal lords and burgher city governments, and had also broken up the unity of the Respublica Christiana. Man's knowledge of the world had been greatly expanded by daring explorations to the distant East and the unknown West; and man's curiosity regarding himself and the world he lived in had been stimulated by the intellectual ferment of that age, which in the history of culture is generally known as the Renaissance.

THE GROWTH OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION 1291–1513

THE HANSEATIC LEAGUE AND TEUTONIC KNIGHTS

22

Germany and Eastern Europe

THE LONG STRUGGLE between the emperors and the popes, with the accompanying feud between the houses of Welf and Hohenstaufen in Germany and the Guelf and Ghibelline parties in Italy, had left the Holy Roman Empire a shattered wreck at the end of the High Middle Ages. After the death of the last Hohenstaufen emperor, Conrad IV, in 1254, there was no generally recognized emperor for nineteen years, though several foreigners claimed the empty title. The empire seemed about to dissolve; but in 1273, the period of "the Interregnum" was brought to an end by the election of a German emperor, and the empire continued to survive, though in a greatly weakened state. Italy was no longer a part of the empire save in theory. Few of the emperors during the Later Middle Ages attempted to exercise authority over the independent Italian city-states. Even in Germany the imperial power could not be revived in any effective way. It had become a land of semi-independent principalities and city-states, in which the emperors enjoyed more prestige than power. Leagues of districts and cities, like the Swiss Confederation and the Hanseatic League, organized themselves in mutual defense against the forces of anarchy about them and learned to depend on their co-operative strength rather than on the emperor for protection. Meanwhile, to the east of the empire, Poland was expanding into a large, though fundamentally weak, territorial state; fierce nomadic Tartars

swept out of central Asia across Russia, and retired after two centuries, leaving the princes of Moscow to form the beginnings of the modern Russian state; and from the southeast the Ottoman Turks carried the crescent of Islam from Asia Minor into the Balkans, destroying the Byzantine Empire on their way.

1. THE EMPIRE SURVIVES IN A STATE OF DISINTEGRATION

The German princes had made good use of the opportunities provided by the Interregnum to establish their independence, and this they intended to keep. Nevertheless, they felt the need of a ruler who would be strong enough to suppress the worst confusion and lawlessness, though not strong enough to interfere in the government of their own states. The tradition of the empire was still strong. Only an emperor could complete the formal structure of the feudal state and give a semblance of legality to the princes' authority. There was still enough German national feeling, too, to make them insist that the emperor should be a German. They therefore agreed on the election of Count Rudolf of Hapsburg (1273–91), who seemed to meet all the requirements to perfection. His family was an ancient and honorable one, with large estates on the northwestern slopes of the Alps, but it was not one of the great princely houses. He himself was popular, a fine, upstanding figure of a man,

Rudolf of Hapsburg
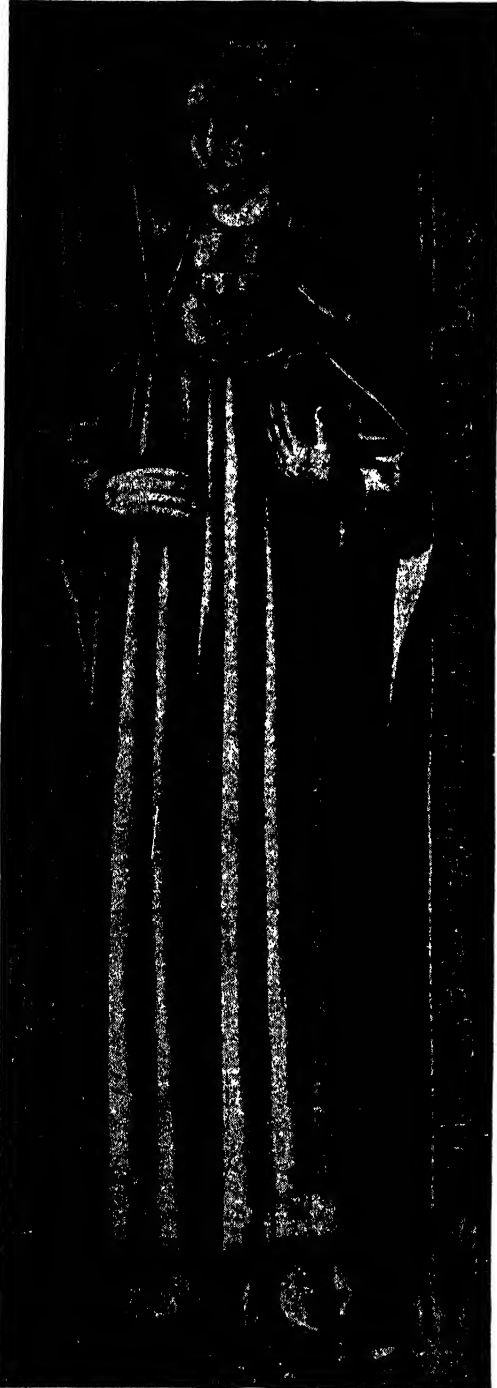
RUDOLF OF HAPSBURG

This portrait suggests the height and dignity if not the amiability of the first Hapsburg Emperor. From a tapestry in the Royal Court Museum in Vienna.

with a reputation for amiability and knightly valor. On the whole, Rudolf made a very satisfactory emperor. He used his prestige wisely to put down lawlessness and to reestablish peace wherever possible by diplomatic negotiations. At the same time, he made no attempt to interfere with the rights of the princes, and he sold privileges freely to both princes and cities. Only one thing alarmed the electors. Rudolf was bent on acquiring land and power for his family. He seized the German fiefs of King Ottokar II of Bohemia, who had refused to recognize his election, and from them granted Austria, Styria, and Carniola to his own son Albert, thus founding a strong domain in southeastern Germany, which the Hapsburgs were to keep until the present century.

Rudolf's success had shown that the imperial title still meant something, if not very much. It had also warned the electors not to leave the crown in one family, lest it become too powerful. Passing over Rudolf's son, Duke Albert of Austria, they chose Adolf of Nassau (1292-98), a Rhenish count who was willing to promise anything the electors demanded as the price of the crown. He failed to keep his promises, however, and before long the disappointed Duke Albert was able to stir up a rebellion among the discontented princes. Adolf was defeated and slain, and the Hapsburg duke was elected in his place. Albert spent his reign (1298-1308) in an attempt to strengthen the authority of the crown, but was assassinated by a member of his own family before he could accomplish anything definite. Again the electors turned from the powerful Hapsburg family. This time they offered the crown to Count Henry of Luxemburg, whose lands lay in the half-French, half-German country to the west of the Rhine. Henry VII (1308-13) had many of the qualities that should go to make a good ruler. He had also a high conception of the imperial dignity, and it was this that caused his downfall. The desire to be crowned at Rome and to reassert imperial authority in Italy, which had lured so many medieval emperors to destruction, led him to purchase temporary peace in Germany by scattering privi-

Emperors from different families

leges among the princes and to embark on an expedition across the Alps. In Italy he was hailed with delight by many, including the great poet Dante, who hoped that he would be able to end the struggle between the Guelf and Ghibelline parties and restore peace. He himself became involved in the party feud, however, and died after three years of fruitless strife. His only solid accomplishment had been the winning of Bohemia for his son John before leaving Germany. This accession of territory for the house of Luxemburg proved again the value of the imperial title. Both Frederick of Hapsburg, the son of the late Emperor Albert, and Louis, Duke of Bavaria, made a bid for it. The result was a disputed election, a civil war, and the final triumph of the latter candidate. During his long reign, Louis IV, "the Bavarian" (1314–47), concentrated his attention on adding to the lands held by his family, the Wittelsbachs. He won for them Brandenburg, the Tyrol, and four provinces of the Netherlands. Save for a long-drawn-out struggle with the popes, which will be discussed later,[1] this was the most important event of his reign. Much of this territory was later lost, but the Wittelsbachs clung to the rule of Bavaria until the revolution that followed the First World War.

During all this time, the passing of the imperial crown from family to family with each generation prevented the **Weakness of imperial authority** emperors from taking any consistent steps to strengthen their authority outside their family domains, or even from developing any strong desire to do so. Any move in that direction would have met with strong opposition and would have had to be carried out at the emperor's own expense; for neither princes nor cities could be forced to pay taxes or furnish military service with any regularity. No emperor could afford to undertake seriously such a colossal task, especially as the crown, with whatever increased authority he could give it, would in all probability pass to some other family at his death. Had the monarchy been hereditary, as in France and England, there would have been a much

stronger incentive to make its power effective. As it was, the chief value of the imperial title was the right it gave the emperors to regrant "escheated fiefs," that is, fiefs that had reverted to the crown through lack of heirs. The emperors used this right regularly, as well as the opportunity furnished by the prestige of the imperial title to contract favorable marriages, to add to their own domain. The crown, in short, was regarded principally as a good investment for the family of the emperor.

After the death of Louis the Bavarian, the imperial title was given back to the house of Luxemburg, where it remained with one short break for nearly a century. But neither Charles IV (1347–78) nor his sons did anything to strengthen the imperial power in Germany. They were not really German and were not much interested in Germany. Charles had inherited the kingdom of Bohemia from his father, King John, the brilliant, erratic son of Emperor Henry VII, and he was always ready to sacrifice the empire to the interests of his family and his kingdom. A later emperor once called him "the arch-father of Bohemia and arch-stepfather of the empire." The former title, at least, he earned by his wise and conscientious rule of Bohemia. He kept peace and order there; reformed the judicial and administrative system; founded the University of Prague; and in general made Bohemia one of the greatest of the imperial states. Further, he acquired Brandenburg for his son Sigismund, taking it from the family of Wittelsbach.

With unusual realism, Charles IV recognized the futility of trying to establish an effective monarchy in Germany. **Golden Bull** All that could be done, he thought, was to take steps to prevent further disintegration. He had no confidence in the Diet of the empire as an institution of government. This body, which was a meeting of all the princes as vassals of the emperor, was always hopelessly divided and had shown itself to be quite powerless. Charles turned instead to the electors who, he hoped, might co-operate to prevent war and keep order if their own position was sufficiently secure. With this in mind, he published the

Golden Bull at the Diet of 1356. The bull carefully defined the method of election and the personnel of the electors so as to prevent further disputes over the imperial title, such as had so often split Germany into warring factions in the past. There were to be seven electors only, including three ecclesiastical princes (the Archbishops of Mainz, Cologne, and Trier) and four secular princes (the Count Palatine of the Rhine, the Margrave of Brandenburg, the Duke of Saxony, and the King of Bohemia). The rest of the bull was taken up with provisions for protecting the power of the electors. They were to have full sovereign power within their states; their territories were not to be divided for any reason; those of the secular electors were to be inherited according to the rule of primogeniture; and the title was to remain attached to the territory. The Golden Bull was the nearest approach to a written constitution the empire ever had, and it was immensely important for the later history of Germany. It prevented many possible civil wars over elections, and it checked the breaking-up of the larger states through divided inheritance, since other princes soon followed the example of the electors in adopting the rule of primogeniture. The electors, of course, gained most from the bull. They became practically independent sovereigns, ruling well-defined territorial states as allies rather than subjects of the emperor.

Under the sons of Charles IV the imperial power declined still further. The elder of the two, Wenceslas or Wenzel (1378–1400), was indolent and habitually intoxicated. He had difficulty in maintaining his position in Bohemia, while in Germany he neglected his duties so scandalously that the electors finally deposed him and chose in his place Rupert, Count Palatine of the Rhine (1400–10). Wenceslas was still ruling Bohemia when Rupert died, but the electors again rejected him and gave the imperial crown to his younger brother Sigismund (1410–37), who had been King of Hungary since 1387. More interested in Hungary than in the empire, Sigismund made only occasional brief visits to Germany. Save at

Later Lux-emburg emperors

the Council of Constance,[1] where he used his great diplomatic ability to help restore peace to the church, he did nothing to justify his election. It was at Constance, incidentally, in the year 1415 that Sigismund gave the Mark of Brandenburg with its electoral title to Frederick of Hohenzollern, whose descendants were in time to make it the nucleus of the Prussian Kingdom and finally of the modern German Empire.

The election of Albert II (1438–39) and Frederick III (1440–93) of Hapsburg in succession restored the imperial crown to the house of Hapsburg, where it remained as long as the empire lasted. The change, however, brought no improvement in imperial authority. The policy of the Hapsburgs was an entirely selfish one. They were interested primarily in their own family fortunes.

The crown passes to the Hapsburgs

The empire was by this time little more than a geographical expression or, as one contemporary writer put it, the shadow of a great name. Germany had lost all national unity, but this was to some extent compensated for by the growing power of the rulers of territorial states like Austria, Bavaria, Hesse, and the electoral principalities. In these we find the development of strong centralized government and, in some cases, of representative institutions, very similar to that which was taking place during the Later Middle Ages in France and England. The Estates or *Landtage* of Bavaria and Bohemia in particular acquired a share in the government comparable to that of the States General in France. Outside these greater principalities, however, all was hopeless confusion. There were a number of ecclesiastical states, ruled by archbishops, bishops, or abbots, and innumerable small territories under the jurisdiction of independent barons or free knights of the empire, who recognized no superior except the emperor. There were also some sixty free imperial cities, like Frankfort-on-Main, Augsburg, Nuremberg, and Strasbourg, which were independent city-states, save for the emperor's nominal authority. In this tan-

State of Germany

[1] See below, page 351.

EMPEROR SIGISMUND

Above: Sigismund, younger son of Charles IV, was one of the first emperors to be elected under the provisions of the Golden Bull.

THE GOLDEN BULL

Right: The first page and seal of the document which was the nearest approach to a written constitution the empire ever had

gled mass of petty independent jurisdictions, there was no power strong enough to enforce law and order or to give protection to life and property. Conditions were bad enough in the large states and within the walls of the imperial cities. Outside these, the most frightful state of lawlessness prevailed.

Faced by this situation, the people, first of northwestern Germany and later in other parts, took matters into their **Holy Vehm** own hands and formed a secret society for the suppression of crime. The society of the Holy Vehm (or Veme) will in some respects remind the modern American student of the Vigilantes in the lawless days of our own West. The Vehm, however, was much better organized. It was not a temporary or local phenomenon, but was active for decades in many parts of Germany. It reached the highest point of its power and

prestige under the Emperor Sigismund, who, admitting his inability to enforce justice, himself became a member of the society. The Vehm held regular courts; tried those accused of serious crimes; and executed the guilty. These courts had no legal authority, but they were backed by the whole force of the society and were more dreaded than any of the legal courts of the land. In the later fifteenth century, the Vehm, like so many other lawless organizations for the enforcement of law, degenerated and its members abused their power, so that it had to be suppressed.

2. THE SWISS CONFEDERATION AND THE HANSEATIC LEAGUE

Despite the disintegration of the empire and the general lawlessness and frequent petty wars that resulted, Germany was on

the whole more prosperous than ever during the centuries of the Later Middle Ages. Commerce and industry flourished in the cities. The failure of the central government was undoubtedly a great handicap, but the people of the empire did not accept a state of anarchy with spineless resignation. Many parts of the empire were forming independent states or associations. We have already noted the development of the larger territorial states. Where these did not exist, leagues of knights, districts, or cities were formed for mutual defense. Such, for example, was the League of Swabian Cities, founded by permission of Charles IV, which for some time withstood the encroachments of the neighboring princes. The various motives underlying these defensive associations, political or economic, are best illustrated by the history of the two most important ones, the confederation of the Swiss cantons and the league of the Hanseatic cities.

The Swiss Confederation, out of which has grown the modern state of Switzerland, originated in a league of three **Swiss Confederation** small rural districts or cantons in the Alpine valleys about the Lake of Lucerne. The league was formed for mutual defense against the exactions of their feudal overlords of the house of Hapsburg. The struggle went on obscurely through most of the second half of the thirteenth century; but it was not till the death of the Emperor Rudolf in 1291 that the three cantons of Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden combined in a formal federation to assert their right to local self-government with no superior save the emperor. The three cantons occupied a mountain district no more than thirty-five miles square, but they were important because they commanded the great trade route to Italy through the Saint Gotthard Pass. Emperors not of the house of Hapsburg were glad to give recognition to the claims of the mountaineers. The cantons, however, owed their independence almost entirely to their own stubborn courage and their mastery of the technique of mountain warfare. In 1315, they won a brilliant victory at Morgarten, where they caught an army led against them by Leopold of Haps-

burg in a narrow pass and almost wiped it out, killing between fifteen hundred and two thousand of the pick of Hapsburg chivalry. Thereafter, they remained practically independent states under the empire. Neighboring cities and cantons, envying them their freedom, soon joined the confederation. By the middle of the fourteenth century, there were eight members, Zug, Glarus, Lucerne, Zurich, and Berne having been added to the original three. By 1513, the number had been increased to thirteen, including the prosperous Rhine city of Basle, while the territories around the frontier in almost all directions had either been reduced to subjection or brought into a friendly alliance with the confederation.[1]

A passionate love of freedom and independence was the outstanding characteristic of the Swiss people. It was at once the strength and the weak- **Its character** ness of the confederation. The cantons would stand together in sturdy defiance of all outside authority; but within the league each canton guarded its independent rights just as jealously. Each had its own separate government, though all sent representatives to a general Diet where matters of foreign policy or general interest were discussed. The laws of the Diet, however, could be enforced only through the governments of the cantons, and were enforced only if they chose to do so. There was always a good deal of friction and jealousy among the cantons, arising from differences in character and interest. Most of the cantons were German, but those to the southwest with their independencies were French-speaking, while most of the subject or allied districts to the south were Italian. Moreover, the "Forest Cantons" which had originally formed the confederation were entirely rural, while several of the later additions, like Zurich, Berne, and Basle, centered around busy commercial and industrial cities. Through their wealth, these latter tended to dominate the confederation, thus arousing the jealousy of the Forest Cantons which never forgot that the Swiss owed the origins of their freedom to the hardy mountaineers who defended the Alpine passes against the might of the Hapsburg.

[1] See map, page 312.

While the Swiss were forming a confederation for mutual defense on the southern borders of Germany, the rich merchant cities of the north were joining in a still more powerful association to protect their commercial interests. The land along the southern shores of the Baltic had been acquired from the Slavs and settled by Germans only recently, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Here the emperor's authority had never been strong, and with the decline of the empire it ceased to function altogether. The merchants in the new German cities of this district, as well as those in the hopelessly disorganized northwestern section of old Germany, were forced to depend on their own efforts to ensure their safety when traveling and to secure trading rights abroad. This could be accomplished only by co-operation, not only of all the merchants in each city, as was done by means of the merchant guild almost everywhere during the Middle Ages, but of a number of cities together. Only so could the cities maintain a fleet large enough to suppress the pirates who swarmed in the Baltic and the North Sea, or bring sufficient pressure to bear on foreign states to make them grant favorable commercial treaties. From this necessity grew the league of North German cities, generally known as the Hansa or Hanseatic League. The first step in the association had been taken by the cities of Hamburg and Lübeck about the middle of the thirteenth century. Other cities joined them in rapid succession. By the end of the century, the Hansa had secured trading privileges of a very favorable kind in London, Bruges, Bergen, and Novgorod. These cities remained the chief foreign markets for North German trade in England, the Netherlands, Norway, and Russia respectively.

The formal organization of the Hanseatic League, however, was not completed till the middle of the fourteenth century. Even then it was no more than a vague and loosely defined confederation of cities, some seventy in all, though the number is uncertain owing to frequent desertions and realliances. The member-cities were grouped under four general territorial divisions: those of the eastern Baltic, the western Baltic, northwestern Germany, and the lower Rhine. In these districts the cities of Danzig, Lübeck, Brunswick, and Cologne were recognized as holding a position of rather vague leadership. On important occasions, representatives from all the cities met together to decide questions of foreign policy or to make trade regulations. Despite its loose organization, the league was strong enough to play a very important part in the politics both of northern Germany and of the Scandinavian countries, and to keep an almost complete monopoly of the Baltic trade.

Control of the Baltic was essential to the prosperity of the northern cities. From that sea came nearly all the herring and cod, for which the fasts of the church created so great a demand. It was also the highway between northern and eastern Europe and the countries that faced the Atlantic. From Novgorod and the lands bordering on the Baltic, the Hanseatic merchants carried furs, wax, amber for the making of rosaries, copper, pitch, tar, grain, flax, and timber, as well as the invaluable herring. These commodities were traded in Bruges or London for wool, cloth, and manufactured articles.

The second half of the fourteenth century was the period of the league's greatest power and prosperity. It remained strong for a century longer, but signs of decay were increasingly visible. Social strife between the poorer classes and the wealthy governing aristocracy at times prevented some of the cities from taking an active part in the league's affairs. The defection of the Cologne group of cities during a considerable part of the fifteenth century also tended to weaken the league. The general conditions of trade were changing. Trade routes were shifting steadily to the west; the rulers of territorial states were developing national economic policies; arfd the new capitalistic methods of business did not fit into the Hanseatic tradition. Finally, the conquest of the Teutonic Knights by Poland, the closing of Novgorod to German trade through the rise of the hostile principality of Moscow, and the union of

Growth of the Hansa

Organization of the league

Hanseatic commerce

Decline of the league
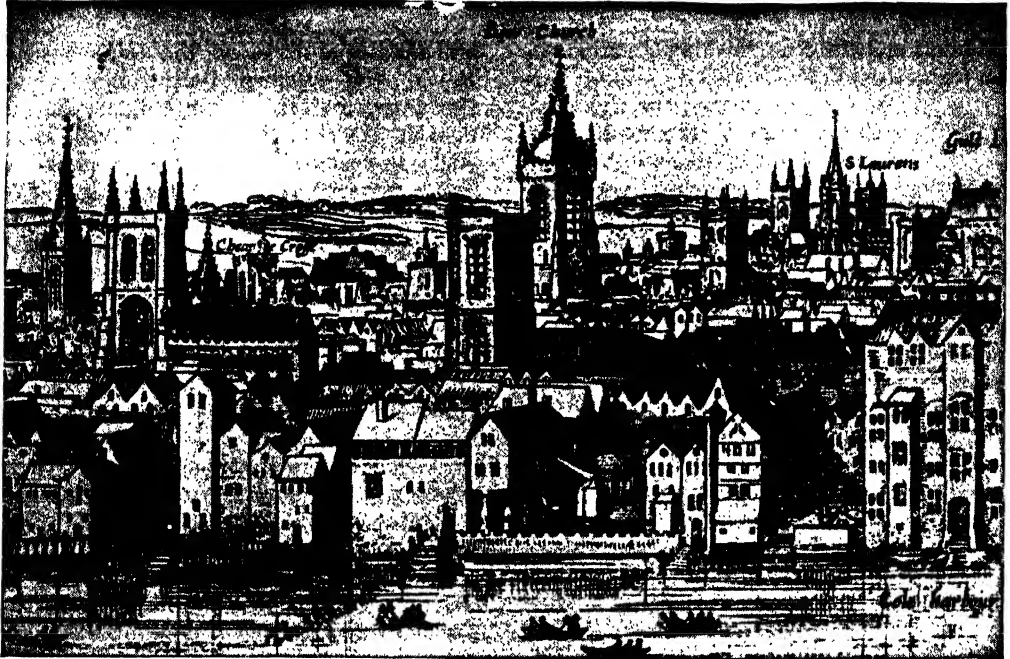
THE STEELYARD, HEADQUARTERS OF THE HANSA IN LONDON

*During their period of greatest power the Hansards had
extraterritorial rights in London within the Steelyard.*

A HANSEATIC SHIP

*The short, broad ships, known as cogs or round
ships, were the most common freight carriers of
the Later Middle Ages.*
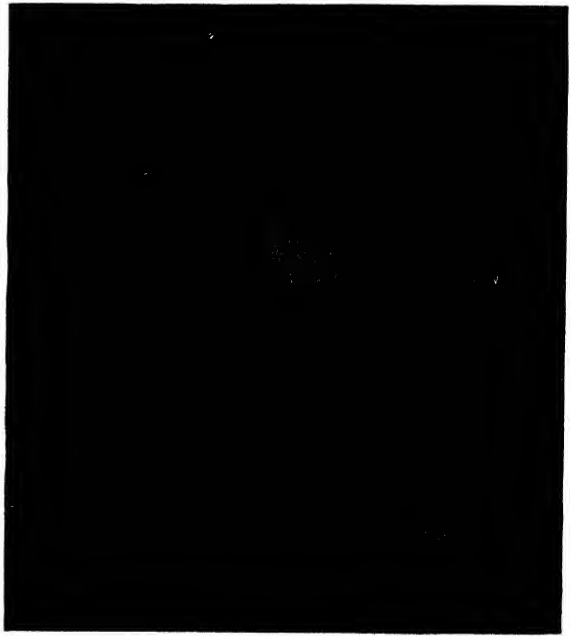
**A HANSEATIC MERCHANT OF THE EARLY
SIXTEENTH CENTURY**

*George Gisze, painted by Holbein in 1532, was
obviously a man of considerable wealth.*

all three Scandinavian countries under one ruler, all helped to shake the league's domination of the Baltic trade. The Hansa lasted for two centuries longer, but was never a great power after the end of the fifteenth century.

The history of the Hanseatic League is closely bound up with that of the order of Teutonic Knights. It was these crusading warriors who had made possible the expansion of German colonies and trade to the eastern Baltic by their conquest of Prussia from its heathen inhabitants in the thirteenth century.[1] The knights encouraged German peasants, nobles, and burghers to migrate to their newly conquered territory. Numbers of new German cities sprang up along the coast and the river-banks. Danzig, Marienburg, Königsberg, and a score of others became flourishing commercial centers. They formed one of the "quarters" of the Hansa, and the league could always count on the knights as allies in its wars with the other Baltic powers. The decline of the order in the fifteenth century was therefore a serious blow to the league. By that time, too great prosperity had begun to undermine the discipline and religious character that had made the knights so effective an organization during their period of conquest. In 1410, the Poles invaded the territory of the knights and defeated them disastrously at the battle of Tannenberg. The order retained its land for another half-century, but in a weakened and impoverished condition. A second and more disastrous war with Poland ended in the Peace of Thorn, 1466. The western part of Prussia was annexed to Poland and the grand master of the order had to do homage for the remainder of his territory as vassal of the Polish king.

Relations with the three Scandinavian countries, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, also formed an important part of the history of the Hanseatic League. Since the break-up of the Danish empire of King Canute in the eleventh century, the Scandinavian countries had taken no active part in

Teutonic Knights

The Scandinavian countries

European affairs and were in general rather more backward than their southern neighbors. In the fourteenth century, Denmark was the most active of the three, and an attempt on the part of its king to encroach on Hanseatic trade led to a war with the league that lasted from 1361 to 1370. The league was finally successful. By the Treaty of Stralsund, the Hansa was given complete freedom of trade in Danish territory and the right to participate in the election of Danish kings, though this latter privilege was never effectively enforced. For a generation the league dominated Scandinavian politics as well as trade, but toward the end of the century its influence was endangered by the union, first of Denmark and Norway and finally of Sweden also under one ruler in the Union of Kalmar, 1397. The union, which lasted till the end of the Middle Ages, was never a very strong coalition, but it was a standing menace to the Hanseatic monopoly of northern trade. In the sixteenth century, Sweden gradually acquired a dominating position in the eastern Baltic.

3. EASTERN EUROPE

Let us turn now to a brief survey of the history of eastern Europe during the Later Middle Ages. Throughout most of the fourteenth century, the Slavic kingdom of Poland, which was the empire's largest eastern neighbor, was engaged in a long conflict in alliance with the Teutonic Knights against the heathen Lithuanians, whose expanding territory stretched along the eastern frontiers of Poland from the Baltic to the Black Sea. In 1386 this situation changed abruptly. By the marriage of a Polish princess to Jagiello of Lithuania and the election of the latter as King of Poland, the two states were united and Lithuania formally adopted Christianity. The territory of Poland was thus more than doubled and she acquired an outlet to the sea at both north and south. The new power of the combined countries was turned immediately against the Teutonic Knights, who, with the conversion of the Lithuanians, had no further religious reason for their existence. We have already noted the defeat of the order and the acquisition by

Expansion of Poland

Poland or western Prussia in 1466. Poland was now one of the largest territorial states in Europe; but it was never able to make full use of its potential power. It lacked unity and stability. In old Poland the cities had been largely Germanized, while the country districts had remained Slavic, and in the new acquisitions to the east the population was a mixture of Lithuanian and Russian Slav having little in common with the Poles. Moreover, the elective monarchy and the selfish independence of the Polish nobles prevented the development of a strong central government. Anarchical feudalism lasted in Poland long after it had died out in the western states.

Beyond Poland in eastern Europe the Slavs of Russia labored under the yoke of their Tartar masters. All through the Middle Ages the Russians had faced east rather than west. Since their conversion to Christianity in the tenth century, they had been members of the Greek Orthodox Church. They looked to Constantinople for leadership in religion and culture as well as for trade. The great principality of Kiev which ruled most of Russia in the early eleventh century, though Scandinavian in origin, was distinctly Byzantine in civilization. Even after it broke up into a number of minor principalities, the Greek Church and Byzantine-Russian culture continued to give some national unity to the Russian people. Then came the Tartars. They were of much the same race as the Huns and other Asiatic Mongolian peoples who had invaded Europe from time to time since the fourth century. Under the leadership of their great khan, Jenghis, the Tartar nomads conquered a vast empire in the first quarter of the thirteenth century, which included all of central Asia, China, and southern Asia as far as the Himalayas. Later, the grandson of Jenghis Khan, Batu, led his conquering horsemen west through Russia, laying waste the country as he went. By 1242, he was raiding Poland and eastern Germany, until he was recalled by the death of the great khan, the son of Jenghis. In the division of the Mongol Empire which followed, Batu was left the western section, including most of Rus-

Tartar conquest of Russia

sia, where he founded the khanate of the Golden Horde. Meanwhile, the Tartars had also invaded the Mohammedan world, sweeping across Persia as far as Bagdad. For some two hundred and forty years, the Tartars of the Golden Horde continued to rule Russia. They had caused tremendous destruction of life and property during their first wild invasion, but thereafter they did not interfere seriously in the life of the people save to collect taxes with an iron hand.

During the period of Tartar conquest, the Russian princes governed the people under the suzerainty of the khan, and the Greek Church was left undisturbed. Even the task of collecting taxes was delegated to native princes, and it was this fact that accounts for the rising power of the principality of Moscow. In 1328 a prince of the Muscovite family was commissioned by the khan to collect the Tartar tribute. His descendants retained the commission and used the authority delegated to them by the khan to build up the power of their family. Moscow became the center of Russian culture and, after the fall of Constantinople, of the Greek Church. Meanwhile, the Muscovite princes were expanding their territory at the expense of the cities and lesser princes about them. In 1478, Prince Ivan III conquered Novgorod, the great commercial city which had never been subdued by the Tartars and which had maintained a prosperous trade with the West through the merchants of the Hansa. Two years later, Ivan declared his independence of the khan and threw off the Tartar yoke. The Golden Horde had been declining in power for a long time and gave up its hold on central Russia almost without a struggle, leaving it to the rule of the Prince of Moscow, who thus formed the beginnings of the modern Russian state.

Rise of Moscow

While the Tartar power was fading in Russia, eastern Europe was being menaced from the south by the advance of still another race of Asiatic conquerors. The Ottoman Turks were Asiatic nomads who, like the Seljuk Turks of an earlier time, had drifted westward and had adopted the Mohammedan religion. Late in the thirteenth cen-

Turks invade Europe

Danube R.
Belgrade
WALLACHIA
SERBIA
TARTARY
Don R.
GREECE
Constantinople 1453

Ottoman Empire, c. 1500

Vienna
HUNGARY
TRAN-SYLVANIA
MOLDAVIA
YEDISAN
ARMENIA
Tunis
ALGERIA
Malta
to Venice
SYRIA
Baghdad
EGYPT
Nile R.
Aden

⬭ *Tributary states*
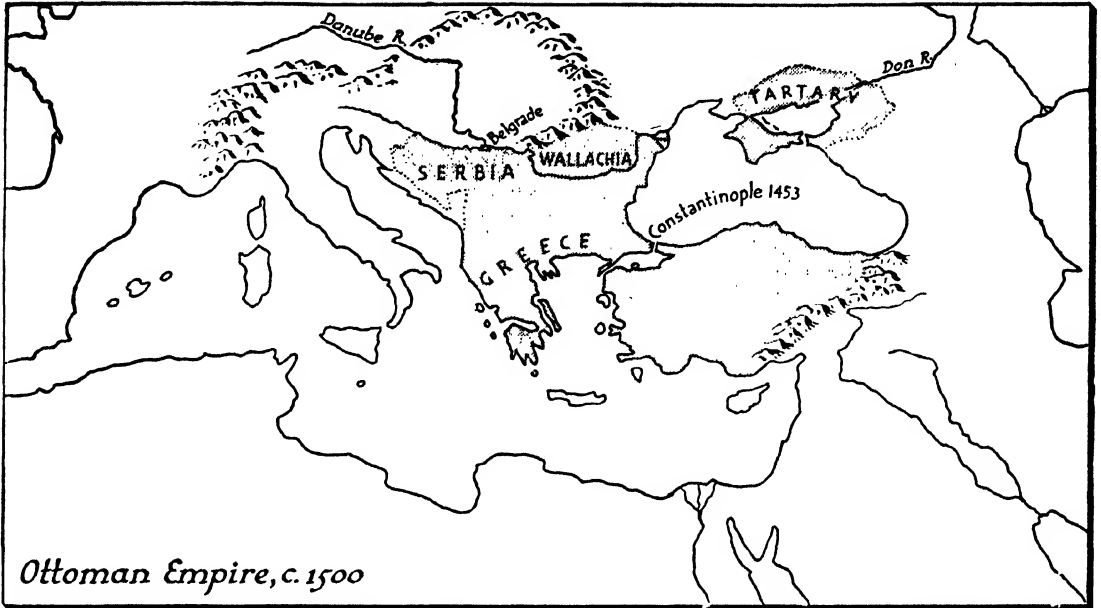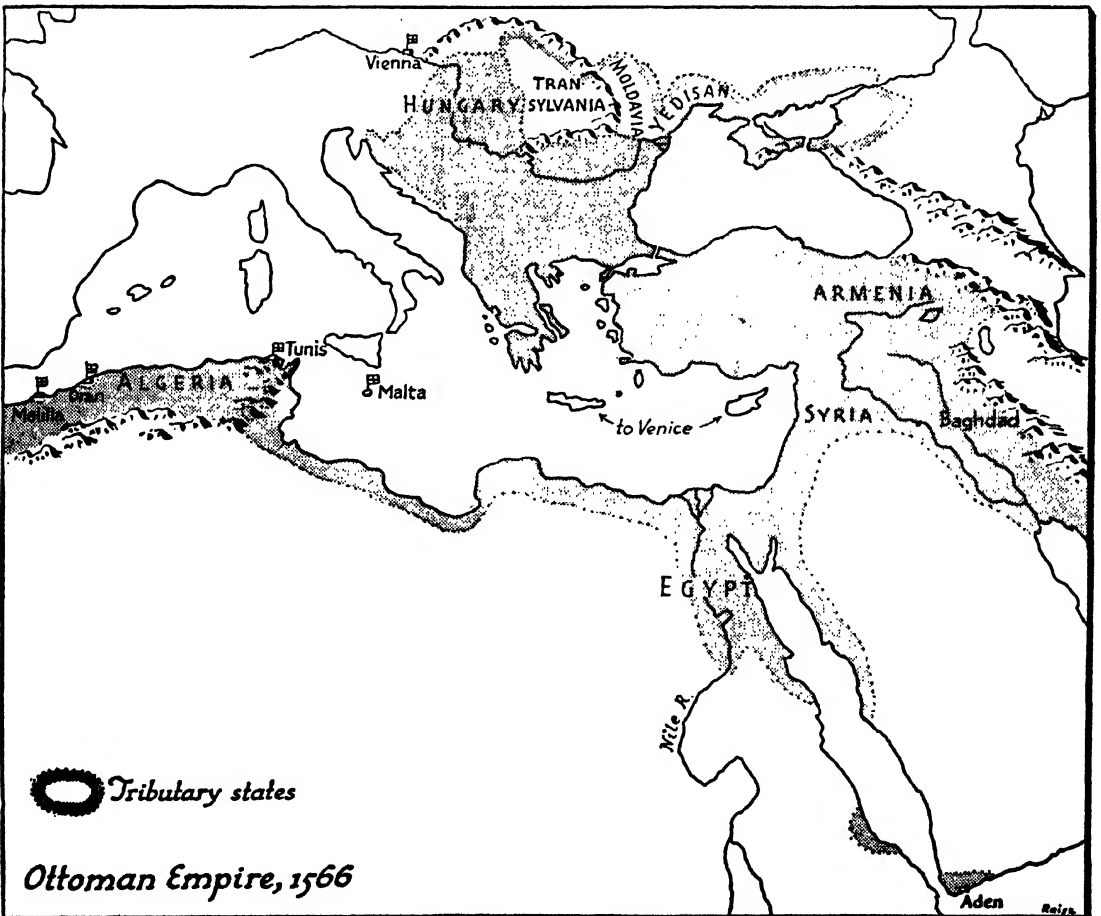
Ottoman Empire, 1566

tury, they established themselves in Asia Minor. In 1350, they conquered what remained of the Byzantine provinces in Asia Minor and, three years later, they crossed the Hellespont into Europe. During the next century they gradually spread their conquests through the Balkans, though the city of Constantinople still remained unconquered. At last, in the fateful year 1453, even that impregnable stronghold fell before the Turkish attack and the last remnant of the Byzantine Empire ceased to exist. The Turks were now able to turn their undivided attention to westward expansion. They completed their conquest of Greece, Bosnia, Serbia, and Albania, and invaded Hungary. There they were checked by the courageous resistance of the Hungarians under the leadership of their heroic kings John Hunyadi and his son Matthias Corvinus. In the early years of the sixteenth century, however, the Turks finally succeeded in breaking down the Hungarian defense and taking over the greater part of the kingdom. From there they went on to threaten Austria. By 1529, they were hammering at the gates of Vienna and the whole of Europe had been made acutely conscious of the Turkish peril.

23

France and England to the End
of the Hundred Years' War

IN THE LAST YEARS of the thirteenth century, both France and England were about to enter on a period of gradual transition that was to change them, each in its own peculiar way, from medieval to modern states. In France feudalism was still strong, but the Capetian kings had expanded the royal domain till it included more than half the kingdom and the monarchy was already a real power in the land. In England the royal government was much farther advanced, though feudal barons still strove to control it. In both countries the first step in the transition was marked by the realization that the military and financial methods of feudalism were no longer adequate to meet the needs of the central government. The kings of France and England were forced to levy extra-feudal taxes that were national in scope, and to this end they summoned to their courts for aid and counsel representatives of their humbler subjects who were not their immediate vassals. The feudal Great Council thus evolved into the French States General and the English Parliament. These institutions had barely begun before both countries were plunged into the long and bloody struggle known as the Hundred Years' War. The war dragged on its weary way, laying waste the richest land of France for generations and to a lesser degree draining the resources of England, but in the end leaving both well on the road to a hard-won national unity. In France the monarchy emerged triumphant and uncontrolled. In England, on the other hand, Parliament had profited skillfully from the king's need for money to carry on the war. The foundations of constitutional government were so firmly planted that they would outlast the disturbances of royal family feuds and the absolutism of Tudor and Stuart kings.

1. CONSOLIDATION OF ROYAL GOVERNMENT IN FRANCE UNDER THE LAST CAPETIANS (1270-1328)

Philip III (1270-85) inherited from his saintly father, Louis IX, a large royal domain and an authority that even the most powerful of his **Philip III** vassals had been forced to respect. To both of these legacies Philip added considerably during his otherwise rather inglorious reign. By reversion and marriage he expanded the royal domain to include the counties of Toulouse, Poitou, and Champagne and, for a time, the kingdom of Navarre, not to mention numerous other small additions acquired on one pretext or another. Under him, too, and thanks in all probability more to the incessant activity of his ministers than to his own efforts, the royal government developed steadily in efficiency and practical power.

With the reign of Philip IV (1285-1314),

called the Fair, we enter definitely on the transitional period in the history of the French monarchy. The time was now ripe for the king to assert his position as king rather than as mere feudal overlord and for him to adopt what may well be called a national policy both at home and abroad. This Philip the Fair did with momentous results; but how much of the credit or blame should be awarded to the king himself is still a matter of doubt much debated by historians. There seems good reason to believe that the real driving force behind the royal government came less from the king than from his ministers, Pierre Flotte, Guillaume de Nogaret, and others whose names are not so familiar. These men were professional administrators, of comparatively humble birth, who had been trained in the royal court and who depended entirely on the king for their position. Hence they were devoted to the king's interests. Most of them were lawyers, well versed in Roman law and impregnated with its monarchical principles. They were cool-headed, sagacious, and unscrupulous enemies of feudalism, the papacy, or any other power that infringed on the king's rights. In the midst of their vigorous activity we can only dimly discern the enigmatic figure of the king.

Philip IV and his ministers

Philip's assertion of royal authority throughout France soon brought him into conflict with his two most independent vassals, Edward I, King of England, who held the fiefs of Guienne and Gascony in southwestern France as a legacy from his Angevin ancestors, and the Count of Flanders, whose fief to the north included rich commercial and industrial cities closely connected by trade with England. War with the former broke out in 1294. After four years of fighting, both parties agreed to a truce which was finally confirmed by a peace treaty five years later. The Count of Flanders, however, who had joined Edward in the war, was not included in the truce. Left to himself, he was forced to submit and his rich county was added to the French king's domain. Philip's success in this direction was brief. In 1302, the Flemish burghers rose in revolt, massa-

Foreign policy

cred French residents, and almost annihilated a French army sent against them at Courtrai. Three years of bitter fighting followed before Philip restored peace by giving Flanders back to its count at the price of a heavy indemnity. Meanwhile, Philip's diplomats had been pressing French claims along the eastern frontier and bit by bit adding imperial lands to France. The most important acquisition in this direction was the Free County of Burgundy (Franche Comté) which Philip acquired through the marriage of his eldest son to the count's heiress. Finally, and not least important of his foreign policies, Philip strongly opposed the interference of Pope Boniface VIII in French affairs, with far-reaching results that will be recounted in the next chapter.

His expensive wars with England and Flanders left Philip in great need of money, and his victory over the papacy opened up at least one way of recouping his losses. The religious order of Knights Templars was a tempting prey, for the Templars had grown enormously rich in land and money. They had become great bankers and had lent large sums to the king. Moreover, since the conclusion of the crusades, they had no longer any respectable reason for existence. Philip, therefore, set about cold-bloodedly to accomplish their ruin, with a view to canceling his debts and confiscating their wealth. The prosecution, begun by Nogaret in 1307, continued for five years. The knights were arrested and forced under torture to confess to the most horrible charges of immorality and blasphemy. A widespread propaganda accompanied the prosecution, all the more effective because of the secrecy that had always shrouded the life of the order. The final act in this judicial farce was the abolition of the order in 1312 by Pope Clement V, who was completely under the thumb of the French king. Their lands were to be given to the Knights Hospitalers, but in France, at least, it was the king who profited.

Templars crushed

As the government of Philip the Fair was more nearly national than that of any of his predecessors, it is not surprising to find him breaking with feudal precedent and making a bid for popular support by summoning

PHILIP THE FAIR AND HIS CHILDREN

Philip and his three sons, who followed him in succession, were the last of the direct line of the Capetians.
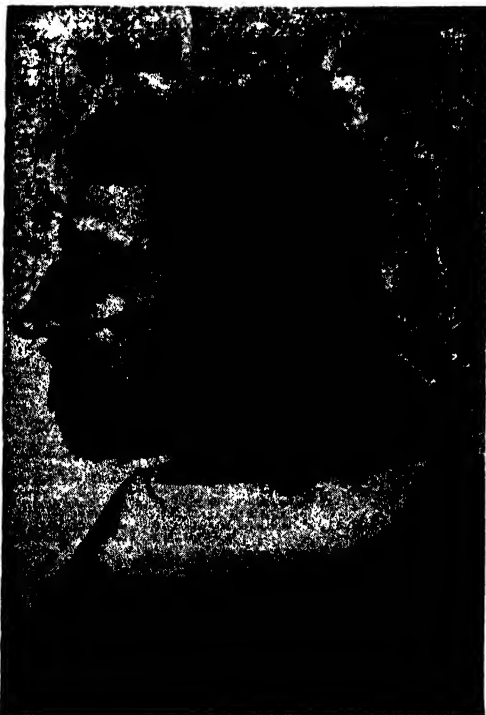
JOHN II

John "the Good" was chivalrous and reckless. He spent most of his reign in England as a prisoner.

CHARLES V

Charles "the Wise," John's son, was less robust, but a much more effective ruler.

FRENCH KINGS OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

representatives of the burgher middle class as well as his feudal vassals and clergy to give consent to his decisions on matters of national importance. The States General, as the new assembly of all three classes or estates came to be called, was summoned only at times of crisis, such as the struggle with Boniface VIII in 1302, which motivated the first summons, or the attack on the Templars in 1308, or when unusual taxes were needed. The last was, indeed, the most important reason for the innovation. The greatly increased expenses of the royal government, particularly in time of war, could no longer be met from the regular income from the royal domain and feudal dues, or even by such extraordinary measures as the debasement of the coinage or the confiscation of property belonging to Jews, Templars, or Lombard bankers. New taxes on all classes were necessary; and these could be collected more easily if the people at large had given their consent, even though it were only a matter of form, through their representatives. French kings had long been accustomed to summoning their vassals-in-chief, lay and ecclesiastical, to their court to give aid and counsel as part of their feudal obligation. What makes Philip's action a new departure was the extension of that summons to representatives of the towns — that is, to the commons who were his subjects rather than his feudal vassals — to meet with the Great Council.

Origin of the States General

Though a new departure for the French monarchy, the summoning of the States General was not, however, an isolated instance of appeal by a ruling prince for support from representatives of the rising urban middle class, whose possession of money made them an increasingly important group from the point of view of a financially embarrassed prince. Other states, including England, the Spanish kingdoms, the empire, and the territorial principalities of Germany, were following the same procedure at this time. Moreover, in France itself the great feudatories, the half-independent vassals outside the royal domain, were doing the same thing in summoning the estates of their own territo-

A general tendency

ries. The States General were so named to distinguish them from the local or feudal estates, some of which maintained their separate existence for centuries.

The States General did not acquire their name or full organization at once, but with repeated meeting the new body gradually took shape. For consultation the assembly split up into three bodies, each made up of the representatives of one of the estates of the realm, the clergy, the nobles, and the commons respectively. The last-named, the "Third Estate," was composed mainly of representatives elected in various ways by the burghers of the chartered towns. Later, at times, the election was extended to include the country districts as well. But as most land was owned by the nobles, the only commons who were important enough to be represented on most occasions were the city middle class. The function of the estates was not to initiate legislation or to control the government. Their duty was to consent to whatever the king proposed, though they might present lists of grievances in the hope that the king would take steps to redress them. The new institution was a means of bringing the royal government into closer contact with the most important classes in the state. In its origin at least, it was rather an extension of the king's power than a limitation upon it.

Organization of the States

The executive authority in the state still rested entirely with the king and the ministers whom he appointed. The *curia regis* was much as it had been in the days of Philip Augustus and Louis IX, save that it now handled a great deal more business and that the special departments, the king's councils of confidential advisers, the *chambre des comptes*, the *parlement*, and the chancery, which did all the secretarial work for the government, were now more definitely and permanently organized.

Royal administration

After the death of Philip the Fair, his three sons, Louis X (1314–16), Philip V (1316–22), and Charles IV (1322–28) followed him on the throne in rapid and uneventful succession. All three died without male

The sons of Philip IV

heirs. This presented an unprecedented problem of succession, as it was the first time since the foundation of the Capetian monarchy in the tenth century that there had not been a son to assume his father's crown. Louis X had left a daughter, but his brother Philip had seized the throne, justifying his action by the principle, based on a fanciful appeal to the "Salic Law" of the ancient Franks, that "a woman does not succeed to the throne of France." After that principle had been revived on his own death and that of his younger brother, the crown passed finally from the direct line of the Capetians. It was given to Philip of Valois, a nephew of Philip the Fair, who took the title Philip VI.

2. GROWTH OF CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT IN ENGLAND UNDER EDWARD I AND EDWARD II (1272–1327)

The history of France under Philip the Fair finds in many respects a close parallel in that of England under Edward I (1272–1307), Philip's contemporary and natural enemy. There, too, the king expanded the territory under his immediate rule, consolidated the royal government, and appealed to popular support by summoning representatives of the commons to his council. In England, however, thanks to the constructive work of the Angevin kings in the twelfth century and of the royal ministers in the thirteenth, there was already a much more closely united state than in France; feudalism was not so decentralized; and the king's authority was more nearly universal and more effective. It needed only the work of a wise and strong king to complete the first step in welding England into a strong constitutional state. And for such a purpose Edward I was ideally qualified. His appearance and character were well suited to catch the popular imagination and to make him a national hero. He was tall and well built, a good soldier and at least every other inch a gentleman. He had, moreover, a sound legal mind and a genius for the organization of institutions. Before he came to the throne he had had a good deal of experience as the most active force in the government under his feeble father Henry III. Historians have hailed him, not only as the conqueror of Wales, but, more important, as the English Justinian and the father of the English Parliament.

Edward's ambition to make England a strong and united state led naturally to attempts to bring all parts of the island under his rule. The mountainous districts of Wales had never been fully conquered by either Saxon or Norman. There the Welsh clansmen maintained their own Celtic language and customs and fought bitterly for the freedom they prized more highly than either settled government or economic prosperity. Norman barons, called the Marcher Lords because it was their duty to defend the march or border, had gradually encroached on the Welsh valleys until less than half of Wales was left under the native prince, and even he was in theory the vassal of the English king. Early in Edward's reign, however, the Welsh prince, Llewellyn, gave the king an excuse for conquest by throwing off his allegiance. Edward's first campaign in 1277 was successful; but it was easier to conquer the Welsh than to hold them. In 1282, the king had to reconquer Llewellyn and his rebellious mountaineers. This time he reorganized the principality, dividing it into shires of the English type, directly under the royal government. Later, he made his eldest son titular Prince of Wales, which title the heir to the English throne has kept down to the present time. There were other rebellions and much discontent among the patriotic Welsh for generations, but Edward had succeeded in making Wales a permanent part of the English state, to the eventual benefit of both peoples.

With Wales conquered, Scotland remained the only part of the island outside Edward's rule. Here he had to deal with a feudal kingdom, less advanced but otherwise not greatly different from his own. The settled Lowlands, at least, were closely akin to England, containing a strong intermixture of Saxon, Danish, and Norman blood and having already adopted Saxon-Norman speech and customs. A disputed succession to the Scottish throne in 1290 gave Edward his first opportunity to interfere in the northern

kingdom. Asserting a doubtful claim to overlordship of Scotland, he secured the throne for John Balliol, whom he then proceeded to treat as a vassal, with the result that Balliol rebelled and formed an alliance with Philip the Fair who was at war with England at the time. Despite the distraction of the French war, Edward marched north and conquered Scotland in 1296. But he had reckoned without the independent spirit of the Scottish people who soon rose in rebellion against their foreign master under the leadership of the knightly William Wallace. A second conquest, accomplished in 1305, after years of campaigning, lasted no longer. The Scots rose again under a new claimant to the throne, Robert Bruce, and Edward died before he could reach Scotland to crush the new rebellion. In neither Scotland nor France had he any returns to show for his expenditure of men and money. Indeed, so far as Scotland was concerned, all that he had accomplished was to arouse in the Scottish people a lasting hatred of England and to drive them into a practically permanent alliance with France.

The reputation of Edward I as a great statesman, perhaps the greatest in medieval English history, rests more securely on his contribution to the formation of English governmental institutions than on his conquest of Wales or his brief successes in Scotland. Institutions that had been vague and fluid took definite shape under his hands. In the interest of good government and the unity of the state, he undertook the task of making the royal administration more efficient and centralizing authority under the crown at the expense of the barons, who might still be dangerous if their wings were not clipped. Depending on middle-class ministers, trained by long service for their duties, and on the new and important class of professional lawyers, he built up a well-ordered machine of government and justice entirely responsible to the king. The *curia regis* was now fairly clearly divided into special courts with well-defined functions — the exchequer for dealing with financial matters, the courts of common pleas and the king's bench for trying civil

Royal administration and courts

and criminal cases respectively, and the king's council, which not only assisted the king in the general business of government, but also took cognizance of all cases that did not fall under the jurisdiction of the special courts. There was little about this system that was absolutely new, but its more definite and efficient organization added greatly to its effectiveness as an instrument of government for the whole state. All England was beginning to look to the king and his courts for government and justice.

Edward was more than a great administrator. He was also the first great English legislator. Under him the English common law — that is, the law used in the king's courts and hence common to the whole country — was given the form which it was to keep with very little change for centuries. This law had been created by custom rather than legislation. Hitherto, the work of the king's courts had been confined to interpreting it by judicial decisions. Now for the first time the king began to legislate. Working with his council, Edward I issued statute after statute, supplementing or altering the common law so as to give it definite form and to bring it into touch with contemporary needs. These statutes formed the essential basis of modern English law. "For ages after Edward's day," wrote Maitland in an often-quoted passage, "king and parliament left private law and civil procedure, criminal law and criminal procedure pretty much to themselves." No single thing, perhaps, has done more to make England a unified state than the development of the common law. It was the king's law and the law of the whole kingdom; before it feudal and local customs faded away.

Common law

Last, but not least, of Edward's contributions to the building of English institutions was his establishment of Parliament, including representatives from the middle class of town and country, as a regular part of the state government. Here, as with the king's council, courts, and law, his work consisted not so much in creating something absolutely new as in combining and giving a more definite and permanent form to earlier institutions.

Origins of Parliament

Neither Parliament nor representation was new in Edward's reign; but the two had never been combined on a national scale, or at least not with sufficient frequency to give the new institution which resulted from the combination a permanent status, for the parliamentary experiment of Simon de Montfort in 1265 had failed and other summonses of representatives had been only partial and irregular. As in the case of the States General, the origin of the Parliament as a consulting body and royal court is to be found in the Great Council of the king's vassals-in-chief, though in England it had been much more frequently summoned and was better organized than in France. By the thirteenth century, it was regularly composed of the most important lay and ecclesiastical barons of the kingdom, for the number of those holding land directly from the king had so increased that only those summoned by name appeared. To this assembly were now added representatives from the middle class, but unlike the Third Estate in France they included knights from the country as well as burghers from the towns. For the origins of this type of representation we must look to a uniquely English institution, the shire and local royal courts, to which for generations representative knights and burghers had been summoned to give information for administrative and judicial purposes, to serve on presentment juries and even to pass judgment. They were summoned because they knew local conditions and customs. When Edward I summoned representatives from shire and town to meet with the Great Council, he was, from one point of view, merely centralizing the representation in the shire courts into one for the whole kingdom, while from another point of view he was extending the Great Council to include representatives of his subjects throughout the state as well as his great vassals.

Edward began the regular summons of representatives early in his reign. Owing to his numerous wars and the increased scope of his government, the king was no longer able to meet his expenses from the customary taxes and feudal and judicial dues.

Purpose and organization

He realized that new taxes, which must fall heavily on the burghers and small landowners, would be much more easily collected if those classes, through their representatives, had given their consent. The representatives of the commons, as they were called, were not yet an essential part of Parliament, but after 1297 it was recognized that their presence was necessary when any nonfeudal taxes were proclaimed. Taxation, however, was not the only purpose of Parliament. It was also a court for the redress of grievances that fell outside the jurisdiction of the common-law courts. By including the representatives, the king opened the way for petitions of grievances from the middle class, which it was the duty of Parliament to redress. Finally, and this is perhaps the most important motive for summoning the commons, Edward desired a broader and more national basis for his government than was provided by the barons alone. "His object was to make the royal power more efficient by keeping it in constant touch with the life of the governed." The knights and burghers could furnish invaluable information regarding local conditions and the interests of their class, and on returning home they could explain the acts of the government to their neighbors. Under Edward I, Parliament was not yet organized in the form we know. When the representatives were present, they stood at the foot of the hall and took no part in the proceedings, save to give consent or to express an opinion when asked, through one of their number who acted as "Speaker." However, they were already forming the habit of consulting separately as to what decision they would give, and were thus paving the way for the formation of a separate House of Commons.

Under Edward II (1307–27), the first Edward's amiable but shiftless son, Parliament was still more firmly established. It took advantage of **Edward II** the king's weakness to assert a measure of independence that would have been impossible under Edward I. The custom of calling the commons to consent to taxation continued regularly until it had acquired a firm basis of precedent. For the rest, the reign of Edward II was an unfortunate one. After

the defeat of his badly managed army by the Scots at Bannockburn in 1314, he gave up all hope of renewing the conquest of Scotland. His incompetent government gave the barons an opportunity to reassert the influence they had lost under the strong rule of his father. After a long-drawn-out opposition, the barons broke into open rebellion in 1327 and deposed the king in favor of his young son, Edward III, who ruled England for the next fifty years.

3. FRANCE AND THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR (1337–1453)

Edward III and Philip VI had each ruled about a decade when England and France were plunged into a war that lasted intermittently through the greater part of the reigns of five kings in each country. During all that time, the war exercised a powerful effect on the development of both countries, but as it was fought entirely on French soil it had a much more immediate effect on the internal history of France than on that of England. We shall trace its course, therefore, primarily in its relation to French history. The war has been rather inaccurately named by historians the Hundred Years' War. It was in reality either more or less than that, since from beginning to end it covered more than a century, though there were less than a hundred years of actual fighting.

The war might also be considered merely a continuation of the age-old conflict between the French kings and their too powerful English vassals. Philip Augustus had taken over most of the French fiefs of the English-Angevin house at the opening of the thirteenth century. His successors had encroached still further, and after the Treaty of Paris (1259) the English kings were left with only a part of Guienne and Gascony in southwestern France on the express understanding that they were to hold it as liege vassals of the French crown.[1] But the French monarchy had meanwhile grown too strong to tolerate the possession of French land by a foreign king, while, for their part, the English kings, who were beginning to think in national rather than feudal terms, found their posi-

Causes of the war

[1]See map, page 336.

tion as vassals increasingly humiliating. The situation was becoming an impossible one, fraught with irritation for both monarchs. It was made still more difficult by the English interest in Flemish trade and the possibility of an English alliance with the Flemish burghers against their sovereign, and by the alliance between the French and Scottish kings. This situation had led to war in the time of Philip the Fair and Edward I. The causes of the war under Philip VI and Edward III were much the same, save that now the English king had an hereditary claim to the French crown, through his mother who was a daughter of Philip the Fair. This claim he was prepared to press, once war seemed inevitable, as a justification of his position and as a means of winning over the Flemish cities.

The first phase of the war was marked by steady misfortune for France. Philip VI was hampered by a rebellion in Flanders and a civil war in Brittany over the succession to the duchy. Moreover, the French army was not so effectively organized as the English, which was now a disciplined and paid royal army rather than a mere feudal levy, and neither Philip nor his successor John II (1350–64) was a match for his opponent in military skill. The first hostilities ended with the destruction of the French fleet by English and Flemish ships off Sluys in 1340, followed by a five-year truce. The next disaster came in 1346. Edward III had landed an army of some ten thousand men in Normandy, had marched up the Seine almost to Paris, and had then turned north, pillaging the country as he went. The French army, which far outnumbered Edward's forces, finally closed with him on the famous field of Crécy (1346). There the heavily armored but undisciplined French knights charged in vain against the dismounted English men-at-arms, while the English archers with their magnificently effective long bows spread death in their ranks. For the first time in a great battle, the modern method of combined missile and infantry fighting had triumphed over the medieval heavy armed cavalry. This fact made Crécy a sign and a portent, though its

First phase of the war

Crécy
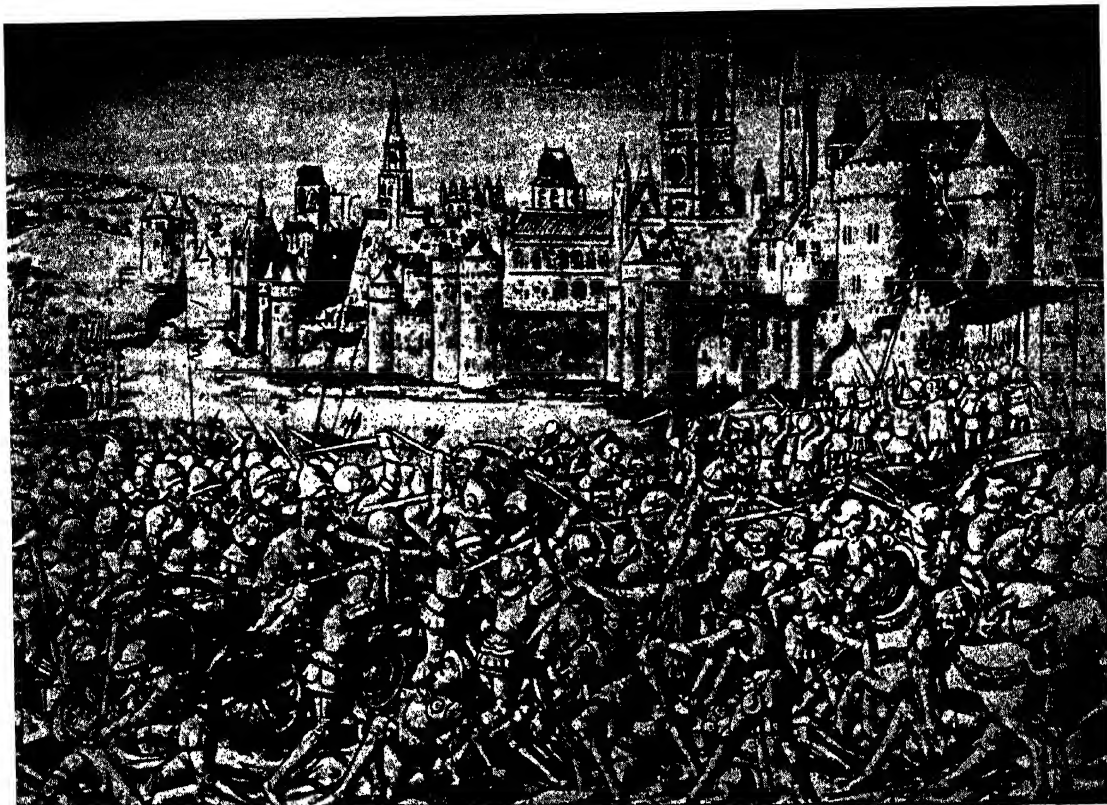
BATTLE BETWEEN THE CITIZENS OF GHENT AND THE COUNT OF FLANDERS, 1382

The Flemish weaving cities, generally friendly to England, were
frequently in rebellion against their count or the King of France.

THE NAVAL BATTLE AT SLUYS IN 1340

The destruction of the French fleet at Sluys made
possible the continuous English invasion of France.

significance would not be fully realized for two centuries to come. The battle ended in a rout, and Edward went on his way to besiege and capture Calais. A truce in 1347 ended hostilities again till 1355.

When the war was resumed, the Black Prince, Edward's brilliant son, began a similar pillaging march through French territory, this time from the direction of Gascony. John II, who was now King of France, hurried south with a large army and met the English at Poitiers (1356). The battle was another triumph for the English archers. The chivalrous but incompetent King John was outgeneraled by the Black Prince, his knights were mowed down, and he himself was taken prisoner. After four years more of fighting, France was at the end of her resources. There was no choice but to make peace on the best terms obtainable. The treaty was arranged at Brétigny in 1360. The English king was given full possession, free of all feudal obligations, of Calais and Ponthieu in the north and of Aquitaine as it had been in the reign of Henry III. Moreover, the French were to pay an enormous ransom for the release of King John. It was still not all paid when John died in 1364.

Poitiers

The first period of the war left France in a frightfully weakened condition. The defeat of the French armies at Crécy and Poitiers was as nothing compared to the constant devastation of the whole northern and western part of France. On their pillaging raids, the English army systematically laid waste the country along the line of march. Nor was that the worst; for both armies, lacking a commissariat, had to live off the country in time of truce as well as in war, and the companies of mercenary soldiers kept up an uninterrupted career of plunder, leaving a trail of ruined crops, burned dwellings and the corpses of non-combatants to mark their passing. War in the fourteenth century still retained this characteristic of feudal warfare, that there was more plundering than fighting and that it was the peasant and townsman who suffered most. To this general suffering was added a burden of taxation such as France had never before known. Again and again

Jacquerie

the king called the States General in the hope that they would aid the collection of the taxes needed to finance the war by giving their consent. But the people were sullen and discontented, and the estates were growing bolder. The estates called by Philip VI in the year of Crécy and the following year refused to consent and demanded reforms in the government. After Poitiers they threatened what amounted to revolution. Led by a Parisian merchant, Étienne Marcel, and backed by the armed citizens of Paris, the estates demanded and for a time secured practical control of the government, which was then in the hands of the Dauphin Charles. At this point the situation was complicated by that desperate and tragic rising of the peasants known as the Jacquerie. Goaded to desperation by their sufferings, the peasants, contemptuously nicknamed Jacques, gathered in bands in 1358, murdered their lords wherever they could find them, and burned their châteaux. The revolt, however, was hopeless. The prince with the aid of the terrified nobles crushed the poorly armed peasants and massacred some twenty thousand of them. With them fell Marcel whose opposition to the prince had been vaguely connected with the Jacquerie and had never had really national support. The States General had overreached itself and had lost its best opportunity to become a necessary and permanent part of French government.

When Charles V (1364–80) became king, he was prepared to profit by the lessons he had learned when acting as regent during his father's imprisonment. He at once began the reconstruction of government finances and the reorganization of the army with a success that won for him the title Charles the Wise. He called the States General, which he had reason to distrust, as seldom as possible, and when he did he was able to secure permanent taxes which made future meetings less necessary. These taxes fell chiefly on the commons, and so were readily voted by the first two estates who formed a majority of the assembly. For the collection of the new taxes, he organized an administrative machinery that lasted for

Success under Charles V

centuries. The army was put on a more regular footing, with knights and archers enrolled in companies and paid by the king. After five years of preparation, Charles was ready to reopen the war. He himself took no part in the fighting, since he was more a scholar and statesman than a warrior. Instead, he entrusted the command of the army to the capable and popular Breton knight, Bertrand du Guesclin. For the first time, the French enjoyed the advantage of superior generalship over the English. Du Guesclin may have been, as commonly reported, the ugliest man in Brittany, but he was certainly a great soldier with years of practical experience behind him. Avoiding pitched battles, he occupied, bit by bit, nearly all the territory ceded to Edward at Brétigny. On the other side, Edward III was drifting into second childhood and the Black Prince's health was failing. After the truce in 1375, the English retained only Calais and a narrow strip of coast in the south between Bayonne and Bordeaux. The next year the Black Prince died, to be followed in 1377 by his father. A renewal of the war was cut short three years later by the death of both Charles V and du Guesclin.

For the next thirty-five years the war languished, with frequent truces and one fairly definite peace in 1396.

Charles VI and civil war The English kings whose reigns fall in this period, Richard II and Henry IV, had too many domestic troubles to pay much attention to foreign war. But France was unable to take advantage of the opportunity offered, for she, too, was weakened by misgovernment and distracted by civil strife. Charles VI (1380–1422) began his reign as a child, with his selfish uncles in charge of the government. Of these, Philip, Duke of Burgundy, was the most important, and the most unscrupulous. In 1388, the young king came of age and began a brief period of good government and reform with the aid of his father's old ministers. But this fortunate period was brought to an end within four years by the first of those violent fits of insanity which rendered Charles permanently incapable of controlling the government. For some time thereafter the Duke of Burgundy and the king's

younger brother, Louis of Orléans, rivaled each other in exploiting the royal government in their own interests. The rivalry between Burgundy and Orléans became still more intense when, in 1404, Philip of Burgundy died and was succeeded by his crafty son, John the Fearless. John had inherited a large territory, which included Flanders and Brabant as well as Burgundy, and hoped through control of the French government to build up a practically independent state between France and Germany. As Louis was the chief obstacle to his plans, he had him assassinated in 1407. Opposition to him continued, however, under the leadership of the Count of Armagnac, the father-in-law of Louis's young son. By 1411, the two factions, Burgundian and Armagnac, had come to blows in open civil war.

After a good deal of fighting, the Armagnacs had gained temporary possession of the mad king and the government, when the new King of England, Henry V, decided to take advantage of the situation and reopen the war with France. Having secured the neutrality of John of Burgundy, Henry landed an army near the mouth of the Seine in 1415 and advanced into Picardy. The French army, led by the Armagnac princes, met him at Agincourt. Despite the defection of Burgundy, the French numbered three times the English force of about thirteen thousand. But again, as at Crécy and Poitiers, the superior discipline and tactics of the small English army gave it an overwhelming victory. Henry commenced the systematic conquest of Normandy, while the Duke of Burgundy seized Paris and the king. The Dauphin Charles now headed the Armagnac party. He was trying to reach an agreement with John of Burgundy in 1419 when the latter was murdered by some Armagnac enthusiasts. Peace between the two parties was now impossible. Philip, the new Duke of Burgundy, promptly formed an alliance with Henry V. He signed a treaty in the name of the king, whereby Henry was to marry the daughter of Charles VI, act as regent till the king's death, and thereafter inherit the French crown. Henry, however, died a few months before Charles VI, leaving

France, 1337

France, 1360

■ Held by the
Kings of England

〜 Boundary
of France

France, c. 1429

☐ held by
the House of
Burgundy

France, 1453

Calais

Paris

Dauphine

Rhone R.

Channel Is.

Seine R.

Paris

Burgundy

Rhone R.
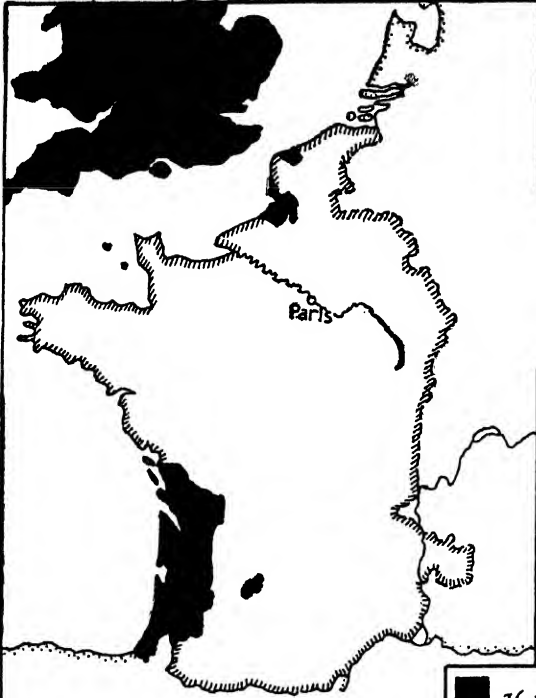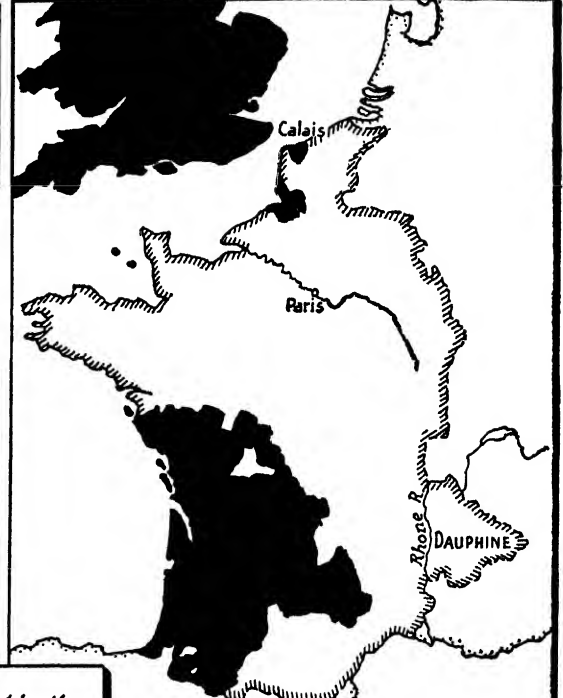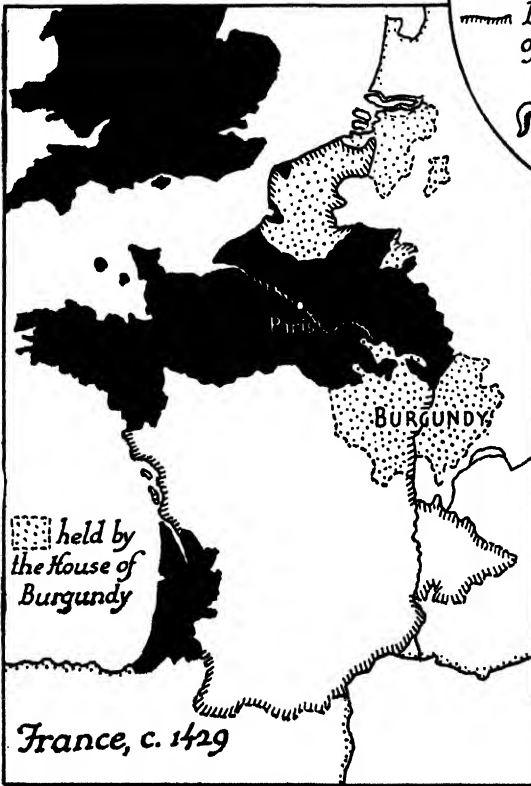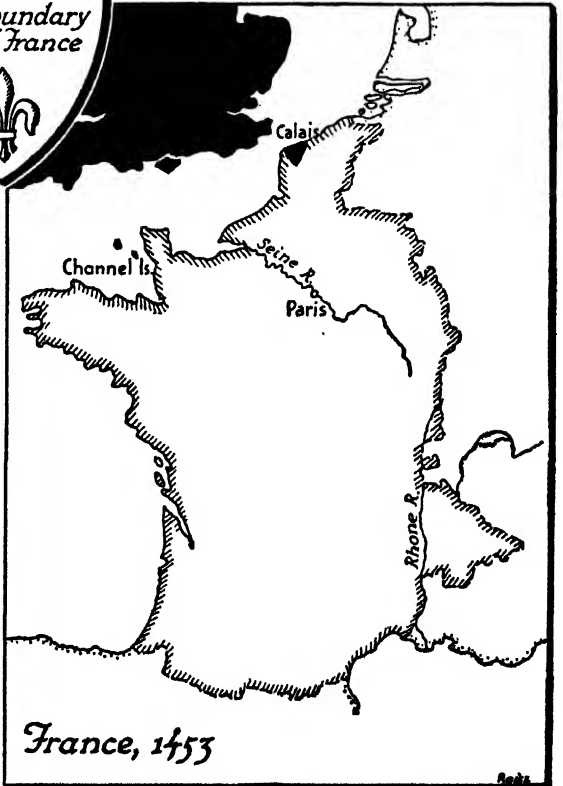
JOAN OF ARC

This contemporary illustration of an incident in the life of Joan from a tapestry shows her being greeted by the Dauphin Charles.

to his infant son, Henry VI, a claim to the throne of France and actual possession of the northern half of the country.

South of the Loire, the Armagnacs still fought on under the leadership of the dauphin, who now took the title Charles VII (1422–61), though he had not yet been officially crowned. He was not a man of very forceful character, but he had a few able and devoted followers and managed to hold his own fairly well against the Duke of Bedford, who acted as regent for Henry VI in France. By 1429, however, his position was becoming very precarious, when the appearance of that remarkable young woman, Joan of Arc, at his court inspired Charles and his supporters with new confidence and energy. The story of the peasant girl of Domremy who believed, and made others believe, that God had chosen her to save France and win the crown for its rightful king is too well known to need retelling. For a year she led the French army, raising the

Last period of the war

Joan of Arc

siege of Orléans and cutting a path for the king to Rheims, in whose ancient cathedral he was crowned and consecrated after the manner of his ancestors. It was a triumph quickly followed by tragedy. In May, 1430, "the Maid" was captured by the Burgundians who sold her to the English. After months of imprisonment, she was tried on charges of heresy and witchcraft, and finally burned at the stake. But she had not died in vain. She had given new spirit to the army and the king, though he had let her die without raising a hand to save her, and she had aroused a patriotic national fervor among Frenchmen that has never since died out. The war lasted two decades longer. It was a period of slow but steady success for French arms. The king made peace with Burgundy in 1435 and repelled the English step by step. The tactics of his general Dunois were much the same as those employed by du Guesclin, and equally successful. By 1453, only Calais was left in English hands and the Hundred Years' War was over.

France had suffered terribly during the long conflict, but she emerged from it a united state with a new national consciousness. The attempts of both the States General and the great princes to control the government had failed. The way was clear for the establishment of absolute monarchical rule over the whole state. When that was accomplished in the generation following the war, France had completed the last step in the transition from feudalism to the modern state.

Results of the war

4. ENGLAND FROM EDWARD III TO HENRY VI (1327–1461)

Much of England's history during the Hundred Years' War has already been told through tracing the fortunes of her armies in France. We must turn now to a brief survey of the political events and the social and constitutional developments in the country itself during this period.

The reign of Edward III (1327–77) was a period of success and popularity for the king in his vigorous youth and middle age, followed by failure and popular discontent in his premature and undignified senility. While he still retained his strength of mind, Edward was absorbed heart and soul in the war with France, and was prepared to sacrifice royal rights and prerogatives to Parliament and to give the people good government in order to secure the financial support necessary to military success. He was always a good politician as well as a brilliant general. When his powers began to fail, his son, the Black Prince, for a time took his place as a national hero. But, unfortunately, he too fell a prey to premature illness and death, leaving his unscrupulous younger brother, John of Gaunt, to act as regent for the old king and later for the prince's infant son, Richard II (1377–99). During the twelve years of Richard's minority, Parliament took advantage of the weakness of royal government to press its claims more strongly than ever, and after the king came of age he was forced for a time to accept a constitutional régime. Richard, however, was arrogant, hot-headed, and foolish, de-

Edward III and Richard II

termined to exercise absolute powers that were no longer practicable. A brief attempt to rule without Parliament led to a revolution. Richard was forced to abdicate in favor of Henry of Lancaster, son of John of Gaunt.

Henry IV (1399–1413) owed his crown to Parliament. He was not the next heir to the throne, and so could not claim it by direct descent. Moreover, the fall of Richard II had demonstrated the folly of ignoring Parliament. Under the Lancastrian kings, therefore, that body developed a larger share in government than ever before. The greater part of the reign of Henry IV was spent in suppressing rebellions and in making good his claim to rule. His efforts were eventually successful. He left the power of his house so firmly established that his son Henry V (1413–22) was able to renew the French war with startling success and to threaten the power of Parliament. But at the height of his career, Henry V died and the royal government was weakened by a regency for an infant king. Even when Henry VI (1422–61) grew up, the government remained weak, for he proved to be an utterly incompetent ruler. The country was torn by the strife of baronial factions and disturbed by the lawless violence of returned soldiers who were maintained by wealthy lords. Parliament took a larger share in government than ever, but it was too often dominated by noble factions. Meanwhile, the war with France was lost and before the end of Henry's reign England was thrown into the chaos of civil war.

The Lancastrian kings

The effect of the Hundred Years' War on England, socially and constitutionally, was in many respects different from its effect on France, though both countries were alike in emerging from the struggle with a new national consciousness. But the English people had not suffered so much. Despite high taxes, the war was popular with all classes, for all had a stake in it. It was always Frenchmen who were plundered and Englishmen who profited, a situation well calculated to arouse patriotic enthusiasm. The greater part of the English army was composed of yeoman archers, drawn from the non-noble class.

England and the war

They were paid by the king and they brought home with them their share of plunder as well as their just share in the glory of Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt. Englishmen did not have to be noble to take pride in English victories or to profit from them. The commons, too, in so far as they were represented in Parliament, took advantage of the financial needs of the government much more wisely than did their French contemporaries. In one respect only did England suffer directly from the war. During its last years and after it was over, the country was flooded with restless and lawless soldiers, who were a constant source of violence and who provided the material for the Wars of the Roses.

The war was not the only factor having an effect on the social development of England in this period. By the begin-

Black Death and Peasants' Revolt ning of the fourteenth century, it was clear that the rise of money economy was slowly breaking up the old system of economic feudalism on the manors. Villeins were beginning to secure the commutation of their personal services to money payments, and were in some places securing personal freedom. In the second half of the century this process was greatly accelerated, due in part to a great international disaster. In the years 1348–50, the whole of western Europe was swept by the most widespread and deadly epidemic disease in its history, the Black Death. It was probably a form of the bubonic plague. At any rate, it was carried from the East by merchant ships to western ports, whence it spread far and wide. The toll of deaths was terribly high, reputedly a third of the total population. All countries suffered, but in England, which was more ready for change, the result was a social revolution. There were not enough villeins left to till the fields. Wages rose to unprecedented heights. Many villeins seized the opportunity to bargain for freedom with their lords or ran away in search of free employment elsewhere. For years the government strove with little success to fix wages at the old levels. The chief result was a growing discontent that finally found expression in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. The revolt failed, but strong economic forces were work-

ing on the villeins' side and their emancipation went slowly but steadily on. By the end of the fifteenth century, they had practically all obtained freedom and had become tenant farmers, or hired farm laborers, or had drifted off to seek work in the cities.

Meanwhile, the steady evolution of the English Constitution continued. A new court, the chancery, was estab-

lished to take over the civil **Administration and justice** cases referred to the king's council from the common-law courts, which the council was now too busy with the increasing amount of government business to attend to. These cases were mostly outside the scope of common law. The court of chancery provided a solution by applying the principle of equity. An equally significant innovation was made in the administration of local justice during the reign of Edward III. In every county prominent knights or landowners were given power to judge minor criminal cases. They were called justices of the peace. Being men of respectable social position who were thoroughly acquainted with conditions in their neighborhood, their judgments were usually respected and in accord with local opinion. For centuries they remained a very important part of English judicial machinery.

The most important constitutional development of this period, however, was the gradual evolution of Parliament

from the rather vague body **Development of Parliament** founded by Edward I to something like its modern form, and the firm establishment of its position as a permanent and necessary part of government. Before the end of the fourteenth century, the division of Parliament into two separate houses, the Lords and Commons, had been completed. We have already seen how Parliament as a whole took advantage of the kings' financial needs, and the weakness of certain rulers, to increase its powers. The Commons made especially good use of the kings' need for money to carry on the war. They had learned to bargain. Before giving consent to taxes they would present petitions for the reform of grievances, and often these petitions were made into statutes by the king and were given the force of law.

THE BLACK DEATH, 1349

This contemporary French miniature shows a mass burial of victims of the plague.

THE PEASANTS' REVOLT, 1381

The army of peasants are here being addressed by John Ball,
the priest whose preaching helped to stir up the revolt.

The Commons were thus acquiring the practical ability to initiate legislation. Parliament, and particularly the House of Commons, had still a long way to go before reaching its present position, but all the essential ingredients were present before the end of the Hundred Years' War. Later kings might dictate to Parliament or try to override it, but none could afford to ignore it or succeed in ruling without it.

In this respect the history of the English Parliament is in strong contrast to that of the French States General, which never succeeded in becoming an essential part of government, but, on the contrary, were called less and less frequently after the middle of the fourteenth century and eventually almost ceased to exist. This fact requires some explanation besides the incidental differences in their history, such as the crushing of the revolutionary movement led by Étienne Marcel, which was without parallel in English history. One fundamental difference lay in the earlier centralization of government in England while both countries were still largely feudal. The English kings were strong enough to compel the barons from all parts of the country to attend the Great Council before it evolved into Parliament. In France, on the other hand, the great lords from outside the domain remained strong enough to ignore the king's summons almost to the end of the feudal era. From the very beginning, then, the English Parliament was more truly national in scope than the estates. There was an equally fundamental difference also in the composition of the English House of Commons and the French Third Estate. The latter was composed almost entirely of representatives of the city middle class, who had no interest

Contrast with States General

in the country districts and nothing in common, socially or in economic interest, with the nobles and clergy in the other two estates. The English Commons, on the other hand, included landowning knights from the shires as well as burghers, and these knights had much the same social and economic interests as the lords. Indeed, many of the knights who came up from the shires were related to the lords by family ties, for in England, unlike any continental country, the younger sons of the barons were excluded from the family inheritance and lost their status as nobles. Together with the numerous knights who held only one or two manors, but who would have been classed as nobles on the Continent, they formed the peculiarly English class of gentry who, in society and in the House of Commons, formed a connecting link between the lords and the merchant middle class. From the social point of view, then, the English Parliament was more truly representative of the nation than the States General, and the two English houses could work together to influence the monarchy as the three estates never could.

The end of the Hundred Years' War found both England and France on the verge of becoming united monarchical states. Both countries had yet to pass through a brief period of civil war (the Wars of the Roses in England and the war with Burgundy in France), but when that was finished, in each country the king became the direct ruler of the whole state by virtue of his royal title rather than as a feudal lord. In England, however, the king still had to rule by constitutional means through Parliament, whereas in France, once the great nobles had been suppressed, the king was left absolute and uncontrolled. The story of these last developments we shall leave to a later time.

24.

The Decline of the Papacy in the Later Middle Ages

THE GREAT AGE of the medieval papacy fell within the two centuries after the accession of Gregory VII. During that time, successive popes built up for the Roman See a spiritual monarchy over all Western Christendom, a hegemony based on canon law, on a highly centralized administrative system that brought the clergy of all lands directly under their control, and on claims, often put into practice, to supremacy over secular rulers. At the end of that period they succeeded in destroying the power of the emperors, whose opposition had been the most serious obstacle in the way of their triumphal march. It was apparently a decisive victory, but the papacy was to pay dearly for it. The last phase of the struggle with the Hohenstaufens had revolved around the temporal rule of the popes over the States of the Church in central Italy, to maintain which they had taxed the church heavily and had even preached crusades against the emperors. Their devotion to this worldly cause, which was of little general interest to Christendom, lost for the popes much of the sympathy and respect of people and clergy alike in other lands. And it was on their hold over the hearts and minds of the people, rather than on the theories of canon law, that the popes must depend for the ultimate support of their power. Moreover, the defeat of the emperors had not removed all opposition

to papal supremacy. The rising territorial monarchies in France and England were to prove more dangerous opponents than the emperors had ever been. By the end of the thirteenth century, the time had passed when any pope could exercise authority over French and English kings as Innocent III had done. When Boniface VIII tried to do so, stating his claims to supremacy more strongly than even Innocent had dared to do, he failed disastrously. From that moment the power of the popes began to decline. Their prestige continued to wane through the seventy years of subjection to French influence at Avignon, through the disgraceful rivalries of the Great Schism and the opposition of the councils that followed, until, by the middle of the fifteenth century, the pope was little more than an Italian prince who was also the administrative head of the church, though even there with powers sadly restricted.

1. BONIFACE VIII AND PHILIP THE FAIR

When Boniface VIII (1294–1303) ascended the throne of Saint Peter, he had no reason to believe that the prestige of the papacy had been in any way impaired. There had been no strong pope to put its power to the test since the end of the war with the emperors, and possibly no one could gauge the

Boniface VIII

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BONIFACE VIII WITH TWO CARDINALS

*From a painting by Giotto, in
San Giovanni in Lateran, Rome*

BONIFACE VIII HOLDING COURT

*The fresco above shows Boniface receiving Saint
Louis, the son of King Charles II of Naples.*

subtle changes in popular opinion that had taken place in the interim. The character of the new pope was certain to make his pontificate a crucial one in the history of the church. He was already in his late seventies and had behind him a lifetime of political and diplomatic activity. He had been one of the most vigorous and capable of the cardinals, but his great capacities were offset by equally great failings of character. He was arrogant, ruthless, and immensely vain, and he showed little evidence of deep moral or religious conviction. His ambitions seem to have been motivated more by personal and family pride than by devotion to the welfare of the church. The early years of his reign were spent in crushing the powerful Roman family of Colonna in the interest of his own less powerful house, the Gaetani. At the same time, his love of power and contempt for the rights of others drove him on to an uncompromising assertion of all those claims to universal supremacy with which his long training in canon law had made him thoroughly familiar.

This conception of his position soon brought Boniface into conflict with the kings of France and England. The
Clericis laicos
first crisis arose from the much-disputed question of the relation of the clergy and church property to the state. In 1296, Philip IV (the Fair) and

Edward I were at war and both demanded subsidies from their clergy to help meet the unusual expenses. They argued that the clergy, as subjects of the state, should contribute to the defense of the realm in return for the protection afforded them by the royal government. The pope, on the other hand, asserted that no secular ruler had the right to tax churchmen or church property. That right could be exercised only by the pope as ruler of the church. This view Boniface expressed in a famous bull, called *Clericis laicos* from the first two words of the text. The bull forbade the clergy of any country to pay subsidies of any kind to secular rulers without the pope's consent. Philip promptly replied by forbidding the exportation of money from the country, ostensibly as a war measure, but with the effect of cutting off the papal income from the French church. Edward also took vigorous action, which amounted to the outlawing of the English clergy who refused to pay the subsidies. Faced by this decided opposition, and finding that the clergy would not support him strongly against their king, Boniface was forced to withdraw the bull.

The pope, however, soon recovered confidence. The crushing of the Colonna in 1298 made his position at Rome secure, and in 1300 he celebrated a jubilee year. Immense
The jubilee of 1300

crowds of pilgrims — their number has been reckoned as high as two million — flocked to Rome to take advantage of the special indulgences and spiritual benefits promised to all who came to the Holy City and contributed to the papal coffers. The success of the jubilee gave Boniface economic independence and an exaggerated confidence in the loyalty of the people to the church. He was ready again to assert his authority over his royal opponents.

It was the King of France who bore the brunt of the second conflict with the haughty pope. The immediate cause of the quarrel this time was the question of clerical exemption from civil jurisdiction. Philip the Fair had condemned the Bishop of Pamiers in Languedoc, apparently on ample grounds, for treason and other serious crimes and asked the pope to degrade him from his office prior to the execution of his sentence. As might have been expected, Boniface refused to recognize the right of a secular court to try an ecclesiastic. In December, 1301, he called the case to Rome for a new trial, and at the same time issued two bulls, one renewing the prohibitions of *Clericis laicos*, the other taking Philip to task for misgovernment. Feeling that the independence of his government was at stake, Philip decided to make an unprecedented appeal for popular support. In April, 1302, he called the first States General and stated his own side of the case to them, with the result that all three estates, including the clergy, addressed letters of protest to Rome.

Conflict with Philip

This opposition merely spurred Boniface on to a more extreme statement of his authority, extending the controversy into the wider field of the supremacy of church over state. The bull *Unam sanctam*, published in November, 1302, contained the most absolute statement of supremacy over secular rulers ever issued by any pope. Most of the arguments, including the time-honored metaphor of the two swords representing the spiritual and temporal authority which the pope claimed the power to wield, the one directly and the other indirectly through control of secular governments, were not new, but the

Unam sanctam

whole tenor of the bull was without precedent in its uncompromising force. It concluded with the flat statement that "for every human creature it is absolutely necessary for salvation to be subject to the Roman Pontiff." The bull was followed by an ultimatum to Philip demanding his complete submission under threat of excommunication.

The pope had gone too far. Feeling that submission was impossible, Philip decided to take the offensive as the only alternative left him. He called an assembly of the barons and higher clergy of France, before which his ministers accused Boniface of heresy, simony, and a host of other crimes. Meanwhile, his chief minister, Guillaume de Nogaret, was dispatched to Italy to arrest the pope and bring him back to answer the accusations of the king before a general council. On his arrival in Italy, Nogaret discovered that the unsuspecting pope had gone to the little mountain town of Anagni to escape the summer heat. There the French minister followed him, accompanied by an armed band which had been raised by the pope's bitter enemy, Sciarra Colonna. They had little difficulty in breaking into the town and seizing Boniface, whom they found deserted by his court, but arrayed in all the dignity of his pontifical robes. They did not hold him long, for the people of the countryside rallied to his rescue and freed him, but the damage was already done. The aged pope died within the month as a result of shock and chagrin. And with him died the medieval papacy.

The fall of Boniface

2. WANING PRESTIGE OF THE POPES AT AVIGNON (1305–77)

For two years after the death of Boniface VIII, the outcome of his struggle with the French monarchy remained in some doubt. The next pope elected lived for only a few months, and in the long interregnum that followed, Philip the Fair was able to bring sufficient pressure to bear on the cardinals to force the election of a French pope, who took the name Clement V (1305–14). The papacy was now brought definitely

Babylonian Captivity

under the influence of the French king. Clement was in France at the time of his election, and Philip used every possible means to keep him there. The disturbed state of Italy, torn by the strife of the Guelf and Ghibelline factions, offered an excuse to the pope for not taking up his residence in Rome. Instead, after four years of wandering about France, he set up the papal capital at Avignon on the Rhone. There the popes remained for nearly seventy years. The city was not actually in French territory — it was in Provence, then a fief of the King of Naples — but it was just on the border of France and well within the sphere of French influence. The popes were doubtless safer there than in Rome, but it was mainly French interest that kept them from returning to their proper home in the ancient capital of Western Christendom. Clement's acquiescence in crushing the Templars at the request of Philip the Fair and in other matters demonstrated the importance to the French kings of keeping the popes at Avignon. And the popes, being French themselves, were willing enough to stay. Twenty-five of the twenty-eight cardinals appointed by Clement V were French, thus ensuring the election of another French pope — and so it went through seven successive reigns. To other nations it seemed that the rulers of the church were being held captive under the domination of France, whence the name "the Babylonian Captivity of the Church" generally applied to this period in papal history.

The subservience of the popes at Avignon to the will of the secular government was limited to France. With regard to other powers, they still maintained their former claims. Indeed, they were encouraged to assert them by the French kings in the hope that they might thus be more useful to French policy. Accordingly, when the Emperor Henry VII died during a vain attempt to re-establish imperial rule in Italy, Clement V declared himself the temporal ruler of Italy and Germany until a new emperor had been elected and had received his sanction, on the ground that the emperor in reality held his title as a vassal of the pope. The death of Clement

Quarrel with Louis IV

shortly thereafter left his successor John XXII (1316–34) to enforce this claim. In the meantime, the rivalry of Louis the Bavarian and Frederick of Hapsburg, both of whom claimed the imperial crown, gave the popes a free hand. By 1322, however, Louis IV was victorious and began his reign without first securing the papal confirmation. John XXII was enraged and placed Louis under the ban of excommunication. The quarrel dragged on through the pontificates of John and the two following popes, until the death of Louis in 1347. Neither side was able to take any decisive action. Louis, indeed, had himself crowned at Rome by the officers of the city and in 1338 the German Diet declared that the emperor's election was valid without the consent of the pope, but later the feeble emperor humbled himself in a vain attempt to gain the pope's forgiveness. All that makes the controversy of real importance was the work of the political theorists who rallied to the emperor's support and launched a bitter attack on papal rights.

Louis the Bavarian found useful allies in his opposition to the papacy in the Spiritual Franciscans, a branch of the Franciscan order which had been condemned by John XXII for their rigid adherence to the rule of absolute poverty laid down by their saintly founder. Among these was an English professor from the University of Paris, William of Occam, whose learning and skill in debate had won for him the title of "Invincible Doctor." His intellectual weapons Occam now turned upon the papacy in a rapid fire of devastating criticism. He denied the papal claims to temporal sovereignty and even set limits to the pope's spiritual authority. His arguments were based largely on the authority of the Bible, which should be interpreted, not only by the pope and the clergy, but by "the discretion and counsel of the wisest men," a rather vague phrase that seems to foreshadow the theory of the supremacy of a council over the pope.

Critics of the papacy

In the field of political theory, an even more forceful assault on papal supremacy was delivered by two secular writers, Marsiglio of Padua and John of Jandun, who pub-

lished the famous *Defensor pacis* in 1324.

Defensor pacis
In this significant book the authors developed theories so far in advance of their age that its full influence was felt only in later generations. Arguing that in the state and in the church, which is here defined as "the community of all who believe in Christ," the sovereign power rests with the people and is only delegated to rulers so long as they fulfill their function of ruling wisely, the authors assert that the papacy is a human institution without authority save that given it by the Christian people. The pope's supremacy over the clergy is a mere presidency created for administrative convenience. All important questions of faith should be referred to the superior authority of a general council representing the Christian community. The pope has no right to "coercive jurisdiction" which belongs only to the state, and it is the pope's claim to this that disturbs the peace of Christendom. In opposing him, the emperor is acting as "the defender of the peace." Further, the clergy, save for their spiritual duties of teaching, preaching, and administering the sacraments, are in no essential different from other Christian citizens. In temporal matters they should be subject to the government of the state.

The daring propositions of the *Defensor pacis* were too extreme to gain wide support at once. In the meantime the

Papal finance
popes at Avignon successfully carried on the work of their predecessors in centralizing the administration of the church and in using their control of the clergy to increase their income. The popes now needed more money than ever before, for they had lost most of their revenues from the States of the Church in Italy and they had to expend large sums for the building of a new capital at Avignon with a magnificence and luxury that would uphold their prestige in Christendom. To meet ever-increasing demands, therefore, the Avignonese popes systematized and perfected all the established methods of taxation and invented some new ones. The financial genius of John XXII, especially, was responsible for the extension of many old practices and for some important innovations. The cleri-

cal tithe, one tenth of the net income from ecclesiastical benefices, levied originally for the purpose of a crusade, now became a regular tax payable to the papacy. John XXII also claimed the "annates" — that is, the first year's income from the benefices of the more important clergy — as well as the revenues from all benefices during a vacancy. Even the "procurations," which were the fees paid to bishops to meet the expenses of visits of inspection in their dioceses, now went to the papacy, with the result that visitations practically ceased in many places. Finally, the popes at Avignon greatly extended the "reservation" of benefices for papal appointment, until they had secured the right, despite the canonical rules regarding election, to name the holders of many of the most important ecclesiastical offices in Christendom as well as a large number of the lesser ones. And these offices were seldom given away without some substantial return, not to mention the innumerable fees paid by the clergy for the confirmation of their offices. Never had the ancient evil of simony [1] flourished so openly at the papal court.

The heavy weight of papal taxation aroused grave discontent in the countries outside of France. In England

Opposition in England
it led to open opposition on the part of the government, for the English kings, who were at war with France, felt an especially keen resentment at seeing so much English money going to a French pope. Edward III even went so far as to protest that "the successor of the Apostles was commissioned to lead the Lord's sheep to pasture, not to fleece them." Papal "provisions" or appointments to English benefices were particularly unpopular because the offices were so often given to foreigners who either remained absent or were unfit to perform their duties. In 1351, Edward III had Parliament pass the Statute of Provisors making this practice illegal. Two years later he sought to curtail papal interference in England still further by issuing the Statute of Praemunire, which made the appealing of cases from the local ecclesiastical courts to the papal court illegal without the

[1] See above, page 217.
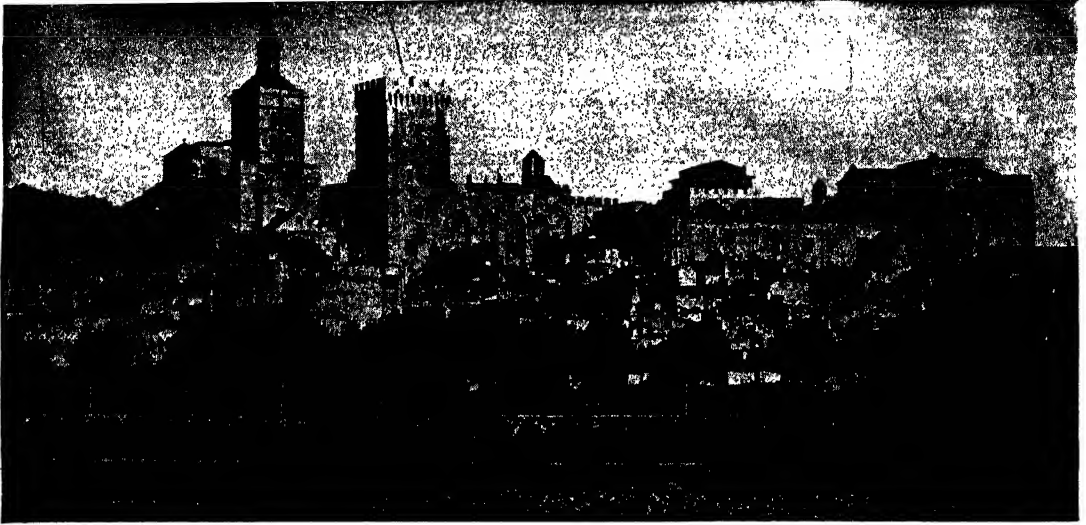
AVIGNON AS IT LOOKS TODAY

The cathedral and the papal palace still tower above the city of Avignon as they did during the Babylonian Captivity.
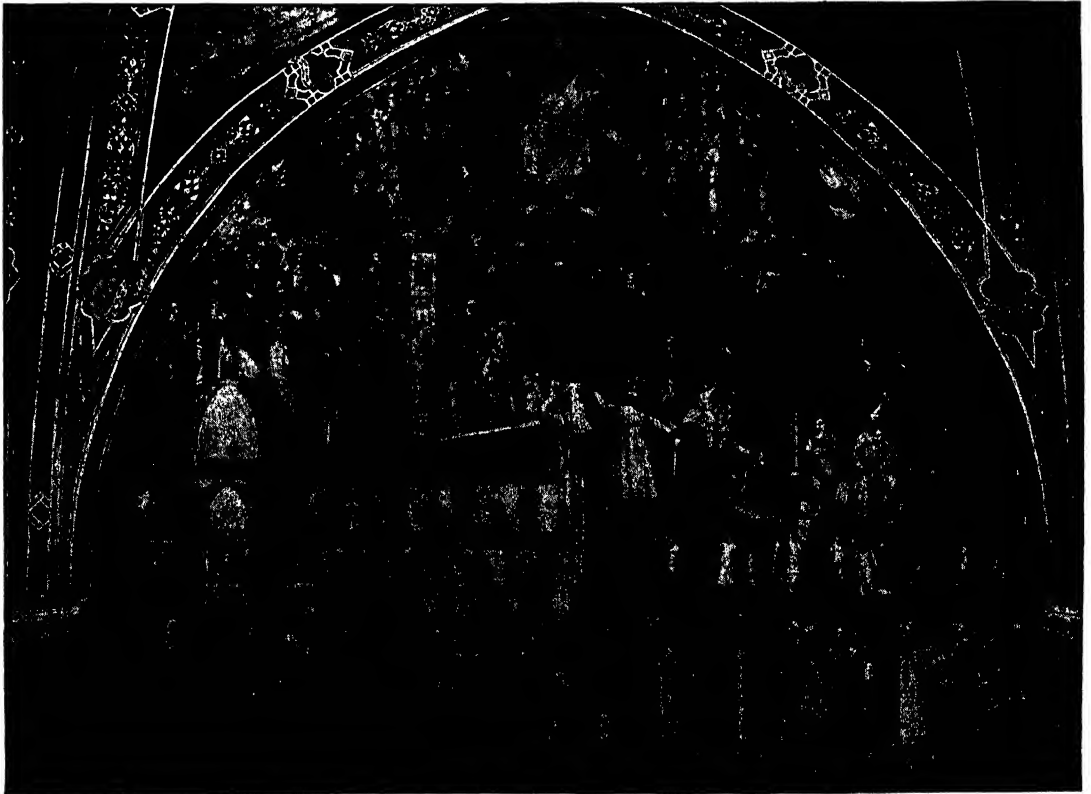
THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT

The papacy might be losing prestige during the Captivity, but its claims were unabated. In this fresco, c. 1365, the pope is shown surrounded by the powers of church and state.

king's consent. In the long run, however, the statutes had little effect, save to force the popes to share some of the spoils with the king.

The opposition to papal taxation was not limited to the state governments. The clergy, too, chafed under the financial burden. But in the final analysis, it was the people who paid, for the clergy recouped their losses by levying tithes and fees for their services. There is ample evidence of widespread popular discontent with the administration of the church, and even of active dislike of the clergy, which was aggravated by the failure of the clergy in many instances to give the spiritual aid and leadership that the people had the right to expect. It is unsafe to accept at their face value all the denunciations of the morals and manners of the clergy made by both secular writers and reforming preachers; yet the evidence of a decline in the moral and spiritual standards of the church during the period of the Babylonian Captivity is too strong to be altogether denied. It could not well be otherwise. Appeals to Avignon from episcopal jurisdiction, the cessation of episcopal visitations, and the absence of foreign incumbents from their posts all tended to disrupt ecclesiastical discipline. Moreover, the whole body of the clergy suffered from the demoralizing effects of simony. Bishops or priests who had purchased their offices were likely to regard them as an investment and to be more interested in making them pay than in performing their spiritual duties. There were undoubtedly many earnest and conscientious priests, like the poor parson of the *Canterbury Tales*. But that Chaucer considered him an exception to the general rule is shown by his description of the other clerics who rode with that cheerful company on the road to Canterbury. One need not read far in the literature of the fourteenth century to find sweeping criticisms of the wealth, worldliness, and immorality of the clergy and plentiful signs of a general lack of respect for them.

As time went on it became increasingly clear that the papacy was losing both popularity and prestige, and that this was due in part to the continued residence of the popes

Popular discontent

at Avignon, which had become a symbol of all the papal abuses of the age. A French pope could not command the loyalty of other nations as could a pope living at Rome, the traditional capital of the universal church. The Italians especially resented the absence of the popes from Italy, since it cut them off from their accustomed share in the profits of the papacy. Rome had built its entire economic life about the papal *curia*. Deprived of it, the city was left desolate and poverty-stricken, dominated by quarreling noble factions, while the States of the Church were in a constant turmoil and threatened to escape entirely from papal control. Yet this very situation made the return to Rome difficult and dangerous. A brief visit to Rome made by Pope Urban V in 1367 ended in disillusionment. He had been encouraged to go to Rome by the success of the warlike Cardinal Albornoz in crushing the Roman nobles and the despotic princes who had seized control of most of the cities in the Papal States. However, the death of the cardinal shortly after the pope's arrival left Urban helpless. He returned to the luxury and security of Avignon, much to the joy of the French cardinals who hated the ruined city with its degraded and rebellious people. Ten years passed and a new pope was elected before the project was renewed. At last, in 1377, Pope Gregory XI decided to make the long deferred move, lest Rome and the States of the Church should be lost beyond recovery. He was welcomed with delirious joy by the Roman populace.

Return to Rome

3. THE GREAT SCHISM, HERESY, AND THE COUNCILS (1378–1449)

All who were most sincerely interested in the welfare of the church had welcomed the end of the Captivity and the return of the papacy to Rome. No one could have foreseen that the death of Gregory within the year would plunge the church into a situation infinitely worse than anything that had gone before. The papal court was scarcely settled in Rome before a new pope had to be elected. The majority of the cardinals, who were French and homesick for Avignon, undoubt-

Beginning of schism

edly wanted another French pope. The Roman people, on the other hand, were determined at all costs to keep the papacy now that they had recovered it and clamored wildly for a Roman pope, or at least an Italian. The election was held in the midst of scenes of mob violence that terrified the cardinals. They hastily chose an Italian, who took the name Urban VI (1378-89). He was a Neapolitan who had risen to the rank of archbishop through the favor of some of the French cardinals at Avignon. But if the cardinals hoped that he would be grateful to them and amenable to their control, they were bitterly disappointed. From the first he treated them with a brutal contempt that led some observers to suspect his sanity. Finding their position intolerable, the cardinals withdrew from Rome and held a new conclave. They declared that the election of Urban was invalid because it had taken place under threat of violence. In his place they elected a French cardinal, Clement VII (1378-94). The new pope with his cardinals then returned to Avignon. In Rome, meanwhile, Urban denounced and excommunicated Clement and the rebellious cardinals, and appointed twenty-eight new cardinals of his own. There were now two popes and two colleges of cardinals, and the people of Christendom were faced by the problem of deciding whether the pope at Rome or the pope at Avignon was the true successor of Saint Peter. The church was split from top to bottom and the schism was not to be healed for nearly forty years.

The question of the validity of the election of Urban VI or Clement VII was one that might honestly puzzle any impartial observer. It is still open to debate. The various states of Europe, however, made the choice of adherence to one or other of the rival popes mostly on political grounds. Italy, with the exception of Naples which was traditionally connected with Avignon, rallied to the Roman pope. France, naturally enough, recognized Clement. National enmities or alliances dictated the position of the other powers. Scotland, Spain, and those of the German princes who were friendly to France adhered to Clement, while England, Flan-

Effects of the schism

ders, Portugal, the empire, and the Scandinavian countries gave their obedience to Urban. The schism had disastrous effects both on the prestige of the papacy and on the spiritual health of the entire church. The rival popes thundered against each other, each denying the other any claim to authority, so that conscientious men did not know which way to turn. Rival claimants fought over ecclesiastical offices and the clergy everywhere were demoralized. Moreover, both popes were in desperate need of money, since each could draw revenues only from the part of the church that adhered to him. As a result, all the financial abuses of the Captivity were multiplied, with correspondingly evil effects. Popular discontent was redoubled and criticism of the clergy and the papacy became bolder. In England and Bohemia, demands for reform crystallized into heresy.

The leader of this movement in England was John Wyclif, a distinguished scholar and professor at Oxford. His first protests against papal supremacy and the wealth of the clergy, published in 1375, won for him the friendship of John of Gaunt, who was already acting as regent for the aged Edward III. They also called forth an official condemnation from Gregory XI in 1377. The scandal of the papal schism, which occurred in the next year, urged Wyclif to a more fundamental and far-reaching attack on the whole ecclesiastical system of his day. Like the later Protestant reformers, whose doctrines he foreshadowed in many respects, Wyclif appealed to the authority of the Bible against that of canon law or the customs and dogmas of the medieval church. He felt that the ills of the church, most of which sprang from the wealth and temporal power of the clergy, could be cured only by a return to the simpler life and teaching of the early Christians. It was the duty of the state to disendow the clergy when they failed to use their wealth for spiritual ends. Wyclif's theories regarding the equality of all Christians and the superiority of the state over the church in temporal matters are somewhat reminiscent of the *Defensor pacis*, but on theological grounds he went farther than Marsiglio had

Wyclif

HUSS BEING LED TO EXECUTION

From the Book of the Constance Council,
by Ulrich von Riechenthal, an eyewitness

done. Still relying on the authority of the Bible, he denied the validity of pilgrimages, the veneration of saints, and the power of the clergy to grant arbitrary absolution for sins, and even attacked the fundamental doctrine of the material presence of Christ's body in the sacrament of the Eucharist. His doubts regarding the sacramental power of the priests, especially those who were living in sin, struck at the very heart of the church's power over the lay world. In this direction, however, he was traveling too fast for the thought of his age. It was only the weakness of the papacy and the doubtful

support of John of Gaunt that enabled him, after he had been expelled from Oxford, to pass his last years in peace as a parish priest at Lutterworth. He died in 1384. His followers, who were called Lollards, preached his doctrines throughout England for some years until they were stamped out as dangerous heretics by Henry IV. But Wyclif's trenchant criticism of the church could never be wholly suppressed. Many of his ideas were to be asserted again at a more favorable time by the Protestant reformers of the sixteenth century, and in the meantime his teaching had spread to the distant land of Bohemia, where it received an enthusiastic welcome.

The movement for the reform of the Bohemian church in the early years of the fifteenth century was not entirely due to the influence of Wyclif. For some time before they learned of him, reforming preachers had been protesting against the wealth and immorality of the Bohemian clergy, who seem to have been unusually corrupt. It was Wyclif's teaching, however, that provided the great Bohemian reformer, John Huss, with the weapons he needed to gain popular support for his attack on the church. Like Wyclif, Huss was a scholar and professor — he taught at the University of Prague — but he was less a theologian and more a conscious nationalist than the English reformer. To his moral indignation against the corruption of the church was added a strong patriotic feeling against the German clergy who had secured most of the important posts in the Bohemian church. It was this combination that made him so popular among the native Bohemians and so dangerous an opponent of the papacy and the empire. In 1414, Huss was summoned to appear before the general council called by Emperor Sigismund at Constance to answer charges of heresy. He was tried and condemned, and after refusing to recant was burned at the stake in July, 1415. The emperor had treacherously repudiated the safe-conduct he had given him. The burning of Huss made it impossible to reconcile the Bohemian rebels to the church. The Hussites formed a separate sect, fiercely loyal to

the memory of their martyred national hero. Their resistance ended only after years of furious fighting, and then only by a compromise on the part of the church.

The growth of heresy in England and Bohemia demonstrated in the most forcible fashion the disastrous results of the schism of the papacy. But even without that object lesson, the evils of the schism were so apparent that both laymen and clergy in all parts of Christendom realized that it must be brought to an end, lest the whole structure of the universal church be destroyed. The popes themselves and the cardinals on both sides loudly proclaimed their eagerness to end the schism, but none was willing to make the first move or to sacrifice his position. Even the death of the original schismatic popes did not bring about reconciliation, for new popes were elected to fill their respective places. Under such circumstances, the only hope of decisive action seemed to lie in a general council which could coerce the popes. The arguments of the *Defensor pacis* for the superior jurisdiction of a general council were at last beginning to bear fruit. But who was to call a council if the popes would not? There lay the difficulty.

Eventually a group of cardinals from each "obedience" met and took upon themselves the responsibility of summoning a general council to meet at Pisa in 1409. Despite the doubtful legality of the council, an imposing array of churchmen attended. The first act of the council was to depose the two reigning popes, the Roman Gregory XII and his rival Benedict XIII. The cardinals present then proceeded to elect a new pope who took the name Alexander V. The latter, however, died within a few months and was replaced by Cardinal Baldassare Cossa as John XXIII. He was an able but unscrupulous man who had risen to prominence by methods more worthy of an Italian despot than of a churchman. Meanwhile, Gregory and Benedict had refused to accept their deposition and had been able to find some support in the conflicting interests of the European states. The council had merely made matters worse. Instead of two popes there

were now three. *Ecce reductio ad absurdum.*

This impossible situation lasted for five years. It was the Emperor Sigismund who found the only possible solution by asserting his right as Roman emperor to call a council of the church as the great Constantine had done at Nicaea. The new council, attended by representatives from all parts of the Roman Church, assembled at Constance in 1414. After much negotiation the three popes were deposed or forced to abdicate, and in 1417 a Roman cardinal of the Colonna family was elected as Martin V (1417–31). The schism was ended and the papacy was restored to Rome. In dealing with other pressing problems, however, the council was less successful. We have already noted that the burning of John Huss failed to check the Hussite heresy. The attempts of the council to reform the abuses in the church, which had arisen during the period of the Captivity and the schism, were almost equally fruitless. It did, however, issue two very important decrees, one asserting the superiority of a general council over the pope, the other providing for the calling of future councils at frequent intervals.

In this conciliar theory, the Council of Constance had left a dangerous legacy to future popes, but on the whole its action had strengthened rather than weakened the papacy, at least in so far as it had restored the pope to Rome and left him without rivals. Martin V and his successor Eugenius IV (1431–47) were able to establish themselves in a position of fair political security in the Papal States, to regain some measure of control over the clergy, and, in the long run, to withstand the menace of conciliar authority. In this they were aided by the political weakness of the greater European states. The council scheduled to meet in 1423 was so poorly attended that the pope had no difficulty in dissolving it before anything could be accomplished. The second council, however, which met at Basle in the first year of the pontificate of Eugenius, presented a more serious opposition. The

Attempts to end schism

Council of Pisa

The Council of Constance

End of schism

The conciliar movement fails

Council of Basle

necessity of ending the Hussite wars called forth a large attendance, and the success of the council in arranging a compromise that reconciled all but the most extreme Hussites to the church gave it considerable prestige. The council, moreover, was determined to effect a sweeping reform of the church "in head and members," beginning with the papacy. After long opposition, Eugenius attempted to bring the council under his control by transferring it to Ferrara; but as most of the council ignored the papal summons and remained at Basle, the council that met at Ferrara and then at Florence in 1438–39 was really a new one. The Council of Ferrara-Florence occupied itself mainly with an attempt, briefly successful, to reunite the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches. Its only lasting result was to stimulate the study of Greek at Florence through the influence of the learned Greek delegates. Meanwhile, the remnants of the Basle Council had deposed Eugenius and elected an anti-pope, Felix V. For ten years the council and its pope continued the struggle with Rome, but the selfish intrigues and political bickerings of its members gradually destroyed its prestige, while Eugenius succeeded in coming to terms with most of the European powers. At last, in 1449, Felix resigned his empty title and the Council of Basle allowed itself to be dissolved. The conciliar movement had failed; its theories were discredited; and the popes were left without constitutional checks within the church.

Martin V and Eugenius IV had done much to restore the papal authority, but the popes were still far from possessing the powers they had had before the fall of Boniface VIII. Never again could they exercise effective supremacy over secular rulers, and even within the church their control was limited by the practical power of the great state governments. This was particularly true in France where, in 1438, King Charles VII had published a law known as the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges which set definite limits to papal interference in ecclesiastical elections, papal taxation, and appeals to Rome. In short, it established a sort of national church under the control of the French monarchy. The governments of England and Germany took less radical action, but were moving in the same direction, and later the Spanish monarchy gained almost complete supervision of the church in Spain.

The century and a half between the bull *Unam sanctam* and the dissolution of the Council of Basle had, indeed, witnessed a terrible decline in papal prestige, even though some considerable recovery of papal power had been made after the Council of Constance. The financial exactions of the popes at Avignon and the scandal of the Great Schism, the political theories of Occam and the *Defensor pacis*, the sweeping criticisms of the church launched by Wyclif and Huss, the conciliar movement and the growing power of the national monarchies had all contributed to the destruction of papal authority, and the fifteenth-century popes, who were more interested in establishing a temporal state in Italy than in giving religious leadership to Christendom, could not win back what had been lost.

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The Age of the Renaissance in Italy

IN THE TWO AND A HALF CENTURIES between the last of the crusades and the beginning of the Lutheran Reformation, there occurred a profound, if gradual, transformation in the character of European civilization. It was an age of transition in which medieval institutions were slowly crumbling and characteristically medieval ways of thinking were losing their force, while at the same time evidences of modern society and modern culture began to make their appearance, at first in partial form, but as time passed with ever-increasing completeness. In Italy, the land of wealth and cities, this change began earlier and progressed with greater rapidity than in the more thoroughly feudalized lands north of the Alps. Moreover, in that land of golden opportunities, of political unrest and swiftly shifting fortunes, the break-up of medieval civilization seemed to give a new and stimulating freedom to the human spirit, so that the age of transition became also an age of great intellectual activity. New vistas opened up before the eager curiosity and limitless ambition of men who were shaking themselves free from the bondage of ecclesiastical authority and corporate society. They awoke to a new appreciation of the glories of the mortal world they lived in, with its unbounded possibilities for wealth, power, artistic pleasure, and intellectual satisfaction for those who had the will to seize them. Finally, on this rich soil, provided by the awakened genius of the Italian people, fell the seeds of antique culture, to bring forth such plentiful fruit that for centuries men thought of that age as a *renaissance* or rebirth of the civilization of ancient Rome and Greece. But the culture of the Italian Renaissance (we may as well keep the word, since it has been hallowed by centuries of use) did not owe its existence primarily to the revival of antiquity, though it was influenced by it. Its roots were fixed firmly in the Middle Ages, but the conditions of its growth were changing and the fruit was not always the same. So far as it can be defined, the age of the Renaissance was an age of chaotic change, in which there was much that was still medieval, much that was recognizably modern, and much also that was peculiar to itself. It bridged the gap between the High Middle Ages and modern times, but it was also an age to itself, filled with a great political, social, and intellectual ferment.

1. RENAISSANCE SOCIETY

If we would seek one fundamental cause for the transformation of Europe during this age, we will find it in the great increase in wealth, which came *Increase in* earlier and in more concentrated *wealth* form in Italy than elsewhere. It was wealth that made the luxury and brilliance of the Italian Renaissance possible, and it was wealth that made a new type of society necessary. This growth of material prosperity was no new thing. It had been an increasingly potent factor in the shaping of

European civilization since the beginning of the High Middle Ages. The revival of commerce, spreading north from Italy, had gradually built up city life with a vigorous and independent middle class, and had introduced the general use of money economy. For a time these forces had adjusted themselves, though uneasily, to the scheme of medieval society. The burghers had formed corporate societies in the communes and guilds which gave them a secure place in the midst of feudalism. But as wealth continued to increase and the volume of business to expand, the new economic force grew too great to be contained within the structure of a social system that had not been designed for it. Its explosive energy brought medieval institutions crumbling to the ground. In time it destroyed feudalism and also its own corporate organization, which gave place to the modern individualistic methods of capitalism.[1] The effects of its action were not contemporaneous or exactly similar in all parts of Europe. In Italy, the result was the rise of a society that was distinctly urban, secular, i.e., worldly, in its interests, and highly individualistic.

Italy was a land of cities. It was perfectly situated to become the center of commerce for the western world, halfway between the fabulous East, where Venetian and Genoese merchants bought luxuries that could not be produced in Europe, and the market provided by the less advanced people of the West. Stimulated by these unique opportunities for commerce and the industry that rose from it, cities sprang up thickly during the Middle Ages in Lombardy, Tuscany, and the States of the Church. They enjoyed unique opportunities in other respects. The long quarrel between the emperors and the popes in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, followed by the temporary collapse of the empire and the absence of the papacy from Italy, enabled the Italian cities to win freedom from outside control. By the beginning of the Renaissance, most of the cities of Italy, except in the Neapolitan Kingdom to the south, were practically independent states, dominating the country districts

Urban society

[1] See Chapter 32.

about them. They thus became the center of political and social as well as economic life for the whole land. The feudal nobles could not resist their attraction. Leaving their isolated rural castles, they moved into the cities and became the neighbors of the non-noble burghers. In this urban society, in which all classes were represented, medieval class distinctions inevitably became less pronounced. Birth still meant a great deal, but wealth or political power might mean more, and where these were lacking, literary, artistic, or any other outstanding ability was sufficient to gain an entry into the homes of the noble or the rich.

The changes in society brought about by wealth and city life were reflected by equally significant changes in the interests and mental attitude of at least the wealthy and leisured classes. The busy life of the cities, the new possibilities for the enjoyment of life and for the satisfaction of esthetic tastes or intellectual curiosity, provided by luxury, wealth, and leisure, all tended to thrust thoughts of religion and of the future world farther into the background of men's minds. The growing disrespect for the papacy and the organized church, due to the scandals of the Babylonian Captivity and the schism, and the influence of the pagan philosophy inherent in the classic literature that was becoming so popular, did something to heighten this tendency. But more important than these in breaking the dominating force of religion were the manifold distractions and worldly interests inseparable from the society of the age. This may be easily exaggerated. Men of the Renaissance were seldom really irreligious. Few if any were atheists or even unorthodox. They were merely less vitally interested in the things of the spirit and more in the things of this world than their ancestors of the days when the life of the ascetic monk had represented the highest ideal, though seldom realized, of thinking men. Perhaps they had fallen into that "forgetfulness of God in time of prosperity" against which medieval preachers were wont to warn their flocks. Certainly the world and the flesh had no terrors for this generation, even though they might still fear the

The secular spirit

FEDERIGO DA MONTELFELTRO, DUKE OF URBINO

This portrait of one of the outstanding personalities of the Renaissance is by Piero della Francesca.
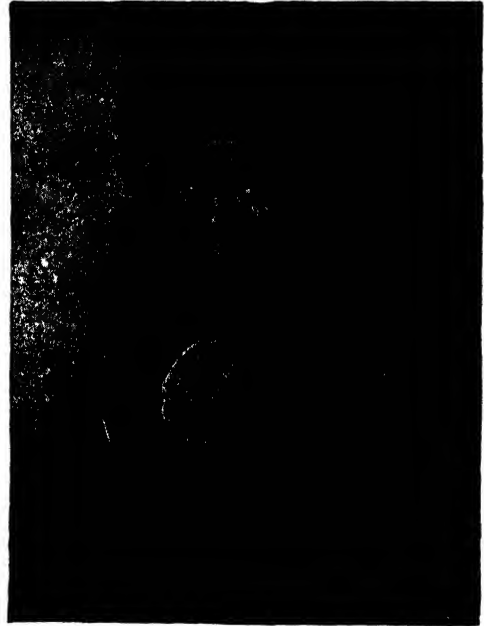
BALDASSARE CASTIGLIONE

The author of the "Book of the Courtier" is shown here in a portrait by Raphael.
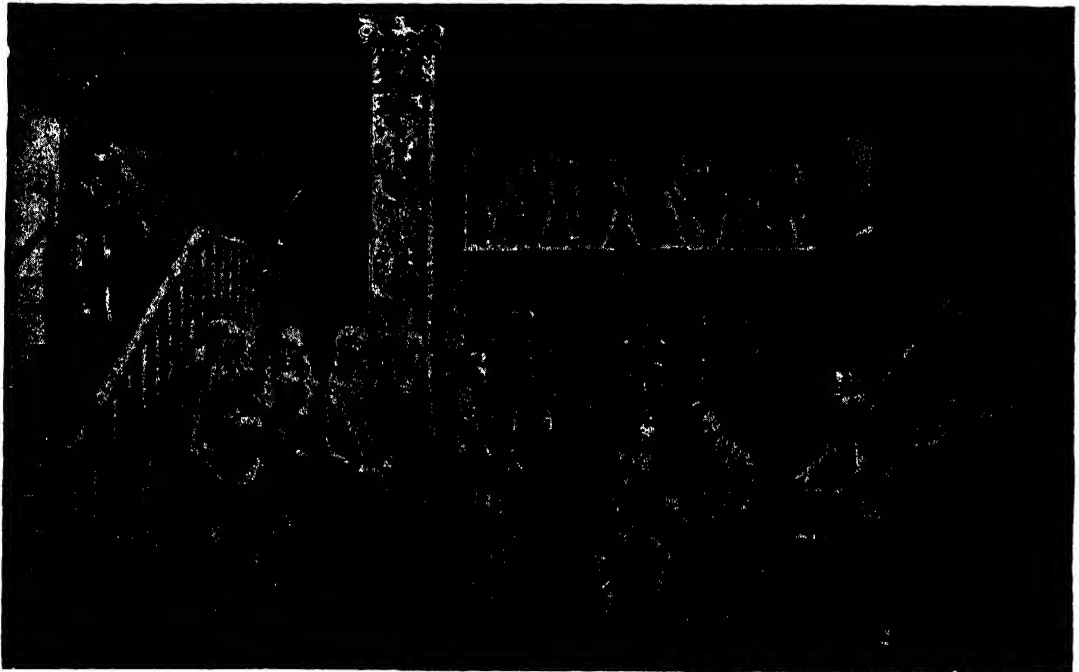
FLORENTINE INTERIOR ABOUT 1490

This room in a Florentine house, from Ghirlandaio's fresco of "The Nativity of the Virgin," suggests the wealth and luxury of upper-class Renaissance society.

devil. This is what is meant by the "secular spirit" of the Renaissance men who threw themselves heart and soul into the full enjoyment and eager exploration of the world about them.

In this vital urban society, with its strong secular spirit, men awoke to a new consciousness of themselves as individuals. Of the modern characteristics that were making their appearance in this chaotic age of transition, few are more significant or more difficult to define than the individualism that so many historians have noted as a contrast to the corporate or class consciousness of medieval society. Men, of course, have always known that they were individuals. But in the perilous world of the Middle Ages, where security in this world depended on membership in a close corporation, whether guild, monastery, church, manor, or rank in the feudal system, and hope of salvation depended on strict obedience to the corporate church, men were inevitably more conscious of their ordained place in the scheme of things than of the potentialities of their own individual personality. As the medieval social structure began to crumble, however, careers were thrown open to talent. In the rapidly shifting politics of the Italian cities, nobility of birth was not essential to power; the new capitalistic methods of business enabled individuals to accumulate wealth far beyond their fellows; and the generous patronage of art raised lowborn artists high above the level of the ordinary artisan. There seemed no limit to what any man might accomplish, aided only by his own ability and fortune. In the new secular spirit, too, men found a double incentive for the full development of their individual powers. Immortal fame in this world came to seem more important than immortal life in the next; and the eager enjoyment of all that this world had to offer stimulated men to the development of all sides of their personalities, so as to wring the maximum of experience or pleasure out of life.

This new realization of individual potentialities brought to life a new social ideal — that of the well-rounded personality — to take the place of the medieval ideal of the

Individualism

man who perfectly represented the qualities of his class or group. It was an ideal that found practical expression in the amazing versatility that characterized so many Italians in the fifteenth century. Statesmen like Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici, the bankers who ruled Florence, soldier-despots like Duke Federigo of Urbino, and business men like the Florentine Palla Strozzi were also scholars and cultivated patrons of the arts, while innumerable examples might be cited of artists who practiced painting, sculpture, and architecture with equal facility and still found time for the pursuit of scholarship and philosophy. And this versatility of interest was not limited to men of unusual genius. The average man of culture now sought consciously to acquire at least an adequate familiarity with all branches of human activity so as to develop his personality to its fullest extent. In the schools conducted by Guarino (1374–1460) at Ferrara and Vittorino da Feltre (1378–1446) at Mantua, the practice of arms and all forms of athletics, music and courtly manners, as well as a thorough training in the arts and classical literature, were included among the things that a gentleman should know. The Renaissance, indeed, produced a new standard for the gentleman or courtier. As Baldassare Castiglione (1478–1529), himself a paragon of courtiers, tells us in his charming *Book of the Courtier*, the man who would make his way successfully into the highest ranks of society must now be not merely, or necessarily, nobly born, though that is an advantage, nor a great warrior, though he should be skilled in arms, but a fully developed personality, an amateur of all arts and all branches of learning and a master of some, possessing, above all, grace, tact, good manners, and personal charm. The contrast between the boisterous and often brutal manners of a Richard the Lion-hearted and the wide education and sensitive *finesse* of a Castiglione marks the development from the medieval to the modern ideal of a gentleman.

So far, as seems inevitable in dealing with the Renaissance, we have dwelt chiefly on the high lights of the age, the signs of prog-

The ideal of the complete personality

ress and the evidences of modern tenden-
cies. But there were also deep
Violent contrasts shadows, and the evolution
away from medieval conditions
was not always a progress toward higher
standards. [The age of the Renaissance in
Italy was above all an age of confusion and
contrast in politics, in religion, in morality,
and in individual characters.] Medieval and
modern characteristics existed side by side
in the same society or the same person, pro-
ducing violent contradictions and startling
incongruities. As the fifteenth century
drew to a close, the people of Florence, who
for years had followed the leadership of
Lorenzo de' Medici, most cultured and
worldly of statesmen, fell suddenly under the
spell of the thoroughly medieval ascetic
monk, Savonarola (1452–98), only to react
again in a short time and burn their former
idol. The despots, who ruled by force and
cunning, recognized the binding power of no
law, human or divine. The eager develop-
ment of all man's faculties meant only too
often the development of the baser as well as
the higher instincts. Princes like the Vis-
conti of Milan might combine inhuman cru-
elty with the most delicate appreciation of
art, and artists like Benvenuto Cellini (1500–
70) might be little better than thugs in their
private life. The most enlightened and ra-
tional of Italian statesmen guided their
policies by the auguries of charlatan astrolo-
gers. In every court in Italy the veneer of
refined and learned society covered dark
stains of immorality, and lavish magnifi-
cence paraded the streets of every city in
glaring contrast to the most wretched pov-
erty.

All that has been said about the Renais-
sance did not, of course, occur at once, nor
would it all be true of any one time. The
age of the Renaissance evolved slowly and
was constantly changing. In the remainder
of this chapter, we shall trace the historical
developments of the age in politics, litera-
ture, and art in an attempt to place the
whole in its proper historical perspective.

2. EVOLUTION OF THE ITALIAN STATES TO 1494

[The Italian Renaissance was born in the
midst of political chaos. The history of
Italy in the fourteenth century is the history
of confusion thrice confounded.
In that century, Italian mer-
chants and bankers were heap- *Italy in the fourteenth century*
ing up unprecedented fortunes;
Italian industry was growing to vast propor-
tions; the greatest of Italian poets were lay-
ing the foundations of a national literature;
but as a nation in the political sense, Italy
did not yet exist. Only in the southern
kingdom of Naples was there any political
unity. The rest of the peninsula was divided
into a host of petty city-states, which had
acquired almost complete independence
from the overlordship of emperor and pope.
Each of these states was torn by hostile fac-
tions and was frequently at war with its
neighbors. The traditional feud between
the Guelf and Ghibelline parties gives some
slight coherence to Italian politics in this
century, but that ancient quarrel had lost
almost all of its original meaning in the
tangle of local interests and antagonisms.
Cities fought each other for control of trade
routes or merely to destroy commercial ri-
vals; country districts rebelled against domi-
nation by the cities; and within the cities the
wealthy merchants and industrialists strove
to control the laboring classes, who rose in
revolt whenever possible, while the nobles
sided with one party or the other and mer-
cenary soldiers fished happily in the troubled
waters.

In the midst of this confusion, two general
tendencies may be observed; first, the de-
struction of democratic republi-
can governments at the hands *Rise of the despots*
of despots or merchant oligarch-
ies, and second, the expansion of the larger
city-states at the expense of the less powerful
ones. The first of these, indeed, was well
under way at the beginning of the fourteenth
century. Nearly all the cities of northern
and central Italy had begun their independ-
ent career as more or less democratic com-
munes, but this form of government proved
neither strong enough to protect the city
from its enemies nor sufficiently stable to
provide the internal peace and order that
were essential to the prosperity of business.
The only possible solution of the problem
seemed to be the government of the city by a

dictator or despot, who would be strong enough to keep order and who would impose peace on the warring factions by taking political liberty from all. Some few states, like Venice and Florence, escaped actual despotism, but they were scarcely more democratic, since their republican government was controlled by a small group of wealthy families. The manner in which the despots acquired their absolute power differed, of course, from place to place according to local conditions. Some turned a temporary authority, legally delegated to them as officers of the state, into an extra-legal power; others were mercenary soldiers or local feudal lords who seized the government by force of arms; while still others used their wealth to gain control of the republican governmental machine.

The despots, like men of any other class, differed widely in character, but certain characteristics were common to almost all. They were mostly men of unusual ability and force of character, for only so could they have risen to power without the support of legal or constitutional claims. They were often ruthless, cruel, and treacherous, because they had to rule by force and through fear. Nevertheless, they frequently gave their cities a wiser and more stable government than they had enjoyed under the old republican communes. As Machiavelli pointed out in his justly celebrated handbook for despots, *The Prince* (1513), it was to the interest of the despot himself to maintain the prosperity of the city he ruled, and no despot could rule for long unless he did so. Most of the despots were intelligent enough to realize that they must win the respect, and, in some measure, the gratitude, of their people. It was this desire, as well as genuine love of culture, that caused so many of them to gather poets, scholars, and artists to their courts by the promise of generous rewards. No small part of the artistic and literary glory of the Renaissance was due to their liberal and remarkably discriminating patronage.

Still the despots could neither have won nor held their power had not the people of Italy generally lost the ability or desire to fight in defense of their liberties. Even under the old republican governments the citizens seldom took an active part in the army. The responsible citizens were too busy with profitable business to waste time in military training, and no republican party government, nor for that matter any despot, could afford to take the risk of revolution involved in arming the lesser populace. The best recruiting ground for a citizen militia should have been the *contado*, the rural territory and villages surrounding the city. But since all the growing city-states had spread their territory by conquest and steadily refused to grant citizenship to the conquered population, they could not trust the latter to fight for the state. The Italian states, therefore, were forced to depend on mercenary soldiers from outside for defense against foreign enemies and to keep down rebellion among discontented citizens or the disaffected subjects of the conquered towns and country. These mercenary soldiers were organized in large bands under their own leaders, called *condottieri*, who sold the services of the whole band to the highest bidder. They did not care for whom they fought or why, so long as they were paid. Their chief interest was to keep the war going as long as possible, for peace meant unemployment. In the main they seem to have been fairly good soldiers, though Machiavelli criticized them severely, but their methods were behind the times. The temporary nature of their employment made it impossible for the *condottieri* to train large bands of infantry, at a time when Swiss and Spanish pikemen were proving the superiority of infantry as the English archers had a century before. They had to depend on cavalry though the terrain of Italy is for the most part unsuited to cavalry tactics. They resorted, therefore, to endless marches and countermarches, maneuvering for position, and they were always more dangerous to noncombatants than to each other. It was a vicious system, and not the least of its evils was that it left Italy without any really adequate defense against foreign invaders from the great territorial states of Europe.

The second general tendency in the history

Character of the despots

Condottieri

On the map: DUCHY OF SAVOY, DUCHY OF MILAN, MANTUA, MILAN, Genoa, D. OF FERRARA, REPUBLIC OF FLORENCE, REPUBLIC OF SIENA, STATES, Venice, Urbino, THE CHURCH, Rome, DALMATIA, Adriatic Sea, THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES, KINGDOM OF SICILY

of Italy during this period, the expansion of

Expansion of states

the greater states at the expense of the less powerful ones, began later than the rise of the despots and was not completed till the fifteenth century. But by 1494, the year in which the first French invasion opened a new era in Italian history, it had progressed so far that only five great states and some three or four lesser ones remained of the scores that had dotted the map of Italy at the beginning of the Renaissance. The five great states were respectively, the duchy of Milan, the republics of Venice and Florence, the States of the Church, and the kingdom of Naples. Of the lesser states, the republic of Siena still maintained its independence in southern Tuscany, as did the marquisate of Mantua and the duchy of Ferrara on the upper borders of the Romagna, though the latter was in theory subject to the papacy. In the States of the Church, too, there were still some practically independent, little, despotic city-states, but they were soon to be suppressed by the popes, Alexander VI and Julius II.

An attempt to trace the history of each of the original Italian states would be neither possible in the space at our command nor particularly profitable. We will limit our attention, therefore, to the development of those great states which survived.

All through the Middle Ages, Milan had been the wealthiest and most powerful of the numerous cities in the rich Lombard plain which commands

Milan

the Alpine passes to northern Europe. In the twelfth century it led the Lombard League in the struggle for independence from imperial control. Like its neighbors, however, Milan lost its freedom to a despotic ruler at the dawn of the Renaissance. In 1311, Matteo Visconti, head of a Ghibelline family already powerful in the city, established a lasting dictatorship with the approval of the Emperor Henry VII, who gave him the title of Imperial Vicar. He also began the expansion of the city-state by the conquest of several neighboring towns. The great period of Milanese expansion, however, did not begin till the reign of Gian Galeazzo Visconti (1378–1402). This cun-

ning and unscrupulous despot succeeded in conquering nearly the whole of Lombardy and seriously threatened Tuscany and the States of the Church. He also won international recognition for his family by purchasing from the Emperor Wenceslas the title of Duke of Milan (1395) and by marrying his daughter Valentina to Louis of Orléans, the son of Charles V of France. During the next half-century, the sons of the great Visconti, Giovanni Maria (1402–12) and Filippo Maria (1412–47), had to wage an almost constant war against Venice and its allies to defend their heritage. When Filippo Maria died, his duchy included only the western half of Lombardy. He was the last Visconti duke, having left no heirs except an illegitimate daughter who had married the vigorous, common-born *condottiere*, Francesco Sforza. The citizens of Milan took advantage of the situation to re-establish republican government, but they had lost the ability to rule themselves and within three years Sforza had made himself Duke of Milan (1450–66). Four years later he made peace with Venice, and from then on almost to the last year of the century the house of Sforza ruled Milan in comparative peace, making it one of the richest states in Italy, as well as a center of art and learning to which men of genius resorted gladly.

To the east of Lombardy the great merchant city of Venice, built out over her lagoons, commanded the Adriatic Sea. Since the first revival of medieval commerce, Venice had been one of the richest cities in Europe. Her geographical position made her the natural middleman in the trade between the eastern Mediterranean and western Europe, while the lagoons which cut her off from the mainland gave her a security that enabled her to stand aloof from the tangled feuds of Italian politics. Moreover, unlike the other Italian republics, Venice had evolved a stable system of government that prevented revolutions and party strife. Since the thirteenth century, the mass of the people had been excluded entirely from the government, which was monopolized by an oligarchy of wealthy families. From these the doge (a life president) was elected, as were also the grand coun-

Venice

cil, the senate, and the powerful Council of Ten, who, after 1310, kept check on the doge and senate. This political stability enabled Venice to recover from a desperate struggle with her trade rival, Genoa, in the fourteenth century, whereas Genoa was left so badly shaken that it fell under the domination, first of France, then of Milan. The beginning of the fifteenth century marks a decided turning point in the history of the republic. Alarmed by the Visconti conquest of Lombardy, the Venetians determined to abandon their aloof position among their lagoons and to acquire a landward state that would protect the city from its too powerful neighbor and would keep open the routes to the Alpine passes, which were so necessary to Venetian commerce. After conquering Padua, famous for its ancient university, in 1405, the republic's forces moved on into Visconti territory. The long war which followed was fought chiefly by mercenaries and the superior wealth of the merchant city was the deciding factor. When the final peace treaty was signed with the new Sforza Duke of Milan in 1454, Venice ruled a mainland state in eastern Lombardy and around the head of the Adriatic as large or larger than that of its rival Milan.

On the western coast of Italy, to the south of Lombardy, lies the district of Tuscany, bounded on the east and south by the States of the Church. All this territory, except Siena, was gradually brought under the rule of the expanding republic of Florence, which conquered even the great mercantile city of Pisa in 1406. Florence had grown tremendously rich from its woolen and other industries. It was also one of the greatest banking centers of Europe and was, besides, the recognized leader of Italy in all branches of culture. But despite their unusually high level of intelligence and the amazingly large number of men of genius to be found among them, the people of Florence had never succeeded in working out a sound republican constitution. All through the fourteenth century and the first part of the fifteenth, the city was a prey to frequent revolutions or party feuds and was dominated most of the time by a small group of wealthy families. This system caused so

Florence

COSIMO DE' MEDICI

*Above: This painting by Pontormo suggests the tight-lipped compe-
tence of the banker who became the real ruler of Florence.*

LORENZO DE' MEDICI

*Top right: Lorenzo "the Magnificent" had apparently more grace
of mind than of feature. Portrait by Ghirlandaio.*

FRANCESCO SFORZA

*Center right: The condottiere who became Duke of Milan was a
forceful and strong-willed man. Portrait relief by Gian Cristoforo
Romano.*

CESARE BORGIA

*Bottom right: The painter, Palmesano, has caught something
of the cruelty, intelligence, and ruthless will that characterized the
ill-reputed son of Alexander VI.*
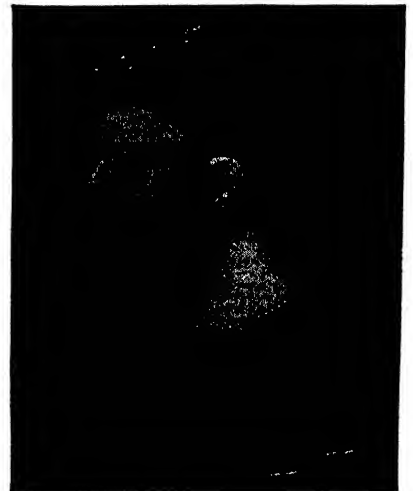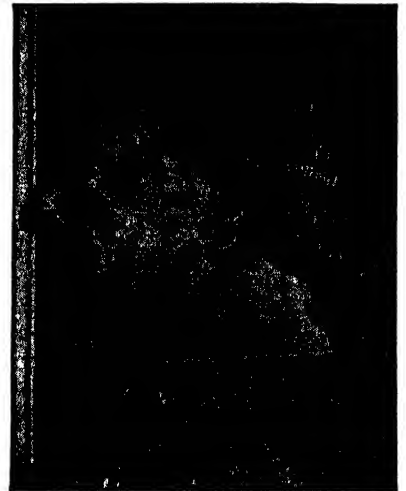
FOUR FIFTEENTH-CENTURY RULERS

much disturbance and injustice that in 1434 the majority of the Florentine people accepted without protest the control of their government by Cosimo de' Medici, the head of a great banking family which was to rule the city for the next sixty years. Florence remained a republic in form, but Cosimo and his successors were in reality its despotic rulers, though they held no official title and merely controlled the republican machinery from behind the scenes, rather after the fashion of a modern American municipal boss. On the death of Cosimo after thirty years of wise government that won him the title of *Pater Patriae* (father of his country), he was followed by his son Piero (1464–69). Under Piero's rather uncertain guidance the power of the Medici seemed to be slipping, but it was fully restored by his brilliant son Lorenzo "the Magnificent" (1469–92). With Lorenzo the prestige of the Medici name reached its highest point. He was a man of complex character and versatile genius, at once poet, patron of art and learning, statesman and diplomat. It was in no small measure due to his diplomatic skill that Italy was kept in a state of relative peace during his lifetime. His son Piero, however, proved unfit to carry on the family tradition. His weakness in dealing with the French invasion of 1494 roused the Florentine people to drive the Medici out of the city, though they were to return later.

The States of the Church stretched clear across central Italy and included the

The States of the Church

Romagna, which extended up the eastern coast almost to the borders of Venetia. This large territory was in theory ruled by the pope, but during the Babylonian Captivity and the schism petty despots had set up practically independent governments in nearly every city except Rome, and even there the popes were none too secure. After the schism was ended by the Council of Constance (1417), the fifteenth-century popes had to face the problem of bringing these independent lords to obedience, no easy task since most of them were professional *condottieri*. Greater progress might have been made had not some of the popes been more eager to replace these despots by mem-

bers of their own families than to subject them to papal rule. Engrossed in these family and political interests, the Renaissance popes became more worldly until there was little to distinguish them from the other Italian princes. They formed diplomatic alliances, made and broke treaties, and hired armies of *condottieri* for wars of conquest or defense. Like the other princes, too, they kept up a luxurious court and spent huge sums of money on magnificent buildings and in the patronage of artists and scholars. Nicholas V (1447–55), who originated the Vatican Library, and Pius II (1458–64) were enthusiastic devotees of the revived classical literature. The latter, indeed, had gained an international reputation as a classical scholar under his own name of Aeneas Silvius before he became pope, though afterward he did rather repent his devotion to pagan letters. His successor, Paul II (1464–71), had reasonably sound ideals, though he was unable to put them very successfully into practice, but the three following pontificates showed a steady decline in papal morality. Sixtus IV (1471–84) and Innocent VIII (1484–92) had no interest beyond the advancement of their numerous nephews and children, and at the end of the century the infamous Borgia pope, Alexander VI (1492–1503), reduced the papacy to the lowest depths of degradation. The reign of the Borgia, however, did much to strengthen the States of the Church politically. Alexander's vigorous son Cesare Borgia at last succeeded in reducing the greater part of the States to obedience, thus enabling the warlike Julius II (1503–13) to complete the task and build up a strong secular state. Under the latter pope and his successor, the Medicean Leo X (1513–21), the golden age of the artistic Renaissance cast over Rome a sunset light shortly to be followed by gathering shadows.

All of Italy south of the States of the Church was included in the kingdom of Naples, to which at times the kingdom of Sicily was united.   **Naples**

Its history during the age of the Renaissance consists almost entirely of dynastic struggles between the different branches of the French family of Anjou and the Spanish family of

Aragon. Here feudalism still survived as an active force, and the intellectual movements of the time made little impression save as importations at the royal court. The Angevin rule in Naples dated back to the conquest of Naples and Sicily from the last Hohenstaufen by Charles of Anjou in 1266. The Sicilian part of the kingdom, however, soon broke away. In 1282, the people of the island rebelled and gave the crown of Sicily to Peter III, King of Aragon, who had married a daughter of the Hohenstaufen Manfred. From that date till the death of Queen Giovanna II of Naples in 1435, the Angevin house ruled in Naples and the Aragonese in Sicily. As Giovanna had died without heirs, the crown of Naples was claimed and won, despite the opposition of the French branch of the family of Anjou, by Alfonso of Aragon and Sicily (1435–58), thus reuniting the two kingdoms during his lifetime. It was divided between his sons, but an Aragonese king was still ruling in Naples when Charles VIII of France revived the old Angevin claim and invaded Italy in 1494.

For a full generation before the beginning of the foreign invasions in 1494, Italy was kept in a more or less peaceful condition by the establishment of a balance of power among the five great states. Diplomatic relations shifted from time to time, but for the most part Milan, Florence, and Naples formed a loose alliance to hold the balance against Venice and the papacy. This alliance was cemented by a series of marriages between the Sforza family and the Aragonese house of Naples, and depended also on the friendship of both with the diplomatic Lorenzo de' Medici. Even the small, though warlike, states of Ferrara, ruled by the family of Este, and Mantua, ruled by the Gonzagas, were drawn into the circle of family marriages. This system, however, could do no more than keep a temporary and uneasy peace within Italy. It offered no basis for union against a foreign enemy. The way for the invasion of Italy by France and the other great European powers was paved by the suspicion and antagonism with which the Italian states regarded one another and by their complete lack of Italian patriot-

Italy on the eve of the invasion

ism. But the story of the invasions, which involved all the countries of Europe in one way or another, must be left to a later chapter devoted to the states of Europe as a whole.

3. THE LITERARY RENAISSANCE

[We have already noted in passing that the age of the Renaissance was characterized not only by economic, social, and political changes — increasing wealth, the development of urban society, individualism and the secular spirit, and the rise of despotic states — but also by a great intellectual and artistic activity along new lines, which expressed or resulted from the other changes in Italian society.] It is this latter characteristic of the age that is often referred to exclusively when men speak of the Italian Renaissance. Like the former it marks a transition from medieval to modern times, with much that was typically its own.

One of the earliest developments of the new age was the creation of an Italian literature, which gave to Italy a national language that served as a bond of cultural unity never realized in the political field. Some signs of this development may be observed in the last years of the High Middle Ages, in the adaptation to Italian uses of forms taken from the lyric poetry of southern France, and in the synthetic "court language" fostered by Frederick II in Sicily. But the close relation between spoken Italian and the Latin that was the general literary medium, as well as the great variety of dialects represented in the numerous Italian states, had prevented the growth of a universal Italian literary tongue. Literary Italian was largely the creation of three fourteenth-century men, who were at least sufficiently typical of their age to abandon old traditions and, confident in their own creative genius, to strike out new paths for themselves.

Beginnings of Italian literature

[Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, these three were the triumvirate who first formed the literary language of modern Italy.] All three were Florentine by descent, and they used the Tuscan dialect as the basis of their literary language. In other respects, however, they

The Tuscan triumvirate

were very dissimilar, and the differences in their character are typical of the gradual drift away from medieval modes of thought. The first and greatest of the three, Dante Alighieri (1265–1321), seems to belong more to the Middle Ages than to the Renaissance. The idealized love poetry of his *Vita Nuova* is nearer to the troubadour tradition of medieval Provence than to the worldly and almost pagan loves of the Renaissance poets. Above all, his greatest work, the magnificent *Divine Comedy*, presents, in its breath-taking voyage through Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, a panoramic survey of all medieval thought. Yet he is not purely medieval. In his confident individualism he foreshadows the coming age, and, despite his interest in religion and philosophy, he was a layman, a member of that secular, urban society that was to fashion the new world.

The second of the triumvirate, Francesco Petrarca or Petrarch (1304–74) was considerably less medieval. His introspective absorption in his own personality, his longing for immortal fame and the intensely human quality of his lyric poems addressed to Laura, together with his passionate interest in pagan antiquity, mark him as a true man of the Renaissance, though his occasional religious reactions and ascetic impulses show that he is not entirely removed from the Middle Ages. His influence on the shaping of Italian poetry, especially on the sonnet and brief *canzonieri*, is second only to Dante's, whose use of the Tuscan dialect he reinforced and purified.

The chief contribution of Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–75) was the shaping of an Italian prose style. Lacking the depth of character and spiritual insight of his two great fellow citizens, this amiable and worldly Florentine burgher was perhaps more typical of his city and his age than either of them. He observed the surface of life with keen enjoyment and described it with a clarity that made the stories of his *Decameron* models for later novelists.

The rapid development of Italian literature was cut short with the death **The revival of antiquity** of Petrarch and Boccaccio and it was not revived again till the second half of the fifteenth century.

The new language could not compete with the amazing revival of interest in the classic literature of ancient Rome. Even Petrarch and Boccaccio were far more interested in this than in their Italian writings, and for two full generations after their death it thrust the "vulgar" tongue completely into the background. The relation between the "revival of antiquity" and the Renaissance has not always been clearly understood. It seems certain, however, that the former was the result rather than the cause of the economic, social, and psychological changes that we have already noted as characteristic of this age, though in turn it influenced and altered their development. The Latin classics were not a discovery of the Renaissance. Many of them were in common use, though chiefly as models of grammatical construction, throughout the Middle Ages. But the deep chasm which separated medieval life and medieval ideals and modes of thought from those of pagan antiquity made any real understanding of the ancient writers almost impossible. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, however, there was growing up in Italy a state of society, essentially urban, secular, and based on wealth, which was not so far removed from the civilization of ancient times, though it was not yet nearly so perfectly formed. It is not surprising, then, that Italians of this age should discover a new meaning in the classics. In these pre-Christian writings they found a culture that seemed to embody everything for which they were blindly groping. They applied themselves, therefore, with devout enthusiasm to the study and imitation of antiquity, inspired by the conviction that the road to progress lay in a return to the glorious past that lay beyond what they considered the Gothic barbarism of the Middle Ages.

The men who devoted their lives to the study of the classics were called humanists, i.e., those who sought to acquire *humanitas*. This word was used **Humanists** in the sense made familiar by Cicero of the mental cultivation which befits a man, particularly as expressed in refined literary form. To the men of the Renaissance it inevitably meant, by implication, a philosophy
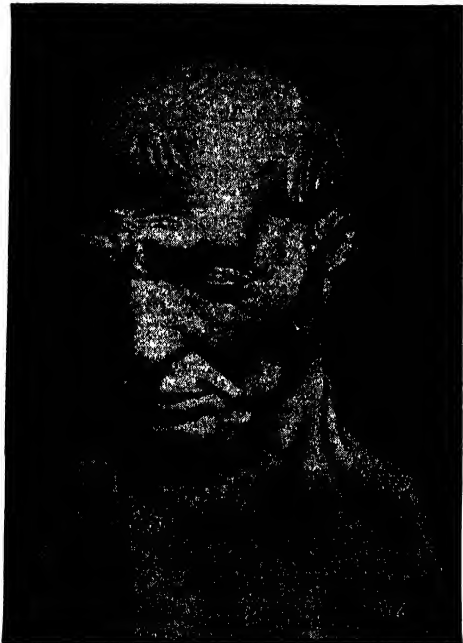
POGGIO BRACCIOLINI

Poggio was a witty and polished writer, a distinguished classical scholar, and collector of manuscripts.
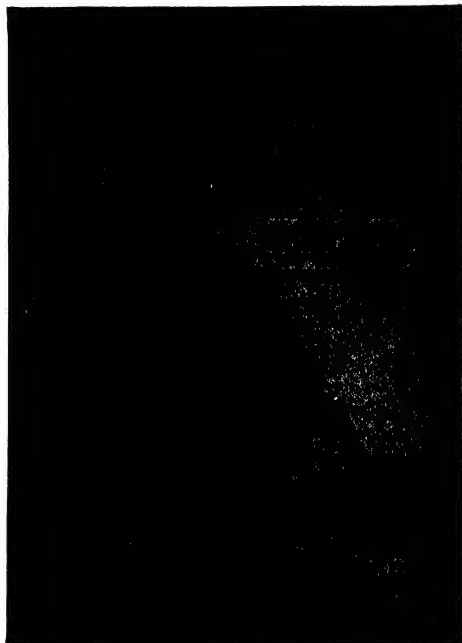
POLIZIANO AND GIULIANO DE' MEDICI

The humanist, Angelo Poliziano, is painted here by Ghirlandaio with one of the sons of Lorenzo de' Medici.

A RENAISSANCE SCHOLAR IN HIS STUDY

The subject of the above painting by Carpaccio is supposed to be Saint Jerome, the humanist among the Church Fathers; but the scene is obviously contemporary.

of life and one in strong contrast to the pre-occupation with the things of the spirit and the future world that had played so large a part in the learned writings of the Middle Ages. It both expressed and strengthened the secular tendencies of the new age. The humanists remained Christian in faith, some of them devoutly so; but few of them escaped the influence for better or for worse of pagan philosophy and morals.

The humanists were indefatigable workers. They were driven by their reverence for antiquity to undertake the

Restoration of classical Latin

double task of restoring the works of classical authors to their original form, while at the same time perfecting their own knowledge of classical Latin style, including the details of spelling, inflection, syntax, scansion, and so forth, which had been almost forgotten during the Middle Ages. The only copies of the ancient authors they could find were the work of medieval scribes who were often careless and ignorant of the niceties of style. Every manuscript was filled with errors. The humanists had, therefore, to learn the rules of classic style from the study of imperfect manuscripts and then to apply that knowledge as they acquired it to the correction of the errors. This could be accomplished only by constant and painstaking comparison of all the manuscripts available.

This necessity led to a frantic search for old manuscripts. Petrarch led the hunt and inspired his friend Boccaccio

Search for manuscripts

and others to take it up. Monastery libraries were ransacked and every new fragment was hailed with delirious enthusiasm. Often the searchers found that they were too late, for many old monastic foundations had degenerated and their libraries had been allowed to moulder from neglect. Boccaccio tells us how he sat down and wept amidst the wreckage of priceless manuscripts in Saint Benedict's old monastery at Monte Cassino. For three generations and more the search continued. Fortunes were spent and emissaries sent to the farthest corners of Europe. One of the most fortunate of the discoverers was the Florentine humanist Poggio (1380–1459), who for forty years was attached to the

papal court and made good use of the embassies on which he was sent to hunt manuscripts in the countries north of the Alps. Merchants, princes, and popes shared the scholar's enthusiasm and spent vast sums in the collection of libraries. It was they, too, who rewarded with generous patronage the humanists who wrote in the newly recovered classical style.

The revival of ancient Greek literature in Italy came later than that of classical Latin. The knowledge of Greek had died out almost completely in

The revival of Greek

the West and it was hard to find instructors who could teach even the rudiments of the language. The beginning of the revival may be dated from 1397, when a competent Greek scholar from Constantinople, Manuel Chrysoloras, was persuaded to come to Florence to teach. He stayed only three years, though he had been given the most flattering reception, but he had done enough to give the Italian humanists a start. After that they studied Greek almost as enthusiastically as the ancient Latin. The ecumenical council of Florence in 1438–39, which brought a host of Greek scholars to that city, gave a further impetus to Greek studies. A few years later, in 1453, the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks drove great numbers of Byzantine refugees to seek a living in Italy by teaching or copying and translating Greek manuscripts. The humanists of Italy eagerly absorbed all the Greek classics, but they reserved their greatest enthusiasm for the philosophy of Plato, now made available for the first time in its original form. Cosimo de' Medici found time in the midst of his manifold duties to found a Platonic Academy in Florence. There, in the later years of the fifteenth century, the learned Ficino (1433–99) and the brilliant Pico della Mirandola (1463–94) taught a synthesis of Platonic philosophy and Christian theology that was to have a profound influence on the humanists of northern Europe.

A new era in Italian humanism and literature opened with the generation who were the contemporaries of that most liberal and understanding of patrons, the magnificent Lorenzo de' Medici (1449–92). Having

learned·good classical Latin and Greek in childhood, the men of this generation enjoyed a wider horizon and displayed greater originality than their predecessors who had had to struggle with the task of learning and restoring the two ancient languages. They were prepared to use the classic tongues to express the thought garnered from the ancient treasury and adapted to the uses of their own age, and they were free to turn their attention to the revival of their own native language which had been allowed to lapse since the days of the triumvirate. Lorenzo himself set the example by writing verses of first-rate quality in Italian, and under his influence the scholar-poet Poliziano (1454–94) produced highly polished poems in all three languages. Thereafter, Italian was used more and more widely, until the generation after Lorenzo raised it to full equality with Latin and Greek, dignifying it with the epic poetry of Ariosto (1474–1533) and the clean-cut prose of the Florentine historians Machiavelli (1469–1527) and Guicciardini (1482–1540).

The age of Lorenzo de' Medici

We cannot leave the humanists without mentioning one important by-product of their intense interest in antiquity — namely, the development of an independent critical spirit. They were often as prone to accept without question the validity of anything found in the ancient writers as their medieval predecessors had been to accept the authority of the Bible, the Fathers, and Aristotle. But the change from one authority to another had given them a new point of view, and the training they received in comparing, correcting, and restoring the manuscript copies of the classics had furnished them with a sound critical method. This method of literary and historical criticism, detached from reverence for religious authority, was used by the Roman humanist Lorenzo Valla (1405?–57) to good effect in proving that the "Donation of Constantine," on which the papacy had based a large part of its claims to secular power, was a ninth- or tenth-century forgery. The Christian humanists of the north were later to use the same critical spirit in a much

The critical spirit

more far-reaching attack on medieval religious institutions.

4. THE ARTISTIC RENAISSANCE

As in literature, so in art. The social and intellectual changes that were taking place in Italy during the age of the Renaissance were reflected by changes in spirit and form in all the arts, and these were accompanied by a change in the character and status of the artist.

The medieval artist had been typical of his age. He was a member of a corporation — nearly all medieval artists were guildsmen — and he worked within the traditions and rules of his craft. He was regarded, and regarded himself, as an artisan. He no doubt took an honest pride in his work, but he was scarcely more likely to attach his name to it than a carpenter or an armorer would be. Being practically anonymous, he had little incentive to break away from the traditional methods used by his fellows, nor, probably, was he free to do so. Moreover, the purpose of his art was most often religious, not so much because religion played such a large part in his life that it was bound to inspire his work as because the church was the wealthiest and most frequent patron of his services. Here, too, he was limited by tradition, for the character of religious art had become highly conventionalized and he was not encouraged to make innovations or to copy too closely natural beauty, which was always suspected by the medieval church. Now, in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the development of a wealthy educated secular society, with a keen interest in art as it portrayed the beauties of this world, gradually changed the status of the artist and the conditions affecting his art. The artist of outstanding genius was in great demand. He might receive from princes, merchants, and bankers rewards far beyond those of the ordinary artisan. His name and the individual character of his work became assets to be highly valued. Working for men who were losing their respect for tradition and who were more interested in this world than the next, the artist was free to strike out along new lines

Individualism and the secular spirit in art

GIOTTO: THE KISS OF JUDAS

Above: Giotto is generally considered the earliest of the great Renaissance painters. This is a detail from a fresco in Padua.

LEONARDO DA VINCI: MONA LISA

Above: Leonardo was one of the great masters of the high point of Renaissance art. The Mona Lisa, one of his most famous works, now hangs in the Louvre.

BOTTICELLI: PRIMAVERA

Below: Few painters have possessed the grace and delicate charm of Botticelli, here shown at its best in his imaginative conception of Spring.

MICHELANGELO: GIULIANO DE' MEDICI

*The marble figure above shows
Renaissance sculpture at its height.*

GHIBERTI: THE SACRIFICE OF ABRAHAM

*This scene from the bronze doors of the Florentine cathedral demonstrates
Ghiberti's ability to get the effects of painting in sculptured relief.*

DONATELLO: GATTAMELATA

*In this great bronze equestrian
statue, the first of its kind, Dona-
tello portrayed one of the condot-
tieri with vivid realism.*

and to develop his individual genius to its fullest extent in the reproduction of beauty for its own sake. Even when he was employed by the church, this was becoming increasingly true, for the ecclesiastical princes of Renaissance Italy shared the growing secular spirit of their age.

Of the major arts, painting was the most characteristic of the Renaissance and was developed to the highest degree of perfection.) Here the Italian love of color and natural beauty found its fullest expression. (Until almost the end of the period, Florence was the greatest center of painting, as of literature and the other arts.) There, in the opening years of the fourteenth century, Giotto (1276–1336) took a long stride away from the stiffly formalized technique of earlier religious painting toward a greater naturalism. Throughout the rest of the century his successors were moving steadily in the direction he had indicated, though their work was still mostly religious and they had not yet acquired the technical knowledge or skill required to accomplish their full objective. The fifteenth century was a period of adventurous experimentation and rapid progress in technique. Driven by the desire to copy natural beauty or the outward appearance of their fellow men as accurately as possible, the fifteenth-century artists mastered the laws of perspective and shadow, discovered how to give their figures the appearance of roundness and depth, and greatly improved the methods of blending colors. (The art of this period was almost entirely secular, even when the subject was religious.) (Portrait painting, the result of that desire to be remembered by posterity which all the great or wealthy men of the Renaissance felt strongly, became for the first time a fashionable form of art.) We have not space to mention all the fifteenth-century painters, but it would be unforgivable to ignore entirely the names of the three Florentine painters, Masaccio (1402–29?), who in his brief life at the beginning of the century set a standard of technical perfection far ahead of his generation, the worldly-minded friar, Fra Lippo Lippi (1406–69), whose love of realism led him to paint portraits of his fellow citizens in scenes of the

Painting

Holy Family, and Botticelli (1447–1510), whose graceful paintings show most clearly the influence of classical paganism on the thought and art of the age.

(After the artists of this age of experimentation and naturalism had worked out the necessary rules of technique came the golden age of Renaissance painting with the work of the great masters who were able to use that technical knowledge and skill as a means for the expression of their artistic conceptions rather than to seek it as an end in itself. The first of these was the Florentine Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), the most versatile man of his age.) (He was a master of all the arts, a poet and musician as well as a practical engineer and an experimental scientist of the first rank.) In this enigmatic genius there was a driving curiosity that impelled him to discover what lay beneath the surface of things. His Mona Lisa, whose mysterious smile has puzzled and fascinated generations of critics, and the disciples grouped about Christ in the Last Supper are studies in character as well as works of impelling beauty. (The work of Raphael (1483–1520) is not so profound, but no one surpassed him in the perfection of his coloring or the serene harmony that pervades all his paintings.) Though he died in early middle age, he produced an amazingly large number of finished works, many of them under the patronage of the popes Julius II and Leo X, including the marvelous Madonna for the Sistine Chapel and the School of Athens. It was Julius II, too, who patronized some of the best work of Michelangelo (1475–1564), having persuaded him to turn from sculpture to painting for the decoration of the Sistine Chapel. The result was a magnificent fresco, covering the whole roof of the chapel, which secures the place of Michelangelo for all time among the master painters. In it, as in everything he did, one can see the tragic driving force, the grandeur of design, and the deep religious emotion that make Michelangelo unique among the artists of the Renaissance.)

(The development of sculpture followed in most respects the same general lines as did that of painting.) In the Middle Ages it had

The great masters

shared the religious and corporate character

Sculpture

of the other arts, having been used mainly for the decoration of churches and cathedrals. Beginning with Niccolo Pisano before the end of the thirteenth century, Renaissance sculptors gradually worked away from Gothic conventions toward a more realistic copying of nature. As in painting, the fifteenth century was a period of experiment and technical progress, influenced to a greater extent than was true of painting by imitation of classical models, for many ancient statues were now being disinterred and studied with keen interest. Sculpture was rapidly securing recognition as an independent art devoted to secular uses and freed from its subordination to religious architecture, though many artists, like Ghiberti (1378–1455), whose bronze gates in bas-relief for the doors of the cathedral baptistery were the wonder of all Florence, still worked on the decoration of churches. (The masterly equestrian statue of the *condottiere* Gattamelata by the Florentine Donatello (1386?–1466) is one of the best examples of the new independent and secular type of sculpture. The golden age of sculpture coincides with that of painting, and here again the powerful figure of Michelangelo towers above the other masters. In this, his most natural medium, his best work, including the noble David, the deeply religious Pietà, and the magnificent tombs of the Medici, were done in his native Florence before and after the years with Julius in Rome.

The changing conditions and ideals of the Renaissance inevitably brought changes in architectural style, often resulting in buildings of great beauty. Yet it is doubtful if the changes mark a

Architecture

clear improvement. Though perhaps better suited to the spirit and needs of their own age, the Renaissance buildings lack the harmony and grandeur of the medieval Gothic cathedrals. In the experimental period of the fifteenth century, individualism ran riot as each architect strove to adapt the antique Roman and medieval Gothic types to contemporary needs, while at the same time expressing his own originality. Of these, Brunelleschi (1377–1446), who built the churches of San Lorenzo and Santo Spirito in Florence, was perhaps the most successful, but it remained for the Lombard architect, Bramante (1444–1514), who drew the original plans for Saint Peter's Church in Rome, later altered by Michelangelo, to evolve out of the old traditions a really harmonious style suitable to his own age.

Having reached its golden age, the artistic and intellectual Renaissance did not last long. It faded with the passing of the peculiar social and economic conditions that had produced it. The loss of political liberty through conquest by foreign powers, the loss of intellectual freedom through the action of the Counter-Reformation, and the decline of economic prosperity due to the shifting of trade routes to the west sapped the energy of Italy. But meanwhile the spirit of the Renaissance had crossed the Alps to exert a great influence on the culture of the North.

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The Waning of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance in the North

THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION from medieval to modern civilization began later in northern Europe than it did in Italy and once begun, it developed more slowly and along somewhat different lines. For in the north, feudalism was more firmly entrenched behind its moats and castle walls; religion lay closer to the hearts of men far removed from the pagan beauty of the sun-drenched Italian land; and in the quadrangles of Oxford and the dusty halls of the Sorbonne, the ghosts of Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus walked undisturbed, long after Italian scholars had deserted them to follow after the still older ghosts of ancient Greece and Rome. But throughout the whole of northern Europe, the same leaven was at work as had transformed society in the more prosperous south. Here, too, commerce and industry were bringing wealth and with it thriving urban centers and an aggressive, self-confident new middle class, whose energy was to disrupt medieval society. Yet the product of the transformation would not be altogether the same as in Italy, for in the north cities were fewer and farther between, and the new society would find its focus in the centralized territorial state rather than in the city.

The fifteenth century and the early sixteenth witnessed the gradual disappearance of many medieval characteristics in society, religion, and culture, and the contemporary growth of much that we recognize as modern. The old and the new existed side by side or inextricably interwoven, and the old gave place to the new so slowly that major changes are discernible only through the lengthened perspective of the years. Men of the fifteenth century did not know that the Middle Ages were dying. They knew only that times were not what they had been; that graybearded men bewailed the passing of the good old days, while aggressive youngsters who had studied in Florence or Bologna spoke slightingly of Gothic barbarism; and that there was now something very like contempt mixed with the envy on the face of the stolid burgher as he watched the gaily dressed knights passing the windows of his countinghouse.

1. DECAY OF MEDIEVAL INSTITUTIONS

In the fifteenth century, feudalism was fading fast. Its economic and social forms might survive for three centuries and more, but of its independent political power there remained only a shadow by the beginning of the sixteenth century. As in Italy, it was the power of money, steadily increasing with the growth of commerce and industry, that wrecked the older forms of society. But in the great territorial states of the north, the influence of money was less direct, for there

Decay of feudalism

it worked through the growing power of the rulers of the states, and it was the state that absorbed feudalism into itself.

All through the Middle Ages, the political independence of the nobles and their privileged position in society had depended in large part on their exclusive monopoly of the arts of warfare. So long as their castle walls remained a sure defense against all enemies, so long as their expensive weapons and armor, their great war-horses and the skill that comes only from long years of training gave them an indisputable superiority over common men in battle, so long as prince and people must depend on them for the defense of the state, for so long was the position of the nobles at the apex of society secure. But in the fifteenth century, the introduction of gunpowder as an effective instrument of war and siege placed a weapon in the hands of common men which enabled them to meet the heavy armed knights on relatively even terms. At the same time, the increase in the amount of money available through taxation or loans gave to the rulers of the states a tremendous advantage over the less wealthy nobles in the use of this new weapon. The kings of great states like England, France, and Spain, and even the princes of smaller territorial states like those of Germany, could now raise and maintain armies, composed largely of common soldiers, against which the nobles were helpless. As early as the fourteenth century, the English kings had used the plebeian long bow to good effect and had demonstrated the superiority of a disciplined army over a feudal levy on the fields of Crécy and Poitiers. The use of gunpowder made the state army a universal institution. Unable to ignore or oppose their king, the nobles enlisted in the royal army and took the king's pay. They still fought, such being their nature, but they fought at the bidding of the twin powers of monarchy and money.

In yet another way, money — or the lack of it — was working to deprive the nobles of their cherished independence. While the business men, who were beginning to discover the profitable uses of capital, and the monarchs, who were acquiring greater powers

Nobles lose monopoly of fighting

of taxation, were growing wealthier, the nobles as a general rule were becoming poorer, for the feudal system had never been designed to produce fluid wealth. The increase in the amount of money in circulation was having the inevitable effect of raising prices, while the income of the nobles, based on hereditary rights and immemorial custom, remained relatively the same. To make matters worse, their pride forced them to maintain their social position by an ostentatious display of luxury and pomp that would have been ruinous to men of much larger incomes. Confronted by failing resources and rising expenses, the nobles were forced to seek aid from the royal purse. And the kings were well content to aid them by the gift of pensions, sinecure offices at court, or positions in the army and church, thereby establishing a system of patronage that made the nobles more than ever dependent upon them.

Economic decline of the nobles

Meanwhile, the same forces that were bringing about the ruin of political feudalism were also causing the breakup of medieval institutions in the non-feudal society of the towns and cities. There the corporate society which centered about the guilds and the city government was slowly going to pieces, to give way to a new individualistic social order. The social and economic structure of the towns in the Middle Ages had been designed to meet the needs of a still primitive system of commerce and industry, maintaining a precarious existence in the midst of a disorganized state and a hostile society. The men of each trade and the burghers of each city had been forced to adopt a strong corporate solidarity for mutual protection. That necessity was now less evident. The growing power of the central governments offered adequate protection, while at the same time the expanding volume of business and new opportunities for the accumulation of wealth tempted men to break away from the restrictions which the guild or the city government had placed upon individual enterprise in the interests of the whole community. Within and without the guilds, the modern methods of capitalism were slowly

Decay of the guild system

A HUNTING PARTY IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Upper left: As the nobles lost power and became courtiers, they also spent money more recklessly to maintain their social pretensions.

A KNIGHT'S ARMOR, ABOUT 1480

Upper right: Full plate armor, the product of highly skilled workmanship, was the knight's ineffective answer to the invention of gunpowder.

THE JOUST

Left: The tournament became an expensive and highly artificial game in the period when chivalry was ceasing to be an effective part of actual warfare.

THE DECLINE OF FEUDALISM AND CHIVALRY

but surely triumphing over the corporate methods of the Middle Ages. The economic and social revolution which this change brought about, dividing the commercial and industrial class into two widely separated classes of proletarian laborers and capitalist employers, was not completed during the period we are discussing, but its effects were already visible. In the most influential, because most wealthy, class of city dwellers in northern Europe, something like the same shift from corporate consciousness to self-confident individualism that we have noted in a more extreme form in Italy was already taking place.

Among the other medieval institutions whose strength was decaying during the Later Middle Ages, the univer-

Decay of the universal church

sal church which for centuries had held sway over a united Christendom was rapidly declining in power and prestige. In a great many ways the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were disastrous ones for the Catholic Church. The papacy, with its wide claims to supremacy over all Catholic Christians, had come into violent conflict with the growing power of the centralized territorial states and had been defeated. National interests had combined with moral disapproval to break the vast authority that the church had wielded during the High Middle Ages. The fourteenth century witnessed the tragedy of Boniface VIII, the Babylonian Captivity, the scandal of the Great Schism, the growth of a strong anti-clerical sentiment, the destructive criticisms of William of Occam and Marsiglio of Padua and the still more telling attacks on the sacramental system brought forward by John Wyclif and John Huss. The fifteenth century, in turn, opened with the menace to papal authority of the conciliar movement, and when that had passed, the popes were left in an anomalous position as Italian princes, whose power over secular governments had vanished and whose control of the church itself was limited by the rulers of the great states.

2. RISE OF THE CENTRALIZED TERRITORIAL STATES

From the foregoing summary of the decay of medieval institutions, social, economic,

and religious, during the Later Middle Ages and the beginning of modern times, one fact emerges clearly. While other and older institutions were crumbling, the centralized territorial states — in some cases one may almost call them national states — were rising to ever-greater power and importance, aided by the power of money and supported by the moneyed burgher class whose business interests demanded order and strong government. This is a fact that deserves a little further consideration in a general way. We shall see more clearly how its final steps were worked out in detail in the following chapter.

The decline of political feudalism left the rulers of the territorial states without serious rivals. Economic and social factors had contributed to this result, but from the constitutional point of view it was ac-

Centralization and consolidation

complished by a double process of consolidation of territory and centralization of governmental authority in the hands of more or less absolute princes. The growth of France as a united monarchical state is the most perfect example of this dual process. There one can see clearly how the kings used both means to transform an indirect feudal lordship into a direct royal government over the whole state. Generation after generation, they consolidated the territory under their direct rule until every fief in the kingdom had been incorporated into the royal domain. Meanwhile, by constantly enforcing their royal rights so far as they were able, they had gradually acquired the power to deal directly with all the people of the state, not merely with their immediate vassals. During the Hundred Years' War they won the right to tax all their subjects directly, going over the heads of the feudal lords. For a time the States General had seemed a possible rival to royal power, but when feudalism collapsed, the estates proved too weak to exercise an effective check on the authority of the king. With variations due to differences in their past history, most of the other states of Europe were undergoing a similar development as the Later Middle Ages drew to a close.

The consolidation of the territorial states

carried with it the centralization of economic as well as political control.

Economic control

During the Middle Ages commerce and industry had been controlled by the individual cities, because the city government was the only power to which the burghers could look for adequate protection. Each city was an isolated economic unit, presenting a united front to all outsiders. However, as the central government of the state grew strong enough to preserve order, this dependence on the city ceased to be necessary. And because the state government was stronger than any city government and covered a much larger territory, the burghers found that it could be of far greater service to them, especially to those whose new individual interests ran counter to the traditional restrictions that were a part of the old city system. The central government, on the other hand, needed the support of the wealthy business men on whom the prosperity of the state so largely depended. They must be taught to depend on the state for aid and guidance. It was therefore to the mutual advantage of both to transfer the control of commerce and industry from the city to the state, thereby ending the economic isolation of the cities and concentrating the interests of the most powerful economic class on the state as a whole.

This tendency toward centralization and the resulting unification of the interests of the people could not but have an

National culture

effect, quite as important if less tangible, on the culture and sentiments of the people. As the concept of the united state loomed larger before their vision, local traditions and local interests waned. Differences in speech and custom in different parts of the state gradually became less pronounced. In short, the strengthening of the centralized state was accompanied by the growth of a common culture that was national in scope rather than local. The invention of printing in the middle of the fifteenth century by facilitating the circulation of books in the national tongue gave a great impetus to the movement, but more time than the period we are now considering would be needed to establish it completely.

Still the beginnings of the tendency can already be seen. Cause and effect, however, are not always too clear and there was probably more involved in the growth of national cultures than the mere development of centralized states. The appearance of a certain amount of national culture in Italy and Germany, where the whole country was not included in a strong centralized state, are exceptions worth noting.

We are on a little firmer ground when we turn to the consideration of the growth of national sentiment or, at least, of a growing feeling of loyalty to the state.

National sentiment

Here Italy is no exception to the rule, for the Italian's loyalty was more strongly attached to his state than to Italy, and what national consciousness there was in Germany, over and above the immediate loyalty to the individual state, may be accounted for by the tradition of a united German state in the past. In the other countries, where cultural and political boundaries more or less coincided, the incipient growth of national consciousness or sentiment clearly followed the development of a strong state. In part, no doubt, it was the natural result of the established fact that the state was now the all-important unit and its ruler the power to whom all men turned for protection and government. That one was a Norman became less important than that one was a Frenchman in proportion as the feudal government of Normandy was merged with the royal government of France. The great international wars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and the early sixteenth also played their part in building up national sentiment, for war is always a powerful stimulus to patriotism. Whereas wars in the Middle Ages had been mostly feudal and had tended to strengthen local loyalties, these later wars developed a national character. The Hundred Years' War, with its memories of Crécy, Agincourt, and Joan of Arc, made Frenchmen conscious that they were Frenchmen and Englishmen conscious that they were not Frenchmen, and therein lay the seeds at least of modern nationalism.

So far we have emphasized the triumph of the territorial state over local interests and

the resulting expansion of the people's horizon from the narrow confines of the fief or city to the larger circle of the state. But that is only part of the story. Equally important is the contraction of common interest from the larger unity of Catholic Christendom to the smaller one of the individual state. For in the Middle Ages, localism had existed side by side with an internationalism unparalleled in modern times. The two are not mutually exclusive. To the man of narrow local loyalties, all people from outside his little circle are foreigners. It matters little whether they come from his own state or another. Feudalism had recognized no national frontiers. A Norman lord would do homage as cheerfully to an English as to a French king. Trade, too, was as much international as local. Merchants wandered freely from one country to another, attending the open fairs and being judged by the common merchant law. The only exclusive monopoly they encountered was that of the city governments or guilds, and that operated equally against natives of the country. Finally, the church was a great international institution that held all men of Catholic Europe together in the common brotherhood of the Christian faith and in common obedience to its laws. It gave to Europe a common culture and in the Latin tongue a common language for education and learning. This international unity was broken up by the rise of the centralized states. In so far as the political, economic and cultural interests of the people were concentrated on the state, they ceased to be international. Even the church was falling under the control of state governments. The state was too powerful to tolerate particular interests within itself or to admit the interference within its borders of any outside power. It is this fact that goes far to explain the breaking away from the ancient church of so many of the northern states during the Protestant Reformation.

Break-up of the unity of Christendom

3. THE NEW PIETY IN THE NORTH

Despite the waning power of the universal church, however, the people of northern Europe were not lacking in piety. Corrup-

tion in the church and the failure of its authority were not necessarily accompanied by a decline in popular religion, though that was doubtless often the case. On the contrary, much of the criticism of the clergy, the opposition to the papacy, and the attacks on the sacramental system which we have noted in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were inspired by a genuine piety that engendered a sincere moral indignation against manifest abuses, and only incidentally served the interests of the state governments. At the same time there was a powerful movement of awakening piety in Germany and the Netherlands which was to have a strong influence on both the Renaissance and the Reformation in the north. But it was not piety of a kind to strengthen the loyalty of the people to the organized church of their day. This movement originated with a group of religious mystics who, though orthodox sons of the church, cherished ideals that were not altogether in keeping with its contemporary practices, and who strove to transcend without breaking away from its mechanical organization.

Germany and the Netherlands

To describe or analyze pure mysticism is almost impossible. There have always been mystics and probably there always will be, but they themselves have never been able to describe their emotions in a way fully understandable to the practical mind. Perhaps it will be sufficient to say that, to the mystic, religion is a purely personal aspiration of the individual soul seeking unity and harmony with the divine power. In that ecstatic feeling of unity with God and harmony with His universe the mystic finds his supreme happiness. For our purposes, the important effects of a revival of mysticism at this time are, first, the increase in fervid piety in an age that had begun to take religion for granted, and second, a growing indifference to the sacramental system in an age when that system, though of vital importance to the authority of the church, was becoming formal and mechanical in its operation. The mystics did not doubt the necessity of the sacraments as had the Lollards and other heretics of the age. But they did place less

The mystics

DÜRER: ADORATION OF THE MAGI

*Style and technique suggest the influence of
the Italian upon the northern Renaissance.*

HOLBEIN: THE MADONNA OF BURGO-
MASTER MEYER

*The portrait of the donor and his family
add a secular note to a religious subject.*

LUCAS VAN LEYDEN: THE CHESS PLAYERS

*The genre scene above is an early example of
a type much practiced in the Netherlands.*

DÜRER: PORTRAIT OF A LADY

*Dürer's portraits have a timeless quality.   One
might expect to meet this lady anywhere.*

ART OF THE NORTHERN RENAISSANCE

SIR THOMAS MORE, HUMANIST AND
CHANCELLOR OF HENRY VIII

This portrait by Holbein suggests the firm will that made him a martyr, if not the wit and amiability that made him Erasmus's dearest friend.

DESIDERIUS ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM

This Holbein portrait of the Prince of the Humanists shows him in a very characteristic pose. Note the keen, fine-cut features, the nose as sharp as its owner's wit, and the general suggestion of a strong intelligence.
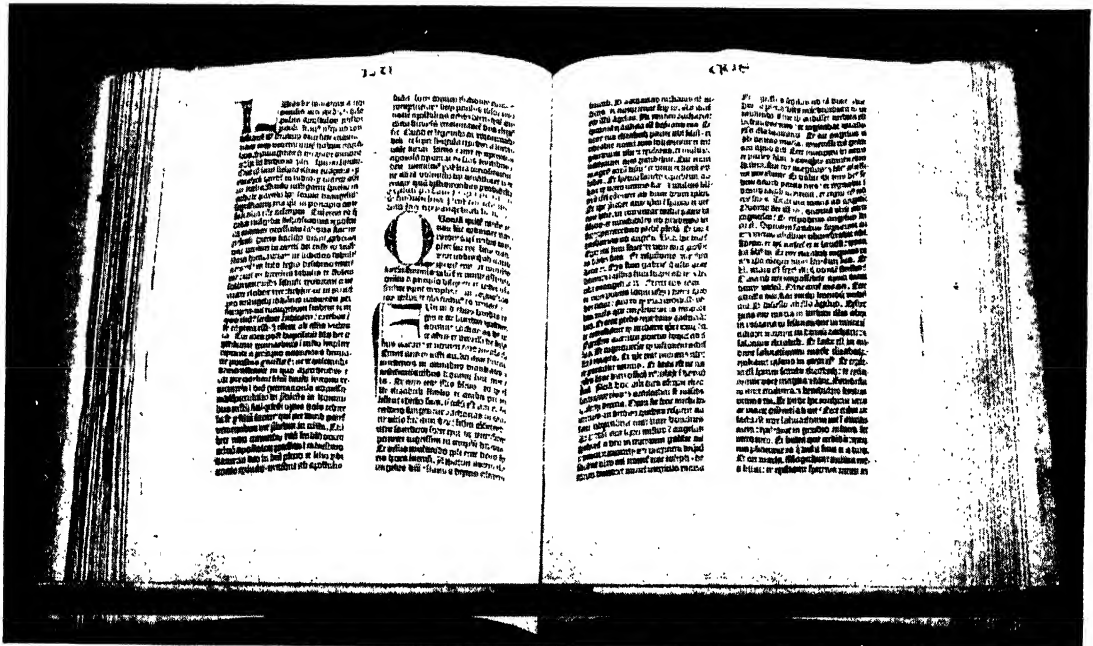
THE GUTENBERG BIBLE

The invention of printing was an immense aid to the spread of lay learning in the North. Above are pages from the first printed book. Note the exquisite workmanship.

THE LITERARY RENAISSANCE IN THE NORTH

emphasis upon their importance. Their aims were too personal, too immediate, for them to place much reliance on formalized observances, or to feel the need of having a priest to act as an intermediary between the individual soul and God.

The new mysticism began in Germany. Its creator was a German Dominican friar, Master Eckhart (1260–1327), and to him the movement owed its philosophy. Its influence on popular piety, however, came through the work of one of his disciples, John Tauler (c. 1300–61), who preached to the common people and gained a wide hearing. Unlike most preachers of the time, he did not represent salvation as the aim and end of religion, but emphasized the love of God as an end in itself. To this end any man, no matter how poor or ignorant, might aspire through simple faith, prayer, and purity of life. This was a practical mysticism within the comprehension of the masses. He was the leader of an organization or society, fittingly known as the Friends of God, which did a great deal to raise the standards of German morality and piety. The essence of the mystics' teaching was gathered together toward the end of the fourteenth century in a little anonymous volume which Luther, who admitted its great influence on his thought, named *The German Theology*.

In the Netherlands, mysticism flowered later and exercised a more direct influence on the thought of the new age. Here as in Germany it produced one great book, the immortal *Imitation of Christ* of Thomas à Kempis, written in the first quarter of the fifteenth century and still popular after more than five hundred years. The doctrine of this most widely read expression of the new piety, or *devotio moderna* as it was called, was very simple: he who would be a true Christian must live as Christ lived, think as he thought, and imitate him in every possible way. It was an ideal with which the church could not quarrel, yet it ignored the elaborate system, whereby the clergy were made responsible for the salvation of men. In the Netherlands, too, the mystics formed a society, devoted to public service, known as the

Mysticism in Germany

The Dutch mystics

Brethren of the Common Life. Its founders, Gerard Groote (1340–84) and Florentius Radewyn (1350–1400), had great faith in enlightened education as an aid to true religion, and under their guidance the Brethren devoted themselves to the education of boys. Throughout the fifteenth century, the schools of the Brethren, especially the large school at Deventer in Holland, were important instruments in spreading the new learning of the northern Renaissance, and did much to shape the ideals of many of the most influential humanists.

4. THE RENAISSANCE CROSSES THE ALPS

In northern Europe the Middle Ages died more slowly than in Italy. The new economic and social developments appeared later and in less concentrated form than in the crowded urban society of the south. It is not surprising, then, that the intellectual Renaissance, which was inspired by the revival of the classics to meet the intellectual needs of the new society, did not cross the Alps until a century after Petrarch and Boccaccio had begun to spread the gospel of antiquity in Italy. And when the Renaissance did cross the Alps, it changed its character to fit the character and interests of a different people with a different past. The Latin spirit had not survived in the Germanic north as it had in Italy; and in these last years of the transitional age, there was a deeper piety and a more profound preoccupation with religion than was common among the more secularly minded Italians. Hence, when the north turned to the classics with new zeal, under the influence of the Italian Renaissance, it was more indifferent to the pagan spirit of the ancient writers. Humanists of the north might revolt against the restrictions and abuses of the medieval church, but they remained Christian, and that not merely in form, but with a deep moral and religious interest as well. They sought in the Latin and Greek classics a more humane morality and philosophy than the scholasticism of the Middle Ages had provided, but they did not ignore the Christian past. Like the Italian humanists, they turned for guidance to antiquity, but it was to Christian as well as to classical antiquity, to the Bible

and the Fathers of the church, to Jerome and Augustine, not less than to Cicero and Virgil.

The first generation of northern humanists, whose activity falls within the second half of the fifteenth century, were teachers. They were far-wandering men, who had been to Italy to study and who returned to their own people to share the intellectual treasure they had discovered there. Few of them wrote anything of note, for their acquisition of the new learning was too recent to be thoroughly digested. They were pioneers, breaking the ground and sowing the seed against the time of harvest. Rudolph Agricola (c. 1444–85), aptly named "the educator of Germany," was characteristic of this generation both in his eager teaching of the ancient tongues and in his deep piety. It was from him that Alexander Hegius (1433–98), the influential head master of the school of the Brethren of the Common Life at Deventer, first learned Greek. At first the old universities, with their long-established curricula, would have nothing to do with these wandering innovators. The new learning spread much more easily in the cities, among the wealthy burghers who had leisure for the pursuit of culture and the financial resources to support and encourage scholars. They had no vested interest in the old type of education as had the university faculties. Eventually, however, even the universities were forced to recognize the new learning. By the end of the century, the humanists had gained a foothold in the faculties of arts and were waging a bitter fight against the champions of medieval tradition.

The spread of the new classical learning in the north was greatly aided by the rapidly increasing use of printed books during the second half of the fifteenth century, which followed the invention of printing, generally attributed to John Gutenberg of Mayence about the year 1447. Part of the technique of printing was known and used before the time of Gutenberg's epoch-making invention. A few short pamphlets or books had been printed by means of wood-cut blocks, the whole contents of a page, usually a picture and a few lines of text, being cut on a single wooden block. But this method was expensive, awkward, and wasteful. The blocks were difficult to make, could be used for only one work, and were soon worn out. The important part of Gutenberg's innovation, which made printing really practicable, was the use of movable metal type. Each letter was cast in a matrix or model. Any number could be cast from the same matrix, thus making the production of type inexpensive and guaranteeing uniformity. The type could then be assembled in a case in any desired order, and after the book was printed could be taken apart or "distributed" and used again and again for other books.

The effects of the printing press on the general intellectual development of Europe can scarcely be overestimated. Its immediate result for the spread of humanism in the north was to place the classics and the writings of Christian antiquity at the disposal of all who could read them, at a moderate price, and to afford the humanists themselves a far wider audience than would have been possible before. Hitherto all books had been written by hand and were often inaccurate as well as expensive. Even in Italy manuscripts were scarce and dear. In the north, where there were proportionately fewer wealthy bibliophiles and the distance between libraries was greater, the study of the ancient writings would have presented enormous difficulties. Within a few years after the invention of printing, however, the number of books in existence had increased tremendously and the cost of each would average less than an eighth of that of a manuscript copy. The new technique spread with amazing rapidity to all parts of Europe. Before the end of the fifteenth century, there were more than a thousand printers whose names are still known, and more than thirty thousand editions had been published.

The last decade of the fifteenth century and the first two of the sixteenth marked the high tide of northern humanism. These years witnessed the mature labors of the second generation of humanists, who in their youth had entered into the full inheritance

of classical and Christian antiquity. Under its inspiration they strove to reform contemporary education and religious thought and practice. They prepared the way for the Protestant Reformation, only to find many of the reforms, for which they had been working, overwhelmed in a sea of dogmatic argument and partisan passions.

These northern humanists had all the reverence for antiquity, and all the scorn for the Middle Ages, that was characteristic of their Italian brethren. Indeed, reaction against medievalism may be taken as the keynote of their thought. The charm and purity of the ancient Latin style made them look with contempt upon the crabbed Latin of the medieval theologians, whose spiritual descendants still ruled in most of the schools and universities. The sane and well-balanced attitude toward life in this world, which they found in the classics, appealed to them more strongly than the one-sided, other-worldly philosophy of the medieval scholastic doctors. But above all, and this was their unique contribution, they found in the Scriptures and the writings of Christian antiquity a simple, vivid religion, which they felt had been distorted by long centuries of involved theological argument and buried beneath the accumulated mass of medieval church tradition. It was their task to restore this early "evangelical" faith in all its purity. To do this they believed that they must first restore and study all the Christian sources, the Bible and the early Fathers of the church, in their original form and in their original language. This necessitated a full scholarly knowledge of Greek and Hebrew as well as of good Latin. All this brought them into violent conflict with the conservative teachers and theologians, who still clung to the medieval traditions in education and theology, who preferred the medieval commentaries to the original texts, and who were ignorant and therefore suspicious of Greek and Hebrew.

In Germany, the outstanding leader of the new movement was John Reuchlin (1455–1522). He had studied in Italy, and after his return to Germany devoted his life to the study of Hebrew as an aid to the understanding of the Old Testament. As a preliminary step he published the first Hebrew grammar north of the Alps in 1506, a work of great service to the new scholarship. His open opposition to a scheme for the suppression of Hebrew books caused him to be charged with heresy by the inquisitor of Cologne, backed by the Dominican teachers in the university there. The resulting trial, which lasted six years, roused a storm of controversy. It was one of the first cases in which both sides appealed to public opinion through the medium of the printing press. On Reuchlin's side were the humanists, on the other the monks and conservative theologians. In this literary debate, the humanists, equipped with a far superior Latin style, had all the best of it. When argument failed, they resorted to ridicule with devastating effect. One work in particular remains an immortal monument to the wit of the humanists. The *Letters of Obscure Men*, written anonymously by one of the young humanists at the University of Erfurt, is still good reading for its hilarious humor and biting satire. It is composed of a series of letters addressed to one of Reuchlin's principal opponents, presumably from his humble admirers. Written in comically barbarous Latin, the letters exposed the ignorance, superstition, and naïve gullibility of the obscure monks and priests who rallied to the defense of tradition. A supplement, even more bitter, appeared shortly after from the pen of the bellicose German knight and poet, Ulrich von Hutten.

In France, James Lefèvre d'Étaples (c. 1455–1536) did for the New Testament what Reuchlin was doing for the Old. He, too, had studied in Italy, returning to teach at Paris. The aim of his work was to discover the real meaning of the New Testament text, treating it as a human document, though divinely inspired. His study of the Greek originals brought new light to bear on the teaching of Christ and the apostles, and had a considerable influence on the thought of Luther and other reformers.

The principal figure among the Christian humanists in England was John Colet (d. 1519), the dean of Saint Paul's Cathedral

in London and founder of Saint Paul's
School. Though not a great

Colet and More

scholar, despite his years of study
in Italy, he was a man of high
character and deeply interested in reforming
the thought and practice of the church. His
influence directed the activity of a number
of writers more learned than himself. Among
his friends was Sir Thomas More (c. 1478–
1535), whose famous *Utopia*, published in
1516, presented the humanist's picture of an
ideal society, one that has given inspiration
to social reformers ever since.

By far the most influential of all the Christian humanists, however, was Desiderius

Erasmus

Erasmus of Rotterdam (c. 1469–
1536). It was he more than
anyone else who formulated and popularized
the reform program of Christian humanism.
He was born in Holland, educated by the
Brethren of the Common Life in their school
at Deventer, and entered a monastery at an
early age. However, he soon escaped from
that narrow environment and thereafter led
a wandering existence, living for years in
France, England, Italy, Germany, and
Switzerland, equally at home wherever there
were learned men who could converse with
him in the classical Latin that was almost
his mother tongue. Until Erasmus was
about thirty years of age, the study of the
classics absorbed his attention to the exclusion of almost everything else. During these
years he acquired a thorough knowledge of
classical literature and the easy, graceful
Latin style that was to secure him universal
recognition as "the Prince of the Humanists." It was not till about the time of his
first visit to England in 1499, during which
he met John Colet and Thomas More who
became his lifelong friends, that he turned
seriously to the religious studies that were to
occupy the largest share of his attention for
the rest of his life.

The chief aim of Erasmus's work in the
field of religious thought was the restoration
of Christianity to its early sim-

Greek New Testament

plicity as taught by Christ himself and by his disciples. He
thought of Christianity as a guiding philosophy for the direction of daily life, rather than
as a system of dogmatic beliefs or ecclesiastical practices as the medieval church had all
too often made it appear. He described his
religious ideal in a significant phrase, "the
philosophy of Christ," in which, perhaps, we
can trace the influence of the Brethren of the
Common Life and the *Imitation of Christ*.
This conception of religion made a thorough
understanding of the original meaning of the
Scriptures vitally necessary. He felt that
the Vulgate, as the Latin version of the
Bible accepted by the church was called,
could not be entirely trusted, since it was a
translation to start with and had been recopied with possible errors for centuries.
Erasmus, therefore, undertook the task of
editing the Greek text of the New Testament
from the earliest available manuscripts.
After years of labor he finally published it,
with extensive annotations, in 1516. It was
the first time that the New Testament had
been printed in its original language. The
conservative theologians, who had been accustomed to following the Vulgate as the
final authority and many of whom were ignorant of Greek, were profoundly suspicious of the
new edition and attacked Erasmus bitterly.

Meanwhile, Erasmus was also working
busily for the reform of those doctrines and
practices in the church that to
him seemed out of harmony

Erasmian reform

with the Christian spirit. This
he hoped would be accomplished by the
growth of enlightened education and a
clearer understanding of the philosophy of
Christ, aided in the meantime by commonsense criticism of existing abuses. The best
known of his numerous works in this field
were the *Praise of Folly* and the *Familiar
Colloquies*, wherein he ridiculed the wealth
and self-seeking power of the clergy, the worship of saints, the monastic orders, indulgences, pilgrimages, and fasts. Erasmus had
a devastatingly satirical wit and had early
discovered that ridicule can sometimes be a
more effective weapon than heavy argument. Because of his masterly command of
Latin style and his clear intelligence and
humor, everything he wrote was widely
read. He helped to prepare the way for the
Reformation, though he himself refused to be
drawn into the conflict that followed it and
remained within the church.

27

The States of Europe at the Dawn of the Modern Age

(c. 1450–1519)

IN THE LAST HALF of the fifteenth century and the first two decades of the sixteenth, the period of transition from the High Middle Ages to the early modern era was drawing to its close. The general characteristics of that change we have already noted. The purpose of this chapter is to pass in brief review the history of the principal European states during these years, so as to show the general structure of Europe at the beginning of modern times, and also to describe the work of those early explorers who were then opening up new opportunities for European trade and expansion, before we pass on to the new era that began with the Protestant Reformation, the foundation of the vast Hapsburg empire of Charles V, and the long struggle between the rival dynasties of Hapsburg and Valois. In all parts of Europe we shall find somewhat similar developments taking place. Under strong and more or less absolute rulers, aided by the support of the rising middle class, the territory of the various states was being consolidated and the authority of the central government was triumphing over the last remnants of feudal independence. At the same time, the territorial princes were transferring control of industry and commerce from the cities, which had been the focal centers of economic life under the medieval guild system,

to the state government, thus laying the foundations of modern economic nationalism. Strengthened by this newly won control of the political and economic forces of their states, the monarchs of Europe also began in these years to seek additions to their territory by conquest, from which sprang those dynastic wars, alliances and counter-alliances, so characteristic of European history in the first centuries of the modern era. Finally, this period witnessed a significant shift in the center of gravity of European trade from the east to the west, due to the discovery of new lands and new trade routes in the Atlantic.

1. SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

Nowhere can the developments listed above be more clearly observed than in the history of Spain, which rose during this period to the first rank among European states. Hitherto the various kingdoms of the Spanish peninsula had played a relatively insignificant rôle in the general history of Europe. They were cut off from the remainder of the continent by the high barrier of the Pyrenees and had not yet learned to use the Atlantic as a highway of commerce to the Far East and West. Moreover, the Christian states had had to wage a long war of conquest to

win their land from the Moslems, and they had since wasted much energy in fighting among themselves. In the middle of the fifteenth century, the peninsula was still divided into five separate kingdoms. Of these Castile, with which Leon had been incorporated, was much the largest. It occupied the whole central plateau and included more than sixty per cent of the entire peninsula. The smaller kingdoms of Aragon and Portugal lay along the coast to east and west respectively. Far to the north, the little kingdom of Navarre straddled the Pyrenees, and in the extreme south the Moslem kingdom of Granada still remained as a reminder that Spain had once belonged to Islam.[1]

The long period of warfare with the Moslems and the gradual expansion by conquest had left a permanent impress on the character of Castile. The Castilian people had grown up a fighting race, rigidly orthodox. Moreover, Castile had acquired its territory bit by bit, and each new acquisition formed a separate unit in the state under the control of half-independent feudal nobles or the orders of crusading knights. As a result, the condition of feudal anarchy common to most countries in the Middle Ages had lasted in Castile till after the middle of the fifteenth century. The power of the crown was also limited to some extent by the Cortes, an assembly representing the upper and middle classes something like the French States General. Castile was mostly an agricultural and pastoral country, none too rich, though its industry and commerce were soon to be stimulated by the opening-up of exclusive markets in the New World, and the importation of gold and silver from Mexico and Peru would bring it for a time a false prosperity. Aragon had a stronger central government, though there, too, the king was hampered by feudal nobles and the Cortes. Thanks to its position on the eastern coast, it had a more highly developed commerce than had Castile. The acquisition of Sicily in the thirteenth century and the islands of Majorca and Sardinia in the fourteenth by the ruling family of Aragon gave it a considerable share of the Mediterranean trade.

Castile and Aragon

[1] See map, page 386.

The foundations of the future greatness of Spain were laid by the union of all the peninsula except Portugal under the rule of Ferdinand of Aragon (1479–1516) and Isabella of Castile (1474–1504), who were married in 1469. When they inherited their respective kingdoms a few years later, the two greatest states in Spain were brought under a common government, though for another generation they remained separate in theory. The combined power of the two monarchs made further conquest possible. In 1492, the year in which Columbus carried the flag of Castile to the New World, they conquered the kingdom of Granada, thus wiping out the last independent Moslem state. Thereafter, Ferdinand launched an ambitious and very astute foreign policy, designed to make Spain a power to be reckoned with in European affairs and to add territory to the possessions of his family. As a result of his part in the Italian wars, of which more later, he acquired the kingdom of Naples from the lesser branch of the Aragonese dynasty in 1503, and in 1512 he conquered all of Navarre south of the Pyrenees.

Union of Spain

The reign of Ferdinand and Isabella accomplished not only the territorial consolidation of Spain, but also the centralization of authority in the hands of a strong royal government. This was especially necessary in Castile, where the independence of the feudal nobles had sadly weakened the government and had produced a frightful amount of lawlessness and disorder. The monarchs began by restoring order and security for life and property through the foundation of a mounted police system recruited from the populace, called the Hermandad or Holy Brotherhood. This popular police force dispensed summary justice to all offenders and was remarkably effective. The next step was to strip the feudal nobles and the great crusading orders of their independent powers and to reduce them to subjection to the crown. In this task, Ferdinand and Isabella could count on the support of the common people who preferred a strong government to feudal anarchy. The monarchs then turned their attention to the reform of

Rise of royal power in Spain

the Spanish church, which had been thoroughly feudalized and rather lax in discipline. They acquired from Pope Sixtus IV the right to nominate all the higher ecclesiastical officers in Spain and used that right to fill the church with men of high character and unquestioned orthodoxy, who would also be devoted to the crown. As a result, the Spanish church became an instrument for the extension of royal power, and was to be the strongest bulwark of orthodox Catholicism in the religious conflicts of the sixteenth century. The Spanish Inquisition, founded in 1478 under the control of the monarchy, was used to crush all signs of heresy and to root out what elements of Moslem religion remained. The expulsion of Moors and Jews strengthened the religious and racial unity of the country, but was a sad blow to its commerce and industry. Finally, it was Ferdinand and Isabella who began the process of whittling away the authority of the Cortes of Castile and Aragon,

now the sole remaining check on the authority of the crown. There were rebellions against Ferdinand's rule in Castile after the death of Isabella, but they had done their work so well that their successor was able to build up the most absolute monarchy in Europe.

Despite the union and expansion of its powerful neighbors, the little kingdom of Portugal on the western coast still retained its independence. **Portugal** Like the other kingdoms in the peninsula, it had played an unimportant part in European history until nearly the end of the fifteenth century. Then it, too, rose to sudden power, a change due almost entirely to the courageous energy of its great navigators. As we shall see when we come to deal with the explorations and discoveries of this era, Portuguese sailors vied with the Spanish in finding new trade routes through the Atlantic, and, like Spain, Portugal enjoyed a period of great if somewhat illusory prosperity.
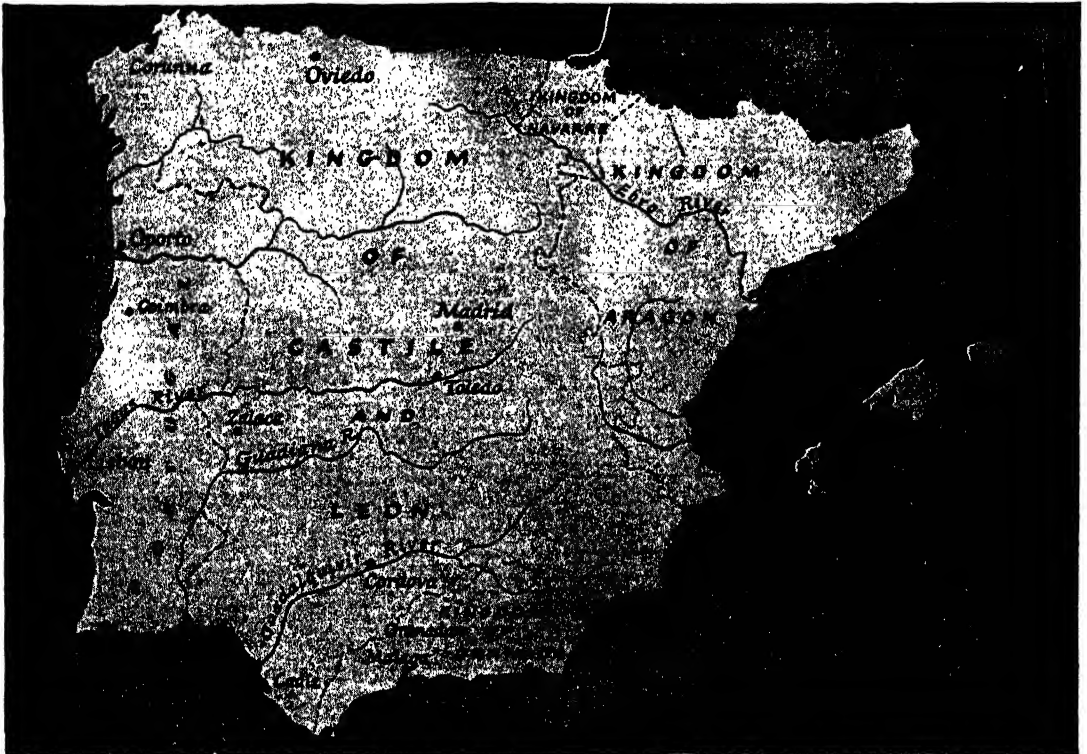
2. ENGLAND

England had scarcely emerged from the Hundred Years' War (1453) when it was

Wars of the Roses

plunged into a long, intermittent civil strife by rival factions in the royal family and the higher nobility. The war had left England a dangerous legacy of disorder. The great nobles had become accustomed to keeping large bands of armed retainers, and accustomed also to violence and bloodshed. Every baron had a following among the knights and gentry of his neighborhood, who wore his livery (coat of arms) and would fight for him. He repaid their services by "maintaining" their interests in the law courts or in private quarrels. This custom of "livery and maintenance" frustrated the normal action of justice and restored something like the old condition of feudal anarchy. The weak government of the feeble-minded Henry VI utterly failed to keep order, as it had failed in the war against France. Moreover, the weakness of the king opened the way for quarrels between one faction or another of the baronage who sought to control the government. These factional disputes broke into open civil war in 1455 between the followers of Richard, Duke of York, next heir to the throne after Henry's infant son, and the supporters of the reigning house of Lancaster, though it was not till 1460 that York definitely claimed the throne. He was killed shortly after, but his son continued the struggle and succeeded in winning the crown as Edward IV (1461–83). The Lancastrian party was now in opposition to the king and the fight went on to an accompaniment of treachery and murder. On the death of Edward IV, his brother Richard III (1483–85) seized the crown from his infant nephew Edward V, and added to this fairly normal crime the more shocking one of having the young Edward and his brother murdered. This was more than the English people could stand, even in that callous age. They deserted Richard and welcomed Henry Tudor, a distant heir to the Lancastrian claims who made a successful bid for the crown in 1485. These frequent and rather petty civil wars are known collectively as the Wars of the Roses from the white and red

roses that, according to tradition, were the badges of the houses of York and Lancaster respectively.

The civil wars had affected the majority of the population surprisingly little, save as they interfered with security and good government. The

Slaughter of the barons

people generally were neutral. No principle of any kind was at stake. It was merely a party fight among the nobles and the royal family. But for that very reason the Wars of the Roses had one very important and lasting influence on the course of English history. They destroyed the old nobility. Each battle thinned the ranks of the old feudal families, and each turn of fortune was followed by executions and the confiscation of ancient family estates. From this time on, the monarchy would have little trouble with the barons. Feudalism in England, which had long been dying, had received its death blow.

A new era in England's history opened in 1485 with the reign of Henry VII, first of the Tudor sovereigns. Having no

Henry VII

very sound hereditary claim to the throne, Henry knew that his only hope of keeping it lay in giving the people the kind of government they wanted, and they wanted, above all, peace, security for life and property, and an opportunity to carry on their business under favorable conditions. They were tired of factional strife and the violence of the nobles. In short, they wanted a strong government, devoted to the interests of the people. No one could have been better suited to the task of satisfying those demands than the quiet, self-contained, and hard-headed Tudor. There was nothing very colorful or dramatic about his personality, but he had a thorough understanding of the needs of his country and a remarkable ability to get things done. Under his canny guidance, England's transformation from a medieval to a modern state was well-nigh completed.

The most vital problem facing the new Tudor king was the restoration of order. This could be accomplished only by reducing the power of

Restoration of order

the remaining barons. Henry set about the task with great energy, exclud-

ing them from his royal council and using the court of the star chamber, which was the royal council in its judicial capacity, to suppress livery and maintenance, and to punish all attempts on the part of the lords to interfere with the prosecution of justice or to oppress their humbler neighbors. With the star chamber court, which could not be intimidated, to deal with the great lords, the local courts were left free to punish the lesser criminals. A task of this magnitude takes time, and something was still left to be done by his successors, but when Henry VII died he left England in a reasonably orderly condition, with the royal authority unquestionably supreme in the state.

Next to order at home, Henry needed peace abroad and recognition of his title by foreign powers. This he secured **Foreign alliances** by obtaining a marriage alliance with Spain, which was rapidly becoming one of the strongest of European states. The marriage of his son Arthur to Catherine of Aragon, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, was a diplomatic triumph. The death of Arthur shortly thereafter threatened to break the bond, but it was renewed by the remarriage of the widowed Catherine to Arthur's younger brother, the future King Henry VIII. The Tudor family thus gained the support of the powerful Spanish dynasty, which was already allied by marriage with the imperial Hapsburgs, who held, among other possessions, the Burgundian Netherlands. Not the least of the benefits accruing from this alliance was that it ensured to English merchants fair treatment in the ports of Spain and the Netherlands.

Henry VII, indeed, never forgot the interests of the merchants. English commerce, especially the rich trade in wool **Encouragement of commerce** and woolen goods, had been growing rapidly during the fifteenth century, but with very little help from the central government. Mostly it was handled by foreigners, some of whom, like the Hanseatic merchants, had greater privileges in English ports than the natives themselves. Moreover, lacking strong support from the state, English merchants had been unable to secure favorable treatment in other countries. Henry undertook to change all this as far as possible. At the beginning of his reign he passed legislation through Parliament designed to give English ships, manned by English sailors, a monopoly of carrying certain types of goods. Wherever possible, he cut down the privileges of foreign traders in England so as to give the advantage to their native competitors, and where the foreigners still held privileges in England, he sought treaties with their home governments to secure reciprocal privileges for English merchants. The commercial treaties, cemented by family alliances, with Spain and Burgundy, opened up great opportunities for English trade. All in all, Henry's economic policies were typically modern. Their chief characteristics — the protection of native trade and industry from foreign competition, the securing of commercial treaties with other states, the transference of economic control from the cities to the state government which all this implied, and the close alliance between the monarchy and the middle class — were all to be followed by English governments for the next three centuries.

It was a prosperous, orderly state and a strong royal government that Henry VIII inherited in the year 1509. The young king was active and ambitious. Under his rule England **Accession of Henry VIII** was to play a larger part in international affairs and to win a new national consciousness through the establishment of a separate national church. Henry VIII looms larger than his less spectacular father on the pages of English history, but it must not be forgotten that it was the elder Henry who laid the foundations of Tudor England.

3. FRANCE, BURGUNDY, AND ITALY

The successful conclusion of the Hundred Years' War was a triumph for the French monarchy. Charles VII was not the greatest of kings, but he had driven out the English and had saved his country from disintegration. The war had aroused a national consciousness in the French people and had taught them that the safety of the country depended on the king alone, for the great nobles had almost ruined France by their selfishness and the States General had

proved incompetent. The people generally, and especially those of the commercial and industrial middle class, would welcome a strong royal government over the whole state; but before there could be such a government, the kings had still to complete the subjugation of the nobility and the consolidation of France by bringing the few remaining half-independent fiefs directly under their control. This task was barely begun by Charles VII. It was left for his son and grandson, Louis XI (1461–83) and Charles VIII (1483–98) to carry it to a successful conclusion.

The most powerful and independent of the French fiefs still outstanding was the duchy of Burgundy. Granted by King **Louis XI and Charles the Bold** John to his son Philip in 1363, it became the nucleus of a rapidly growing state under the Burgundian branch of the royal family.[1] Philip's son, Duke John, who was assassinated in 1419, and his son Philip allied themselves with the English against the French kings and the Armagnacs in the later stages of the Hundred Years' War. Philip was, indeed, almost an independent sovereign, and his impetuous son, Charles the Bold (1467–77), was determined to be recognized as such and to break completely away from France. This ambition was not essentially unreasonable, for the Burgundian house had already acquired, by marriage, purchase, and conquest, extensive lands outside of France in addition to the original duchy. These included the Free County of Burgundy (Franche Comté), Luxemburg, and the rich states of the Netherlands, and to them Charles added Alsace and Lorraine. In reality, Charles ruled a kingdom in that debatable land between France and Germany, reminiscent of the ancient kingdom of Lothair, and it is not surprising that he should desire the title of king. His ambitions inevitably brought Charles into violent conflict with Louis XI. For a time he seemed to be having the best of it, but he had also aroused the enmity of his warlike neighbors, the Swiss, and it was they who finally brought about his defeat and death. His daughter Mary kept up the struggle

[1]See maps, page 386.

with France, aided by her husband, Maximilian of Hapsburg, son of the Emperor Frederick III, until her death in 1482. Maximilian then made peace with Louis. The duchy of Burgundy was surrendered and was brought directly under the French crown. Alsace and Lorraine were also returned to their former owners, but the rest of the Burgundian states were kept by Philip, the son of Mary and Maximilian, to make a formidable addition to the lands of the house of Hapsburg.[1]

Meanwhile, Louis XI was using his undoubted talent for diplomacy and intrigue to good effect in subjugating the other semi-independent feuda- **Consolidation of France** tories of France. The character of this strange, cunning, and unscrupulous man will always be an enigma to historians. He was superstitious, treacherous, and cruel; yet he must be given credit for his invaluable services in making France a united nation. When he died in 1483, the duchy of Brittany was almost the only fief outside the royal domain. Charles VIII was still a boy, though officially of age, when he succeeded to the throne, but fortunately Louis had left his daughter, Anne of Beaujeu, with authority to act as guardian to her young brother until he should grow up. For nine years this princess, whom her wise if somewhat misogynous father had called "the least foolish woman in Europe," practically ruled France. It was her energy that put down the last rebellions of the French nobles and finally, after years of fighting, secured the union of Brittany with the royal domain by the marriage of Charles VIII to Anne, Duchess of Brittany, in 1491. With this acquisition the consolidation of France into a united territorial state was practically complete.

As in Spain, the territorial consolidation of France was accompanied by the centralization of power in the hands of an absolute monarchy. The **Triumph of monarchy** nobles were robbed of almost all their political authority and the States General was reduced to a negligible position. During and after the war, the French kings had secured the right to levy taxes on their own authority throughout the state. With

[1]See map, page 394.

HENRY VII OF ENGLAND

The founder of the Tudor dynasty was an unspectacular but very competent ruler.

CHARLES THE BOLD OF BURGUNDY

This portrait scarcely suggests the recklessness that characterized the last Burgundian duke of the French line.
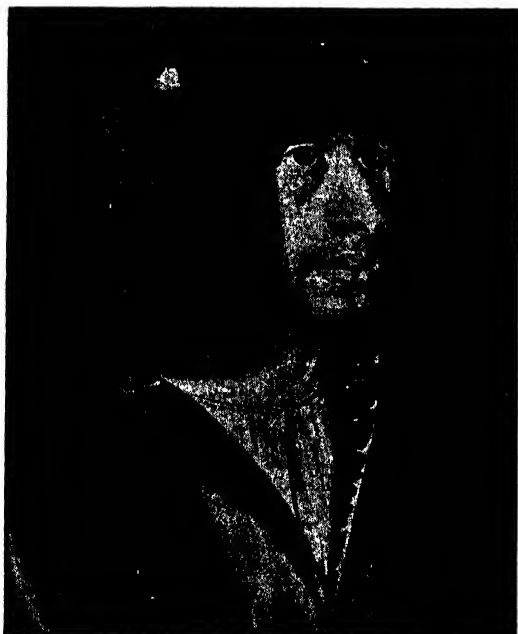
CHARLES VIII OF FRANCE

As this contemporary portrait indicates, Charles was not the most intelligent ruler in Europe.

LUDOVICO SFORZA, DUKE OF MILAN

Ludovico Sforza, called "Il Moro," was the man who first invited the French to invade Italy.

RULERS OF THE SECOND HALF OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

this financial backing, they could maintain a standing army with which the nobles could not compete. Moreover, they could ensure the subjugation of the nobility by taking them into their pay. The nobles became courtiers and officers in the royal army. In compensation for their lost independence, they retained their social prerogatives and the more substantial privilege of practical immunity from taxation. Only occasionally hereafter, under very weak kings and when the country was torn by religious strife, would the nobles attempt to reassert their independence, and then with no permanent success. Meanwhile, the middle class in France, as elsewhere, profited by the restoration of order and the assumption of economic control by a strong government. At the end of the fifteenth century, France was prosperous and all classes looked to the king as the embodiment of the national state.

Charles VIII had scarcely taken over the government of his newly united kingdom from his wise sister before he began to dream of adding to his glory by wars of conquest. And Italy, rich and famous for its culture, but weakened by its fatal lack of unity, seemed a prize within the easy grasp of the absolute ruler of a great state. Moreover, he had inherited the old Angevin claim to the kingdom of Naples, and few monarchs in that age of dynastic greed could bring themselves to ignore such a claim when a favorable opportunity for pressing it was presented. In 1494, France was strong and united, while the political situation in Italy made any united resistance to an invader extremely unlikely. The balance of power in Italy, which depended on the alliance of Milan, Florence, and Naples, had been overturned after the death of Lorenzo de' Medici in 1492.[1] Alfonso II of Naples, who became king early in 1494, had turned against Ludovico Sforza, called "Il Moro," who had been ruling Milan since 1479 in the name of his feeble nephew, the Duke Gian Galeazzo. The latter was Alfonso's son-in-law, whence his demands that the powerful Moro should turn the government over to the titular duke, whom Alfonso could easily control. Piero

France and Italy

[1] See above, page 363.

de' Medici, forgetting his father's diplomatic policy, supported Alfonso's demands. To protect his usurped authority, Ludovico Sforza then turned to Charles VIII and offered to help him in the conquest of Naples. So began for France the long series of futile wars in Italy. For more than half a century French kings wasted men and money in the vain attempt to conquer and hold a land that had little in common with France, while neglecting the more possible and profitable aim of rounding out their frontiers to the north and east within the natural boundaries of the Rhine and the Alps.

The first French invasion of Italy was little more than a military parade, with some comic-opera effects. Charles VIII crossed the Alps in September, 1494, marched down through the peninsula without encountering serious opposition, and by the early spring of the following year had conquered the whole kingdom of Naples, still without fighting a real battle. However, Naples was easier to win than to hold. The tactlessness and brutality of the French soon made them unpopular in the kingdom, while to the north the other Italian states, belatedly alarmed at the presence of the foreign invader, began to unite. Charles was forced to withdraw from Italy, leaving a garrison in Naples which was easily driven out by Alfonso's son Ferrante in 1496. The only immediate result of the invasion had been the expulsion of the Medici from Florence by the indignant citizens, when Piero supinely surrendered the outlying Tuscan forts to Charles.

Charles VIII invades Naples

Charles's expedition, however, had shown the ease with which conquests could be won in Italy, and the next French king, Louis XII (1498–1515), had not been a year on the throne before he followed his example. Louis, who was a cousin of the late king, had inherited a claim to Milan through his grandmother Valentina Visconti, Duchess of Orléans. He therefore directed his attack against Milan, which he had isolated by winning over Venice and Pope Alexander VI with promises of aid for their own selfish ambitions. The French army made short

Louis XII invades Italy

work of the Milanese mercenaries. The duchy was conquered and Ludovico Sforza was taken prisoner. Louis then prepared to move against Naples. The major difficulty in that direction was the probable opposition of Ferdinand, King of Aragon and Sicily, who might resent the expulsion of his kinsmen of the lesser branch of the house of Aragon from Naples. Louis avoided this difficulty by inviting Ferdinand to become a partner in the conquest. Naples was again taken without serious opposition, and again the French found it impossible to hold what they had won. Almost immediately the two conquerors quarreled over the division of the spoils. War broke out between them in 1502, and before the end of the following year the French were driven out and Naples was added to the growing possessions of Spain.

With France holding the duchy of Milan in the north and Spain the kingdom of Naples in the south, the independ-

The League of Cambray ence of Italy was sadly threatened, but still the other Italian states could not unite against the menace of foreign domination. The next few years were occupied by shifting alliances and cold-blooded land-grabbing on the part of both Italian and foreign states. Venice was the first to suffer. That rich republic had aroused the enmity and greed of the other powers by its unfortunate policy of landward expansion. Both the French king, now Duke of Milan, and Maximilian of Hapsburg, who had been elected emperor in 1493, claimed parts of the Venetian territory, as did also the warlike Pope Julius II (1503–13), whose determined ambition was to recover full control of all land that had ever belonged to the Papal States. These three formed the nucleus of the League of Cambray (1508), later joined by Ferdinand of Spain, for the partition of Venice. Most of the fighting was done by the French and papal troops, and with considerable success. The proud republic was on the verge of ruin when Julius II made a separate peace with it in 1510, on condition of receiving the lands taken by Venice from the Romagna.

Having won all he wanted from Venice, the pope then turned against his French allies

who were becoming dangerous neighbors. In 1511, Julius succeeded in breaking up the League of Cambray and forming a new

The Holy League

"Holy League," composed of the papacy, Venice, and Spain, and soon joined by the Swiss, Maximilian, and Ferdinand's son-in-law, Henry VIII of England. The purpose of the league was to drive the French out of Italy and, incidentally, to distract the attention of France while Ferdinand conquered Spanish Navarre. The French won an initial victory in the bloody battle of Ravenna early in 1512, but before the end of the year the Holy League had achieved its objective. The French were again forced to withdraw from Italy, leaving Milan to the Moro's son, Maximilian Sforza, under the protection of the Swiss. Florence was punished for her alliance with France by being handed back to the Medici.

For a brief period Italy was restored to something like its state prior to the invasions. But in 1515 a new king, Francis I, ascended the throne of France and immediately fol-

Francis I reconquers Milan

lowed the example of his predecessors in seeking glory beyond the Alps. The young king swept down into Italy with a powerful army, defeated the combined Swiss and Milanese forces at Marignano, and within a few months had reconquered the duchy of Milan. One very important result of this invasion was the Concordat of Bologna, arranged in 1516 between Francis and the new pope, Leo X, whereby the king surrendered the "liberties" of the French church asserted in the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges (1439) [1] but received in return the right to nominate all the higher clergy in France.

The wars in Italy had by this time lasted more than two decades. Italy had paid dearly for its lack of unity, and France had merely paved the way for a long and costly struggle with the house of Hapsburg, to whose rising fortunes we must now turn our attention.

4. GERMANY AND THE HOUSE OF HAPSBURG

Germany in this period presents the one

[1] See above, page 352.

great exception, outside of Italy, to the gen-
eral rule of territorial and politi-
Disunion of Germany cal consolidation and the rise of
strong central government that
applies to the other European states. The
amalgamation of the German monarchy
with the impressive but impractical Holy
Roman Empire and the disastrous conflict
with the papacy had prevented the forma-
tion in either Italy or Germany of a unified
state. In the middle of the thirteenth cen-
tury the empire had seemed on the point of
dissolution. It was revived, but with
scarcely more than a nominal unity, and it
grew no stronger. The emperors had still
very little real authority. They could raise
neither adequate revenue nor an effective
army outside their own domains, nor were
they strong enough to keep order and en-
force justice save in their own family lands.
The Diet of the empire — the assembly of
princes and representatives from the free
imperial cities — was equally powerless to
secure obedience to its laws. The Emperor
Maximilian I did make some attempt to
strengthen the central government, but ac-
complished little, for like the other emperors
of this period he was far more interested in
advancing the position of his family than in
adding to the imperial authority. This lack
of unity in the empire, however, was made
up for to some extent by the consolidation of
the larger states within Germany. In these
individual states, duchies, margravates, and
the like, something like the same tendency
toward centralization that we have noted in
the monarchical states was taking place.
Finally, it must not be forgotten that, de-
spite political and social disorder, Germany
was on the whole very prosperous in these
years and was undergoing a spiritual and
intellectual revival under the influence of the
Christian Renaissance.

The most striking development in German
political history during this period, and one
that was to have a tremendous
Hapsburg emperors influence on the whole history
of Europe, was the phenomenal
rise of the Austrian house of Hapsburg.
After the election of Albert II (1438–39), the
imperial title remained in the Hapsburg fam-
ily generation after generation until it came

to be considered almost as an hereditary
right. Albert was followed by Frederick III
(1440–93) and Maximilian I (1493–1519).
It was the latter of these who was chiefly
responsible for bringing into the Hapsburg
family that vast collection of lands outside
of Germany that was to make his grandson,
Charles V, the greatest ruler in Europe in
the next generation. Charming, cultured,
and impractical, Maximilian played a part,
usually pretty ineffective, in every interna-
tional crisis of that crucial period when the
monarchs of France and Spain were consoli-
dating their territories and were turning to
the conquest of Italy. Maximilian was the
perpetual victim of magnificent and vision-
ary schemes, for which his economic and
military resources were ludicrously inade-
quate. His participation in the Italian wars
brought him nothing but grief, while his de-
votion to his family interests and to foreign
projects ruined his chances of building up a
strong imperial government in Germany.
His only success was due to the skill and
good fortune with which he arranged a series
of marriage alliances with other powers. But
that alone was enough to make his house the
most powerful in Europe.

The first of the marriages that was to do
more for the Hapsburg family than conquest
had ever done took place in
1477, when Maximilian himself **Hapsburg**
married Mary of Burgundy, the **marriage alliances**
daughter and sole heiress of that
reckless duke, Charles the Bold, who had
just met his death in battle with the Swiss.
To this marriage was born a son, Philip the
Handsome, who inherited the Burgundian
estates, including the Free County of Bur-
gundy, Luxemburg, and the rich provinces
of the Netherlands, after his mother's early
death. In 1496, Philip was married to Jo-
anna, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isa-
bella, under whom the kingdoms of Spain
had been united. Within a year this mar-
riage became unexpectedly important be-
cause of the death of Joanna's only brother,
which left her the heiress to the combined
territories of Castile and Aragon. Ten years
after their marriage, Prince Philip died and
his wife Joanna was adjudged insane. The
hereditary claims of both were thus left to

from Maximilian I — TYROL, AUSTRIA, STYRIA, CARINTHIA, CARNIOLA

from Mary of Burgundy — NETHERLANDS, LUXEMBOURG, FRANCHE COMTÉ

from Ferdinand and Isabella — Baleares, Naples, SARDINIA, SICILY, Malta

Empire of Charles V — POMERANIA, BRANDENBURG, SAXONY, SILESIA, BOHEMIA, BAVARIA, Rhine, SWITZ., SAVOY, VENETIA, Danube R., boundary of the Holy Roman Empire, Naples
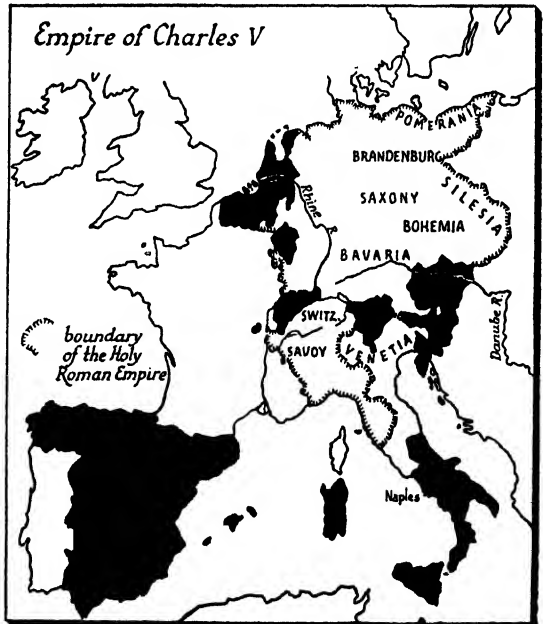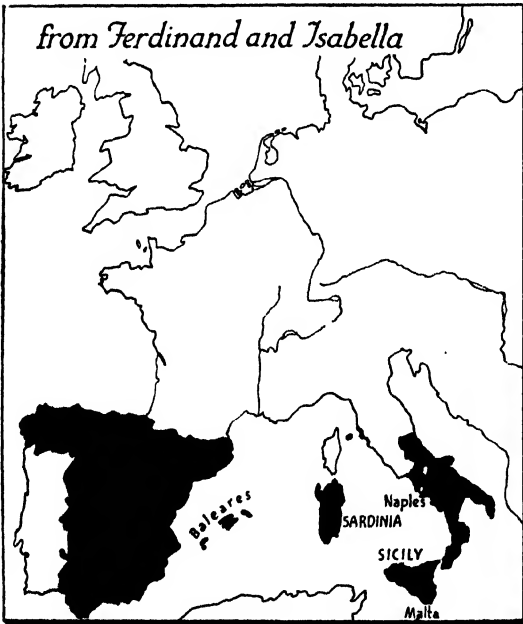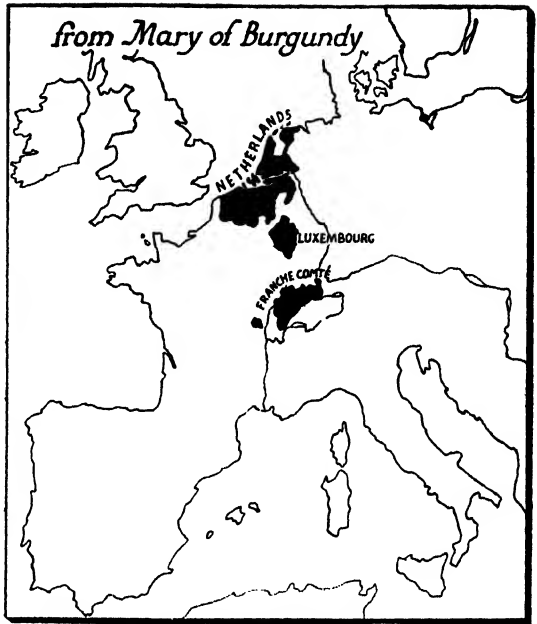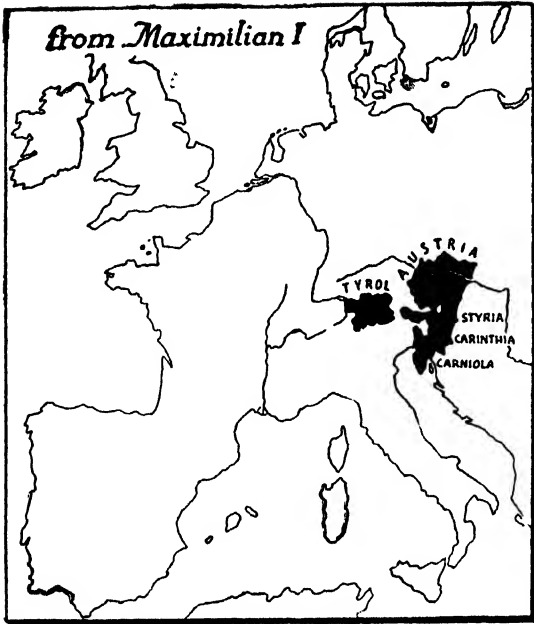
THE HERITAGE OF CHARLES V

their six-year-old son Charles, who immediately took over his father's Burgundian states. With the death of his maternal grandfather Ferdinand in 1516, the young Charles also inherited the united kingdom of Spain, plus the Aragonese kingdoms of Sardinia, Sicily, and Naples, and the Castilian claims staked out by Columbus and other explorers to the new world of the Americas. When, in 1519, his paternal grandfather Maximilian died, Charles added to these the hereditary Hapsburg lands in Germany, which included the duchy of Austria and the adjacent duchies of Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola and the county of Tyrol. In that same year he was elected emperor as Charles V, and thereby gained the imperial rights of government, such as they were, over all of Germany and northern Italy. With this vast accumulation of Burgundian, Spanish, Austrian, and imperial lands, Charles V, at the age of nineteen, became the ruler of a larger territory than had been collected under one monarch since the break-up of Charlemagne's empire.[1]

5. EXPANSION OF THE EUROPEAN HORIZON BY EXPLORATION

In this last part of the transitional period between the High Middle Ages and the beginnings of modern times, while the states of Europe were consolidating under the impulsion of economic forces to form strongly centralized units, the cupidity and economic rivalry of those states caused an eager search for new trade routes that resulted in a vast expansion of the horizon of Europe. Not only new trade routes but new lands were discovered, and a new world was opened up to European exploitation. The beginning of the modern age in Europe coincides with the beginning of the modern world.

What knowledge medieval Europe possessed of the world outside its narrow borders it had inherited mostly from ancient Greek geographers. This fund of information had been preserved and augmented by generations of Saracen scholars until the people of Latin Christendom

Early geographical knowledge

[1] See map, page 394, and genealogical table, page xvii.

were prepared to take it over. But if the Saracens preserved the knowledge of Ptolemy, they preserved also many of his errors and ingenious guesses, including his calculation, much too small, of the size of the world. Their maps, which represented the tropical portion of Africa as an uninhabitable land of burning heat surrounded by boiling water and the Atlantic as an impassable sea of darkness, did as much to hinder as to help further exploration, though they were fairly accurate in their description of lands already known. Europe, northern Africa, western Asia, and the lands bordering on the Indian Ocean were shown fairly clearly. Much as the Moslems had done for the science of geography, however, the first great addition to western knowledge of the world during the Middle Ages was made by Christian explorers, who pressed eastward overland until they reached the rich and populous countries of the distant East.

Of these the most important were three members of an enterprising Venetian merchant family. In 1271, Nicolo and Matteo Polo, who had already traded in the western portion of the great Tartar Empire that covered all central Asia as well as eastern Europe, set out on a second expedition to the East. This time they took with them Nicolo's young son Marco, and they did not stop in the western lands of the Golden Horde. Instead, they pressed on through central Asia until they arrived at the court of the Tartar emperor, Kublai Khan, in the Chinese city of Pekin. They were kindly received and were given positions of honor in the Tartar government. Marco, especially, became a favorite of the great khan and was sent on numerous expeditions to almost every part of the Tartar Empire. For seventeen years he remained in the khan's service, visiting lands unknown to Europeans before his time and traveling roads where no European was to follow him until the nineteenth century. At last, wearied of exile, the Polos returned home, traveling this time by water around the eastern and southern coasts of Asia to India and thence by land to the Mediterranean.

After his return, Marco Polo published his famous memoirs. His account of what he

Marco Polo

had actually seen is amazingly accurate,
though to his contemporaries it
seemed the wildest exaggera-
tion. Still, if only a part of what
"Marco of the millions" recounted were
true, there was in the East wealth such as
Europe had never dreamed of, and held,
moreover, by a people who loved the arts of
peace more than war. To Europeans, poor
and warlike, Cathay (China) became the
promised land of unbelievable wealth, an
easy prey if only it could be reached, or at
any rate the source of a fabulously rich
trade. And aside from Marco Polo's story,
the West had already ample evidence of the
rich possibilities of the eastern trade. The
trade in pepper, cinnamon, and other spices,
which were so highly valued in an age when
artificial means of preserving food were rare,
in silk, precious stones and woods, etc., all
luxury commodities that brought a very
high price in proportion to their bulk and
weight, had helped to found the fortunes of
Venice, Genoa, and Pisa. But the Italians
could not trade directly with the producers
of these commodities. The Moslem middle-
men, who commanded the land and water
routes between India, where they met mer-
chants from China and the Spice Islands,
and the Mediterranean, took the lion's share
of the profits. The long overland route
through central Asia was impractical for
regular trade. Was there not some other
way of getting to India and China, a direct
route by water that would enable western
merchants to sail directly to the source of
eastern wealth?

It was the hope of finding such a route,
either by sailing south around Africa or west
to the coast of Asia, which was
believed to be much less distant
than it was, that inspired daring
Portuguese, Spanish, French,
and English seamen of the fifteenth century,
and even earlier, to set out on perilous voy-
ages of exploration into the unknown At-
lantic. Fear of the Atlantic was ingrained in
the minds of European sailors, accustomed
as they were only to coasting voyages,
though by the end of the Middle Ages the
use of the magnetic compass as a guide in the
open sea was generally known. Exploring

The lure of the East

Search for a new route to the East

voyages were expensive as well as hazardous,
and for a long time they brought few results.
Small wonder that progress was very slow.
Had it not been for the authority of the
great state governments, backed by the
capital and the demands of the merchant
class, the age of discovery might have been
postponed indefinitely. It is doubtful, in-
deed, if it could have been achieved by the
medieval system of guild and city economy.
That discovery followed the rise of the cen-
tralized states and of the beginnings of capi-
talism was no coincidence; nor was it coin-
cidence that the explorations were nearly all
sponsored by the states along the Atlantic
seaboard. For the people who faced the At-
lantic felt the need of a new route to the
East more keenly than the Italians, who
were on the whole well enough content with
their existing monopoly of the eastern trade,
second-hand though it was.

The little kingdom of Portugal, situated
at the southwest tip of Europe, took the lead
in fifteenth-century exploration
of the African coast and of the
neighboring islands of the At-
lantic. They were not the first
to set out, but they were the most persistent,
thanks in large part to the intelligent direc-
tion and unflagging enthusiasm of a prince
of the royal family, Henry "the Navigator,"
who for more than forty years prior to his
death in 1460 devoted himself to the en-
couragement of exploration. Henry's mo-
tives were a strange mixture of scientific curi-
osity, crusading zeal, and national ambition.
Some of his ideas, such as his hope of reach-
ing the upper Nile from the western coast by
way of the Senegal River and thus outflank-
ing the Moslems in North Africa, proved
erroneous. Nevertheless, his explorers a-
chieved important results. Before his death
they had founded permanent settlements in
the islands of Madeira and the Azores, had
set up a regular trade, partly in slaves, with
the Guinea coast, which so far as is known
had never before been reached by water, and
were already pushing farther south. The
sure profits of the Guinea trade, however,
tended to keep explorers from going farther,
and twenty-six years passed before the first
Portuguese ship, commanded by Bartolomeo

Portuguese sail around Africa
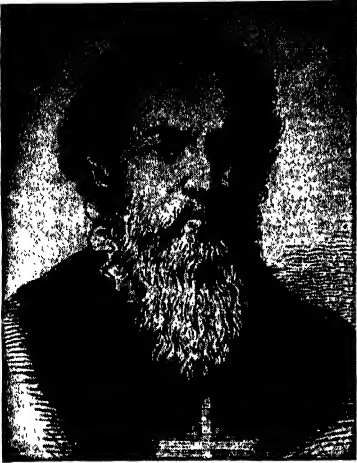
HENRY THE NAVIGATOR   CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS   VASCO DA GAMA
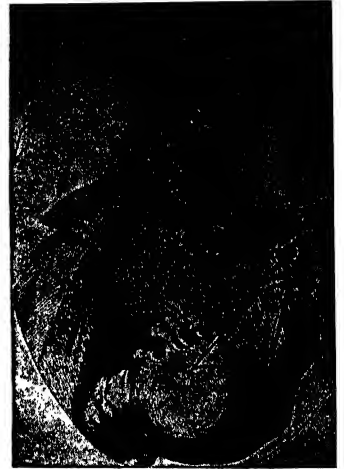
THE POLO FAMILY ON THEIR WAY TO CHINA

The scene above is from an illumination in the Catalan Atlas of 1574.

THE GREAT EXPLORERS

Diaz, rounded the southern extremity of Africa in 1486. The way to India was now open, and in 1498 a Portuguese fleet under Vasco da Gama sailed into the Indian harbor of Calicut.

Having at last arrived at the long-awaited goal, the Portuguese threw themselves with the utmost enthusiasm into the development of the new commerce. They did not establish themselves, however, without a bloody struggle with the Moslem traders who had hitherto enjoyed a monopoly of commerce in the Indian Ocean. The tale of Portuguese conquest of Indian trade is one of terrible bloodshed and brutal atrocities. Under the viceroy, Albuquerque (1509–15), the Moslem merchants were driven out of the Indian waters and permanent trading posts were established on the Malabar (western) coast of India and at Malacca on the Malay Straits. The latter served as a receiving-point for the spices from the islands of the East Indies and for the Chinese trade. The profits accruing from the new commerce were immense, and for a time Portugal became one of the great powers of Europe. The direct water route was cheaper than the old Moslem-Venetian route overland and through the Mediterranean, and the profits did not have to be split. Venice could not compete and gradually declined, never to recover.

Portuguese trade with India

In the meantime, while the Portuguese were still feeling their way down the African coast, other explorers were following the lure of the East out across the open Atlantic. The ancient error of the Greek geographers in underestimating the size of the world was still accepted. There were encouraging legends, too, of islands midway in the Atlantic that would serve as stepping-stones across the sea. Since they knew nothing of the two continents that barred the way (for the discovery of America by the Northmen had been long since forgotten), the explorers who sailed straight west into the Atlantic had every reason to believe that they were on the shortest and most convenient route to China or India. There was nothing novel in the plans of the Genoese captain, Christopher

Discovery of America

Columbus, who sailed westward with a charter from the Spanish government in 1492, except his determination to sail straight on till he encountered land, instead of turning back as his predecessors had done to look for the mythical islands of the Atlantic. The result of Columbus's epoch-making voyage is known to every schoolboy. Having touched the islands of the Greater Antilles, he returned with the assurance that he had found India. Later explorations brought disillusionment. In the next few years, Spanish explorers coasted the mainland from Florida to Brazil and found it to be an impassable barrier.

Despite their disappointment at not reaching the East, the Spanish adventurers settled down to the conquest and exploitation of the lands they had found. This process was accompanied by the most frightful cruelty to the helpless natives. Yet for all their brutal exploitation of the natives, the Spaniards found in the islands where they first settled no great or sudden wealth, though the colonies they founded proved permanently valuable. It was not till they reached Mexico that their dream of finding El Dorado was realized. The conquest of the Aztecs of Mexico by Hernando Cortez and a small Spanish force in 1519 brought to light a store of gold and silver such as no European had ever seen before. A few years later, a handful of Spaniards under Francisco Pizarro began the conquest of Peru, where they took from the peaceful Incas quantities of gold and silver that surpassed even the riches of Mexico. The importation of gold and silver from the New World into Spain, from whence it eventually circulated to other countries, revolutionized the economic state of Europe. The amount of money in circulation was greatly increased; as gold and silver became more common, prices rose in proportion; and the opportunities for the accumulation of capital became much greater. As for Spain, it became the leading power in Europe on the strength of its sudden wealth.

Spanish conquests in New World

The Spanish government, meanwhile, had not given up all hope of establishing direct contact with the East and of cutting in on

Portuguese Explorations

Spanish Explorations

English ■ and ■ French Explorations
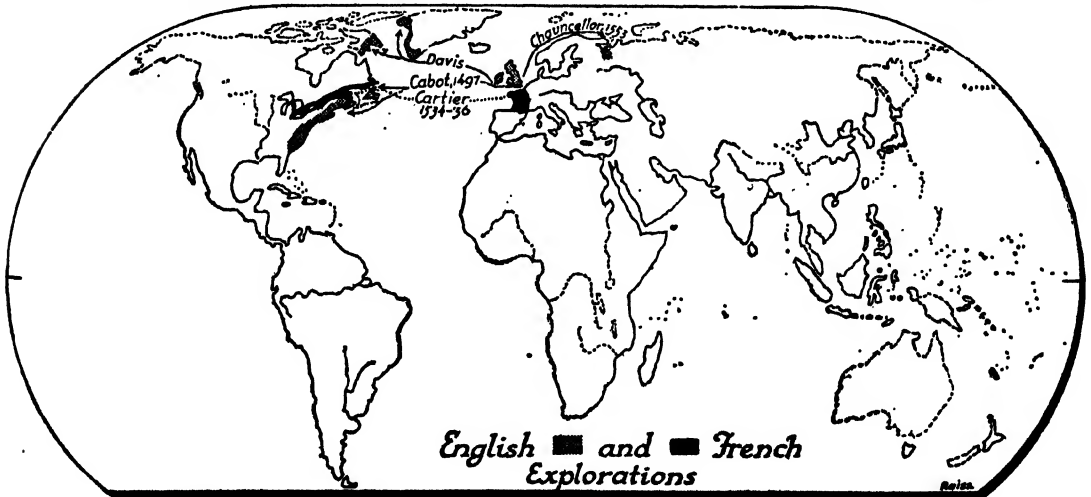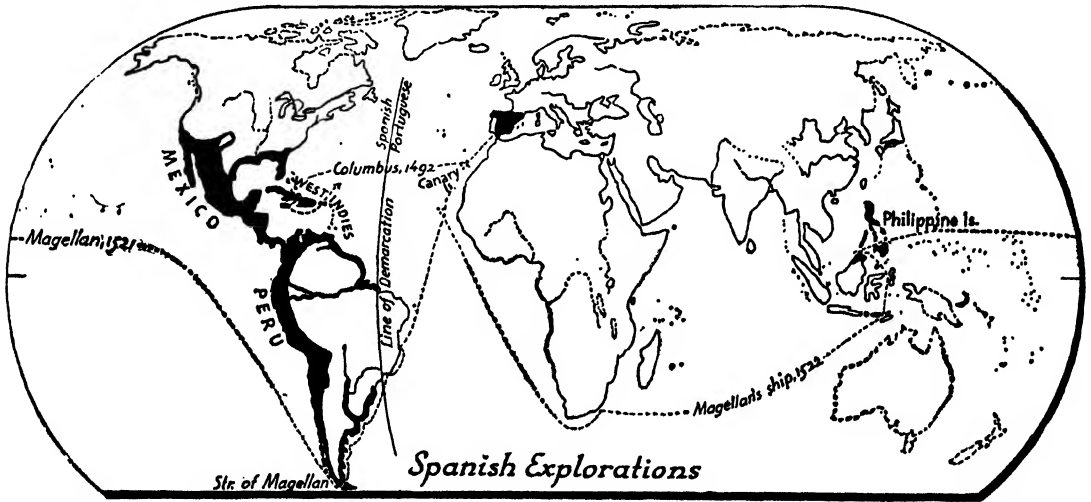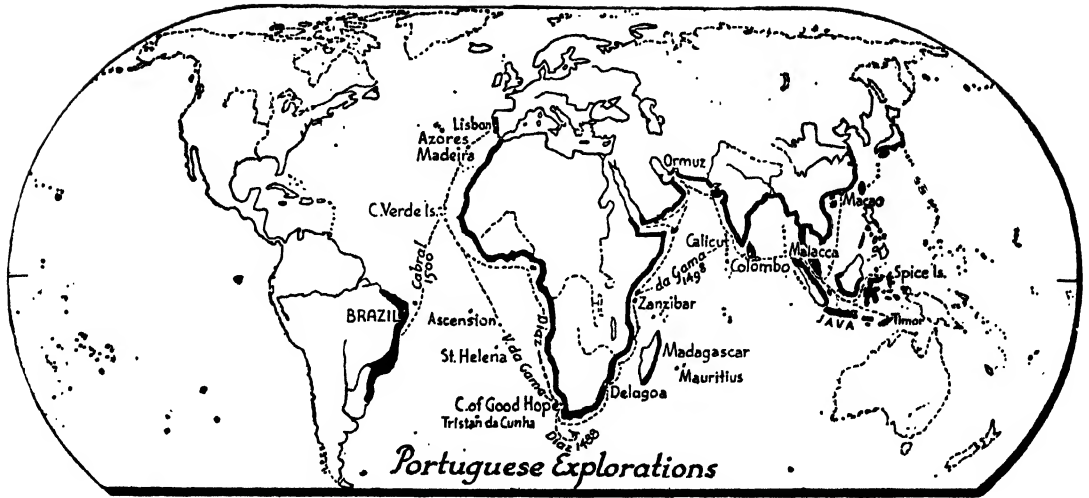
EXPLORATIONS OF THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES

the Portuguese trade with the Spice Islands. Spanish-Portuguese rivalry dates back to the beginning of the discoveries. As early as 1493, Pope Alexander VI had divided the new-found lands into two hemispheres, assigning to Spain all lands lying west of a line drawn three hundred and seventy leagues to the west of the Azores and to Portugal those east of that line.[1] One of the first results of this demarcation was that Portugal claimed Brazil — which was touched on by the Portuguese captain Cabral in 1500 on his way to India — as extending to the east of the line. The division also caused a dispute as to whether the East Indies were in the eastern or western hemispheres. It was to settle this dispute and to find, if possible, a western route to the East that the Spanish government sent out an expedition of five ships in 1519 to sail around South America. The expedition was commanded by a Portuguese noble, Ferdinand Magellan, who had sailed with his countrymen to the East, but had since entered the service of Spain. It was a long and hazardous voyage, one of the most daring as well as one of the most important of all the explorations. After following the eastern coast of South America to its southern tip, Magellan passed through the dangerous straits that

Circumnavigation of the globe

[1] See map, page 399.

are still called by his name and struck out into the southern Pacific. Three terrible months passed before he sighted inhabited islands, the Ladrones. Magellan himself was killed a little later in a fight with natives of the Philippines, but what was left of his crew went on with their one remaining ship. In September, 1522, their number now reduced to eighteen, they arrived home, the first men to have sailed completely around the world. They had removed the last great uncertainty regarding the nature of the earth.

The kings of England and France were as eager as their southern neighbors to find a route to the lands of spices and gold, but they had less immediate success. As early as 1497, Henry VII sent out a Genoese captain, called by the English John Cabot, who touched the borders of the New World at Cape Breton and Labrador. Other explorers, both English and French, followed, but found little that seemed worth while, save the Newfoundland fisheries which proved a steady source of wealth. The vain search for a northwest passage to China continued throughout the sixteenth century. It was not till the following century, however, that France and England began to utilize the North American land they had found by establishing colonies that were to form the basis of great colonial empires.

French and English explorers

SECTION F

The Reformation
and the Wars of Religion

(c. 1517 — c. 1660)

In the first two decades of the sixteenth century, the transition from the medieval to the modern world was nearing completion. Feudalism had lost most of its independent political significance and the centralized territorial states were almost full grown. The corporate economic life of the High Middle Ages had almost disappeared, though the modern form of individual capital was not yet fully developed. The church still held the allegiance of all western Europe, but it was no longer the dominating institution that it had been in the twelfth or thirteenth century. Even that intellectual and artistic efflorescence that glorified the age of transition and which we call the Renaissance was passing its peak. Europe was again about to enter upon a new era with new problems. At the close of the second decade of the sixteenth century, two events signalized the nature of the coming age and revealed the problems that would most concern the people of Europe for the next century and a half. In 1517, Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five theses on the church door at Wittenberg, and thereby set in motion the forces that were to break up the universal church into warring sects and to make religious controversy the focal center for political rivalries, economic and social discontents, and intellectual activity. Two years later, Charles V was elected Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, thus completing the accumulation of territory which brought the greater part of Europe under the rule of the house of Hapsburg and precipitating a century and a half of dynastic wars. Because of the dominating part played by the religious revolution and religious rivalry, we have called the period from about 1519 to 1660 the age of the Reformation and the Wars of Religion. But it was also an age of frequent dynastic wars; it witnessed the development of modern forms of state government and many modern forms of culture; and it saw the most important stages of that economic revolution which made capitalism the dominant factor in modern economic life.

28

The Reformation and the Founding of the Protestant Churches

(1517–55)

EUROPE was a very different place in the early years of the sixteenth century from what it had been in the thirteenth. In the intervening years the most characteristically medieval aspects of European civilization had disappeared or were rapidly disappearing, and modern society had begun to take recognizable shape. Yet one medieval institution, and that the greatest of all, still stood, unchanged in form though considerably shaken and with alarming fissures appearing here and there in its once solid masonry. The real unity of Western Christendom had been broken up; yet the Roman Church still maintained its traditional place as the embodiment of all religion in western Europe; the papacy still kept alive its claims to universal sovereignty, and the clergy still exercised their monopoly over the means of salvation. The church, it is true, had changed in some respects since the thirteenth century, but not as a rule in ways that made it a more satisfactory minister to the needs of the new age. Nothing could be more certain in this age of rapid change than that some of the people at least would demand changes in their religious life to fit the changes in their worldly existence. And such changes could not be effected without extensive changes in the church; for in that age religion was inseparable from the church,

just as the church was inseparable from the state and society. The most devout churchmen recognized that a reform of the church was necessary and hoped to bring it about in ways that would leave the outward structure intact. They were too late. Before they could accomplish anything, the explosive forces of the new nationalism, the new ethical and moral interests of the bourgeois class and the new humanistic piety, combined with old grievances against Rome and discontent with the clerical system, were ignited by the fiery preaching of Martin Luther, and the resulting explosion split the unity of the ancient church beyond all hope of rebuilding. What occurred was in reality a religious revolution, and it is this revolution that is generally referred to by historians as the Protestant Reformation, or simply the Reformation.

1. CAUSES OF THE REFORMATION

The immediate acceptance of Luther's revolutionary doctrine by all kinds of people in all parts of northern Europe is sufficient proof that those who welcomed the new movement did so for a wide variety of reasons. No such spontaneous reaction of popular sentiment could have sprung from any single cause or have been inspired by a single motive. We must look for the causes

of the Reformation, then, in the economic, political, social, and cultural, as well as religious, background of the age. These various causes have already been mentioned and explained in previous chapters. Here we can give only a brief summary to gather them together and to indicate their bearing on the problem of the Reformation.

The most obvious cause of the Reformation was the necessity of reforming abuses in the church, a necessity that had **Abuses in the church** been widely recognized for the past two centuries or more, without much being done about it. The wealth and temporal power of the church; the special jurisdiction of ecclesiastical and papal courts; the appointment of foreign papal favorites to high ecclesiastical offices; the avarice, carelessness, ignorance, and immorality of some of the clergy; the evils of simony and the financial exactions of the papacy — all these served to arouse a strong feeling of discontent with the church as it was, particularly when they bore heavily on the purses of the laity.

Still the fact that there were abuses in the church would not in itself have caused such a widespread revolt from the **Influence of earlier reformers** Roman communion as took place in the Reformation. The need for reform was no greater when Luther nailed his theses on the church door at Wittenberg than in the days of William of Occam, Marsiglio, Wyclif, and Huss. Yet these earlier reformers failed, while Luther succeeded. Why? Aside from the fact that Luther provided a more satisfactory theological formula to justify revolt, it is clear that in the meantime conditions had changed so that more people were prepared to break with the church than before. The early critics of the church and the papacy had been voices crying in the wilderness. They had propounded many of the ideas later asserted by Luther, but they had secured only a relatively small following because the time was not yet ripe. They had not labored entirely in vain, however, for among the factors that prepared the way for the success of the Reformation the memory of their teaching, never wholly forgotten, must be given a prominent place.

The sacramental system was the rock upon which the early revolts against the authority of the church had foundered. **Revolt from the sacramental system** However much men might feel the need of reform, they felt still more keenly the need of those services that only the clergy could perform. When, more than a century after Wyclif and Huss, Luther reasserted their doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, one of the important reasons for his success was that in the meantime certain religious and social developments had combined to make a good many men less ready to admit dependence on the priests and the sacraments for their salvation. In Germany and the Netherlands, the mystics, whom we have already noted,[1] had preached an inner piety, a religion that consisted chiefly of an immediate communion between man and God and left little room for the mediation of a priest. During that time, too, in the cities where the seeds of both the Renaissance and the Reformation found their most fertile soil, the growing education, individualism and self-reliance of the prosperous middle class tended to make them resent the necessity of depending for their salvation on the ministration of the priests. This tendency to rebel against the church's most fundamental belief was more dangerous to it than any amount of criticism of abuses in the clerical system.

In other ways the changing spirit of the new age was causing men, especially of the bourgeois class, to lose interest in the beliefs, ideals, and traditions of the medieval church. **Changing spirit of the age** The medieval ideal of the truly religious life, as embodied in monasticism, had stressed poverty, asceticism, and otherworldliness as among the prime virtues. But with increasing prosperity, money was playing a much more important part in men's lives, and by the beginning of the sixteenth century the age in which Saint Francis of Assisi had sung the praises of his Lady Poverty and had enrolled enthusiastic recruits in her service had long since passed. Practical business men had begun to think of poverty as a social evil rather than as a saintly virtue.

[1] See above, pages 377–380.

Other-worldliness made small appeal to men absorbed in the business of this world, and asceticism had few charms for the hard-working burgher who looked forward soberly to an old age spent in quiet enjoyment of the results of honest trade. Next to monasticism the strongest force in shaping the spirit as well as the form of the medieval church had been feudalism. And as feudalism lost vitality, the medieval church lost the social atmosphere that had been most congenial to it. To the middle class of city dwellers especially, whose temper was to shape the interests of the new age, the chivalric-feudal spirit of the crusading era which was also the great age of the medieval church had very little appeal. Saint Louis was no more akin to them than was Saint Francis. The elaborate and colorful ritual of the Catholic Church rather jarred on their sober minds. In some vague way, very difficult to express, they felt it to be more suited to the gilded and extravagant society of the feudal nobility than to their own business-like world. Added to that, of course, was the economic fact that the church conferred solid benefits upon the great nobles, whose sons became bishops, whereas the economic relations of the bourgeoisie with the church represented an unfavorable balance of trade.

But for the present we are discussing the failing appeal of the ideals of the medieval church, and in that connection one further factor must be noted. The saints themselves were losing something of their appeal to the popular imagination. Not only were the ideals they represented losing conviction, but the number of saints on the calendar had grown too great for the proper observance of saints' days, and their relics had been too freely peddled about the country. Perhaps they had grown too familiar to be given the respect formerly accorded them. Certainly, no feature of church practice was dropped with less resistance during the Reformation than the veneration of the saints.

The intellectual basis for the revolt against medievalism in the church was provided by the Christian humanists.[1] **Influence of humanists** Whole-heartedly devoted to the study of antiquity, they had

[1] See above, pages 382-383.

learned to despise medieval traditions as products of "Gothic" barbarism. Erasmus was not the only one of them who ridiculed pilgrimages, the veneration of the saints, the supernatural power of relics, the practices of monasticism, and the temporal power of the papacy, on the ground that these things were not part of original Christianity. It was the humanist emphasis on the literal study and reinterpretation of the Bible from original sources that gave Luther his most potent weapon. It was a commonplace among the enemies of the Reformation that Erasmus had laid the egg which Luther hatched.

Among the other causes of the Reformation, the interests of the state governments and the strength of national opposition to papal authority must not be forgotten. Indeed, few if any of the changes that **National opposition to Rome** had taken place in the preceding century did more to make the break with Rome politically possible than the development of the centralized territorial states and the growth of national consciousness which we have noted in the last two chapters. As these grew stronger, both prince and people resented more and more keenly the payment of taxes to an Italian prince, the appeal of cases from the national courts to the papal court at Rome, and the interference of a foreign power in their national affairs. This was particularly true in England, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries, where the rulers had not secured such control of the national church before the Reformation as had the kings of France and Spain. The opportunity presented to the kings and princes of these countries to gain complete control of the church in their states, as well as the financial advantages that would result from the stoppage of papal taxation and from the confiscation of church lands, was a strong inducement to them to embrace the Reformation movement. Without the help of the secular governments, it is doubtful if the new churches could have been securely established in many of the northern states.

2. LUTHER AND THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY

By the second decade of the sixteenth cen-
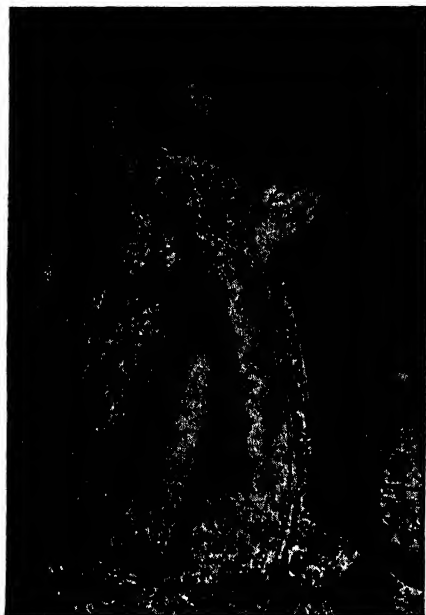
ALEXANDER VI
1492–1503

*The worldly and ill-famed Borgia helped
to give the papacy a bad reputation.*
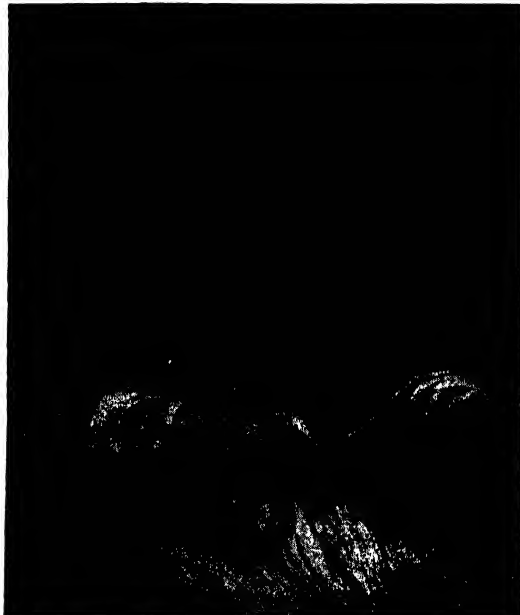
JULIUS II
1503–1513

*Raphael's portrait gives a magnificent
impression of the old fighting pope.*
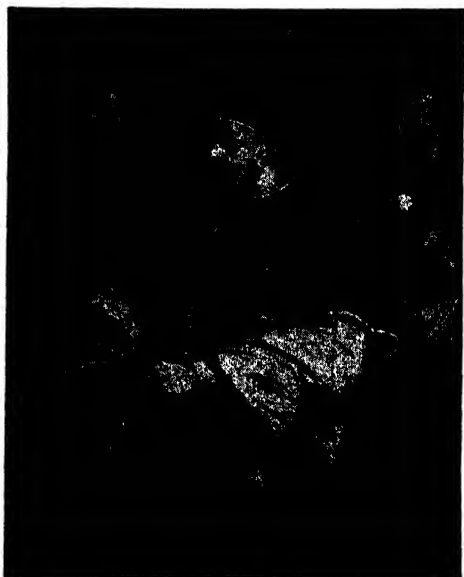
LEO X
1513–1521

*The first Medici Pope was less violent,
more cultured than his two predecessors,
but scarcely less worldly.*

CLEMENT VII
1523–1535

*The second Medici Pope, who had to meet
the full shock of the Reformation, is
shown here as a young man.*

POPES OF LUTHER'S TIME

tury, Germany was ready for a religious

Martin Luther revolution. All that was needed was a leader who would unite men of varied interests and show them the way. That leader was Martin Luther (1483–1546). In his ringing phrases the inarticulate discontent with things as they were and blind gropings for a more satisfactory religious life found expression. And in his doctrine of salvation by faith alone, all who were ready to rebel against the authority of the church found for the first time a justification for revolt that carried conviction to their consciences. Luther did not cause the Reformation; but he gave the signal for its start and shaped its course. So far as any man can, Luther influenced the history of his age.

Luther's parents were Saxon peasant folk, stern, hard-working, and pious, somewhat

Early years better off than the average, for they were able to give their son an excellent education. In 1501, at the age of eighteen, young Martin entered the famous Saxon university at Erfurt. There for four years he studied the Nominalist philosophy that still dominated the old school, but he also read the classics and talked to the enthusiastic group of young humanists who were known as the "Erfurt poets." Having completed his course in the faculty of arts, Martin began the study of law in accordance with the wishes of his practical father. Almost immediately, however, he changed his mind and entered the local monastery of the order of Augustinian Eremites. Two years later he was ordained priest, and in 1508 was moved to the house of his order at Wittenberg to teach in the new university recently founded there by the Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise. There followed nine years of outwardly peaceful academic activity, during which Luther lectured to students, preached in the castle church, and began to acquire a considerable local reputation. But quiet though they seemed, they were years of mental turmoil for the young monk, until the discovery of the doctrine of faith brought peace to his soul, and, before long, strife to all Christendom.

Since his entry into the monastery, Luther had been tormented by the fear that nothing he could do would be sufficient to merit salvation. Indeed, it was this fear

Justification by faith that caused his sudden decision to become a monk, to the disappointment of his father and the astonishment of his fellow students. He had carried with him from the peasant environment of his childhood a conception of God as a stern, unforgiving judge, and he had accepted the current teaching of the church that salvation depended on "good works," which included the sacraments, prayer, fasting, and, if one would be sure, the ascetic practices of monasticism. But though he devoted himself to an excessive asceticism, he still found no assurance that he had merited salvation. His reading of Saint Augustine further shook his faith in his own efforts by the suggestion that only those who are predestined to receive divine grace will be saved. And who can know that he is among those chosen? The answer to all his problems came to him suddenly about the year 1515, from the reading of a verse in Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans on which he was lecturing to the university students. It contained the phrase, "The just shall live by faith." He had often read it before, but now he saw in it a new meaning — that man may be justified, i.e., saved, by faith and by faith *alone*. Doubtless only those predestined for salvation would be given faith; but to possess faith, which is the means of salvation, is also to possess the conviction that one will be saved. It took some time for Luther to work out all the logical consequences of his doctrine, for he was not essentially a systematic thinker. Eventually, however, he was forced to the conviction that, if faith alone was needed for salvation, then the good works of the church, fasts, pilgrimages, and even the sacraments, were unnecessary, and that no man was dependent upon the services of pope or priest for his salvation.

With these ideas running through his mind, it was inevitable that Luther should begin to criticize some of the

Indulgences practices of the church arising from the doctrine of good works. As it happened, the question that first aroused him to open protest was that represented by the papal indulgence proclaimed by Pope Leo X

to obtain money for the building of Saint Peter's Church in Rome. The granting of indulgences had been a common practice in the church for more than two centuries. It was an integral part of the church's scheme of salvation and had become an important source of papal revenue. In theory it was an elaboration of the penitential system, the origins of which date back to the early days of the church. Following confession and proof of contrition, the sinner received absolution for his sins through the sacrament of penance. He was then free from the guilt of sin and the fear of eternal damnation. But he still owed further atonement in the form of penance or punishment in this world and, after death, in purgatory. The first indulgences or remissions of further penance were granted by the popes, acting as the successors of Saint Peter, to the crusaders. Later, pilgrimages or other good works were substituted, until in the fourteenth century the Avignonese popes set the precedent of accepting money payments as constituting the major part of the necessary good works.

To Luther, however, convinced that faith alone could save men from the results of sin,

The ninety-five theses

it now seemed clear that indulgences were not only useless but actually harmful, since thereby men were encouraged to put their trust in something that could be of no help to them. He felt bound, therefore, to issue a warning to his people. As the simplest method of securing a hearing, he prepared a list of ninety-five theses or propositions on the subject, which he announced his willingness to defend in public debate. Following the usual academic practice, he posted these theses on the church door where all could read them, and awaited developments. To his surprise the theses aroused a perfect furor of interest. They were soon printed and circulated all over Germany. That they carried conviction to their readers was attested by a sharp decline in the sale of indulgences.

In 1517, Luther had no thought of breaking away from the ancient church, but the

Luther drifts from the church

next three years saw him forced step by step farther from it. In order to meet the arguments of the papal legates who were sent to demand

that he recant and of the orthodox theologian, John Eck, who engaged him in public debate at Leipzig in the summer of 1519, he had to work out his ideas to their ultimate conclusion. Almost against his will, for he had a natural respect for authority, the Wittenberg monk was forced to realize that his beliefs were contrary to many of those held by the church and that there was no place for him within the Roman communion. He had found in the Bible, however, as he interpreted it, a firm support for his convictions, and resting on that divinely inspired authority he confidently defied the authority of the pope.

Leo X was delayed in taking decisive action against Luther by what seemed to him the more important business of the imperial election in 1519.

The pamphlets of 1520

This hotly disputed election worked doubly to the advantage of Luther, for his prince, Frederick the Wise, was able to secure from Charles V, as the price of his support, a promise that the rebellious friar should not be condemned without a hearing before the imperial Diet. This meant further delay, and Luther used the time to good effect by writing a series of pamphlets with a view to publicizing his beliefs and winning the support of the German people. He was amazingly successful. The *Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation on the Improvement of the Christian Estate* was a stirring appeal to German patriotism against the tyranny of Rome. In it he called on the German princes to reform the church and outlined a comprehensive program. This popular pamphlet was followed by the *Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, a more scholarly exposition of his views on the sacramental and sacerdotal system. A third pamphlet, *The Liberty of a Christian Man*, explained in popular fashion for the common man the practical bearings of his doctrine.

When at last the summons came calling Luther to appear before the Diet of the empire at Worms in the spring of 1521, he went with the assurance that he had the sympathy

Luther at Worms

at least of the majority of the German people. He was at the height of his popularity. All who nursed grievances against the church

MARTIN LUTHER (1483–1546)

This portrait shows the German Reformer in the years just after the Diet of Worms. In the full strength of early middle age, his strong peasant face indicates something of the forceful character that lay behind it.
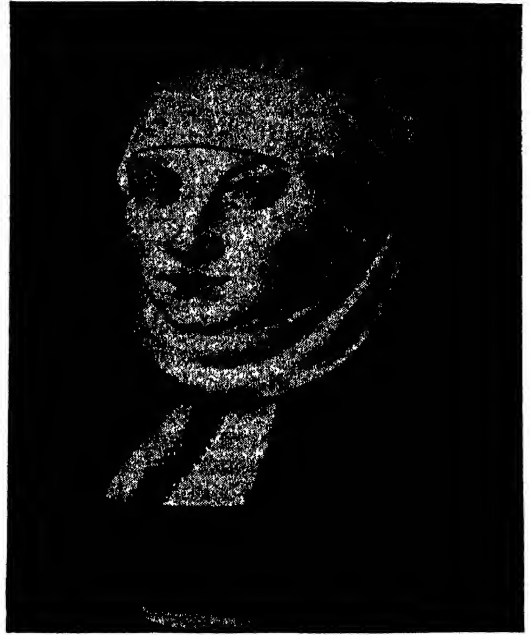
CATHERINE LUTHER

Luther's wife, the former Catherine von Bora, as she appeared in 1526 shortly after her marriage. The painting by Lucas Cranach was done at the same time as that of Luther opposite.

A SATIRICAL PICTURE OF THE SALE OF INDULGENCES

This contemporary wood-cut is a satire on the methods of the indulgence seller, John Tetzel.

or hoped for reform wished him well, for the split in the church had not yet gone so far that it was necessary to take definite sides. Nevertheless, it took real courage to walk into the lions' den, with the fate of John Huss at Constance as a warning of what might happen. It was a dramatic moment when the Saxon peasant monk faced the assembled dignitaries of state and church and firmly refused to recant. Next day he left Worms. Within a few days he was proclaimed an excommunicated heretic by the church and an outlaw by the empire. But by that time he was safe in the lonely castle of the Wartburg, where he had been conducted by the orders of Frederick the Wise. There he passed a year in enforced leisure, which he put to good use by translating the New Testament into German. The Old Testament he translated later, completing it in 1532. As his whole program rested on the authority of the Bible against that of church tradition, it was essential for his success that the Bible should be readily accessible to the people. The importance of his German Bible can scarcely be overestimated. It has often been called the most powerful Reformation tract, and it had almost as much influence on the development of the German language as on German religion. Luther was a master of his native tongue, and his Bible played a part as important in fixing the standard of modern German as Dante's *Divine Comedy* did for the Italian.

The peaceful interlude on the Wartburg marks a turning point in Luther's career as a reformer. Hitherto he had been **The Lutheran Church** a sturdy rebel against church authority and a champion of individual liberty of conscience. He was now to become the organizer of a church of his own and an increasingly conservative defender of established authority. Returning to Wittenberg in the spring of 1522, he began at once the task of reconstruction. His first action was to moderate the extreme changes put into effect by some of his more radical followers during his absence. He then set about the business of organizing a new church on as conservative a basis as possible. In the Lutheran Church as it finally took shape, a good deal of the old

Catholic doctrine and practice was retained. Nevertheless, there were changes of vital importance. In accordance with Luther's denial of the doctrine of good works and hence of the validity of the sacramental and sacerdotal system, all of the sacraments were abolished except baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are specifically mentioned in the Bible, and even these lost their character as miraculous good works. Pilgrimages, fasts, veneration of saints and relics, and the rest of the traditional practices based on the doctrine of good works also went by the board. The clergy, no longer considered as having special sacramental powers, were permitted to marry and live the life of ordinary men. The monastic orders were entirely dissolved. Thus was broken down the barrier that had separated the clergy from the laity and had made them a separate caste with unique privileges. Finally, the church, in everything save questions of belief, was placed directly under the control of the state government. The superintendents, who replaced the former bishops, were practically state officers.

With the definite organization of a separate church, Luther lost the support of many who had sympathized with him before the Diet of Worms. **Defection of the humanists** Among these were the majority of the Christian humanists, including their leader, Erasmus. They had favored Luther's early demands for reform within the church, but were repelled by his violence and dogmatism. When the time for a final decision came, they found their loyalty to the ancient church too strong to be broken, especially as Luther's theological doctrine seemed to them no improvement on that of the old church. Erasmus was bitterly disappointed at the ruin of his hopes for a peaceful reform to be accomplished by education and without schism or turmoil, and he found it impossible to accept Luther's denial of man's free will or ability to work out his own salvation. The defection of the humanists was a serious loss to the new church, leaving it more conservative and dogmatic than ever.

The Lutheran Church was scarcely begun before it lost the support of another and more numerous class, the majority of the

German peasants and poor city workers, who were alienated by Luther's conservative attitude toward the great social revolution which swept across Germany in 1525. The Peasants' War, as it was called, was a general rising of the downtrodden peasants, frequently joined by the discontented working classes in the towns, to demand justice and relief from crushing economic and social burdens. It had been preceded by a long series of similar revolts, extending over the past two hundred years, but becoming increasingly frequent since the turn of the sixteenth century. These earlier risings, however, had been confined to limited districts or individual lordships. What made the present rebellion at once more general and more radical was that the peasants had found, in Luther's assertion that the Bible is the only real authority, a justification for revolt and a program of social reform that would unite the discontented elements of different parts of the country in a common movement. Their dream of restoring the social conditions of evangelical Christianity was impractical, but it gave the necessary religious coloring to their demands. Beginning in Swabia, the revolt spread rapidly through central and southern Germany. For a time the old order seemed seriously threatened. Luther was as much alarmed as the princes at this revolt against established authority. With a singular lack of sympathetic insight, he urged the peasants to remember the Biblical injunction to obey the magistrates. Then, when they refused to listen, he called on the princes to crush and slay the "thievish, murderous hordes of peasants." The lords needed no such encouragement. The revolt was put down with appalling savagery. The peasants and artisans sank back into a hopeless economic slavery and looked no more to Luther for guidance.

Instead, great numbers of them joined one or other of the numerous little sects which now formed as independent groups apart from both the Catholic and Lutheran churches. Luther's example had been more potent than he could have wished, especially now that he was the active head of a tri-umphant state church. In the days when he was in rebellion against the Catholic Church, he had confidently asserted the right of the individual man to interpret the Bible and religion generally in the light of his own reason and conscience. And though he later denied that right to others in practice, and though the Lutheran Church, like all other Protestant state churches, persecuted dissenting opinion, yet the ultimate sanction of Protestant belief continued to be the reason and conscience of individual men rather than the authority of a universal, apostolic church, as was true with Catholicism. As a result, Protestants in every land continued to assert the right to individual judgment in opposition to the state church, whatever it might be, and to found dissenting sects. No matter how it might organize or become established with state support, Protestantism was essentially sectarian rather than universal in character.

In Germany the sectarian revolt took a great variety of forms, with wide divergence in creed as well as in moral and social teaching. Nevertheless, they all shared a few common characteristics, and since most of them refused to recognize the validity of infant baptism and insisted on rebaptizing their converts, they were generally known as Anabaptists. They were all recruited from the submerged and downtrodden classes; they refused obedience to the state church and sometimes to the state; they founded their doctrine, whatever it might be, on a literal, unhistorical interpretation of the Bible with a view to restoring the simplicity of primitive Christianity; and they were cruelly persecuted everywhere by Catholic and Protestant states alike. Ignorant they may have been, but they were deeply pious and their history is ennobled by an inspiring record of heroic constancy in the face of persecution. Despite every effort of the persecuting state churches, they continued to exist, and their modern descendants are to be found in the Baptist, Mennonite, Moravian, and other churches.

If Lutheranism lost heavily through the defection of the humanists, the peasants, and the proletariat, that loss was compensated

by the adherence of the middle and upper classes in an increasingly large number of the German states and free cities. Within Luther's lifetime, nearly half of Germany officially adopted his church. The princes found in it a valuable support for their governments, while the burghers found in Luther's teaching a moral and ethical ideal as well as an individual spiritual life more in harmony with their character than that provided by the medieval church. The victory of Lutheranism was in part the triumph of the territorial state over the universal church, but it was also the triumph of a new lay-bourgeois ethic over the feudal-clerical-monastic ideals of the Middle Ages. It was not the least important result of the Reformation that the good citizen — the pious layman, who was a good husband and father, honest, hard-working, and thrifty — supplanted the ascetic monk or the crusading knight as the ideal Christian.

Consolidation of Lutheranism

The founding of Lutheran state churches inevitably caused grave political complications in Germany. Church and state were too closely united to admit of any degree of religious toleration. The Lutheran princes claimed the right to determine the religion of their states as Catholic rulers did, and when at the emperor's dictation, the Diet of Spires in 1529 passed a resolution denying that right, the Lutheran princes drew up a formal protest. It was from this that they came to be called Protestant, a name later applied to all non-Catholics. Shortly after this, both Lutheran and Catholic princes formed leagues for mutual protection and Germany was divided into two armed camps. Charles V was eager to restore religious unity to his empire for political as well as religious reasons, but was too busy elsewhere to bring strong pressure to bear on the heretics until 1546. He then declared war on the Protestant league, only to find that he had delayed too long. Though successful at first, he found that the new religion was too firmly established to be permanently crushed. Finally he was forced to agree to a compromise that left each prince free to make his state either Catholic or Lutheran as he

Religious war and peace

chose. This was the Religious Peace of Augsburg, signed in 1555.[1] It kept a rather uneasy peace in Germany for the rest of the century.

By this time, Lutheranism had gained nearly the whole northern half of Germany. It had also spread to the Scandinavian lands. The Reformation in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden followed much the same course as in the German states, the rulers taking the lead and establishing national churches directly under the control of the state, though here the episcopal system was retained.

Lutheranism in Scandinavia

3. ZWINGLI AND CALVIN AND THE REFORMATION IN SWITZERLAND

Luther's doctrine seems to have been peculiarly suited to the Teutonic mind. Outside of Germany and Scandinavia, pure Lutheranism never gained any permanent hold, though Luther's influence and example played a large part in the spread of the Reformation to other lands. Save in England where the Anglican Church grew up under a variety of influences, the Protestants in other countries, Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, and Scotland, to name the most important, followed the leadership of Zwingli and Calvin. The Protestant churches founded in these countries were generally known as the "Reformed Churches," to distinguish them from the Lutheran.

To the south of Germany, and closely connected with it by bonds of tradition, language, and trade, the thirteen cantons of the Swiss Confederation maintained an independent existence as the freest and most democratic states in Europe. Situated at the heart of Europe, Switzerland was in constant contact with her great neighbors, Germany, France, and Italy. Sturdy Swiss foot soldiers, the finest of their age, fought for pay in the armies of France and Italy, while the merchants of the city cantons grew rich on the trade that flowed through the Alpine passes from Italy to Germany. In the northern cities of Zürich, Basle, and Berne, Christian humanism of the northern type had taken firm root.

Zwingli's early environment

[1] See below, page 427.

Erasmus found at Basle a printer for his New Testament and a circle of congenial friends with whom he spent many of the later years of his life. It was in this stimulating intellectual atmosphere that Huldreich Zwingli (1484–1531) grew up and received his education. He entered the priesthood at about the time that Luther was taking his final vows in the monastery at Erfurt; but in the years when the German monk was seeking salvation in agony of soul, the future Swiss reformer was devoting himself to the study of the classics. He was a thorough humanist and Erasmus was his idol. It was due to his influence that Zwingli first turned to the study of evangelical Christianity, though for many years his interest in religion was fairly perfunctory.

In 1519, shortly after he had been transferred to the minster church in Zurich, **The Reformation in Zurich** Zwingli experienced a religious conversion. At the same time he began to read Luther's first pamphlets. He immediately became a reformer and preached to such good effect, appealing both to the desire for reform and the patriotic resentment of Roman domination, that he gradually won over the city council and a majority of the people to his views. In 1525, the last Catholic Mass was celebrated in Zurich. That event marked the completion of the Reformation in the canton. The "Reformed" religion, which now became the official doctrine of Zurich, was in many respects similar to Lutheranism. The sacramental system, the celibacy of the clergy, monasticism, fasts, and the veneration of saints and relics were abolished. Like Luther, Zwingli founded his teaching on the authority of the Bible, but he interpreted it more freely and with more radical results. The point on which he differed most widely from Luther was in his interpretation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which he considered merely a symbolical commemorative service, whereas Luther, though denying the miracle of the Mass, insisted on the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the elements of bread and wine. This distinction foiled all attempts at union between the two branches of Protestantism, but it was not the only

difference. Zwingli was less mystical and less absorbed in theological dogma than Luther. He was a practical reformer with much of the Erasmian conception of religion as a philosophical guide to daily life.

From Zurich the reform spread to the other city cantons and even beyond the borders of Switzerland to Strasbourg and other German cities **Spread and opposition** of the upper Rhine. The five forest or rural cantons, however, were more conservative and remained loyal to Rome. In 1529 they united in alliance with Austria to oppose the Reformation. The bitter feeling between the two religious parties soon led to open war, which ended with the defeat of Zurich, left alone to face the Catholic forces, in 1531. The Peace of Cappel, which followed, was moderate, leaving each canton free to determine its own religion, but the Reformed Church had suffered a serious loss in the death of Zwingli, who was killed in the final battle. For a time it was left leaderless, until the arrival of Calvin opened the second period of the Swiss Reformation.

John Calvin (1509–64), the new leader who did more than even Zwingli had done to form the spirit of the Reformed **Calvin** Church in Switzerland and the other countries that adopted it, was by birth and training a Frenchman. He was born of moderately well-to-do parents in Picardy and educated at the University of Paris and in the law schools of Orléans and Bourges. At Paris he received a thorough training in the classics, which left him with an excellent Latin style and may have been in part responsible for the feeling for style in handling his native tongue that made him one of the greatest masters of French prose in his century. His legal training was equally important, for to the end of his days his thought on all religious and moral questions retained a strongly legal cast. Shortly after he had completed his studies, Calvin was converted to the new doctrine of the Reformation, through reading the works of Erasmus and Luther. But France at that time was no safe place for heretics and he was forced to flee. He took refuge in the Swiss city of Basle in 1534 and there began his first theological writing.
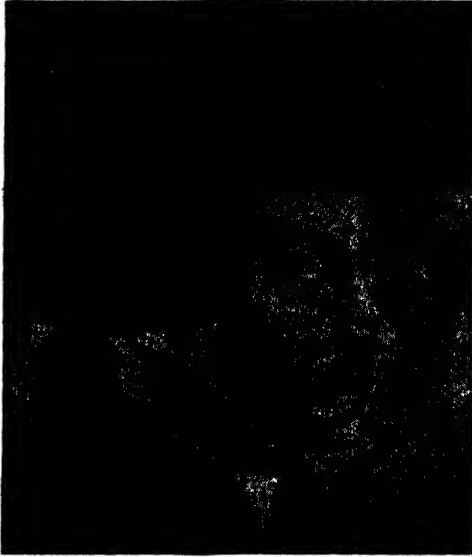
HULDREICH ZWINGLI

This portrait of the founder of the Reformation in Switzerland is from a painting by Hans Asper.
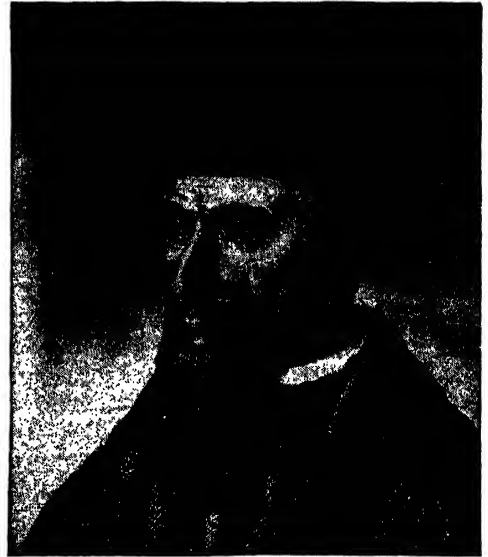
JOHN CALVIN

The grim austerity of Calvin's face was well suited to his character and creed.
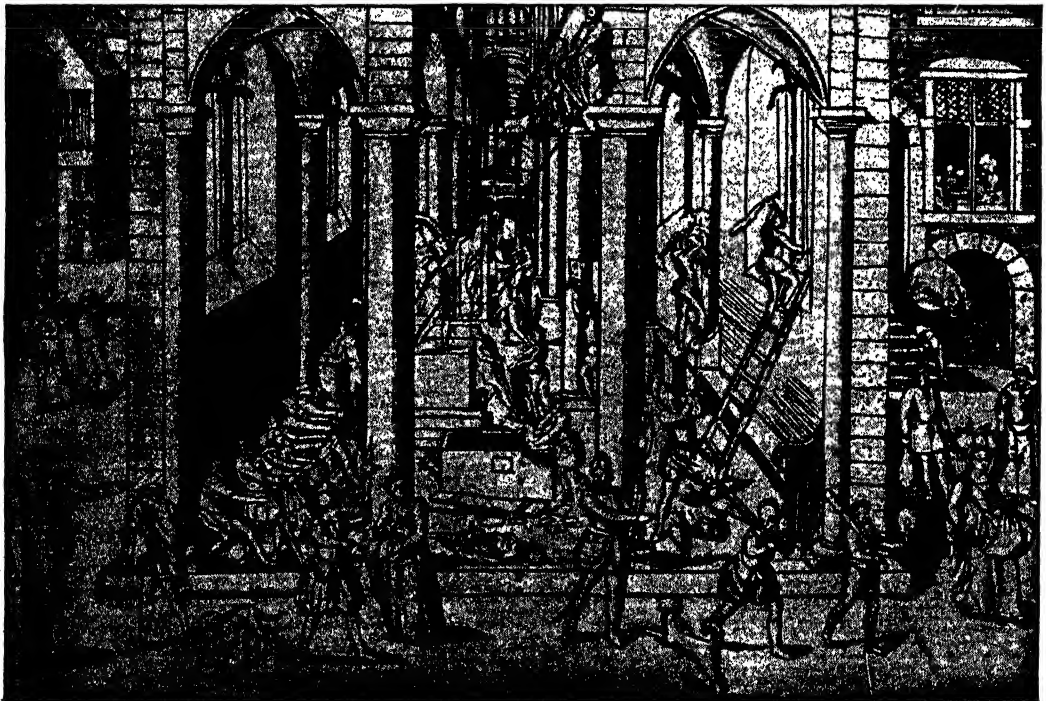
CALVINIST ICONOCLASTS IN THE NETHERLANDS

The Calvinists were opposed to the decoration of churches with pictures or images of the saints, and sometimes destroyed them.

Two years later, Calvin published the first edition of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion.* From time to time thereafter he added to it in new editions and also translated it from the original Latin into French. When finished, this work contained a complete summary of that system of theology and morals generally known as Calvinism. More than any other book it was responsible for the spread of Protestantism to the non-Lutheran countries. Its clarity of thought and remorseless logic carried conviction more unescapably than did the mystical fervor of Luther. There was little that was really original in Calvinism, for the fundamental doctrines were Luther's almost without exception, and yet the total effect was very different from Lutheranism. The chief difference, aside from the more logical and consistent development of Calvin's thought, lay in a decided shift in emphasis. Starting with the same belief in man's inability to save himself by good works, Luther placed the greatest emphasis on the saving power of faith, whereas Calvin thought much more about the majesty and power of God, who predestines certain souls for salvation and assigns the rest of mankind to hopeless damnation. Calvin's was a sterner doctrine, and its sternness was reflected in his moral teaching and legislation. He considered it the duty of the church and state to make men moral in the strictest legalistic sense. No part of his teaching had a more profound influence on the life of the Calvinist countries than this. The civilization of America to this day shows traces of the Calvinist morality brought over to these shores by the Puritan immigrants who founded the early colonies in New England.

In the emphasis on strict morality lay the one apparent logical inconsistency in Calvin's doctrine. Yet if it did not follow logically from his doctrine of predestination, it was psychologically necessary. No serious man — and Calvinism appealed essentially to serious men — contemplating the awful majesty of God and the foreordained alternatives of eternal salvation or damnation, could remain indifferent to his own fate in

eternity. And since no man could be sure that he was of the elect, and since nothing he could do of his own will could change the immutable decree of predestination, the Calvinist lived under the shadow of a terrifying uncertainty. According to all logic, the fact that he could do nothing to change his fate should have made him indifferent to his conduct in this world, but the doctrine of predestination had instead exactly the opposite effect. For it might safely be assumed that those whom God had chosen to be saved would be men who would lead good moral lives. The fact of living a strictly moral life did not prove that one was of the elect, but if one were leading an immoral life it did prove that one was not of those chosen. Hence there was at least a partial assurance in the former case, and it was a bold man who could spurn even such uncertain comfort. Further, Calvin and his followers tended to take their conceptions of God and of morality more from the Hebraic Old Testament than from the New. To the Calvinist moral laws were veritably laws, such as Jehovah had handed down to Moses on Mount Sinai, and in enforcing moral laws, including the strict observation of the Hebrew Sabbath, Calvinist rulers and ministers felt that they were carrying out the will of Jehovah. To understand the spiritual atmosphere of any Calvinist country, whether Geneva, Scotland, or New England, one must know the atmosphere of the Old Testament prophets and the Pentateuch.

The laboratory in which Calvin worked out the practical application of his doctrine was the city of Geneva. It lay in the French-speaking district on the borders of Switzerland and was not yet a fully fledged member of the Swiss Confederation when Calvin first entered it in 1536, though it was closely allied with the Protestant canton of Berne, which was supporting the Genevan citizens in their struggle for freedom from the rule of their bishop and count. The latter two, who shared the government of the city, were both members of the house of Savoy. Owing to the bishop's double authority, the rebellion against the domination of Savoy meant also rebellion against the church. The Reforma-

Calvinism

Calvinist morality

Reformation in Geneva

tion in Geneva, therefore, began partly as a political expedient. The chief Protestant preacher, William Farel, was finding grave difficulties in organizing the Reformed Church among the people who were not all converts by conviction. Such was the situation when Calvin came to Geneva for a brief visit and was commanded by Farel in the name of the Lord to stay and help him. For three years Calvin and Farel strove to organize and purify the new church, but aroused so much opposition by their unbending discipline that they were finally driven out. The new church, however, was hopelessly divided without their leadership, and in 1541 the people of Geneva begged Calvin to return on his own terms. For the remainder of his life Calvin was the real ruler of Geneva, though all opposition to him was not crushed until 1555. Under the new constitution, which Calvin helped to form, the government of Geneva was a sort of theocratic republic, with the administration of state and church so closely interwoven that it is difficult to determine which was responsible for the moral legislation that made Geneva the most moral city in Europe.

From Switzerland, Calvinism spread to other countries. In some sections of southern Germany it replaced Lutheranism, but mostly its converts were found in countries where the Lutheran reform had gained no strong foothold. The Reformation in France soon became thoroughly Calvinist, and largely through Calvin's influence it gained ground steadily, despite the royal persecution which prevented the organization of Reformed churches till about 1555. The history of the Huguenots, however, as the French Protestants were called, belongs mostly to the period of the Counter-Reformation and the religious wars in the second half of the century and will be treated more fully later. The same holds true for the Calvinist or Reformed churches in the Netherlands, Bohemia, Scotland, and such influence as Calvinism had on the Church of England. The organization of the Reformed churches in other countries, and their relation to the state, varied according to local conditions, but all showed the influence of

Spread of Calvinism

the strict moral sense and rugged spirit of the Genevan reformer.

4. THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND UNDER HENRY VIII AND EDWARD VI

In the English Reformation the same causes were present as have been noted in connection with the revolt from Rome in the continental states; but they were present in a very different ratio. National, political, and economic motives played a much more important part in the early stages of the movement in England than did religion. Under Henry VIII, little more was accomplished — or aimed at — than the transference of the political control and of the temporalities of the English Church from the pope to the king. The religious Reformation followed the political. It was not till after Henry's death that England became in any real sense Protestant.

Henry VIII was as nearly an absolute ruler as any English king ever became, and his will was the determining factor in bringing about the break with Rome at the time *Preparation for the break* when it occurred, yet Henry could never have forced his people to throw off their ancient obedience to the pope had not a great many of them been already prepared to welcome the move. National opposition to papal interference in English affairs had found bold expression from time to time since the fourteenth century. England had suffered more than most countries from the financial exactions of the papacy and from the appointment of the pope's foreign favorites to high ecclesiastical offices. The wealthy and corrupt monks and priests were no more popular in England than elsewhere. Moreover, England had been the scene of Wyclif's daring attack on the wealth and temporal power of the clergy, and though his Lollard followers had apparently been crushed, the memory of his teaching had never been entirely forgotten. The Christian humanists, too, had done their share to prepare the way for the Reformation here as on the Continent. John Colet, Sir Thomas More, and the rest of Erasmus's circle of English friends, though most of them remained loyal Catholics, had made evangeli-

cal Christianity and the idea of a practical reform of church abuses familiar to the educated classes. Finally, Lutheranism had been brought over from Germany by merchants and wandering scholars, aided by the printing press, and was spreading slowly through the city middle class, where it found a congenial atmosphere as it had among the continental bourgeoisie. When Henry rebelled against papal authority, then, he could count on a considerable amount of popular support.

In the early years of Henry VIII, however, there was little to indicate his future rôle in England's church history. In-
Early years of Henry VIII deed, he was generally considered a strong champion of orthodoxy. In 1521 he published a violent attack on the Lutheran heresy, for which the pope awarded him the title of Defender of the Faith. Besides, he was too much engrossed in his ambitious foreign policy, in which he was encouraged by his chief minister, Cardinal Wolsey, to pay much attention to the reform of the church at home. For years Wolsey and the king expended the resources of the kingdom in an attempt to make England a power in international affairs by holding the balance between the Emperor Charles V and Francis I of France. And though Henry apparently realized that clerical privileges, ecclesiastical courts, and papal jurisdiction were now the only remaining obstacles in the way of his complete control of his kingdom, Wolsey, who was papal legate in England and hoped to be pope, was always able to distract his attention and stave off any action against the rights of the church. More than once, papal ambassadors warned the pope that if Wolsey fell, the church in England would suffer, and by 1527 Wolsey was slipping. His diplomacy had accomplished nothing save to waste the accumulated treasure of Henry VII and to burden the English taxpayers. Henry was already losing confidence in the cardinal, when the affair of the divorce precipitated Wolsey's ruin and brought on the break from Rome.

In 1527, Henry had been married to Catherine of Aragon for eighteen years and, save for one daughter, Mary, was still childless.

Therein lay the immediate occasion of all the momentous events of the next few years. Henry needed
The royal divorce a male heir to preserve the Tudor line and there was apparently no hope from Catherine. The death of all Catherine's sons in infancy began to seem to the king a divine judgment upon him for having broken the Biblical injunction against marrying a deceased brother's wife, for Catherine had previously been married, briefly, to his elder brother Arthur. Henry had secured a papal dispensation at the time of his marriage, but now conscience and inclination running together were sufficient to convince him that the marriage had not been valid. He was eager to marry again and had already chosen as his future wife Anne Boleyn. He therefore instructed Wolsey to secure a divorce, or rather an annulment, from Pope Clement VII. But in 1527 the pope was in no position to take action against Catherine. She was the aunt of Charles V, and Charles was master of Italy. The imperial troops had just sacked Rome and the pope was in their power.[1] Negotiations dragged on until Henry lost all patience. In 1529 he called a Parliament that was to declare the English Church independent of Rome. Wolsey was deprived of his office and the following year was arrested on a charge of treason. Meanwhile, Parliament had begun to pass act after act reducing clerical privileges and papal authority. By 1533 it had so far separated the English Church from Rome that the new Archbishop of Canterbury was able to grant the king his divorce.

The next year Parliament took the final step needed to establish the complete independence of the English national church. All relations
The Anglican Church with the papacy were severed and the king was declared by the Act of Supremacy to be the "supreme head" of the Church of England. This meant that one more kingdom had been lost to the once universal church. It was one more example of the triumph of central government over separate interests, of state over church, and of nationalism over the unity of Christendom that was characteristic of the age. The

[1] See below, page 421.

change was made with very little opposition because the majority were ready for it. Besides, it was a very conservative revolution. Save for the substitution of royal for papal authority and the loss by the clergy of their special legal status, there was no very marked change in the outward organization of the Anglican Church. The most radical change was the gradual dissolution of the monasteries and confiscation of their lands. Again Parliament willingly lent its authority to the king's will, for the monks had long been unpopular and the confiscation of the monastic lands enriched both the state and the wealthy burghers and gentlemen who purchased them from the king.

There was even less change in the official doctrine of the church than in its organization. Henry was still a champion of orthodoxy so far as was possible. A few earnest Catholics, like Sir Thomas More, were executed for their refusal to accept the king as supreme head of the church, but there were as many martyrs on the other side who suffered because they were too Protestant. Parliament authorized the use of the English Bible, and some changes were made in religious practice, but Henry was determined to keep the essentials of Catholic faith. In 1539, as a Catholic reactionary party gained ascendancy at court, Henry passed through Parliament an act defining the faith of the Anglican Church in six articles, all quite Catholic in tone, and this act was enforced by severe persecuting laws. The political break with the Catholic Church, however, inevitably opened the way for criticism of Catholic doctrine and, despite everything that Henry could do, Lutheran and Calvinist

Conservative doctrine

opinions were spreading rapidly in England.

When Henry VIII died in 1547, he left his throne to his infant son Edward VI (1547–53) and the government to a Council of Regency headed by the Protector Somerset, the young king's maternal uncle. During the next six years a doctrinal Reformation was accomplished to supplement the political and constitutional Reformation of the previous reign. There can be no doubt that Protestants, whether Lutheran or Calvinist, or a compromise between the two, were still in a distinct minority, but they were an influential minority and strongly represented in the Council. The repressive laws of Henry VIII were repealed almost at once. The next step was to prepare an English liturgy and enforce its use by an Act of Uniformity in 1549. This was the first Book of Common Prayer, the work of Archbishop Cranmer, whose grand English cadences still are heard in the services of the Anglican Church. Three years later it was revised so as to make it more acceptable to the extreme Protestants, and at the same time the official creed of the church was defined in the Forty-two Articles of Religion. These were made as vague and general as possible so as to enable those who were almost Catholics, as well as Lutherans and Calvinists, to remain within the church. England was still far from unanimity in religion. All that the government was working for at the moment was a decent outward uniformity, while at the same time favoring a steady drift toward real Protestantism. But the question was still an open one when the premature death of Edward replaced his Protestant government by the Catholic régime of Mary Tudor.

The doctrinal Reformation

29

The States of Europe in the Age of Charles V

(1519–56)

DURING THE PERIOD dealt with in the preceding chapter, that in which the unity of the Catholic Church was broken and the three great Protestant churches, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Anglican, were founded, the rulers of Europe had often other and apparently more important problems to consider than the fate of religion, though that was something that could never be entirely forgotten. The outstanding factor in the relation of the European states to each other in this period was the existence of the vast dynastic empire of Charles V, which threatened the rest of Europe with the menace of Hapsburg domination. We have already seen [1] how this great accumulation of territorial states came to be united under the rule of the young heir to the Hapsburg, Burgundian, and Spanish dynasties, and have noted at the same time the development of strongly centralized states throughout Europe, under rulers who had acquired new national and dynastic ambitions with the acquisition of absolute authority in their own lands. Before the accession of Charles V, national and dynastic rivalry had embroiled the European countries in a greedy struggle for the spoils of Italy. That rivalry now took on a new character. The Valois king of France stood pitted against the mighty Hapsburg as his

sole rival for the hegemony of Europe. They had too many conflicting interests to remain at peace with each other, and the destruction of either would have meant the domination of Europe by the victor. The other states, therefore, were drawn into the struggle in the hope of maintaining the "balance of power," that is, a state of international equilibrium. Meanwhile, within each territorial state, the rulers continued still further to centralize the government and to develop unhampered sovereign power.

These major themes of European history were repeated in miniature among the German states that made up the Holy Roman Empire. There the ambitions of Charles for centralized control and dynastic aggrandizement met the similar ambitions of the territorial princes. The German princes feared Hapsburg domination as much as did the rulers of the other European states. And in Germany, more than elsewhere, the situation was complicated by the religious revolution and by the constant threat of Turkish aggression from the east. The result here was the establishment of a temporary equilibrium among the German states that matches the larger equilibrium of Europe.

1. THE RIVALRY OF HAPSBURG AND VALOIS

In 1519, almost all of western Europe —

[1] See above, pages 393–395, and map, page 394.

the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland,
and parts of Italy were the only

Three young monarchs

exceptions — owed allegiance to one or other of three young and ambitious monarchs who for a generation were to remain the principal actors in the international drama. The young-

Charles V (1519–56)

est of the three, Charles V, had just been elected emperor of the Holy Roman Empire; but the shadowy imperial sovereignty over Germany represented only a small fraction of his real power. He was already the hereditary ruler of the Hapsburg family lands in and around Austria; of the Burgundian states of Franche-Comté, Luxemburg, and the Netherlands; as well as of the Spanish kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, Sicily, Naples, and Sardinia, and those new lands in the Americas whose store of gold the Castilian *conquistadores* were only beginning to touch. This imposing array of possessions made Charles the most powerful monarch in Europe; yet not so powerful as would appear on the surface, for in actual practice the available strength of his empire was always considerably less than the total strength of its component parts. It was a purely dynastic empire, accumulated by a series of family alliances. It lacked both national and geographical unity. The person of Charles was the only bond holding his scattered dominions together. To utilize the full resources of each in a common policy, or to satisfy their varying interests, would have taxed the genius and energy of a Charlemagne. And the nineteen-year-old ruler who accepted that appalling task was not a brilliant youth. He was not even personally attractive, being of a somewhat stolid nature and having inherited the more unfortunate Hapsburg features. But, as time went on, he proved that he possessed a large measure of sound common sense, industry, patience, and a degree of determination verging on stubbornness. These qualities in the long run served him better than the more brilliant and attractive traits of his rival of the house of Valois.

Francis I of France was a little older than Charles and had already won military glory by the conquest of Milan. He had a good deal of surface charm and culture; but his character was essentially frivolous, without depth or substance. Had he possessed any of the qualities

Francis I (1515–47)

of greatness, he might have fared very well in his contest with the Hapsburg, for, though he ruled less land, it was united in one compact national state, over which he had absolute control. Instead, he was vain, inconsequent, absorbed in selfish pleasures, and gifted with a fatal genius for snatching defeat from the jaws of victory.

Between these two monarchs stood the Tudor Henry VIII of England. His aim was to keep the balance between them so even that the influence

Henry VIII (1509–47)

of England, though a relatively weak state, might become the determining factor in European affairs. It was a sound policy, but Henry got less from it than might have been expected, for both he and his chief minister, Wolsey, too often mistook pointless duplicity for diplomatic skill and he was never prepared to back his promises by determined action.

It is a commonplace of history that war between Charles V and Francis I was inevitable, and certainly there were enough causes for friction to make peace between them im-

Causes of the war

possible in that age when the personal or family interests of rulers were considered sufficient reason for war. In the first place, France was surrounded by Hapsburg territory,[1] and its king felt it necessary to break the Hapsburg power in self-defense. Then, too, Charles and Francis had conflicting dynastic claims to territory in half a dozen places. In the north, Francis held the duchy of Burgundy, which Charles claimed by right of descent from Charles the Bold, while Francis revived an old feudal claim to Charles's Netherland provinces of Flanders and Artois. In the southwest, Francis supported the claims of his kinsman the King of Navarre to the territory annexed by Charles's grandfather Ferdinand. Finally, both rulers hoped to dominate Italy. There, Francis held the duchy of Milan, which Charles claimed as a fief of the empire, while Charles ruled the kingdom of Naples, which Francis claimed as heir to the house of Anjou. And

[1] See map, page 402.

as if these various grounds for conflict were not enough, the two young rulers had been rival candidates in the imperial election, which created a strong personal animosity between them.

Of the two, Francis was better prepared for immediate war, since all his resources were concentrated in a single compact state. Charles had pressing problems to meet in Spain, threatened by a serious revolt, as well as in Germany, and he was in desperate need of money. He was fortunate, however, in being able to postpone hostilities until 1521. By that time he had met the imperial Diet at Worms, had disposed of his family interests in Germany by entrusting the Hapsburg lands there to his brother Ferdinand, and had gained allies, for what they were worth, in Henry VIII and Pope Leo X. The war opened with campaigns on three fronts, in the Netherlands, in Navarre, and in Italy, but throughout the war nearly all the serious fighting was concentrated in the last-named country. For four years the fortunes of war shifted from one side to the other, as did also the alliances of the papacy and the other Italian states. The French lost Lombardy and regained it. In the spring of 1525 their success seemed certain, when the situation was suddenly reversed. In a bloody battle fought before the walls of Pavia, the imperial troops destroyed the French army and captured the French king. It seemed like a decisive victory for Charles, but his resources were too far exhausted for him to take full advantage of it. He did not press the war, but contented himself with keeping Francis a prisoner in Spain until his resistance was so worn down that he would accept the terms dictated to him. By the Treaty of Madrid, January, 1526, Francis solemnly pledged himself to give up the duchy of Burgundy, as well as all claims to the disputed territories in the Netherlands, Navarre, and Italy.

The war, to the Treaty of Madrid

Despite his solemn oaths and the pledge of his knightly honor, Francis had not the slightest intention of keeping the terms of the treaty. No sooner was he back in France than he was busy organizing the

The war, to the Treaty of Cambray

League of Cognac, composed, with France, of the Italian states, Venice, Florence, the papacy, and Milan, which had been given as an imperial fief by Charles to one of the Sforzas. All of these now became the natural enemies of the victorious emperor through their desire to keep the balance of power in Italy. Henry VIII declared himself favorable to the league, but did not join it. It was an alarming situation for Charles. As usual, he found it hard to raise enough money for foreign war from his scattered possessions and still harder to get the money to Italy. The Constable of Bourbon, a French prince who had deserted France and now commanded the imperial army in northern Italy, found it impossible to keep his troops in order without pay. In 1527 they mutinied and forced Bourbon to lead them to Rome, to collect their own pay from the pillage of the rich papal city. The sack of Rome, which followed, was as brutal and as thorough as any that the eternal city had suffered from the Goths or Vandals. The Spanish soldiers in the emperor's army left a bitter memory of cruelty and greed, while the German mercenaries, mostly Lutheran, took a special delight in deeds of sacrilege. The capture of Rome left Pope Clement VII helplessly in the emperor's power. Neither Rome nor the papacy would ever again enjoy the same wealth or freedom. For them the glory of the Renaissance was over. A new French invasion also marked the year 1527, but again Francis saw hope of victory turned to defeat. By 1529 both sides were ready for peace. The Treaty of Cambray was in main outline a repetition of that of Madrid, save that Francis was allowed to keep Burgundy, which Charles had learned he would not give up anyway. Like the former treaty, this was to prove no more than a truce. Nevertheless, it is an important milestone in the history of Europe. It marks the end of the first and most active stage of the war, and the beginning of that Hapsburg domination of Italy which was never seriously challenged till the nineteenth century.

The war dragged on through the remainder of the reign of Charles V, but intermittently. The emperor was left free from time to time to attend to the affairs of his

FRANCIS I OF FRANCE

This portrait possibly fails to do justice to the gallant king, who was regarded — at least by his courtiers — as a handsome man and more than a little of a dandy.
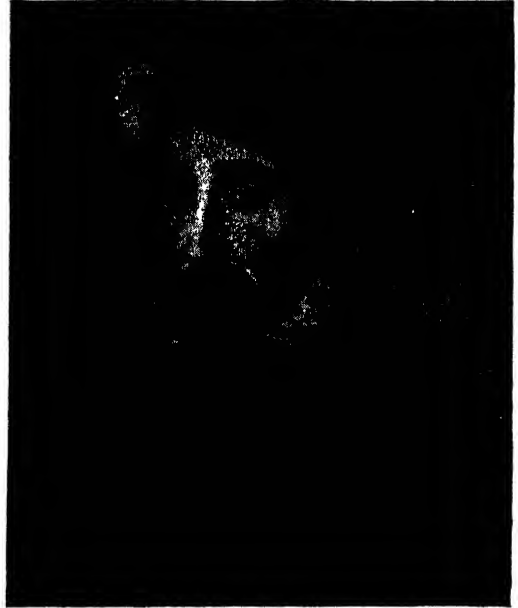
HENRY II OF FRANCE

Henry II, as painted by Jean Clouet, was an altogether grimmer person than his father. He belonged to the atmosphere of the Counter-Reformation.

various lands, to stem the tide of Turkish invasion, and to try to crush out the Lutheran heresy that was dividing Germany, but never for long enough to accomplish decisive results. The enmity of the Valois crippled him at every turn. More than once, the French king formed alliances with the Protestant princes of Germany and with the Turks against the emperor. Even the death of Francis I did not end the strife, for his son Henry II (1547–59) carried on the feud. The situation was still very much the same when, in 1556, Charles V voluntarily laid down the heavy scepter he had wielded so long. He left the Hapsburg lands in Germany and the imperial crown to his brother Ferdinand, his western states to his son Philip II of Spain.

The concluding act of the long rivalry of Hapsburg and Valois is little more than a brief epilogue. In 1559, Philip II and Henry II signed the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, the terms of which settled the

The war, to 1556

The Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis

questions at issue between the two powers for the remainder of the century. France acquired some small additions of territory along her northeastern border, but in return finally renounced all claims to lands in Italy, the Netherlands, or Spain. This renunciation was in itself a solid gain for France. Her opposition to the encircling power of the Hapsburgs had perhaps been justified, but the men and money expended on the vain attempt to conquer territory in Italy, which could never have become an integral part of France, were wasted. They would have been better spent in an effort to round out the French frontiers to the north and east within the geographical limits of old Gaul. The final abandonment of the Italian dream removed one of the principal causes for war, while the splitting of Charles's empire between his brother and son reduced the fear of Hapsburg domination. A rough equilibrium among the European powers was thus established, which lasted for the most part during the coming half-century of internal religious wars.

2. CHARLES V AND HIS EMPIRE — THE PROTESTANTS AND THE TURKS

If the contest with the kings of the house of Valois formed the central theme of the reign of Charles V, it must not be forgotten that, along with this foreign problem, Charles had also to deal with a host of problems connected with the internal government of his various states. These states were so diverse in geographical position, race, language, economic and cultural interests, and even in religion, that no one consistent policy could be applied to all. No policy, that is, except the traditional policy of the Hapsburgs, which was to capitalize every opportunity for the aggrandizement of the family. Dynastic ambition was not a trait peculiar to the Hapsburgs; it was shared by most European rulers. But Charles could not identify it with national interests as could the kings of France or England. He was born and brought up in the Netherlands, yet his empire was too large for him to subordinate his major policies to Flemish interests. He was always a foreigner in Germany and Italy. In the latter he worked for Hapsburg domination rather than Italian unity, and in the former he allowed the interests of the Austrian Hapsburg states and the distractions of his dynastic war with France to thwart his efforts to rebuild a united imperial state. So far as Charles did identify himself with any country, it was with Spain.

Problems of Charles V

In the sixteenth century, Spain was the greatest state in Europe, with the possible exception of France. It was certainly the strongest of the states ruled by Charles, and it was there that he made his permanent residence, leaving it only when the pressing needs of his other possessions demanded his presence. · He became in time a thorough Spaniard and won the loyalty of the Spanish people by convincing them that their country was the center of his empire and that their interests were his. His relations with them, however, were not at first happy. When he first came to Spain in 1517 as the heir of the late King Ferdinand, he was regarded as a foreigner and his Flemish ministers were distrusted and hated. The Spaniards resented the expenditure of Spanish gold to win the imperial election, which threatened to make Spain merely a province of a German empire. A widespread revolt, inspired by a mixture of social discontent with resentment of royal taxes and foreign ministers, broke out just as Charles was leaving for Germany in the spring of 1520. It collapsed, however, from lack of cohesion among its leaders, before Charles returned in 1522. For the next seven years, while the war with France raged most fiercely, the emperor stayed in Spain and gradually the Spanish people came to accept him as the embodiment of their national state. His victories were Spanish victories, won largely with Spanish gold and the incomparable Spanish foot soldiers. Moreover, his rigid Catholic orthodoxy, which tended to alienate him from his northern subjects, was perfectly congenial to the Spaniards, the most orthodox nation in Europe. They fully approved of his bloody conversion, or extermination, of the Moorish population in the southern provinces, though it meant the destruction of the most industrious class in the peninsula. There was here no conflict between church and state, but rather a strong mutual support.

Spain

In these years the wealth of Spain was a byword in Europe; yet for all its apparent prosperity, the economic strength of Spain was not so secure as it seemed. Before another generation had passed, it was destined to begin a rapid and permanent decline. The truth was that Spain was living on unearned increment, the gold and silver stolen from Mexico and Peru. This sudden wealth stimulated industry and commerce for a time, but in the end it proved a curse — the curse of Midas. There was too much gold. It raised prices to a higher level than in any other country, with the result that Spain bought more than it sold. The most lasting benefits, therefore, went to other countries. The tremendous expense of Charles's foreign wars, too, helped to drain the country of its gold, while bringing no economic return. Finally, the easy wealth of the Americas destroyed the industrious instincts of the people, such as they were, for they always had been more apt to war than

Prosperity of Spain

to trade. This wealth lasted about two generations. When it was gone, there was nothing left.

Next to Spain, Charles depended most on the wealth of the Netherlands and was most at home there. Under his rule

The Netherlands

the Netherlands prospered, despite heavy taxation, and the frontiers were rounded out by occasional conquests. Save for one serious rebellion at Ghent in 1539, the people remained loyal to their native prince. Nevertheless, there was a growing discontent under the surface, the fruits of which were to be reaped by Charles's son Philip II. There was reason for the suspicion that the emperor was exploiting their resources for his own advantage rather than theirs. The prosperity of the Netherlands was due more to the industry and keen trading sense of the people than to the government, and what advantage accrued to trade from the connection with Spain scarcely compensated for the heavy taxes to support Charles's foreign policies, in which the Netherlands had no real interest. Besides, the emperor's attempts to suppress heresy in all his dominions aroused resentment, for, despite persecution that kept them under cover, Lutheran, Anabaptist, and finally Calvinist opinions were gaining many converts.

If the Netherlands were still a source of strength to the Spanish monarchy, though

Italy

destined to be a ruinous expense in the next generation, Italy probably cost more than it was worth to Spain. Here the interests of Charles were purely dynastic. He made no attempt to establish national unity in Italy. All he aimed at was to acquire as much land as possible for his family and so to manage the remaining states as to bring the whole peninsula under Hapsburg domination. And this he accomplished. Milan was conquered, while Florence, Genoa, the papacy, and the smaller Italian states preserved their nominal independence only by subservience to the dominant power.

It was in Germany that Charles encountered his most difficult problems and met

Germany

with the least success. Although it was the ancient home of the Hapsburg family, Charles was always a for-

eigner in Germany. He spent little time there, and constantly put off dealing with German problems until he had leisure from his more vital interests elsewhere. This, however, was not the only reason for his failure. It is doubtful if the most German of emperors could have revived the outworn Holy Roman Empire at this late date, or have preserved in it more than a formal unity. True, there had been of recent years a marked growth of German national sentiment, which Charles might have used if he had identified himself strongly with German nationality; but class jealousies, the petty independence of free cities and imperial knights, the territorial sovereignty of the princes, and, in addition, the new religious differences were centrifugal forces stronger than any feeling of national unity.

At his first imperial Diet, that of Worms in 1521, Charles took steps to meet the two most important problems of the empire, the reform of imperial government and the suppression

The council of regency

of the Lutheran heresy. In neither was he successful. The solution of the former problem was attempted through the creation of a council of regency, which would rule during the emperor's absence, and which he and the electors hoped would hold the empire together. After Charles left, however, the council proved powerless to act in any important matter. It had no adequate military or financial power, and even the princes on the council ignored its decisions. It was completely discredited by its failure to suppress the rebellion of the Rhineland knights, led by Franz von Sickingen, in 1522, and the Peasants' Revolt three years later, both of which were put down by the independent action of the princes most concerned. These two rebellions prove how strong was the social discontent among all classes, a discontent that had its roots in the economic readjustment of the new age, but was given an additional impetus by the first impact of Luther's revolutionary teaching.

The emperor's legislation against Luther had no more effect than had the attempt to reform the imperial constitution, and largely for

The Protestant party

the same reason. The imperial authority

THE EMPEROR CHARLES V

Titian did his best to give the emperor the appearance of imperial dignity, but even he could not make him handsome.

THE EMPEROR CHARLES V AND POPE CLEMENT VII ENTERING BOLOGNA, 1530

The scene above, painted by Brusasorci, was part of the ceremony that attended the imperial coronation of Charles V.

was not strong enough, especially with Charles engrossed in affairs elsewhere, to coerce the princes or the governments of the free cities. During his long absence no serious effort was made to enforce the Edict of Worms. The Lutherans were left free to organize their church wherever they had the support of the local government. The Diet of Spires in 1526, despite a Catholic majority, passed a law, called a "recess," declaring each state free to act as it chose in regard to the new church. This was not an edict of toleration, but rather a declaration of the independent sovereignty of the separate states, a principle with which even the Catholic princes sympathized. Three years later, the news that Charles had ended the war with France and was about to return influenced a second Diet of Spires to repeal the recess, whereupon a number of Lutheran princes and cities presented a signed protest. The Protestant party was born. The following year (1530) Charles was back in Germany and presided over the Diet of Augsburg. He was determined, now that he was free from foreign complications, to take vigorous action. After an attempt at reconciliation had failed, the emperor gave the heretics six months in which to return to the church, after which, he declared, he would suppress them by force. But before he could put his threat into effect, Charles was forced to temporize by the necessity of gaining all the support he could get against the Turks, and the opportunity for decisive action was lost.

For more than a century, Christian Europe had lived in fear of the Ottoman Turks. In 1453 they had completed the conquest of what remained of the Byzantine Empire by the capture of Constantinople. During the succeeding generations their conquests had continued at the expense both of their Christian and fellow Moslem neighbors.[1] Their victorious armies seemed invincible. At the time when Charles V was elected emperor, they held nearly all the land of the ancient Byzantine Empire as it had been in the days of Justinian. All the Balkan states had been lost to Christendom, and before long Europe

The Turkish menace

[1] See map, page 323.

was shocked by the news of a further Turkish advance up the Danube, under the command of the new Sultan Suleiman II, "the Magnificent" (1520–66). In 1526 his army defeated the Hungarians and killed their brave king on the field of Mohács. In 1529 the Turks laid siege to Vienna; were driven back; and now, in 1532, were advancing on Austria again.

Hitherto, Charles's brother Ferdinand, to whom he had entrusted the German Hapsburg lands, had borne the brunt of the defense against the Turks. On the death of his brother-in-law, King Louis II of Hungary and Bohemia, at Mohács, Ferdinand had been elected king of both countries. His attempts to defend his newly acquired kingdoms as well as his hereditary Austrian lands kept Ferdinand too busy to take any action against the Lutherans. The new Turkish advance of 1532 forced both Charles and Ferdinand to come to terms with the heretics. Charles dropped his plans for crushing Protestantism for the time being and came to his brother's aid, driving back the Turks and recovering part of Hungary. The demands of his other possessions, however, prevented Charles from following up his victory. Before the end of 1532 he was on his way back to Spain via Italy. Ferdinand was again left to carry on the struggle alone, which he did without much success. Finally, in 1547, he and the emperor secured a precarious peace by recognizing the Turkish possession of the greater part of Hungary.

Ferdinand and the Turks

Meanwhile, with Charles once more absent from Germany and absorbed in other interests, Protestantism spread rapidly, while the Protestant party formed a defensive organization against the time of the emperor's return. As early as 1531, when there still seemed a chance of immediate action by the emperor, the chief Protestant states — principalities and free cities — had joined together in the League of Schmalkalden for mutual defense. As other princes were converted to Lutheranism, they too joined the league. Though often weakened by petty jealousies, the princes of the league made a formidable force. More than once the kings

The League of Schmalkalden

of France and England sought alliance with them against the emperor. With each year it became increasingly clear that Charles must return and crush them, or all hope of restoring the political as well as religious unity of the empire would be lost. But, what with campaigns against the Algerian pirates in the Mediterranean, wars with France and the Turks (now allies), a rebellion in the Netherlands, and other troubles, fourteen years passed before Charles was once more free to take up the task he had abandoned in 1532. By that time, about half of Germany or more was Protestant, including four of the seven electors.

Nevertheless, when Charles at last opened war on the League of Schmalkalden in 1546, he had fair prospects of success.

Schmal-kaldic War His army was smaller than that of the league, but it contained a large number of those Spanish foot soldiers who had proved themselves to be the finest fighting material in Europe, and it was commanded by the able and ruthless Duke of Alva. Also, he had won over the treacherous Maurice of ducal Saxony and one or two others of the Protestant princes. His chief advantage, however, lay in the lack of unity among the leaders of the league and in their equally fatal lack of military strategy. As the chief Protestant princes separated to protect their own lands, the emperor forced one after another of the smaller states to submit. Finally, only John Frederick, Elector of Saxony, and the Landgrave Philip of Hesse had strong forces outstanding. In the spring of 1547, the former was defeated and captured at Mühlberg, the latter at Halle. Charles then set about the suppression of Protestantism in the states of the vanquished princes. The next five years proved that it was easier to defeat the princes than to reconvert their people. They had been Lutheran too long to give up their religion at the command of even a victorious emperor. In 1552, the Protestant princes rebelled, aided by an alliance with Henry II of France. Three years more of anarchy at last persuaded the emperor to give up all hope of crushing Lutheranism in Germany, and to make peace.

The final settlement of the religious strife

in Germany, at least for the sixteenth century, was arranged at the Diet of Augsburg of 1555. It is called the Religious Peace of Augsburg. It kept Germany **The Religious Peace of Augsburg** free from further religious war for more than sixty years; but there were terms in the compromise that maintained a constant tension between the Protestant and Catholic parties and promised serious trouble at some future date. That promise was fulfilled in the following century in the frightful devastation of the Thirty Years' War.[1] Four major principles laid down by this treaty are worth remembering: (1) The princes of the various German states and the governments of the free cities were to be free to choose between the Lutheran and Catholic faiths. The princes were to have the right to enforce the religion of their choice upon their subjects, but the free cities on the Lutheran side could not expel a Catholic minority. This principle, which made the religion of the state that of its ruler, is generally known by the phrase *cujus regio ejus religio.* (2) This principle was to apply only to Lutheran and Catholic governments. It did not extend to Calvinists, though their number was increasing. (3) An "ecclesiastical reservation" made an exception of ecclesiastical princes (archbishops, bishops, and abbots), who ruled territorial states. In case any of these should become Lutheran, he was to surrender his state, which would remain under the control of the church; but Lutheran subjects of such princes were not to be forced to give up their religion. (4) Protestant states were to retain whatever church property they had confiscated prior to 1552. The Peace of Augsburg marks a definite stage in the disintegration of the empire, not only because it determined that Germany should remain divided between two religions, but because it recognized the sovereign authority of the princes in the important matter of religious control. It was a victory for the princes in their struggle for independence as much as for Protestantism.

The Religious Peace was followed shortly by the abdication of Charles V. His dealings with his German empire had been

[1] See Chapter 35.

Hapsburg Lands after 1556

- Austrian
- Spanish
- Holy Roman Empire
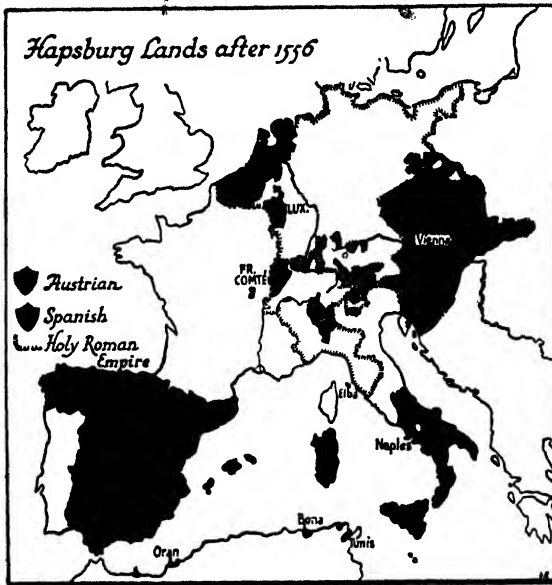
generally unfortunate. He was embittered by one more failure at the end.

Abdication of Charles V

He could not persuade the electors to accept his son Philip as his successor. He was forced, therefore, to split his inheritance. He surrendered the German Hapsburg lands to his brother Ferdinand, who had ruled them since 1521, and with them went the imperial crown. The remainder of his possessions, the Burgundian and Spanish inheritance, he left to his son Philip II. The abdication was completed in 1556. The weary emperor then retired to a Spanish monastery, where he died three years later. He was not an old man, but he had carried a tremendous burden of responsibility almost from childhood.

3. THE MONARCHY IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND

The kings of France who were the contemporaries of Charles V were rather less successful than he in foreign

Royal power in France

affairs, but, on the other hand, they had less trouble with the internal government of their state. We have already noted the triumph of the French monarchy over the nobles and the estates who might have checked its power. When Francis I came to the French throne, he took over a practically absolute government, and the royal power had grown still stronger when he handed it on to Henry II. It had been strengthened by one more generation of tradition, a generation in which the royal rights had been repeatedly asserted and stated in legal form by the school of legists who were trained in Roman law at the University of Toulouse. The treason of the Constable of Bourbon was the only indication that the great nobles who were related to the royal family might again be a menace to the crown; for the present at least, the nobility were obedient courtiers and soldiers in the king's pay.

Like Charles V, Francis I and Henry II were often in need of money to carry on their foreign wars. What income the government had, however, was entirely at the disposal of the king, and with reasonable care

Taxation and finance

it should have been sufficient, though the expense of a standing army was considerable. The French army was strong in artillery and cavalry, having the fighting nobility to call on for the latter arm, but was always weak in native infantry. For this wing of the service, the king had usually to depend in part on Swiss and German mercenaries, who were willing to fight under any flag so long as they were paid. In addition to the army, a good deal of money was spent in pensioning nobles and on the expenses of a luxurious court. The largest part of the royal income came from the *taille*, a direct tax, the amount of which the king could increase at will. Extraordinary expenses were often met by the sale of offices, many of them unnecessary ones created solely for the purpose of sale. This, of course, created a financial burden on the government for the future. On the whole, the financial system was awkward and wasteful. Later, during the Wars of Religion, its inadequacy came near ruining the monarchy.

The royal finances and royal authority were both strengthened by the power which Francis I acquired over the church in France. The terms of the Concordat of Bologna

King and church

(1516) left the king with almost complete control of appointments to the higher ecclesiastical offices in the country. He used this
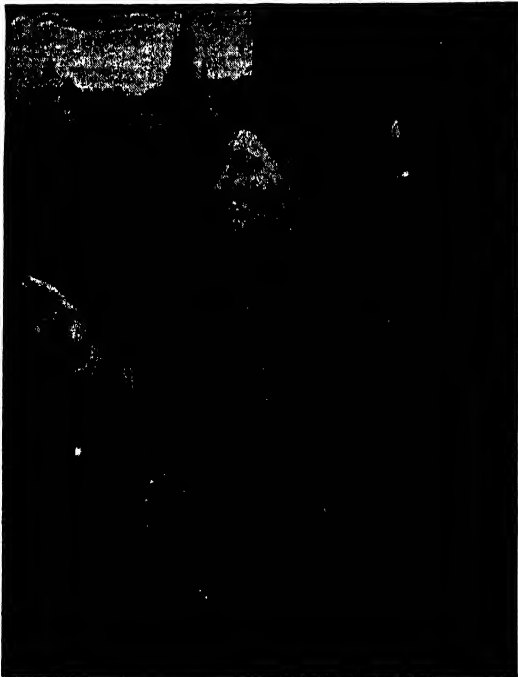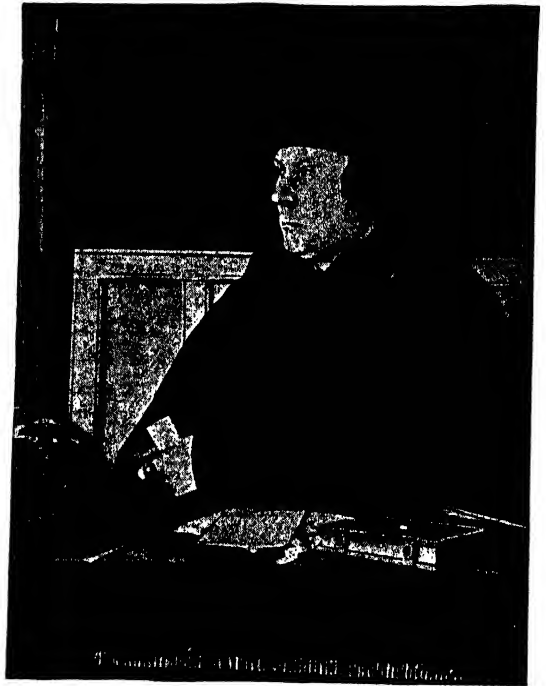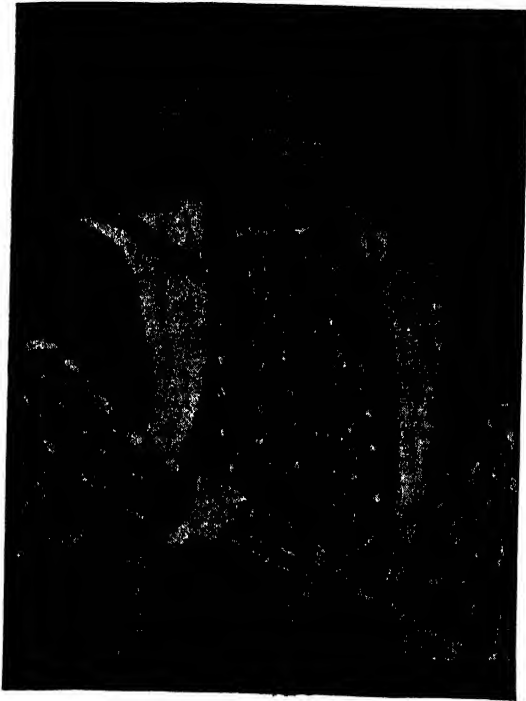
HENRY VIII, KING OF ENGLAND

Upper left: Henry is painted here (by Holbein) in later life, after he had lost much of his early vigor and abundant health; yet the face still shows the blunt strength and arrogant will that were characteristic of this bluff Tudor at any age.

THOMAS CROMWELL

Upper right: A Holbein portrait of the minister who was Henry's right-hand man during the years of the establishment of the Anglican Church.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Left: This astute and ambitious prelate was the chief adviser of Henry VIII during the early years of his reign, but lost favor after failing to secure the king's divorce.

power freely to reward the loyalty of the nobles and also to pay the diplomats and ministers who served him, thus relieving the royal treasury of a considerable drain. A further extension of royal power over the church came in 1539, when the king transferred jurisdiction over the great majority of cases from the ecclesiastical courts to the royal courts. That the king had already acquired all the control of the national church and its wealth that he desired was one of the most important factors in deciding the fate of the Reformation in France. Had it been otherwise, Francis might easily have followed the example of other northern rulers in breaking with Rome. As it was, he remained strictly orthodox and persecuted heresy whenever he was on good terms with the pope, though neither he nor his son scrupled to ally themselves with the Protestant princes of Germany. Henry II was much more severe than his father in the persecution of French heretics, and, indeed, had more to work on, for despite persecution the Calvinist faith was spreading rapidly in France.

Across the Channel from France, Henry VIII inherited a government that was almost as absolute as that of the Valois kings, and, like Francis I, he handed it on still further strengthened to his son. England was now a full-grown national state. Most of the old medieval institutions still lived on in form, but the substance of their power had been transferred to the crown. The central government controlled commerce and industry, once the duty of the towns and guilds; it had taken over the full administration of justice, either through the royal courts or through the justices of the peace, who were the unpaid servants of the crown; and during the reign of Henry VIII the king also took over the supreme government of the English Church, thus completing his sovereignty over all institutions and all individuals in the state. Before this all-powerful monarchy, the old feudal nobility faded into insignificance. They were excluded from the king's council, which was the chief instrument of the central government, in favor of middle-class men or the new nobility created

Tudor absolutism

by the crown, men trained in legal and administrative service and wholly devoted to the king. At the same time, their local jurisdiction was superseded by that of the justices of the peace, who were recruited from the country gentry.

But if Tudor government was absolute, it was also popular, and scrupulously constitutional. Parliament never died out in England as the States General were dying out in France. Under Henry VIII, Parliament might seem little more than a subservient tool in the hands of the king; but it was a tool that he used constantly and kept in good condition. All Henry's major policies, for example his radical change in the government of the church and the dissolution of the monasteries, were carried out by act of Parliament. Henry VIII was, indeed, a master in the art of handling Parliament. Under his skillful guidance it became a dependable support to the royal authority by giving a legal coloring to the king's acts, rather than a check upon him. Yet all Henry's skill in avoiding the appearance of tyranny would have been useless had not the majority of his policies been genuinely popular, at least with that middle class of burghers and country gentlemen who made up the most influential class in the state. The success of the great Tudor monarchs, Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth, depended in large part on the fact that they understood their people, that their policies were thoroughly English, and that they never forgot the economic interests of the middle class.

King and Parliament

The task of carrying on an absolute government in England was made easier by the fact that it was relatively inexpensive. High taxation would soon have destroyed the popularity of the government. But the kings of England in the sixteenth century were freed from many of the expenses that burdened the royal exchequer, and hence the people, elsewhere. There were not so many greedy nobles to pension as in France, and for some time Henry was able to take care of his favorites by means of the confiscated monastic lands. The administration of local justice cost nothing, being carried out by the unpaid

Tudor finance

justices of the peace. And, the greatest saving of all, the English kings did not need to maintain a standing army, as did the continental rulers whose borders were always open to invasion. Though Henry VIII was frequently drawn into continental complications, the number of English troops employed on the Continent was never very large. Instead of building up a strong permanent army, Henry devoted his attention to the more important, but less expensive, task of creating a royal navy. Not the least part of Henry's claim to be the founder of modern England lies in this realization of the importance of England's insular position and of defense by sea.

30

The Catholic or Counter-Reformation

FOR HALF A CENTURY after Luther nailed his theses on the church door at Wittenberg, the Protestant Reformation continued to spread, until the very existence of the Roman Catholic Church seemed threatened. At the end of that half-century, one or other of the three great Protestant churches was firmly established, with the active support of the state, in the three Scandinavian kingdoms, in about half of Germany and Switzerland, and in England and Scotland; Calvinism was in open rebellion against a Catholic monarch in the Netherlands and was fighting on fairly even terms in France; while the Catholic states of Germany, as well as Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary were honeycombed with the Protestant heresy, and signs of it had been seen even in Italy, the home of the Roman Church. Then the tide turned. The rising tide of Protestantism was checked and then gradually turned back. Within the next generation, the Catholic Church recovered much of the ground lost in Germany and the neighboring countries to the east, and made secure its permanent hold on the Latin nations to the south. This dramatic reversal was the work of the Catholic Reformation or Counter-Reformation, as it has been variously called, depending largely on the writer's point of view.

Historians have long debated whether the reformation of the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century was a spontaneous movement, springing from the desire of the Catholic peoples who were emerging from the age of the Renaissance for a deeper piety and a reform of ecclesiastical morals, or whether its inspiration was the necessity of rallying all the forces of the church against the growing menace of Protestantism by the revival of a more vital Catholic piety, by the strict definition and teaching of orthodox doctrine, and by the removal of those abuses that were so largely responsible for the defection of the north. The truth seems to be that it was both. That its origin was partly spontaneous is shown by the frequent and widespread demands for reform in the days before Luther was heard from, and in the following years before Lutheranism had become a serious danger to the church. A reform of clerical morality and a revival of piety within the church, a true Catholic reformation, would undoubtedly have taken place without the stimulus of the Protestant Reformation. But, lacking that stimulus, the Catholic Reformation would have followed a very different course from that which it actually took. As the Protestant menace increased, the efforts of the Catholic reformers were turned more and more toward the combating of heresy, so that in its mature form the Catholic Reformation was in very large part a counter-reform. The activity of the Council of Trent, the repressive measures of the Inquisition and the Index, and the work of the Jesuits, which were the chief agencies of the reformation, were directed principally to the defense of the

church against heresy and to the recovery of those who were lost to it.

1. THE EARLY CATHOLIC REFORMATION

The spontaneous Catholic Reformation won its first and most complete success in Spain, and it was the Spanish spirit that dominated the movement later as it drifted into the Counter-Reformation. The state of religion in the Spanish peninsula at the end of the Later Middle Ages was in many respects unique. The long crusade against the Moslems had tended to identify the defense of the orthodox faith with the growing sentiment of national patriotism, so that there was not a country in Europe where heresy was regarded with greater abhorrence. Spain had been less affected by the Renaissance revolt against medievalism and by those social changes that together helped to deaden the piety of Italy and to prepare the peoples of the north for new religious ideals and beliefs. The spirit of Spain was unquestioningly orthodox, and its piety of a type wholly in keeping with the ideals of medieval Christianity. Moreover, the monarchy had won control of the Spanish church and the interests of state and church were closely identified. Everything, therefore, favored the purely orthodox reformation, begun by Cardinal Ximenes in the closing years of the fifteenth century with the full support of the monarchy. The result was a marked improvement in the morals and educational standards of the clergy, which in turn led to a strong revival of piety among the people under their care. But the Spanish reform had also its darker side of persecution and intolerance. The Inquisition was introduced into Spain in a new and more effective form, to crush by force and terror all deviation of opinion from the strict lines of medieval orthodoxy.

In Italy, too, during the early decades of the sixteenth century, Catholic reformers were working earnestly to revitalize the spiritual life of church and people; but their efforts were isolated and did not meet with the immediate success achieved by the reform in Spain. Indeed, in this late and rather decadent period of the Renaissance, Italy presented no very hopeful field for either clerical reform or religious revival. The upper classes were steeped in the semi-paganism of the classical revival, and some of them were prepared to give philosophical credence to the heretical ideas of the north; the great mass of the people were orthodox enough, but superstitious rather than pious; and in Italy, more than anywhere else, the papal *curia*, still headed by popes of the Renaissance type, was a perpetual stumbling-block to reform. Most of the abuses in the church had a financial reason for their existence and to remove them would cause a sharp decrease in the revenues of the pope and the members of his court. Hence the vested interests at Rome were opposed to reform. At the same time, Italy had received too many material benefits from the Italian papacy to rebel against it, as the northern states did, and there was no state government strong or independent enough to take the initiative in reform, as was done in Spain. Nevertheless, there were in Italy many earnest and devout men, some of them holding high offices in the church, who were sincerely interested in reform. In the later years of Pope Leo X, a number of these formed at Rome a loosely organized society known as the Oratory of Divine Love. Elsewhere similar groups were to be found. All were united in their hope of a Catholic reformation; but as time went on they drifted into two fairly distinct groups, separated by divergent ideas as to the policy to be pursued in regard to Protestantism. The one group, best represented by the Venetian humanist and statesman, Contarini, hoped for reconciliation with Protestant reformers on the basis of practical reform and a liberal interpretation of Catholic doctrine; the other, typified by the Neapolitan Bishop Caraffa, were equally eager for reform, but with no change or compromise in doctrine or usage, and favored the suppression of heresy by the means that had proved so successful in Spain.

Meanwhile, though efforts for practical reform were thwarted by lack of papal cooperation, considerable progress was made in the revival of religion among the masses of

the people. Much of the credit for this work was due to new or revived reli-
gious orders, of which the most influential was the Capuchin order, founded in 1526 as a re-
formed branch of the Franciscan. The spirit of the new order was medieval rather than modern; its inspiration was a return to the ideals of Saint Francis. Like the early Franciscans, the Capuchins devoted themselves to preaching a simple piety among the poverty-stricken masses, and no group did more to gain popular support for the early Catholic Reformation than these kindly enthusiasts, whose pointed hoods soon became familiar sights in every marketplace. Good work, too, was done by the new Theatine order, founded by Bishop Caraffa in 1524 with the object of reforming the secular priesthood. It was composed of priests who had taken monastic vows, and had a wholesome influence on the clergy in all parts of Italy.

Revival of religious orders

With the accession of Pope Paul III (1534–49), following the death of the harassed and vacillating Clement VII, the Catholic reformers at last began to receive some co-operation from the papacy. Several of the most distinguished leaders of the reform party, including Contarini and Caraffa, were made cardinals, and a committee of cardinals was appointed to investigate conditions in the church. The report which they submitted showed so many abuses in the papal *curia* and throughout the government of the church that it was thought wise to suppress it, lest it give aid and comfort to the heretics. A beginning, however, was made in the reform of the *curia*, but as the energy of the aged pope declined, his zeal for reform also diminished and the results were disappointingly small. Still, the pontificate of Paul III marks an important turning point in the history of the church, the end of the Renaissance papacy and the beginning of the reforming popes.

The papacy takes up reform

In the early years of Paul's reign, the liberal reformers, led by Cardinal Contarini, seemed to be in the ascendancy at Rome. They were prepared to make some compromise with

Failure of conciliation

the spirit of the new age, as represented by both the Renaissance and the Reformation, and still hoped to re-establish the unity of the Catholic Church by a reconciliation of the Protestants. That accomplished, a general Catholic Reformation, free from the distractions of partisan strife and dogmatic controversies, would be possible. It was the policy proposed at the beginning by Erasmus, and it was doomed to failure now as then. Contarini and his friends failed to realize the fundamental nature of the differences separating the new churches from the old. They had, however, powerful support in Charles V, who was determined to restore religious unity to Germany and would have been glad to do so by peaceful means. In 1541, a serious effort was made to establish a mutual understanding at a religious colloquy, held at Regensburg (Ratisbon). Contarini was the chief representative of the Catholic Church and the liberal and conciliatory Melanchthon the principal spokesman for the Protestants. Thanks to Contarini's tactful diplomacy, both sides made surprisingly liberal concessions, yet they failed to come to any agreement on the fundamental question of the sacraments. The net result of the colloquy was to prove the impossibility of reconciliation even under the most favorable circumstances. The party of conciliation was discredited and quickly lost influence.

Their place was taken by the conservative reformers, under the leadership of Cardinal Caraffa. This meant that hereafter the Catholic Reformation in Italy would follow the Spanish model and would become more and more a Counter-Reformation, directed against the growth of Protestantism. For more than a decade Spain had dominated Italian politics; from this time on the spirit of Spain was to dominate Italian religion as well. The reform of practical abuses in the church and the revival of popular Catholic piety continued, but they were coupled with strict medieval orthodoxy and stern repression of all deviating opinion. Before the death of Paul III, the Jesuits had become a powerful militia in the service of the papacy and the orthodox faith; the first

Opening of the Counter-Reformation
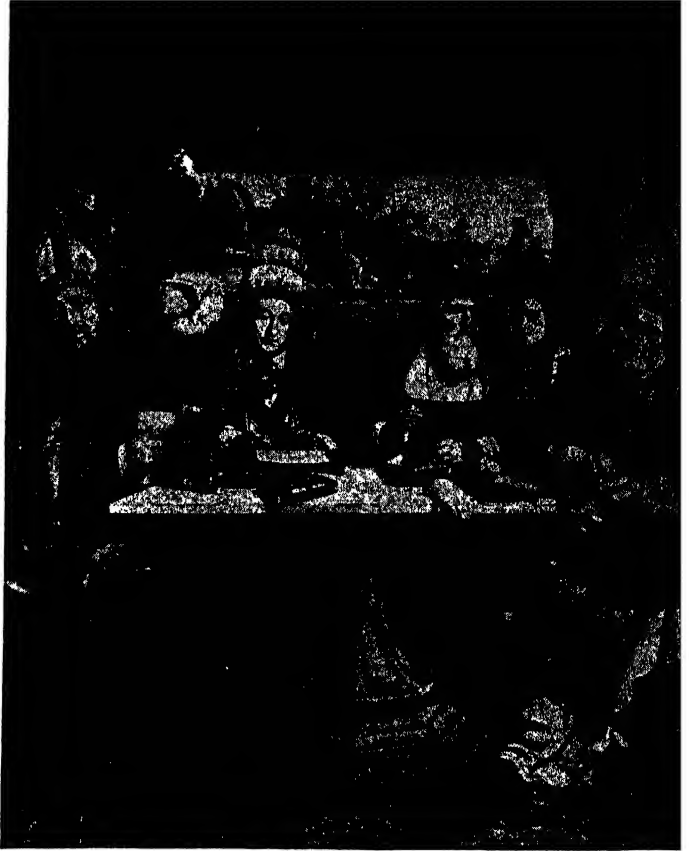
SAINT IGNATIUS LOYOLA

Upper left: The soldier saint who founded the Society of Jesus was a man of single-minded and passionate purpose.

POPE SIXTUS V

Lower left: One of the reforming popes of the sixteenth century, Sixtus V did much to restore discipline within the church.

TYPES OF SIXTEENTH-CENTURY CLERGY

Upper right: The idealized picture of the four Fathers of the Church shows the costumes worn by high church dignitaries in the sixteenth century. From left to right they are a bishop, a pope, a cardinal and another bishop.

LEADERS OF THE CHURCH IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

session of a general council had been held at Trent; and the Inquisition had begun its work in Italy.

2. LOYOLA AND THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

Of the various agencies through which the Counter-Reformation was brought about, possibly none had a wider influence in retaining the loyalty of those who were still members of the Roman Church, or in winning back those who had deserted it, than the devoted preachers and skillful teachers who made up the Society of Jesus. In the Jesuits, as they were popularly called, "the most powerful missionary organization the world has ever seen was placed at the disposal of the papacy."

In the year when Martin Luther faced the Emperor Charles V at the Diet of Worms, *Ignatius Loyola* the man who was to organize the church's best defense against Luther's teaching was fighting as an officer of Charles's army in the besieged city of Pampeluna in northern Spain. He was a noble from the Spanish Basque province of Guipuzcoa, one Don Iñigo Lopez de Recalde de Loyola, better known to history as Ignatius Loyola. He was wounded before the city was taken, and in the months of anguish that followed, his whole attitude toward life was changed. He determined to abandon his career as a soldier of the Spanish king for that of a soldier of Christ. Hereafter he would fight only with the weapons of the spirit, and would strive to emulate the deeds of the medieval saints, as in his earlier days he had imitated the heroes of chivalric romance. When he had recovered, save for a slight lameness that lasted through life, he set out on his new career with characteristic enthusiasm. As he himself tells us, he had still much to learn about the religious life. Some three years passed before he gave up the hermit life and extravagant self-denial he had begun, and determined to devote his life to aiding the salvation of his fellow men. For this purpose he realized that he would need more education, especially in theology. He therefore set about the difficult task for a man of his years of learning Latin, which was a necessary prerequisite to study in any university. In 1528, he matriculated in the University of Paris, where he remained for the next seven years, studying patiently and meanwhile gathering about him a group of disciples to aid him in his major purpose.

If Loyola never became a great scholar, he had other qualities that made men who were more learned than himself follow his leadership. Aside from *The Spiritual* *Exercises* his absolute sincerity, unswerving determination, and those indefinable gifts of personality that any leader of men must possess, Loyola's most valuable asset was his uncanny insight into the workings of the human mind. This was abundantly proved by his *Spiritual Exercises*, the book that helped to win his first followers and that later maintained the character of his order. Based on a detailed, introspective study of his own experience in the early days of his conversion, it gives directions for a period of intensive contemplation, lasting normally about four weeks, and designed to produce in the participant those soul-shaking emotional experiences that Loyola himself had undergone haphazard and over a much longer time. The *Exercises* left an indelible impression on the minds of those who passed through the course faithfully, and transformed them into devoted and obedient soldiers of the church.

Such was the training of the little group of companions who gathered about Loyola at Paris. There were six of them when, in 1534, they took an oath *Founding of* *the society* to go to Jerusalem, as soon as their studies were completed, there to do missionary work among the Moslems, or, if that proved impossible, to go to Rome and place their services at the disposal of the pope. The six had been carefully selected. They were all men of unusual character, ability, or learning. Among them was the Basque noble Francis Xavier, who was to become the most famous of the Jesuit missionaries, and the Spaniards, Lainez and Salmeron, who later exercised a decisive influence at the Council of Trent. In 1537, the companions, with three more added, met again in Venice, but, finding the road to Jerusalem blocked by the Turkish war, took the alternative course of going to Rome. The next two years were spent preaching

and teaching in various parts of Italy. This experience showed them the crying need for work such as they were doing, and they determined to organize as a permanent order. After some delay, they received papal confirmation of their plan from Pope Paul III in 1540. The following year Loyola was elected first general of the order. The new order was called the Society of Jesus, but a more accurate translation of the Latin *Societas* would make it the "Company of Jesus," for Loyola intended the word to be used in the military sense. They were to be a company of spiritual soldiers, fighting under the banner of Jesus. During the next ten years, the rapidly growing society received many extensions of privilege from the pope, and these, together with a more complete draft of the constitution, were confirmed by a bull of Pope Julius III in 1550.

The purpose of the society was set forth clearly in the constitution, which Loyola finally completed just before **Its purpose** his death, and in the bull of 1550. The best brief statement is in the latter: "The company is founded to employ itself entirely in the defense of the holy Catholic faith." In particular, that meant the defense of the church by helping to retain the allegiance of her people, by adding to her membership through the conversion of the heathen, and by winning back as many as possible of those who had been lost to the various Protestant sects. The order was not founded specifically for the combating of heresy, but that would be one of its chief duties. The method to be employed was fourfold: first, to educate the young in orthodox schools; second, to win influence with the doubtful through their services as confessors; third, to carry on missionary preaching in heathen or heretical lands; and fourth, to acquire diplomatic influence in international affairs by serving in the courts of nobles and princes. Unlike the earlier monastic orders, the society was not founded primarily for the salvation of its own members, though that was taken for granted, but to accomplish a definite purpose. For that reason, the keynotes of the constitution were efficiency and obedience. The spirit of the Jesuits was the spirit of their founder,

and Loyola was a Spaniard and a soldier. As a Spaniard he was unshakably loyal to the orthodox faith and to the traditional practices and authority of the organized church, whose head was the pope. As a soldier he never questioned the orders or policies of his superior officer, in this case the pope, and he expected equally unquestioning obedience from those under his command. In the *Spiritual Exercises* he had insisted on the necessity of mental obedience to the church, "always defending her teaching and never opposing it," and in the constitution he stressed above all else the necessity of absolute obedience, first to the pope and second to the general and other superiors of the order.

Loyola's emphasis on efficiency, which followed naturally from his conviction that the order was intended prima- **Organization** rily to accomplish a definite purpose, was reflected in the military organization of the society and in the rules for the selection of new members. Novices were to be carefully chosen, with due regard to those qualities, such as good appearance, pleasing personality, intelligence, suitable character, and good social standing, that would make them most useful. Before becoming a full-fledged member of the society, the novice had to pass through a long period of spiritual training and education, during which he might be dismissed at any time. He was then assigned to one of the several different classes into which the society was divided, according to his ability or experience. All members took the customary monastic vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, but there was an inner circle of the most experienced members who took an additional vow of special obedience to the papacy. From these "Professed of Four Vows" the executive officers were chosen. At the head of the whole order stood the general, elected for life, with absolute authority over all members. Under him were the provincials and a descending hierarchy of inferior officers, very much like that of a modern army. The Jesuits were a very mobile as well as a disciplined body. Any member could be dispatched at a moment's notice to whatever field seemed most in need of his services. As

a further innovation in the interests of efficiency, Loyola freed his order from those restrictions of dress, ascetic practice, regular hours, etc., which were common in the monastic orders, but which might interfere with the duties of missionary preachers and teachers.

The society thus formed grew with amazing rapidity and soon spread to every country of Europe as well as to the heathen lands beyond the seas. At the death of Loyola there were twelve provinces and some fifteen hundred members. Preaching and hearing confessions made up the largest part of their work, but their service as educators was perhaps more important. Jesuit schools and colleges soon sprang up in every Catholic country, and were regarded as among the most efficient of their age. The opportunity provided by their schools to shape the thought of the younger generation, in addition to their work as preachers and confessors, enabled the Jesuits to exert a very great influence on the people, the results of which were amply demonstrated in the success of the Counter-Reformation. In later centuries they were frequently charged with working more for the formal adherence to the church of the masses of the people than for their spiritual betterment, and their methods were subjected to a good deal of criticism. The emphasis on efficiency had its dangerous side. But in their early days, at least, the people saw in them only the most unselfish and devoted as well as the most effective servants of the church.

3. THE COUNCIL OF TRENT (1545–63)

The Jesuits had barely begun their work when the rulers of the church took steps to strengthen its defenses against the Protestant heresy by the calling of a general council, which was to determine the character of the Counter-Reformation. It met in the imperial city of Trent, just north of the Italian border, in three separate periods. The first period, 1545–47, fell in the reign of Paul III, the second, 1551–52, in that of Julius III, and the last, 1562–63, in the reign of Pius IV.

From the very beginning of the Lutheran movement, there had been frequent demands for a general council as a means of settling the great problem of the church. At first Luther and his followers had appealed from the authority of the pope to that of a general council, and later the Catholic reformers who hoped for reconciliation, as well as the Emperor Charles V, took up the cry. They were joined by the Spanish bishops and the conservative reformers of Italy, who agreed that a council was necessary for reform, but who were violently opposed to any policy of doctrinal compromise or reconciliation. In addition, all opponents of papal authority in the church worked for a council. The popes, however, were very loath to call one, for they had unhappy memories of the councils of Pisa, of Constance, and of Basle, and feared that the chief result would be an attempt to limit their authority. When Paul III finally agreed to summon a council, he did so as the result of a policy that few of those who demanded it would entirely approve. Since the failure of conciliation at Regensburg, the pope and the Counter-Reformation party, who were now in the ascendancy at Rome, had determined on a new policy, which was to recognize the loss of the Protestants as a whole as irremediable, and to concentrate on the defense of what remained, with the hope of winning back individual heretics wherever possible. This was to be done by an authoritative definition of Catholic doctrine on all disputed points, so as to clarify the differences between the old and the new churches; by active repression of heretical opinion in all Catholic countries; and by reform of those practical abuses that left the church open to reproach. This policy appealed to the Spanish churchmen, but not to the majority in France and Germany, who still hoped for some compromise with the new ideas; and even the Spanish reformers were opposed on one very important point. They had little hope of the papacy reforming itself and felt that reform should be carried out by the council, whereas the papal party felt that this part of the task should be left to the authority of the pope.

With all these divergent ideas as to the work the council was to do, it is not surpris-

Problems Involved

EL GRECO

Upper left: A self-portrait of the painter, who seemed most deeply imbued with the spirit of the Counter-Reformation, at least in its Spanish form

PIETÀ, BY EL GRECO

Upper right: El Greco's conception of the dead Christ has a morbid and tortured quality.

ST. FRANCIS AND BROTHER RUFUS, BY EL GRECO

Like his Pietà, El Greco's conception of St. Francis was marked by a morbid asceticism that was foreign to the early Franciscan tradition.

THE SPIRIT OF THE COUNTER-REFORMATION

ing that its meetings were stormy, or that there were such long gaps between them. The political interests and animosities of the various states helped to complicate the situation still further. On the whole, however, the papal party was able to carry through its policy. At the very beginning, the pope secured a working control of the council by obtaining a decision that only bishops and heads of religious orders, who were present in person, should have the right to vote. This enabled him to maintain a loyal Italian majority, for Trent was close to Italy and the prelates from more distant countries were usually prevented by wars, expense, or other inconveniences from attending in large numbers. Still, the papal control was never very secure, and the papal legates were forced to compromise on the matter of reform, permitting its discussion, but on the condition that the definition of doctrine should be taken up at the same time. As a matter of fact, most of the time of the council was occupied with the latter question. All through the council, the Jesuits Lainez and Salmeron exerted a great influence on the members and were often instrumental in winning them over to agreement with the wishes of the papal party. During the last session, the diplomatic pope, Pius IV, took pains to secure the agreement of the great Catholic monarchs before submitting his projects to the council, and so won his way through what seemed an almost impossible situation. The final triumph of the papal authority was assured when the council in its closing session voted to present all its decrees to the pope for confirmation.

The most important result of the Council of Trent was the final definition of Catholic doctrine. At a time when all religious opinion was in a state of flux, and when Protestantism was splitting up into antagonistic churches with irreconcilable differences in belief, the Roman Catholic Church was given a coherent and authoritative statement of orthodox faith which would prove a powerful instrument for the preservation of unity. The lines of demarcation between Protestantism and Catholicism were sharply drawn. Al-

The council

Definition of doctrine

most every one of the doctrinal decrees of Trent was designed to meet some Protestant dogma. Among the most important was the decree defining authority. Luther, Calvin, the Anabaptists, and other Protestants had appealed to the sole authority of the Bible against that of the church and the papacy. This was the authoritative foundation for Luther's fundamental doctrine of salvation by faith alone as well as for the general Protestant attack on the sacramental system, the secular power of the papacy and the clergy, monasticism, the veneration of saints, and the other practices of the church which had grown up in post-Biblical times and hence were not mentioned in the Bible. Forced to meet this argument, the council decided that the Bible and the tradition of the church were of equal authority, and that both could be interpreted only by the church, which in practice meant by the pope as head of the church. In addition, the traditional Latin translation of the Bible, the Vulgate, was declared to be the only authoritative version. This adherence to tradition as the best weapon against the innovators was the keynote of all the major doctrinal decrees of the council. By establishing the authority of tradition, however, the Council of Trent bound the modern Catholic Church to medieval precedent and made any later change in either doctrine or practice extremely difficult. Still, the very insistence on tradition had its value, for it gave to the Roman Church the prestige and authority of unbroken continuity with the past, which the newer Protestant churches necessarily lacked.

The work of practical reform, so far as it was actually accomplished by the council, was of secondary importance. Still, it did outline a comprehensive program of reform abolishing the worst abuses and making provision for better discipline and higher educational standards among the clergy. The practical execution of these decrees, however, was beyond the power of the council, which ceased to exist as soon as its work was done. It had to be left to the executive authority of the pope and his successors. Fortunately, the majority of the later popes

Reform decrees

THE GRAND INQUISITOR, DON FERNANDO NINO DE GUEVARA

In one of his finest portraits, El Greco has made the Grand Inquisitor, who sentenced to death so many heretics, an entirely believable figure.

POPE PAUL IV

Cardinal Caraffa, later Pope Paul IV, was for many years the leader of the conservative wing of the Counter-Reformation. He was largely responsible for the introduction of the Spanish form of the Inquisition into Italy.

HERETICS BURNED BY THE INQUISITION

A contemporary representation of a scene which was an all too familiar sight in Spain during the Counter-Reformation

THE INQUISITION

proved worthy of the trust. The Catholic Church never again suffered from the lax discipline or worldly minded leadership that had left it so open to criticism during the period of the Renaissance.

4. THE COUNTER-REFORMATION IN ACTION

With the conclusion of the Council of Trent, all the forces of the Counter-Reformation swung into action, under the leadership of reforming popes. Without the support of papal authority, which was strengthened rather than otherwise by the council, no permanent success would have been possible. Even before the end of the council, the papacy had been responsible for a good deal of reform, in the reign of Paul III and still more under Paul IV (1555–59), who as Cardinal Caraffa had for years been the leader of the conservative Catholic reformers. After Trent, the spirit of the Counter-Reformation ruled at Rome. During the remainder of the sixteenth century, two popes in particular, Pius V (1566–72) and Sixtus V (1585–90), were zealous exponents of clerical morality and rigid orthodoxy. Under the former, the Catholic Church took on new vigor, crushed out all opposition in the lands it controlled, and began a remarkable period of reconquest. Catholicism was no longer on the defensive. It was carrying the war into the enemy's country. Under Sixtus V, as the power of Spain declined, the papacy took its place once more as the leader of the Catholic world, though no longer with the secular power that had hampered rather than helped its spiritual authority in earlier times.

In the Latin countries of Italy and Spain, where the Counter-Reformation triumphed most completely, the work of reform was accompanied by savage repression of heresy. The Inquisition, which was the chief agent of repression, was not a new institution. It had been used with terrible effect against the heretics of southern France in the thirteenth century. In the closing years of the fifteenth century, it was revived and given new and more effective powers in Spain. Then, in 1542, when the Counter-Reformation first

Reforming popes

Inquisition and Index

gained headway at Rome, Cardinal Caraffa persuaded Pope Paul III to reorganize the papal Inquisition in Italy on the Spanish model. Throughout the remainder of the Counter-Reformation period, the Holy Office, as the Inquisition was officially named, with its secret trials and its power to turn over condemned heretics to the secular government to be burned at the stake, maintained a reign of terror, completely successful in stamping out all open signs of heresy in Italy and Spain. North of the Alps and the Pyrenees it never gained a firm foothold, though Philip II at one time tried to introduce it into the Netherlands. A second and almost equally important agent for the suppression of unorthodox opinion was the Index of Prohibited Books, an elaborate system of censorship of the press, designed to prevent the publication or circulation of any book that might suggest to the people ideas derogatory to the church or to orthodox belief. One of the immediate results of the Council of Trent was the publication of the Tridentine Index, which superseded earlier lists, and was enforced wherever the co-operation of the civil government could be obtained. Later, a permanent Congregation of the Index was instituted by Pius V to keep the work up to date. The effect of this rigid control of the press in moulding the thought of the Spanish and Italian people can scarcely be overestimated.

It is only fair to note that the persecution of heresy and censorship of heretical books were by no means confined to the Catholic Church. Tolerance of varying opinions in matters of religion was a virtue that found few champions in the sixteenth century. To both Protestant and Catholic theologians, the heretic who endangered men's souls was a deadly enemy of mankind. Moreover, in every country, church and state were so closely united that a dissenting religious sect was likely to become a seditious political party, and the persecution of heresy by the state often appeared as the punishment of treason or sedition. Nevertheless, the persecution of heretics was never as thorough or as savagely enforced in the Protestant countries as it was in Italy and Spain, for in none

Intolerance on both sides

of them was there a separate institution, with the terrible powers of the Inquisition, dedicated to that purpose.

However successful the negative measures of suppression might be in stamping out heresy in Catholic lands, they would never have accomplished the real revival of Catholic piety, much less the reconquest of doubtful or openly Protestant lands, which took place during the Counter-Reformation. For this, aside from the work of the Council of Trent and the reforming popes, credit must be given to the Jesuits. Their methods were positive and constructive. They preached, heard confessions and taught, reviving the piety of the indifferent, directing the consciences of the penitent, and instilling orthodox beliefs and devotion to the church into the minds of the young in their formative years. And they went out as missionaries to the lands that were drifting toward Protestantism. Some of their most effective work was done in

The Jesuits

Germany where, under the leadership of Peter Canisius, they brought about a revival of Catholic education and piety in the states whose rulers were still Catholic, but whose people were hovering on the verge of heresy.

By the end of the sixteenth century, the Counter-Reformation, like the Protestant Reformation, had spent its aggressive force. By that time the religious map of Europe was fairly definitely fixed. The church on both sides had become closely identified with the national, political, and governmental interests of the state, and could count on them for permanent support when the wave of religious enthusiasm died down. France had emerged from the Wars of Religion with a recognized Protestant minority, but with Catholicism assured as the national faith. Poland had been won back from Protestantism and Germany was evenly balanced between the two opposing creeds, with little chance of further conquest by either.

Results

31

The States of Europe in the Age of Philip II

(1556–98)

THE FIRST HALF-DOZEN YEARS of the reign of Philip II marked the opening of a new era in the history of most of the states of Europe. The scenes shifted and new figures replaced the old on the European stage. In France, the death of Henry II left the government in the hands of his widow Catherine de' Medici and her weakling sons; in England, the last of the Tudors, Elizabeth, began her long and prosperous reign; the ill-fated Mary Stuart took over the government of Scotland in the midst of a religious revolution; and Charles V, about whom European politics had centered for nearly half a century, divided his vast empire between his brother Ferdinand and his son Philip II, who for the remainder of the century was to take his father's place as the focal center of European affairs. Nor were the changes of these momentous years merely changes of person. The strife of Lutheran and Catholic in Germany had just been settled by the Religious Peace of Augsburg, and the German states entered on a period of formal peace that makes it possible to ignore their history for half a century; in the next few years, Protestantism was permanently established in England and Scotland; the Netherlands were drifting fast toward open revolt against Spain; France gave up her claims to Italy, thus ending the long Hapsburg-Valois wars, and the French Huguenots opened the Wars of Religion that were to devastate France with civil strife for more than a generation; and in 1562 the leaders of the Catholic Church met in the final session of the Council of Trent.

These years set the stage for the history of Europe during the remainder of the sixteenth century. In many respects the age of Philip II (1556–98) was very different from that of Charles V. Both the Renaissance and the Reformation had passed their peak and other problems engaged the attention of the European peoples. The action is often confusing, the motives tangled and difficult to follow. But two or three main threads, often interwoven, run through the history of the whole period. They are: the Spanish-Catholic policy of Philip II, the driving force of the Counter-Reformation, and the rising commercial interests of England and the Netherlands.

1. SPAIN UNDER PHILIP II

The son of Charles V, who inherited the crown of Spain with its dependencies in the Netherlands, Italy, and the Americas, clung throughout his life to a consistent policy and to the conviction that it was God's purpose for

Policy of Philip II

the people of Europe. That policy may be briefly stated. It was, in the first place, to enforce absolute government and strict conformity to the Catholic faith in all his dominions; second, to use the unified force thus established to make Spain the dominating power in Europe; and finally, to use this Spanish hegemony as God's instrument for the restoration of religious unity under the Roman Catholic Church to Western Christendom. In essence it was the dream of Charles V in his later years, but narrowed and intensified in his son by the shearing away of the German half of the Hapsburg empire, by Philip's Spanish upbringing, and by the influence of the Counter-Reformation, which made Philip a more bigoted Catholic than his father had ever been. In short, where Charles had been a cosmopolitan emperor, to whom his family interests meant more than any country, Philip was a Spanish king, a Spaniard born and with a Spaniard's narrow patriotism, rigid orthodoxy, and relentless hatred of heresy. Philip's problems were made simpler than his father's by the loss of the German lands, but he had still a baffling variety of tasks to demand his constant attention, and, as in his father's case, his efforts were hampered at every turn by the utter inadequacy of the financial means at his disposal.

He was hampered, too, by fatal inadequacies in his own character and ability. **Character** Philip had a very strong sense of duty, and he was an indefatigable worker. But, in an absolute ruler, industry may be nearer a vice than a virtue, when it is the product of a narrow, plodding mind, without understanding of men and lit by no spark of imagination. Philip's conscientious attention to every detail of government too often led to fatal delays. His best-intentioned efforts were often misdirected. His was the strength and weakness of the monomaniac. The conviction that his cause was the cause of God and Spain and he himself the chosen instrument of God's will held his spirit firm through countless trials, but it also closed his heart to mercy and his mind to counsel.

Philip was successful in carrying out the first part of his policy, at least in Spain.

There the enforcement of universal orthodoxy was relatively easy, for the majority of the Spanish people were as stanch Catholics **Religious persecution** and as intolerant of heresy as Philip himself. The Inquisition had done its work well in the past half-century. Still there were alarming signs of heresy here and there in the last years of Charles V. Philip's first act, therefore, on his return to Spain in 1559, was to stimulate the Inquisition to renewed activity. The fires of the *auto-da-fe*, that terrible ceremony in which heretics were burned to death, spread across Spain. The persecution was thorough and effective. Even the suspicion of heresy was eradicated and it did not make its appearance again. There was still, however, in southern Spain one large group of very doubtful Catholics, the Moriscos of Granada. They were not heretics in the ordinary sense of the word, but descendants of the Mohammedan Moors who had been forcibly converted by Charles V. Philip had good reason to believe that their professed Christianity was no more than skin deep. Determined to crush out all signs of Mohammedan faith or practice, he instituted a series of repressive measures that finally goaded the Moriscos to a desperate rebellion. The revolt was put down with frightful thoroughness. The helpless Moriscos were massacred or transported into servitude in Castile. Granada, which had been the richest agricultural land and the most prosperous center of industry in Spain, was left a barren waste.

Religious unity was closely bound up in Philip's mind with the establishment of his own absolute authority in Spain. Each would help the **Absolute government** other and both were necessary in order to place the full resources of the country at the disposal of his greater purpose. The way had been prepared for him. He had only to carry on the work of Charles V in weakening the already feeble constitutional powers of the Cortes and in excluding the nobles from an active share in the civil government. His chief contribution was the development of a highly centralized bureaucratic administration, in which most of the offices were held by men of low birth who would be entirely dependent upon him. He

PHILIP II OF SPAIN

Titian has caught much of the essential character of his subject. The long pale face and heavy eyes indicate the cold and enigmatic character that made Philip respected by many but loved by very few.

THE DUKE OF ALVA

The Spanish general who tried to subdue the Netherlands by calculated cruelty was well suited by nature to carry out Philip's religious and political policies.
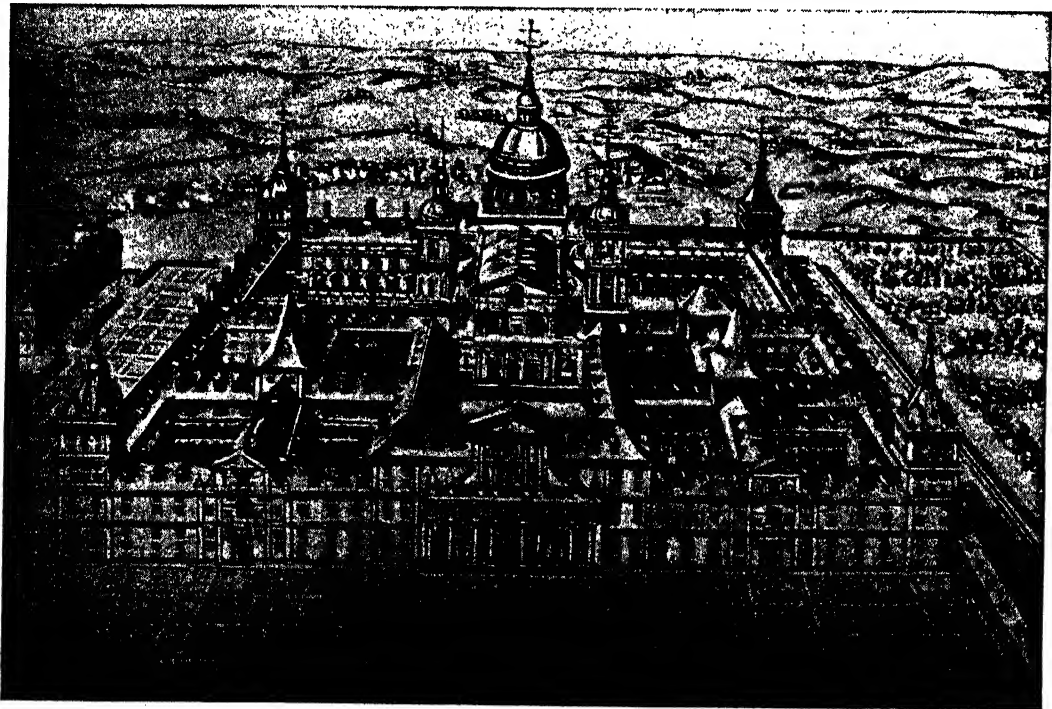
THE ESCORIAL

In the cold grandeur of this palace, built in the form of a grid in memory of the martyrdom of St. Lawrence, Philip II brooded upon death and the life eternal.

himself was the center of the whole system, supervising the work of all departments, often down to the most petty details.

So far, Philip succeeded in putting his policy into effect. But it did not have the desired result of making Spain a greater nation. On the contrary, both the country and the government grew steadily poorer, and when Philip died the fabulous wealth of Spain was fading to a memory. From the beginning, indeed, Philip was in constant financial straits. The ambitious foreign policies of Charles V had already reduced the government to the verge of bankruptcy, and Philip was forced to meet expenses almost as great from diminishing resources. Italy had never contributed much to the royal treasury, and the Netherlands on which his father had depended so heavily were in revolt during most of Philip's reign, thus making them a source of expense rather than of income. The whole burden, therefore, fell upon Spain. But even from this source, the amount that could be collected steadily decreased, as stupid economic legislation and a misguided system of taxation aggravated the decline of Spanish prosperity. The net result of Philip's financial policy was to kill the goose that laid the golden egg. The *alcabala*, a tax of ten per cent on every sale of goods, to mention but one of many burdensome taxes, was in itself enough to strangle the commerce of Spain and starve her industry, and to these were added innumerable hampering regulations and prohibitions, which in the end gave most of Spain's trade to the English or Dutch and drained the country of its gold and silver.

The results of Philip's unwise policy in Spain were not at once discernible. Thanks to the conquered wealth of the New World and to the apparent strength acquired through union with the great Hapsburg empire, Spain had become the greatest of the European nations during the reign of Charles V. For a long time after his death, she was able to maintain the appearance of greatness and an undiminished prestige, but under Philip the reality of Spanish power was crumbling. Two important successes, however, helped to hide this fact. In 1571, the Spanish fleet admin-

Taxation and commerce

Results in Spain

istered a decisive defeat to the Turks at Lepanto, and in 1580, Philip succeeded in making good an hereditary claim to the kingdom of Portugal, thereby uniting the whole peninsula under his rule and adding the great colonial empire of Portugal to that of Spain. Nevertheless, in summing up the results of Philip's government of Spain through nearly half a century, one must note more failure than success. He left his country impoverished, his people orthodox and proud, but unindustrious. Spain still seemed greater than it was, but it would not be long before the internal decay would destroy its prestige.

Meanwhile, Philip's attempts to carry out that part of his policy which concerned the rest of Europe had not met with even the partial success he had achieved in Spain. The Netherlands rebelled against his autocratic Spanish-Catholic government and the northern provinces broke away to form an independent Protestant state. Henry IV foiled his efforts to crush out Protestantism in France and to dominate the French government in alliance with the Catholic party. Finally, his hopes of restoring England to the Catholic Church and of gaining control of Spain's most dangerous commercial rival led only to the supreme disaster of the Armada.

Failure abroad

2. THE REVOLT IN THE NETHERLANDS

In almost every respect, the Netherlands were very different from Spain and they could not be made to accept the same policies or methods of government. It was one of the tragedies of Philip's reign that he never fully understood or became reconciled to that fact. The sovereignty of the seventeen provinces that made up the Netherlands was his by hereditary right, but there was no other political bond to hold them together, and each province had its own cherished institutions and ancient privileges. Even racial or linguistic unity was lacking; for the northern provinces were predominantly Germanic and Dutch-speaking, while the southern were more nearly French in tradition and language. Situated at the commercial crossroads of northwestern Europe, the Nether-

Philip and the Netherlands

lands were the home of a vigorous commercial and industrial people, prosperous and independent. Their position left them open to all the cultural and religious influences of the age and, despite persecution, many had adopted one or other of the current Protestant faiths. Lutheranism and Anabaptism had been the first to make an impression, but at the time when Philip began to rule, Calvinism was spreading rapidly in the northern provinces. The government of a people who were so divided, yet so prosperous and independent, would require a good deal of tact and understanding. Charles V, himself a native of the Netherlands and their own prince, had possessed those qualities in sufficient degree to retain their loyalty, though there was a good deal of discontent in his later years. Philip had neither tact nor understanding — and he was a foreigner.

The causes of the revolt were inherent in the character of Philip and his Netherland subjects and in the irreconcilable opposition between his general policies and their economic, political, and religious interests. From the beginning they distrusted him as a foreigner who did not speak their language and had no sympathy with their point of view. Philip was, indeed, a Spaniard first and last. He regarded the Netherlands as satellites of Spain, to be used for Spanish interests. Economic grievances soon gave point to their resentment of this attitude. Philip was in desperate financial straits. He was forced to begin his reign by increasing the burden of taxation, already high enough under Charles V, and most of the money wrung from the Netherlanders was spent in Spain. Still worse, he strove to restrict their commerce so as to give the advantage to Spanish merchants. Political grievances fed their resentment still further, as Philip tried to force upon the Netherlands a centralized, absolute government like that of Spain, regardless of the ancient constitutional rights and traditional privileges of the separate provinces. Finally, Philip's determination to crush out heresy in all his dominions permanently alienated the growing number of Protestants, while his arbitrary reorganization of the church government (including

Causes of the revolt

the creation of a number of new bishoprics) aroused the opposition of many Catholics. Philip's rigid Catholic policy was not the sole cause of the revolt, but once the revolt had begun, it was the factor that made reconciliation of the provinces that were predominantly Protestant impossible.

Despite these various causes of discontent, the first ten years of Philip's reign passed before there were any signs of open rebellion. Following his father's abdication, Philip remained in the Netherlands until 1559, when he returned to Spain, never to visit his northern possessions again. From that time on, he left the government of the distant provinces to a series of regents, of whom the first was his half-sister, Margaret of Parma. He always insisted, however, on a vexatiously detailed supervision of the regent's activity from his cabinet in Madrid. So far as he gave independent authority to anyone, it was to his chief minister in the Netherlands, Cardinal Granvelle, who became so unpopular that Philip was forced to recall him in 1564. The power of this foreign minister was especially resented by the great nobles, who were accustomed to being consulted in affairs of state. The most important of these, Prince William of Orange, had been shown high favor by Charles V, but now found himself neglected. He was not, however, responsible for the first outbreak of the revolt, though he was later to be its greatest leader. In 1565, a group of young hotheads from the lesser nobility, together with some of the wealthy burghers, organized to protest against the arbitrary government, the foreign ministers, and the Inquisition. The following year, some two hundred and fifty of them gathered to present a formal petition to the regent. They accomplished nothing, but the incident is memorable because it was then that the rebels acquired the name of "Beggars," applied to them in derision by one of the regent's councilors and carried by them in defiant pride throughout the revolt. The protest of the nobles was followed by wild anti-Catholic riots and image-breaking on the part of the Protestant proletariat, and Philip began to lay plans for crushing the independence of his turbulent and hereti-

Beginning of the revolt

cal subjects. In 1567, William of Orange resigned his offices and retired to his German estates to organize resistance; the first army of the Beggars was defeated by government troops; and Philip sent a Spanish army to the Netherlands.

The arrival of ten thousand veteran Spanish troops under the Duke of Alva, who now replaced Margaret as regent, opened one of the darkest and most blood-stained pages in European history. Philip had ordered Alva to crush all opposition both to the government and to the Catholic faith, and he could scarcely have found a more perfect instrument for his purpose than this hardened campaigner, who shared to the full his blind Spanish patriotism and hatred of heresy. For six years (1567–73) Alva raged through the land, imprisoning, executing, and confiscating the property of those who were suspected of either rebellion or heresy. Even the greatest nobles were not spared. The gallant Lamoral of Egmont and the Count of Hoorn were among the first to fall. In addition, Alva levied crushing taxes (including the Spanish *alcabala* or ten per cent tax on sales), which almost ruined the commercial and industrial prosperity of the Netherlands beyond repair. All this was not accomplished without opposition, but the people of the Netherlands were cowed by fear, and the duke's Spanish veterans easily defeated the German and French mercenaries recruited by William of Orange and his brother Louis of Nassau. The only success of the rebels was won on the sea. From 1569 on, the "Sea Beggars," lawless privateers who hated Spaniards and Catholics as much as they loved fighting and plunder, preyed on Spanish shipping along the Atlantic coast. At first they had operated from friendly English ports, but in 1572 they acquired a base on the coast of Holland by capturing the harbor of Brill. This first success on land encouraged other towns in Holland and Zeeland to rebel. In July, the Estates of Holland proclaimed William of Orange their stadholder, and despite frightful sieges and massacres the northern provinces never again submitted entirely to Spanish authority. Even Philip could see that the reign of

Alva's reign of terror

terror had borne its logical fruit in bitter hatred of Spain, and in 1573 he recalled Alva, replacing him by the more pacific Don Luis Requesens.

Throughout these bloody years, William of Nassau, Prince of Orange, was the heart and soul of the rebellion. He was a German by birth and his title was derived from a principality in southern France, but he had large estates in the Netherlands and became a Netherlander at heart. He was a tolerant man who hated religious persecution, and after the beginning of the revolt he threw in his lot with the Protestant minority. It was his grim determination, his refusal to accept defeat, and his patient and skillful diplomacy that kept the spark of rebellion alive during the darkest years. A discreet capacity for keeping his own counsel was one of his outstanding gifts, whence the name William the Silent by which he is best known in the annals of his adopted country. His constancy was rewarded by success in the years following the removal of Alva. Sternly refusing all conciliatory offers short of complete religious freedom and restoration of the old political rights, he kept up the fight, meanwhile uniting the northern provinces under his leadership and working to win the coöperation of the south. This latter object he achieved in 1576 after the Spanish troops, who had been left unpaid and leaderless by the death of Requesens, mutinied and perpetrated the horrible massacre known as the "Spanish Fury" at Antwerp. Goaded by this final outrage, the States General of the southern provinces signed the Pacification of Ghent, a treaty with Holland and Zeeland to stand together against the Spanish tyranny.

William unites the provinces

The union, however, did not last long. The common hatred of Spain was offset by too many differences between north and south. They did not speak the same language, and the aristocratic governing class of the industrial southern provinces had little in common with the democratic commercial states of the north. The chief barrier between them, however, was the difference in religion. The years of persecution had driven the most stubborn Protestants from

Treaty of Arras and Union of Utrecht

the south to the more easily defended and rebellious northern provinces, which were now fanatically anti-Catholic, while the south was left fairly free from Protestantism. It would therefore not be difficult for an astute diplomat to stir up dissension between the provinces, and this was the aim of Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma, who arrived with a new Spanish army to take over the regency in 1578. The famous Parma, already renowned as a soldier but equally skilled as a diplomat, was not long in getting results. Early in 1579, a group of the southern provinces signed the Treaty of Arras, forming a league for the protection of the Catholic faith. This was immediately answered by the Union of Utrecht, in which the northern provinces banded together to resist religious persecution and Spanish rule "with life, blood, and goods." These two treaties mark the final split between north and south. In the following years, Parma conquered or cajoled the remaining rebels in the south and restored the ruined land to the Spanish crown and the Catholic Church, while the little Protestant states in the north struggled on to maintain their independence and to form the Dutch Republic.

Philip never became reconciled to the loss of the most prosperous part of his Netherland possessions. Until he was

The Dutch Republic assassinated in 1584, William the Silent was kept busy defending his country against Parma's armies and trying in vain to get substantial aid from France by offering the sovereignty of the United Provinces to the king's younger brother. After his death the danger increased. There was no strong central government in the new republic, and each of the provinces claimed independent sovereign powers. Aid from England helped them over the difficult period of the next four years until events elsewhere relieved the pressure. Parma's attention was distracted, first by Philip's plans for the invasion of England, then by wars with the French Huguenots, and later with France itself. Meanwhile, two new leaders appeared who united the provinces and shepherded them through two decades of war to final security. John van Oldenbarneveldt gave wise direction to affairs of

state, while Maurice of Nassau, the brilliant son of William the Silent, became stadholder of the various provinces and led the Dutch army to victory after victory. A truce in 1609 practically ended the war, but Spain did not formally recognize the existence of the Dutch Republic as an independent state until 1648. Meanwhile, the Dutch had prospered mightily. Their seaborne commerce had not been wrecked by the revolt as had the industry of the southern provinces, and, though the long war with Spain was expensive, their expanding commerce more than made up the loss. Despite its small size, the Dutch Republic was now one of the greatest commercial powers in Europe with trade extending from the West Indies to the Far East. Together with England, it fell heir to the commercial supremacy that was slipping from the hands of Spain.

3. THE WARS OF RELIGION IN FRANCE

The Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis and the death of Henry II, both in the year 1559, ended an epoch in French history — that of the long foreign wars against the encircling Hapsburg power and for the domination of Italy. For the next forty years, French history centered around new problems, as foreign wars gave place to the civil Wars of Religion.

The Reformation came to France as an importation from Germany and Switzerland, though the way had been prepared by some of the earlier **French Protestantism (to 1559)** French Christian humanists. From the first it had to make its way against the opposition of the monarchy, for the French kings had already acquired all the control of the church in France that they needed and regarded heresy as a menace to national unity. In the early years Francis I was fairly tolerant, but as Lutheranism gained ground, he commenced an intermittent persecution, which became more severe and constant in the last decade of his reign. Under Henry II, the persecution became still more severe. Nevertheless, Protestantism continued to spread, finding many converts among the burghers, gentry, and nobility, and took on a more aggressive character. The secret of this new energy was the influ-

THE "SPANISH FURY" AT ANTWERP

This engraving gives a vivid impression of the massacre of the people of Antwerp by the mutinous Spanish soldiers in 1567.
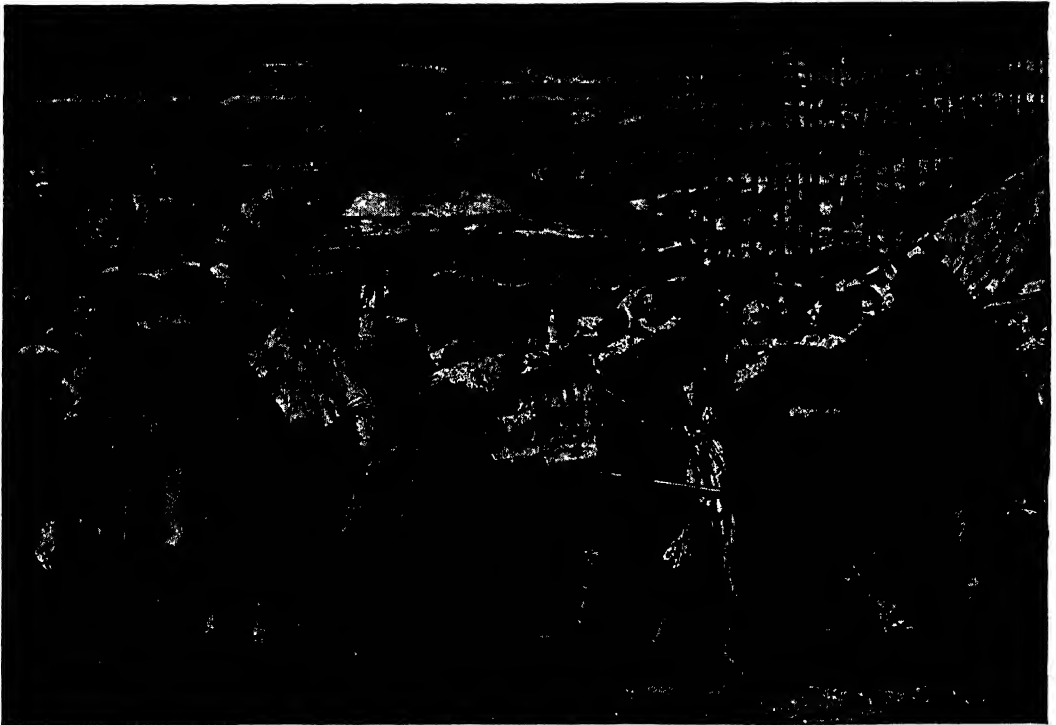
THE SURRENDER OF BREDA

In one of his finest paintings, Velasquez commemorated the surrender of the town in which William the Silent had his home. The Dutch commander is shown surrendering the key of the town to the Spanish general.

ence of John Calvin and the shift among French Protestants from Lutheranism to Calvinism. Calvin was himself a Frenchman and a master of French prose. His logical spirit made a more direct appeal to the French mind than did the mysticism of Martin Luther. Moreover, he maintained a personal supervision of the struggling Protestant communities from his stronghold on the eastern frontier, and gave them the benefit of his genius for organization. In the year 1559, which saw the death of Henry II, the first French Protestant Synod met secretly in the king's own city of Paris to work out a national organization for the Reformed Church in France.

The next step in the development of French Protestantism followed almost immediately. It became a politi-
Rival noble families
cal party, headed by a group of great nobles who were held together by family ties. Under the absolute monarchy of Francis I and Henry II, the majority of nobles were little more than courtiers and soldiers. Nevertheless, there were a few great nobles, divided into two family groups, both more or less closely related to royalty, who exercised great influence at court. Under the feeble rule of Henry's sons, they became rivals for the control of the government, and, as one group was Protestant, though of fairly recent conversion, the other extremely Catholic, their rivalry became an integral part of the religious struggle. On the Protestant side were the two foremost Princes of the Blood, Anthony of Bourbon, King of Navarre by virtue of his marriage to the Protestant Jeanne d'Albret, and his brother Louis of Condé. Allied to them by marriage was the able and deeply religious Gaspard de Coligny, Admiral of France, who, together with his two brilliant brothers, gave the soundest leadership to the Protestant party. Coligny was also related to the family of Montmorency, though the head of that powerful house, the aged constable, remained a Catholic. On the other side, the family of Guise headed the ultra-Catholic opposition to heresy. They were a younger branch of the ruling house of Lorraine and were closely connected by marriage with the royal fami-

lies of France and Scotland. Duke Francis of Guise, the head of the family, had acquired a great military reputation and considerable popularity in the recent wars with Spain; two of his brothers were cardinals and royal ministers; his sister Mary was Regent of Scotland as widow of James V and mother of the young Queen Mary Stuart, and the latter now became Queen of France as the wife of Henry II's eldest son, Francis II (1559–60).

As Francis II was still too young to rule, though he had passed the legal age of majority, the government fell naturally into the hands of the
The Guise ascendancy
queen's uncles, the brothers Guise. They at once made use of the known Calvinist leanings of their rivals, the Bourbon-Coligny group, to drive them from court, thus forcing them into opposition as avowed leaders of French Protestantism. During the next year, the Guises redoubled the religious persecution, filling the prisons and keeping the executioners busy, while in self-defense the Protestants were forced to organize as a political-religious party. It was at about this time that the Protestants in France came to be known by the name of Huguenot. They were drifting rapidly toward rebellion when the Guise ascendancy ended for a time with the death of Francis II, after only a year's reign.

The crown now passed to Henry's second son Charles IX (1560–74), who was still a child. His mother, Catherine de' Medici, promptly seized
Catherine de' Medici
control of the royal government as regent. Hitherto this daughter of the famous Florentine family had played a secondary rôle as the wife of Henry II and mother of the late king, but from this time on she was to be a principal actor in the hectic French drama. For a quarter of a century she directed the government of her remaining sons, and wielded whatever power was left to the French crown. Through it all she clung to a consistent policy, though it was one that had every appearance of inconsistency. Her aim was simply to maintain control of the government for herself and her sons and to keep the kingdom at peace so far as possible. To do that, she played off

Guise against Bourbon, extreme Catholic against Huguenot, and strove whenever possible to build up a center party of moderate Catholics who would be loyal to the crown and would help to keep the peace.

Catherine's first action was to stop the persecution of the Protestants and to issue an edict granting them a limited **Protestant aggression** freedom of worship. If Catherine hoped that this would keep the peace or conciliate the Huguenots, she was mistaken. Calvinism had gained steadily and become increasingly militant under the weight of persecution. When the pressure was lifted, it spread with startling rapidity and remained as militant as ever. The Protestants were never more than a small minority of the population of France, perhaps not more than ten per cent, but their strength was far greater than their numbers would indicate. They were recruited chiefly from the most energetic and influential classes — the industrial and commercial townsmen and the fighting gentry from the country, to whom were added a few great nobles. They were characterized by a high morality and earnestness of purpose that made them in every way a respectable as well as formidable group. Filled with hope, they were now determined to win full freedom at all costs. Catherine's moderate edict failed to satisfy them. At the same time, it aroused strong opposition from the extreme Catholics. Fanaticism on both sides flared to fever heat. Catholics and Protestants alike rioted and desecrated each other's churches in every corner of France. In 1562, the Duke of Guise, placing himself at the head of a group of Catholic nobles, seized control of the government and forced Catherine to recall the edict of toleration. But the Protestants had gone too far to submit. They took arms to defend their faith and opened the Wars of Religion.

France now entered on a decade of alternate civil war and peace that was very little **First Wars of Religion** different from war. Despite their great inferiority in numbers and frequent defeats, the Huguenots held their own by virtue of able leadership and unshakable determination. The murder of Francis of Guise in 1563

weakened the Catholic party, and in the following years nearly all the original leaders on both sides fell, leaving Coligny the most outstanding figure in France. Meanwhile, Catherine pursued her vacillating course, alternating persecution with toleration, and striving to restore peace and keep control of the government. In the years 1570–72, she seemed about to obtain her objective. She arranged a peace treaty, granting a fair amount of freedom to Protestants in places where they were in the majority; summoned Coligny to court; and planned to win over the Huguenot leaders by marrying her daughter Margaret to young Henry of Bourbon, who had succeeded his father Anthony as King of Navarre and would in time become the natural chief of the Huguenots.

As usual, however, Catherine had failed to reckon with the fanatical passions on both sides, which indeed she could never understand. The Huguenots were still unsatisfied and **Massacre of Saint Bartholomew** the Catholics were developing a strong opposition under the leadership of Duke Henry of Guise, the son of the old Catholic leader. Moreover, Catherine began to fear the influence of Coligny with the king, now of age, whom he was trying to persuade to help the Protestant rebels in the Netherlands and to seize the opportunity provided by the revolt to annex the French-speaking provinces. Peace seemed as far away as ever, and Catherine decided to throw in her lot again with the Guises. She persuaded herself that the admiral and the few remaining Huguenot chiefs were the principal obstacles to peace, and that if they could be removed, the Huguenot resistance would collapse. Their presence in Paris for the wedding of Henry and Margaret provided the opportunity, and on Saint Bartholomew's Eve, 1572, Catherine and the Guises laid the plans that led to the terrible massacre of the following day. They had probably intended no more than the murder of Coligny and the other chiefs, which Henry of Guise supervised himself, but, as news of the killing spread, the fanatical Paris mob rose to take a hand, and before morning some two thousand Protestants had been

slain. Similar massacres in other cities soon accounted for thousands more.

Despite the loss of their leaders, the Huguenots still fought on, until in 1576 they won the most favorable peace yet accorded to them. Nevertheless, it was clear that they had passed the peak of their power and were losing ground. Their numbers had been cut down by war and massacre and it was only in the south and west of France that they were strong enough to hold their own. Protestantism was no longer spreading. On the contrary, a strong Catholic reaction had set in under the influence of the Counter-Reformation and the activity of the Jesuits. Moreover, the whole country had suffered terribly from the wars, and the ruined people not unnaturally blamed the stubborn Protestants. The royal government was almost bankrupt, and Henry III (1574–89), who succeeded his brother Charles IX two years after the massacre, was too feeble to control the situation. In 1576, the extreme Catholic party, headed by Henry of Guise, took matters into their own hands and formed the Catholic League, independent of the king, for the suppression of Protestantism. During the next few years, the league gained a wide following and also the assurance of support from Philip II.

The death of Catherine de' Medici's fourth son, the Duke of Alençon, the last of the Valois line, brought about a crisis and precipitated the final struggle. Henry III was in feeble health and had no sons, and the nearest heir to the throne was now the Protestant Bourbon prince, Henry of Navarre, who for some years had been the most active leader of the Huguenots. Rather than accept him, the league was prepared to go to any lengths. In 1585, the leaguers signed a treaty with Philip of Spain in open defiance of their king. The war that followed is called the War of the Three Henrys. Lacking resources or the strength to use what he had, Henry III was caught between the league, led by Henry of Guise, and the Huguenots who followed Henry of Navarre. At first the unfortunate king submitted to the dictation of the league, then in a burst of futile energy he strove to

The Catholic reaction

War of the Three Henrys

free himself by the assassination of Duke Henry. Vengeance followed within the year. In 1589, he was himself assassinated by a fanatical leaguer, and Henry of Navarre proclaimed himself King of France as Henry IV (1589–1610).

The death of Henry III did not at once end the wars, for his successor had still to overcome the opposition of the league and of Spain. His religion was the chief obstacle in his path to the throne. Save for that, the French people would have accepted him willingly enough, for they were weary of war. After four years more of fighting, Henry IV finally realized that the obstacle was insurmountable. He submitted and formally adopted the Catholic faith. After that he had little trouble in reconciling the leaders of the league, though he had still to fight a war with Spain, for Philip II was loath to give up his dream of dominating France through the Catholic party. The war ended on terms favorable to France in 1598, the last year of Philip's reign. In the same year, Henry provided a settlement of the religious problem for France, which in main outline was to last for nearly a century. By the Edict of Nantes, he guaranteed freedom of conscience and full political rights to all Protestants. The Wars of Religion were ended. Protestantism in France had secured a legal status, but its great days were over. During the next century it faded slowly, as the interests of the age shifted. Meanwhile, with peace restored at home and abroad, Henry IV was free to turn his attention to the reconstruction of his shattered kingdom. But that is a story that must be left for another chapter.

Settlement under Henry IV

4. ENGLAND UNDER ELIZABETH AND THE SCOTTISH REFORMATION

Before Protestantism was finally established in England, there was a brief Catholic interlude. When the young King Edward VI died, the fate of religion in England was still far from certain. The English Reformation had begun as a political and national revolt against Rome, supported by economic motives, rather than as a primarily religious

Catholic interlude: Mary

movement. The people had acquiesced in Henry's establishment of a national Anglican Church, but neither king nor people had changed their doctrinal beliefs in any very marked degree. True, Protestant teaching of the various types emanating from Germany and Switzerland gained many converts, especially in the influential commercial class and among the gentry of the south, and under Edward doctrinal Protestantism made rapid progress. Still, there is reason to believe that when Edward's eldest sister Mary Tudor, the daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, came to the throne in 1553, the greater number of Englishmen were either still Catholic or were sufficiently indifferent to accept either church as the government should decide. The proof is that Mary, herself a devout Catholic, was able to restore Catholicism as the official religion with the aid of Parliament and to reunite the English Church to the Roman. There was no rebellion, and the Catholic restoration might have been successful but for two things. In 1554, Mary married Philip II of Spain and joined Spain in a close alliance that reduced England to the position of a Spanish satellite. And she persecuted Protestants with a harshness that won for her the name of Bloody Mary. The Spanish alliance, coupled with the persecution and the restoration of papal authority, aroused national resentment in England and hatred of Spain and the papacy. When Mary died, most Englishmen were formally Catholic, but Catholicism had become more unpopular. The issue was still to be decided.

The crucial decision was made by a young woman of twenty-five, Elizabeth (1558–1603), Anne Boleyn's daughter, **Elizabethan settlement** and the last of the Tudors. The new queen had been raised as a Protestant, but she was no fanatic. What she wanted was a national church, free from Rome and subject only to the royal authority, Protestant in character, but liberal enough so that all but the most stubborn extremists might conform. She procured it by act of Parliament in 1559. In the matter of church government, Elizabeth followed the example set by her father. An Act of Supremacy re-established the Anglican Church under the supreme authority of the crown, with the old episcopal system otherwise unchanged. This was followed by an Act of Uniformity, which prescribed the use of a Book of Common Prayer, modeled on that of Edward VI, as the only legal form of worship. Having secured the outward uniformity that was so essential for political reasons, Elizabeth was prepared to leave a good deal of leeway in matters of doctrine. The creed as stated in the Prayer Book and the later Thirty-Nine Articles was predominantly Protestant, but the phrasing at crucial points was vague enough so that the more moderate Catholics, who did not hold strongly to the papal obedience, might attend the national church without too great a shock to their consciences, while almost all Protestants, whether they had taken their opinions from Wittenberg or Geneva, could interpret it to suit their own convictions. The Elizabethan settlement of the church was a characteristically English compromise and amazingly permanent. Elizabeth reigned long enough to see it firmly established and it has lasted down to our own time. Divergent parties soon arose within the church — but they remained there. Only the wilder Protestant sects and the extreme Catholics remained stubbornly aloof. They were punished and harassed by fines, but were not persecuted so severely as to arouse public sympathy for them.

The peaceful and permanent establishment of a Protestant church in England was closely bound up with the conversion of Scotland to Protestantism just at the time when **England and Scotland** Elizabeth was beginning her reign. The coincidence was of vital importance to both countries. United by a common religious interest, England and Scotland were both able to withstand the threat of domination by the great Catholic states of the Continent, Spain and France respectively.

Scotland was still a very backward country, almost medieval in its social and political structure. Its church was dominated by lawless nobles, **Reformation in Scotland** was disproportionately wealthy for a poverty-stricken country, and was probably the most corrupt in Europe. It

was an easy target for the attacks of the Protestant reformers. Moreover, the latter had patriotic national sentiment on their side. The Scottish people were growing restless under the rule of the French regent, Mary of Guise, while their queen, her daughter Mary Stuart, was living at the French court and in 1558 married the heir to the throne of France. They resented the treatment of Scotland as a dependence of France, and as the Guises were ultra-Catholic, Catholicism came to be associated in the popular mind with French domination. All the materials for a conflagration were present. All that was needed was the fiery preaching of John Knox, who returned from Geneva in 1555, to set the land ablaze. In 1557, a congregation of Scottish nobles signed the first Covenant for the defense of the Protestant faith. Two years later, Scotland was in armed rebellion against the French Catholic regent, and in 1560 Elizabeth sent aid to the rebels to help them drive out the French troops. That action was decisive. It secured the triumph of Protestantism in Scotland and ended the long-standing enmity between the two British countries.

When Mary Stuart came to rule her Scottish kingdom in 1561, she found the Calvinist Presbyterian Church already firmly established. The fact that the Reformation had come to Scotland in the form of Calvinism and in opposition to the government made the religious situation in Scotland very different from that in England. The Presbyterian Church was founded as the result of a revolution that swept away the old episcopal system with the royal control. As was characteristic of Calvinist churches everywhere, its organization was essentially democratic, with the final authority vested in the congregations and their elders and ministers. Such a church could not be controlled by the state, but, on the contrary, could bring powerful pressure to bear on the government. This Mary Stuart soon found to her cost. Through seven years of folly and romantic adventure, she fought the power of the church, only to be beaten by it. At last she fled from the country to take refuge in England, leaving her infant son James

Mary and the Presbyterians

VI to be brought up by Presbyterian divines.

We must turn now to other aspects of English history, of equal importance with the religious settlement. The age of Elizabeth was the age when England rose to the first rank among the commercial nations of the world and built up the sea power that was the foundation of her future greatness. The origin of England's opportunity was the shift, already noted, in the center of gravity of world trade from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic.[1] New trade routes, around Africa to India and the Spice Islands and straight west across the ocean to the Americas, were blazed out by Portuguese and Spanish seamen. As a result, Portugal and Spain acquired a monopoly of the rich commerce of the Far East, the African coast, and the New World. But they did not hold it long unchallenged. The Spaniards and Portuguese were great pioneers and colonizers, but they were indifferent merchants, and their methods of government were fatal to home industry and trade. It was inevitable that the hardy seagoing folk and canny merchants of England and Holland should seek their share in the New World trade — and almost as inevitable that they should get it. They had the advantage over their competitors of thriving native industries, like the woolen cloth industry, which gave them valuable goods to sell in foreign parts. Despite all prohibitions, English merchants poached on Spanish preserves in the New World, and carried on a profitable smuggling trade with the Spanish colonists, who needed the goods which they could supply to better advantage than could the merchants from the home country. Meanwhile, daring English sailors risked their lives in Arctic seas, in the hope of finding new routes to the Orient by the northwest passage around North America or by the northeast passage around Europe. The latter aim led to solid results through the discovery of the White Sea, which opened up a new and profitable trade route to Russia. English merchants, too, dared the Spanish control of the Mediterranean to carry on trade with the Levantine countries of the Near East.

Rise of English commerce
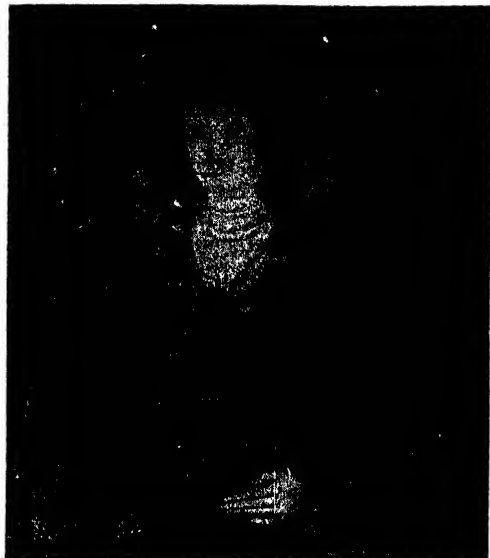
QUEEN ELIZABETH

This portrait tells us more, perhaps, of the styles at the court than of the character of the "good queen" herself.

SIR FRANCIS DRAKE

For centuries Drake's name has been a symbol of the fighting tradition of the British navy.

THE GREAT ARMADA

A contemporary picture of the great Armada fighting the English fleet commanded by Sir Francis Drake

The fact that open trade with the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, united into one great empire by Philip II, was denied to them forced the English merchants to become armed smugglers and pirates, and made England a militant sea power. For years before there was formal war between England and Spain, merchant-privateers like Drake and Hawkins plundered the Spanish Main, captured treasure ships, and perfected a new technique of naval warfare. Religion added bitterness to the commercial rivalry. The English merchants were mostly Protestant, and they took a double satisfaction in every blow struck against the commercial monopoly of Catholic Spain. Nor were they the only Protestant seamen who combined profit with religious satisfaction in daring assaults on Spanish commerce. By an odd coincidence, the sea power of both the Netherlands and France was almost entirely in Protestant hands, that of the rebellious Dutch and Huguenots respectively, who held the best of the Atlantic ports and issued forth to prey on the shipping of Spain. From the North Sea to the Caribbean, militant Protestantism rode the seas and harassed the great Catholic state, whose land armies were still regarded as invincible. It was the English privateers, the Huguenots, and the Sea Beggars of Holland, who, by strangling Spanish trade and cutting Spain off from the Netherlands, made possible the success of the Dutch revolt. Or, if that were not enough, the aid, official and otherwise, sent from England to the Protestant rebels in the Netherlands may be considered a decisive factor. Small wonder that Philip II finally determined to crush the island kingdom which had become the chief menace to his cherished plans for the restoration of Catholicism to Europe and for the aggrandizement of Spain.

It is more surprising that he did not attack England earlier, when, indeed, he would have had a better chance of success. But there were a number of good reasons for his delay. At first he had hopes of restoring the ascendancy over England, which he had lost on the death of Mary, by marrying Elizabeth, or through the queen's fear that France would press the claims of Mary Stuart. And Elizabeth's astute diplomacy maintained the delusion as long as possible. Then the Netherlands revolted and Philip put off war with England until he should have regained control of his northern possessions. He lacked the sea power to land an army in England, so long as the English could count on the aid of Dutch and Huguenot privateers, and with every passing year the English themselves became more formidable opponents on the sea. Philip accordingly turned to conspiracy with English Catholics to rid himself of Elizabeth and to restore Catholicism in England by replacing the Protestant ruler with the Catholic Mary Stuart. The weak point in Elizabeth's position was that she was the last of the direct line of Tudors, that her legitimacy was disputed by all good Catholics, who had never recognized the validity of Henry's divorce from Catherine and marriage to Anne Boleyn, and that Mary Stuart, as great-granddaughter of Henry VII, was the next claimant to the throne. For years Elizabeth's life was in constant danger from Spanish-Catholic plots, which, incidentally, served to arouse in patriotic Englishmen an undying hatred of papal Spain. So long as Mary Stuart lived, neither English independence nor Protestantism was safe. Elizabeth protected the unhappy queen as long as she could, but at last, in 1587, she submitted to the popular demand and ordered her execution for treason. There was now nothing to delay Philip any longer. He declared open war immediately. It lasted until after the end of Elizabeth's reign.

Though the war dragged on for years, its fate was settled at the very beginning by the dramatic defeat of Philip's great Armada in 1588. He had strained the financial resources of Spain to the utmost in order to build a fleet great enough to crush the English navy and transport an invading army to England. But more than money is needed to build an effective navy. Philip listened too little to the advice of experienced sailors, and entrusted the command to landsmen and soldiers. From beginning to end, the history of the Armada is a story of short-sighted stupidity and hopeless bungling. No account was

taken of the new technique of naval warfare, based on the use of heavy cannon in light, handy ships, which had been worked out by Drake, Hawkins, and other privateers and introduced into the small but efficient English navy. The story of how the "invincible" Armada was destroyed by the winds and water of the English Channel, ably assisted by the men and guns of the English navy, is too well known to need recounting. The destruction of the Armada marked a definite stage in the decline of Spain's power, while for England it was the beginning of a great era of ascendancy on the sea.

32

The Economic Revolution

IN PRECEDING CHAPTERS we have traced the history of Europe during the period of transition from medieval to modern civilization. We have noted the transformation of society and the state, together with the accompanying changes in the realm of thought and religion, and have suggested more than once that the motive force behind many if not all of these changes was the development of new and more potent forms of economic activity. It is time now, with the political, cultural, and religious background already before us, to study at greater length the nature of the transformation of European economic life that took place during these centuries. We shall find that it amounts to an economic revolution, and one that marks what are perhaps the most fundamental differences between the medieval and the modern ages. Indeed, it is very doubtful if any of the changes of this crucial period in Europe's history had more far-reaching consequences than the change in the methods of doing business. Because the change occurred at different times and in different degrees in different places — in isolated instances in the fourteenth century, more generally in the fifteenth, and almost universally in all parts of Europe in the sixteenth century — it is difficult to trace its history in any connected fashion. We have one clue, however, to guide us through the maze. Our main task will be to follow the development of capital and to discover what it did to commerce, industry, agriculture, the state, and society.

1. THE ACCUMULATION OF CAPITAL

The first prerequisite to the introduction of capital as a productive force in the business world was the existence of private fortunes, or accumulations of capital, large enough to **Rise of money economy** furnish a surplus that could be invested in any profitable enterprise. The problem of how such fortunes were accumulated, in occasional instances before the end of the High Middle Ages and with increasing frequency during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, is one that has led to a great deal of discussion among modern historians. One point, however, is clear. They could not have existed had it not been for the gradual spread of what we call "money economy," following the revival of trade that began about the middle of the eleventh century. In the purely feudal society of the earlier Middle Ages, there had been little use for money and but little cash in circulation. What trade there was in that age, when almost all men drew their living from the cultivation of the soil, was carried on by barter, and the obligations of man to man were usually fulfilled by personal services. With the revival of commerce, accompanied as it was by the revival of industry and town life, this primitive economic condition gradually changed. Merchants and artisans found it

more convenient to buy and sell raw materials or goods for cash, and even the peasants who worked the land in time acquired the habit of buying and selling, as the growing towns offered a cash market for foodstuffs. The change from the "natural economy" of barter and personal services to the "money economy" of cash transactions took place very slowly and was not complete at the end of the Middle Ages. Moreover, the medieval organization of commerce and industry under the corporate guild system, which was designed to limit the activity of individuals in the interests of the whole city community, effectively prevented most business men from accumulating more money than they needed for a "decent" living and the current expenses of a small business. Nevertheless, by the end of the thirteenth century, a good deal of money was in constant circulation, and already some few fortunate individuals had succeeded in accumulating surplus capital that might be invested to produce a profit when opportunity offered.

Given the general use of money, we have still to answer the question of how such private fortunes or any considera-

Accumulation of capital ble amount of surplus capital could be accumulated in the age before the feudal system had ceased to dominate agriculture and even before the guild system had lost its hold on commerce and industry. Leaving aside for the moment the fact that such long-distance commerce as that between the Italian cities and the Near East afforded unusual opportunities for individual profit even at the height of the guild régime, we shall find that most early accumulations of capital resulted from the use of political power, from money-lending, or from large mining operations.

As has already been pointed out, the rise of money economy was closely associated with the rise of strong central

Through political power governments in the European states.[1] It was the increasing possibility of raising money taxes that enabled the princes of the Later Middle Ages to hire standing armies and support a centralized administration, thus freeing themselves from dependence on the feudal nobles.

[1] See above, pages 372-376.

At present, however, we are interested in another aspect of the collection and expenditure of the growing royal revenue. The collection of royal taxes meant the accumulation in one place of a sum of money larger than could be gathered together in the normal course of trade. And where any large sum of public money is gathered together, there are always opportunities for the diversion of considerable portions of it into private hands. Medieval governments were notoriously careless and inefficient in the handling of finance. The king might be in constant need of money, but the officials who were entrusted with the handling of the royal revenue frequently retired with sizable fortunes. It is said that the French superintendent of finance, Pierre Remy, left a fortune equivalent to $14,000,000 on his death in 1328. Similar opportunities were afforded by the revenues of great nobles, whose lands were petty states in themselves.

Another source of early fortunes, and one of the earliest ways in which surplus capital could be made to produce more capital, was the practice of

Money-lending and banking usury, as the church called it, i.e., money-lending at high rates of interest. There had been money-lenders all through the medieval period, many of them Jews, who made large though uncertain profits, and in the Later Middle Ages an extensive banking and money-lending business, with ramifications reaching to every part of Europe, was built up first by Lombard and then by Tuscan and German bankers. The famous Augsburg banking house of the Fuggers and the Florentine bank of the Medici are but examples of a number of fifteenth-century firms engaged in what would today be called international finance, and even earlier the bankers had become a very real power in international affairs. The most important clients of the early bankers were the rulers of the European states, who needed large sums of money at short notice for the paying and equipping of armies or for other expenses of the government and the court. Edward III could not possibly have begun the Hundred Years' War had he not been able to borrow large sums from the Florentine bankers to pay his new type of non-feudal army, and

JACOB FUGGER, THE RICH

This portrait, from a contemporary wood-cut, has every appearance of being a realistic picture of the richest man in Europe in the age of Charles V.

JACQUES COEUR

Merchant and finance minister to Charles VII of France, Jacques Coeur was one of the most prosperous capitalists in the fifteenth century.

LARGE-SCALE MINING

The silver mine shown above is one of the large operations financed by Fugger capital.

even his relatively peaceful contemporary, the Emperor Charles IV, is reported to have borrowed two million francs in one year. The new centralized monarchies were discovering the potential power of money. They regularly anticipated the income from revenues that could not be collected very rapidly, and were almost constantly in debt. The profits from this sort of money-lending were usually very high, but also very uncertain, for a prince might readily disown his obligations, as Edward III did, thereby ruining a number of Florentine bankers and causing a disastrous financial panic in Tuscany, and the heir to a throne would not always feel obliged to assume his predecessor's debts. Next to the rulers, the most constant borrowers were the feudal nobles, chronically improvident and hard-pressed for ready money, and the great ecclesiastical lords who built the magnificent cathedrals and monastery buildings on borrowed money, or squandered their incomes and all they could borrow in very much the same fashion as did the lay nobles. One thirteenth-century Archbishop of Cologne, for example, borrowed a million francs from the Italian bankers. In short, most of this early money-lending was for unproductive purposes. It did not bring profit to the borrower as well as to the lender. Hence the objections of church and people alike to the practice of usury. When money was lent, as it was beginning to be in the fifteenth century, for such productive purposes as the financing of large commercial ventures, there was little or no objection.

Before we consider the use of capital for commercial purposes, however, we must note **Mining** one exceptional method of accumulating a fortune, closely allied to political power and banking, yet more productive than official graft or the lending of money to impecunious monarchs and nobles. In the Later Middle Ages mining operations on a large scale were undertaken by men, mostly bankers or princes who had enough capital to enable them to introduce improved technical methods and enough political power or influence to secure a monopoly of mining rights in a given district. A fair share of the Fugger fortune

came from the operation of German silver mines.

Mining and banking played a particularly important part in the rise of capitalism, because they helped to furnish the tools of capital — money and accounting — as well as to accumulate fortunes. In the age when modern business was just beginning, "hard" money — that is, gold and silver coinage — was a much more essential ingredient in every business transaction than it is in our own day of elaborately organized credit systems. Up to the middle of the fifteenth century, the amount of money in circulation in Europe seems to have increased fairly steadily, though slowly, as the general volume of business grew and the opportunities for profitable investment became more numerous, thus bringing hoarded money into active circulation. From the end of the thirteenth to the middle of the fifteenth century, however, the total amount of money in existence in Europe probably did not increase, or may actually have decreased; for there was a lull in mining operations and a good deal of gold and silver was drained out of Europe by the luxury trade with the East. The revival of mining on a large scale after the latter date, due to the investment of capital to finance difficult operations, was of great importance in adding to the supply of coinage, which was so necessary to the development of capital. This supply was still further augmented in the sixteenth century by the importation of gold and silver from the mines of Mexico and Peru.

Almost equally important was the work of the bankers, not only in mobilizing capital, but also in working out a technique of convenient and accurate accounting, which is one of the principal tools of active capital. Originating in Italy, the science of accounting by double-entry bookkeeping spread to all parts of Europe by the beginning of the sixteenth century. Its adoption marks a definite stage in the development of capitalist business. It made possible accurate estimates of profit and loss, which greatly facilitated the handling of a large business, and also had a profound psychological effect on the business man himself by clarifying his

attitude toward his business and pointing out with unmistakable clearness the importance of profit as his chief aim. Moreover, the improved methods of bookkeeping enabled the bankers to work out a system of clearing or exchanging bills of indebtedness, so that international trade could be carried on with less dependence on the transfer of actual money.

In short, by the dawn of the modern age, a new type of wealth was already in existence,

The new wealth while a new technique for handling it and a new attitude toward its use were in the making. This new wealth was money wealth. Men had discovered the potentialities of capital and the truth of the axiom that money can make money. Business men were beginning to think in terms of investment of capital and to aim at the accumulation of profit rather than at the acquisition of a mere living. We must turn back now to trace the introduction of capital into commerce and industry, for it is investment in these productive enterprises that is the most essential characteristic of modern capitalism.

2. CAPITAL REVOLUTIONIZES COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Given the existence of fortunes large enough to leave a surplus for investment, the

Investment in trade introduction of capital into commercial life awaited only the opening-up of opportunities for the investment in trade of money in sufficient quantities to be dignified by the name of capital. Such opportunities were very few in the period of the High Middle Ages. Most medieval commerce was handled by small merchants, working under guild or city regulations which usually limited them to dealing in one kind of goods and to a small quantity. True, they had a small working capital, but they could scarcely be called capitalists, for they seldom aimed at or achieved more than the making of a respectable living from their trade. Only in long-distance, seaborne trade, like that between the Italian cities and the East, was it possible for a merchant to deal in large enough quantities to leave room for the investment of any considerable amount of money or the

making of any considerable profit. It was in this trade that the first purely commercial fortunes were founded. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, however, opportunities for larger commercial ventures became steadily more numerous and more general in all parts of Europe. These were in part the result of the larger and more concentrated demand created by the rising territorial states and the growing cities. The rulers of the new centralized states entered the market for large supplies of goods to equip their armies or for the luxurious needs of a royal court. This demand could be met more profitably and more conveniently by merchants working on a more extensive scale than that of their medieval forerunners, and frequently a single merchant or a small group would be able to secure a monopoly. The phenomenal fortune built up by the fifteenth-century French merchant, Jacques Coeur, owed a good deal to his double position as merchant and controller of the royal finances, so that as the king's agent he bought the government supplies from himself. The growth of great cities had a similar effect on trade, by creating a concentrated market for large quantities of goods from distant parts.

Finally, and this is perhaps the most important single factor in creating new opportunities for the investment of capital in trade, at the end of **New trade routes** the fifteenth century, the discovery of new ocean trade routes to Africa, India, and the Americas [1] opened up the most distant and most profitable trade that the world had yet seen. The Portuguese merchants, who brought back shiploads of spices, dyes, and silks from India, realized an almost incredible profit on their investment. Scarcely less profitable was the trade between Spain and the New World. Spanish merchants imported gold and silver, the priceless cochineal, dyes, and drugs, and sent out in return to the growing Spanish colonies all the necessities of life. Nor were the profits from these new trade routes limited to Portugal and Spain. The cargoes that came into the harbors of Lisbon or Seville were trans-shipped to the Netherlands for distribution, and before long, Dutch, Eng-

[1] See above, pages 396-400.
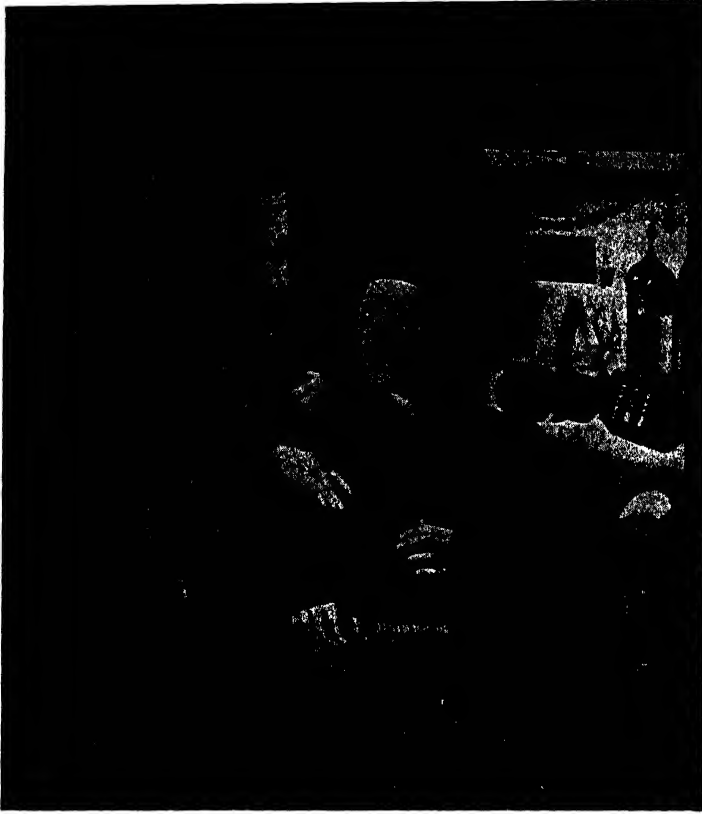
A FLEMISH GOLDSMITH

The painting of St. Eligius, patron saint of goldsmiths, by Petrus Christus, is in fact a picture of a fifteenth-century goldsmith's shop.

THE MONEY CHANGER AND HIS WIFE

This famous painting of a money changer, by Marinus van Roymerswaele, is a study in naked greed.

lish, and French merchants were competing for their share in the New World trade.

But if the profits from this new ocean commerce were great, the risks and the time involved in distant voyages were also considerable and the initial investment must be fairly large. Such commerce could not have been carried on under the primitive guild system. Nor, indeed, could the expanding volume of trade within Europe itself have been handled successfully by the old methods. It is extremely difficult to trace the exact relation between cause and effect in the gradual transition from the guild system to the conduct of trade by individual capitalists; but the net result is clear. A constantly expanding volume of trade on a world-wide scale was outgrowing the framework of a system which had been designed to meet the needs of a much more limited economic life. New conditions demanded new methods, and the tradition-ridden guilds were not sufficiently flexible or adaptable to survive in competition with the relatively unrestricted capitalists, who were prepared to seize every opportunity offered by the changing times. Those centers of trade where the medieval system was too firmly entrenched to be dislodged now began to decline, while other centers where capital could operate more freely took on new life. Among the other advantages enjoyed by capital was its freedom to migrate. It could be transferred easily to the new strategic centers created by the shift in the direction of world trade. In the sixteenth century many German capitalists shifted their investments to Antwerp to take advantage of the rising Atlantic trade. Capital, in short, was a fluid force, eminently adaptable. It could be moved, not only from place to place, but from one kind of business to another, as was demonstrated by the Fuggers, who kept their money working constantly in banking, mining, commerce, and industry, piling up profit by the modern method of a constant and rapid turnover.

The new conditions of trade, with greater opportunities for carrying goods in large quantities and from distant sources, gave rise to a new figure in European commerce, the entrepreneur or wholesale middleman. In the Middle Ages, when most international trade was concentrated in the periodic fairs, commerce was carried on by small wandering merchants, who sold their goods in large part directly to the consumer. At the same time local trade was handled chiefly by masters of the craft guilds who made their goods and sold them at retail, across the counters of their shops. This system survived through the sixteenth century, but the increased bulk demand of the cities was rapidly rendering it obsolete. Trade was outgrowing local limits, and the transportation of goods from place to place was being taken over by wholesale middlemen, who stood between the producer and the retail merchant. Handling goods in bulk, the entrepreneur had to have considerable capital to invest, but having that, he had a great advantage over his smaller competitors. Because of his strategic position between supply and demand, and because he was often able to secure a monopoly of trade either from the state government or through association with others like himself, the entrepreneur was frequently able to control prices at both ends and thus make certain of a profit.

As compared to the medieval method of doing business, the investment of capital in wholesale trade was essentially an individual enterprise; yet the new type of merchant found that there were still many advantages to be gained from association. In this respect the familiar guild organization provided a model that could be adapted to new uses. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries witnessed the formation of a number of merchant companies for the purpose of securing monopolies or special privileges for their members, though each member traded independently on his own capital. Such were the great London companies of Mercers, Drapers, and Grocers, who dealt in linen and silk fabrics, wholesale woolen cloth, and spices and drugs, respectively.

More characteristic of the modern development of capital, however, were the merchant associations of another kind, partnerships, family firms, and eventually joint-

RETURN OF THE FIRST DUTCH FLEET TO TRADE WITH THE EAST INDIES, 1597

In the seventeenth century the Dutch founded a great commercial empire in the East Indies. The contemporary painting above shows the first fleet returning to Amsterdam.
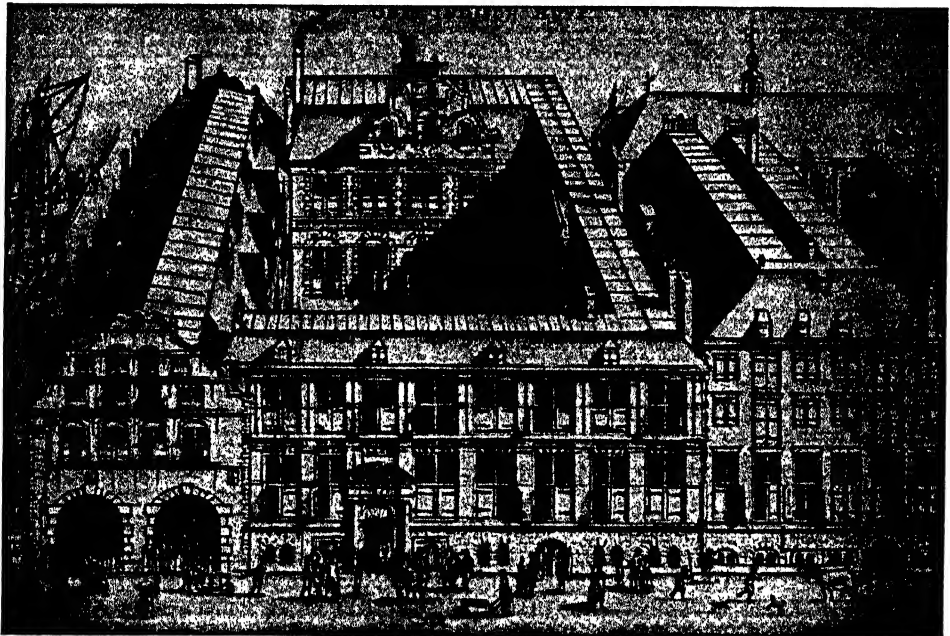
THE EAST INDIA HOUSE

The great building above was the headquarters of the Dutch East India Company.

stock companies. As has already been suggested, the wholesale trade, and especially the long-distance trade, demanded the investment of a considerable sum of capital to finance each venture. Not every merchant had enough capital to buy a large cargo or to send a ship to distant parts. Or, if he did have it, he might not be willing to risk so much on one venture. This problem could be solved by the formation of a temporary partnership of several merchants, each of whom would contribute a share of the necessary investment and would receive his proportionate share of the profit when the enterprise was completed. Such partnerships, if repeated, might in time lose their temporary character and become permanent business firms. Partnerships or associations of capital within the limits of a family group were the most likely to assume this permanent character.

The most complete development of the principle of association was represented by the joint-stock company. Though fairly common in southern Europe before the first one was organized in England in 1553 for the exploitation of the newly discovered northeast trade route to Russia via the White Sea, they remained fairly rare in the north until the end of the sixteenth century. As a rule the joint-stock companies were organized only when it was necessary to open up new and especially expensive or hazardous trade routes to distant lands. On the surface, their organization looks very much like that of a modern corporation. Each investor purchased a share or shares of the joint stock, thus contributing to the capital of the company, which was managed as a whole by the company's officers. However, they still kept many of the characteristics of the simple partnership, for each shareholder was responsible for the entire debts of the company.

The rise of capitalist commerce led inevitably to the introduction of capital into industry. The artisan, or manufacturer to use a more modern word, supplied the goods in which the trader dealt, and, as the merchant began to handle goods in larger quantities and to carry them farther afield, there arose

Capital invades industry

opportunities for the production of goods in greater quantities than had been needed to supply a local market or the relatively small demands of the ordinary medieval merchant. This demand for a larger volume of production created openings for the investment of capital in industry, in the same way that the demands of a growing market had done in commerce, and the results were as revolutionary. Medieval industry had been essentially small industry, designed for the most part to supply a local market. The typical guild master was a retail merchant, who sold his goods in his own shop, as well as a manufacturer. Even when he sold his goods to a merchant for export, guild regulations usually limited him to a small quantity of production by prescribing the number of apprentices and journeymen whom he might employ. This system proved adequate for the needs of a relatively simple economic life. It could not meet the demands of a rapidly expanding market and a growing international trade. This was apparent first in those industries which manufactured goods chiefly for sale in distant parts. Here there was growing up a wholesale demand, which necessitated, or at least created opportunities for, wholesale production, and wholesale production meant the investment of capital. In some cases industry adapted itself to the use of capital by a natural internal growth. In others, the capitalist method was imposed upon it by the entrepreneur, who handled raw materials and goods in wholesale lots, and who found it more profitable to hire laborers to work up his goods than to sell raw materials to individual masters and buy the finished product from them. In any case, the commercial middleman tended to separate the manufacturer from the consumer, and so destroyed one of the most characteristic elements of the original craft guild system.

Radical as was the change wrought wherever capital invaded industry, it did not, as a rule, result in the immediate destruction of the guilds. Rather, it tended to transform them, until they had entirely lost their original character. There were two fairly common ways in which this was accomplished. The

Capital in the guilds

first occurred in those industries where a number of craft guilds in turn worked on the manufacture of a product intended for a foreign market, and where the merchant guild, which handled the finished product, succeeded in dominating the workers' guilds. The best example of this process is the cloth-making industry in Florence, England, Flanders, and elsewhere. Here there was a necessary division of labor. The wool passed through the hands of spinners, weavers, dyers, fullers, and shearmen, before it was finally bought and sold as finished cloth by the merchants of the *Arte di Lana*, as the merchant guild was called in Florence, or the drapers, as they were called in England. As the only large and constant customers, the cloth merchants, by working together, found it easy to control prices and methods of work. This the *Arte di Lana* of Florence succeeded in doing as early as the end of the thirteenth century. The next step was for the merchants, who were themselves rapidly becoming capitalist entrepreneurs, organized in merchant companies solely for the purpose of securing monopolies, to buy the raw wool in bulk and hire the members of the workers' guilds to make it into cloth. They were now large employers, who had invested considerable capital in industry; and the masters of the subordinate craft guilds had sunk to the position of mere wage-earners. Those masters who clung to their independence were forced out of competition, because cloth that had been bought and sold in small quantities by a series of independent masters cost the merchants, who were the only purchasers, more than it did under the new system, in which the merchant bought the raw wool and merely paid wages. The final step in the subjection of the workers was taken when, as occurred in England in the sixteenth century, the merchant employers began to give out their wool to workers who were not guildsmen and who, therefore, could not combine to keep up wages.

A second way in which capital invaded the guild system was demonstrated by the rise of capitalist masters within the guild itself, where there was a demand for quantity production. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, particularly in the most thriving in-dustrial centers in France, England, and Germany, many of the guilds were becoming very exclusive. The masters banded together to form a small oligarchy and to exclude all outsiders from mastership. Having full control of the guild, they were able to relax the rules regarding the number of apprentices and journeymen whom any one master might employ. Each master could thus produce a larger quantity of goods. The result was that the masters, who still retained their guild monopoly of the right to sell their product in the city, became in reality merchant employers, while the majority of the workers in the craft became permanent wage-earners, who would in all probability remain journeymen for life. The growing gap between worker and employer within the guilds is shown by the numerous attempts of journeymen in all parts of Europe during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to form guilds of their own for defense against the masters, and by the formation, as in the English "livery companies," of organizations of the wealthy masters inside the guild, for the purpose of controlling the workers and the sale of goods.

While capital, in these various ways, was reshaping the guild system and making it serve its own interests, there was also a steady growth of capitalist industry outside the guilds altogether. **Capital outside the guilds** The original capital for this type of industrial enterprise was nearly always furnished by commerce. An example has already been noted in the wool merchants who gave out their wool to non-guild workers as a means of escaping the restrictions imposed by such few privileges as the guildsmen still retained. This usually necessitated the moving of industry from old established centers with traditional guilds to new towns or villages where no guild was already in existence. There the capitalist employer could pay lower wages and hence make a larger profit. And as capital inevitably followed profit, the new unrestricted centers throve and took business away from the old guild towns. The decline of many old English towns and the rise of new industrial centers in the north and west of England are good indications of the geographical shift

that often followed the capitalization of industry.

One final word of warning before we leave this subject: we must not forget, in concentrating our attention on the new developments of this age, that the transformation of industry by capital was a slow process and was not completed until two centuries or more after the end of the sixteenth century. Some parts of Europe lagged behind the rest, and there were almost everywhere some small guilds that survived with little change.

So far we have been dealing with the effect of capital on the economic life of the towns and cities. But what of the **Agriculture** great majority of the population in every country, who still wrung their living from the cultivation of the soil? Their life was as yet almost untouched by the transforming power of capital. Agriculture was the most conservative form of economic activity, the most thoroughly bound by tradition. In most parts of Europe, the ownership of land was not yet regarded as an investment, like a commercial or industrial business. It was rather an inherited possession, handed down in noble or knightly families, and worked in small plots by peasants who were traditional tenants and who owed customary dues to the landlord. The peasant tenants had few opportunities to accumulate the capital that would have been needed to change their methods of cultivation or their economic status, and the hereditary tenant system afforded few chances to the lord for the investment of capital in technical improvement or large-scale production. In short, though political feudalism was declining, economic feudalism still persisted. Some changes, however, were taking place. Money economy had already spread from the towns to the country, and, in most places, the peasants had arranged to pay a cash rent to their lord as a commutation of the personal services they owed him. And this change, slight though it was, did something to shake the rigid structure of custom and left some openings for capitalist enterprise. In some parts of Germany, wealthy burghers were buying up land with a view to exploiting it at a profit, and in both Holland and England capitalist methods

were beginning to invade this last stronghold of medieval tradition.

The first signs of this development can be observed most clearly in England, for there feudalism died earlier than in most continental countries. The **Enclosures in England** popular outcry against "enclosures" in the sixteenth century points to one of the ways in which capital was changing agricultural methods at the expense of the hereditary peasant tenants. By this was meant the fencing-in of the open fields of the manor in order to use them for grazing sheep. This required an initial capital investment, but brought a larger profit to the landowner, first, because the price of wool was rising with the expanding English woolen industry, and second, because grazing required the employment of much less labor than did the cultivation of the soil. But, though profitable to the landlord, this was disastrous to the peasants who were driven from their ancestral lands and thrown out of employment. As a matter of fact, the amount of land actually enclosed was comparatively small, but it demonstrated a change in attitude on the part of the English landowners. Traditional rights were being less carefully observed. Before the end of the sixteenth century, in many parts of England hereditary tenancy was giving way to leases for life or for a term of years.

3. CAPITAL AND THE STATE

We have already commented, in this and previous chapters, on the close relation between the growth of capital and the rise of the national or territorial states. This relation was so important that it deserves some further discussion, even though it may be in part repetition.

The origins of that gradual centralization of power in the hands of a monarch or prince, which was characteristic of most of the states of Europe **Capital and the state** in the Later Middle Ages, can be traced back to a time before capital, in the modern sense, was a vital force in business, but not before money had become an important factor in economic life. The growing power of the monarch depended on his ability to collect money to pay and equip

an army and to maintain an effective administrative system. Since money circulated most freely among the business class of the towns and cities, and since they were as a rule not a part of the feudal system, the monarch depended on them for a considerable share of his taxes. As the central governments grew stronger, and feudalism declined, kings were able to extend taxation to the rural districts, yet the commercial and industrial middle class still remained an important source of royal revenue. The growth of capital among this class, therefore, greatly increased the possibilities of royal taxation. Capitalist business increased the amount of money in circulation and, at the same time, it concentrated a large part of that money in the hands of a relatively small class, thus making the collection of taxes easier. The rulers of Europe soon realized the extent to which their own power, or that of the state, depended on the prosperity of the capitalist business men, and with that realization they began consciously to promote the interests of capital.

Before discussing the conscious promotion of business by the state, however, let us pause to note some of the ways in which the rise of territorial states unconsciously favored the early steps in the growth of capital. We have already explained how the development of central governments aided the accumulation of those large fortunes which were among the important prerequisites of capitalism. Moreover, the supplying of goods for the state armies and the royal courts furnished some of the earliest opportunities for the investment of capital in large-scale commercial transactions. More important than any of these factors, however, was the greater security and order which strong centralized governments alone could enforce. The free and safe circulation of trade that was essential to the success of capitalist business would have been impossible in the midst of the earlier feudal chaos. So, if the rulers of the European states realized their need of a prosperous business class, the capitalist merchants and manufacturers realized as clearly their need of a strong state government.

This close relation between the new type of state and the new type of business inevitably tended to make the territorial or national state the most important unit in economic life, *The state an economic unit* just as the city had been in the High Middle Ages. Medieval merchants and artisans had looked to the city government for protection, and it in turn had regulated their activity, either directly or through the agency of the guilds, in the interest of the whole city community. All trade outside the city was in a sense foreign trade, and was intermunicipal in character. Now, with broader economic interests to consider, the capitalist merchants and manufacturers began to look to the state for protection, and the state government in turn regulated trade and industry for the good of the whole state as they conceived it. One great advantage of this transference of economic control from the city to the state was the clearing-away of the economic barriers, set up by city exclusiveness, to trade within the state itself; a second was the greater protection which the state could give to its merchants in foreign parts.

The economic policy adopted by the European states when they took over the regulation of business was in many respects similar to that of the *Mercantilism* medieval cities, save that it was carried out on a much larger scale. The activity of the individual was still controlled, though not so rigidly, for the good of the whole community. This national economic policy is generally known as "mercantilism." It was developed to its fullest extent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but it was also generally practiced in the sixteenth century and signs of it were apparent at an even earlier date. Mercantilism consists essentially in the regulation of industry and commerce by the state government, with a view to making the state more prosperous and hence more powerful in relation to neighboring states. One of the primary aims of mercantilist policy, though by no means the only aim, was the accumulation in the state of as large a supply of money — i.e., gold and silver — as possible. Actual money played a much more important part in the conduct of business then than now. Moreover, in the days before the credit system had been so

highly developed as to enable states to float large national debts, money was very necessary to pay the expenses of the growing national armies, on which the safety of the state depended. And the amount of money that the government could collect in taxes depended more or less on the amount in existence in the state. The government, therefore, regulated trade whenever possible, so as to encourage exports above imports. This was called maintaining a favorable balance of trade, for if a country sold more than it bought, more money would come into the state than would leave it. Another aim, closely allied to the first, was to increase the wealth of the state by founding colonies, as Spain and Portugal did in the sixteenth century and England, France, and Holland in the seventeenth, and to exploit them in the interest of the mother country. The mercantilist state always endeavored to maintain an exclusive monopoly of trade with its colonies, exchanging manufactured goods for raw materials of greater potential value. Since war was an ever-present possibility in the mercantilist age, the preparation for war was a regular part of every government's economic policy. This explains why some states, like France, frequently forbade the exportation of grain, so that the country would not be dependent on its neighbors for food in case of war, and why maritime states, like England, promoted the shipbuilding and fishing industries and issued navigation acts to encourage native shipping, thus building up a merchant marine manned by trained seamen as a sort of naval reserve.

If the purpose of state economic legislation was in many ways like that of the medieval cities, the theory which justified

Monopolies

it was still more clearly a legacy from the Middle Ages. The right to trade was still not regarded as the natural right of every resident; it was rather a privilege to be granted by the government as it saw fit. From this it followed naturally that the government which granted the right to trade had full power also to regulate the method of trade. Every sixteenth-century state government exercised that power in a variety of ways, but nowhere was the theory of privilege and control demonstrated more clearly

than in the granting of monopolies to companies or groups of merchants for some specific type of trade. Sometimes a state would grant a monopoly to foreign merchants when it needed the goods that only they could supply, or in order to secure reciprocal advantages for its own merchants in foreign countries. More commonly, however, the monopolies were granted to organizations of native merchants. Such were the monopolies given by the governments of England, France, and Holland to the companies that opened up trade with the Far East, or the earlier monopoly of exporting English cloth to the Netherlands granted to the Company of Merchant Adventurers. These monopolies served the double purpose of excluding foreigners from the trade and of encouraging the most effective native trading organizations by freeing them from both native and foreign competition. In addition, the government often profited directly by retaining a share in the profits of the monopolistic company.

In regulating industry, the mercantilist governments followed the same principles as motivated their commercial legislation. Indeed, the two cannot be separated. Realizing **Regulation of industry** that the wealth of a state depended in large part on its productive power, the best rulers of the mercantilist age made every effort to stimulate manufacturing, especially of those goods that could be exported in order to maintain the favorable balance of trade or that might be useful to the state in time of war. With this in mind they granted monopolies and even subsidies to those companies, guilds, or localities that seemed best fitted to produce needed goods. Whenever possible they strove to introduce and foster new industries that would make the state more independent of other countries. Thus, in the late sixteenth century the silk industry was introduced into France with government aid, and the glass industry was founded with royal monopolies in both France (1551) and England (1567). Government regulation and aid, however, did not always serve their intended purpose, and not infrequently industries were more hampered than helped by the well-meaning efforts of a paternalistic state.
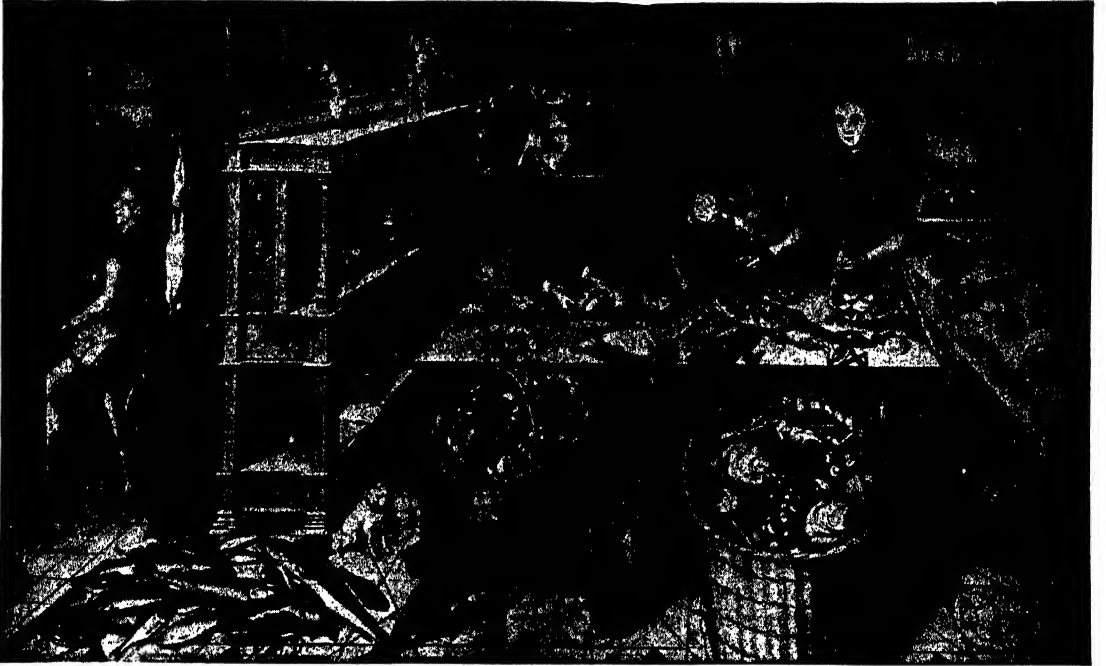
INTERIOR OF A SIXTEENTH-CENTURY KITCHEN
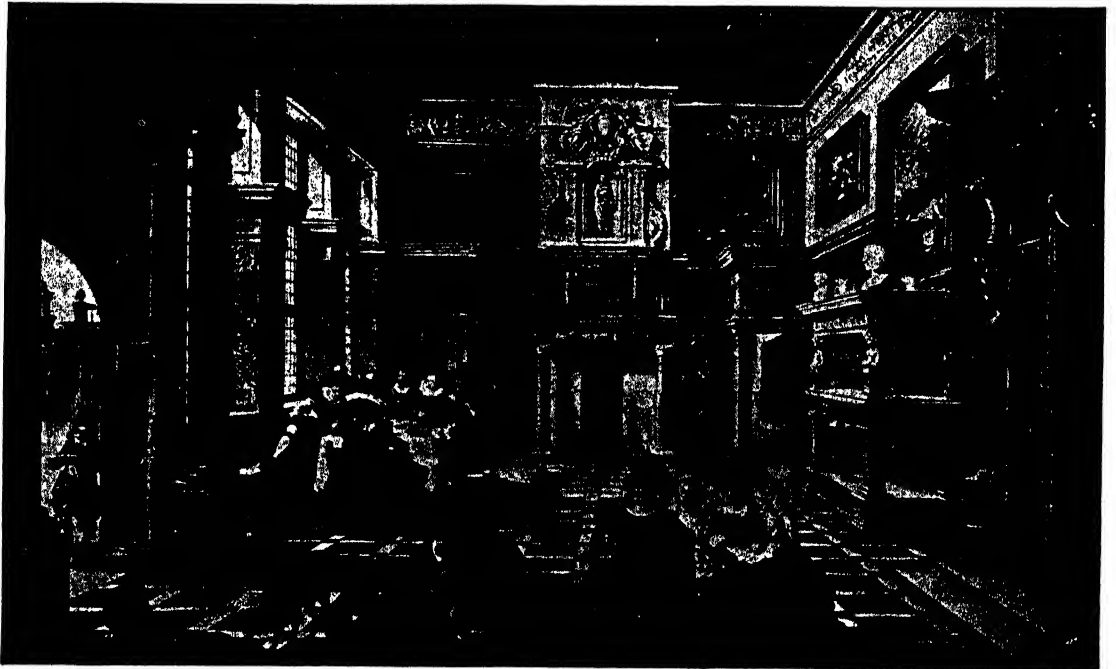
INTERIOR OF A WEALTHY MERCHANT'S HOUSE

EVIDENCE OF THE PROSPERITY THAT CAME
WITH THE COMMERCIAL REVOLUTION

When the state took upon itself the task of controlling the economic life of its citizens, it was forced also to assume the responsibility for adjusting those social problems that arose from the working-out of economic conditions. This was a relatively new problem for state governments, but before the end of the sixteenth century state legislation designed to fix wages and regulate conditions of labor was fairly common. Such legislation was usually much more favorable to the capitalist employers, who could bring pressure to bear on the government, than to the unorganized laborers, yet the interests of the latter and of the unemployed were not entirely neglected. The Elizabethan Poor Laws and the famous Statute of Apprentices are but examples of numerous state laws that were intended, in part at least, to protect the laborers and care for the poor.

Employment and poor relief

4. CAPITAL AND SOCIETY

We have seen how the rise of capital caused an economic revolution and fostered a political revolution through aiding the rise of the territorial states. It was the fundamental cause also of a social revolution, which had only begun in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but which when completed would have reshaped society from top to bottom. The rise of capital changed the character of wealth and the sources of power. In the Middle Ages power resulted usually from an inherited position in society, and wealth was the product of power. It was only in small part money wealth; in much larger part it consisted of the ability to command the services of men by virtue of hereditary contracts. In the modern world, on the other hand, wealth is the source of power, and modern wealth is essentially money wealth. It is money that creates the power to control the services of men. This is the essence of the social revolution that was beginning in these transitional centuries.

Capital re-shapes society

As a result of this social revolution, two powers, closely allied, rose to dominate the rest of society. They were the monarchy, representing the power of the territorial state, and the wealthy middle class or bourgeoisie. The latter was eventually to triumph over the monarchy itself and was either to control or destroy it, but for the present they were content to serve its interests, secure in the knowledge that its interests were also their own. Meanwhile, as the state grew stronger and the wealthy bourgeoisie more influential, the power of the feudal nobility declined.[1] They still maintained their social prestige, their pride of class and many of their special privileges, but they were no longer the dominating class in European society.

Triumph of state and bourgeoisie

The nobles, however, were not the only class to suffer because of the rising power of money. Capital reduced to complete subjection the much more numerous class of industrial laborers. They were no longer included among the bourgeoisie and did not rise with them to power; for the introduction of capital into industry had driven an ever-widening wedge between the few who became rich employers and the many who became mere wage-earners, with little chance of ever rising above that position. This is perhaps the most significant of all the changes wrought by the rise of capital. In the High Middle Ages, when nearly all industry was confined within the limits of the guild system, no such permanent division between employer and worker had existed, for every apprentice and journeyman expected some day to become a master and an employer on a small scale, and every employer had been at one time a wage-earning journeyman. At the end of the sixteenth century, this might still be true in some places, especially in the smaller crafts; but in the large industries a very different condition existed. The great majority of industrial workers already formed a class in society by themselves — the proletariat. Unorganized, or with organization strictly controlled by the state, unrepresented in government, uneducated, and lacking the surplus capital that was the source of power in the new society, men of this class had little hope of bettering their condition, either individually or as a whole. They were the victims of the new economic system, reinforced

Subjection of proletariat

[1] See above, pages 372-373.

by the tacit alliance of their employers with the state.

In conclusion, we must note two striking results of the capitalist revolution, which are so important that they cannot be ignored, by the historian or by anyone else. The first is the vast increase in the total wealth of the world produced by the capitalist system; the second, the concentration of a disproportionately large share of that wealth in the hands of a few people, thus opening up a tremendous gap between the economic and social status of the rich minority and the poor majority. Whether the latter condition will remain permanently as yet remains to be seen.

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The Reconstruction of France and the Establishment of Absolute Monarchy

(1598–1660)

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY, which had opened with such brilliant promise for France, drew to its close in the midst of disillusionment and disaster. When the century began, France had seemed about to enter upon a new and glorious epoch of national strength. The monarchy had apparently won at last its long fight for centralized government and national unity against the independent feudal nobility, and the dream of extending French power across the Alps into the fabulous land of Italy seemed already an accomplished fact. But sixty years of foreign wars ended with the abandonment of the costly Italian dream; and a further generation of civil Wars of Religion left France distracted and desolate, powerless in foreign affairs and internally divided, with her people impoverished and her government bankrupt, and with the ancient specter of feudal independence once more raising its head to mock an impotent monarchy. Just as the century ended, however, there were signs of renewed hope. Henry of Bourbon, King of Navarre, had become King Henry IV of France, and under his strong hand, peace, unity, and order were restored to the troubled land. Once secure upon his throne, Henry devoted himself to the task of reconstructing his shattered country and restoring the power and prestige of the monarchy at home and abroad. Many of the results of his work were wasted in the years following his death, but the task of strengthening the state was taken up again by Richelieu and by Mazarin; to such good effect that when the young King Louis XIV took over the personal government of his kingdom he found France the foremost power in Europe and himself an absolute monarch, whose authority was questioned by neither noble nor commoner.

Meanwhile, keeping pace with the evolution of the national monarchical state, the national culture of France was taking form. In the midst of the foreign and civil wars of the sixteenth century, France reaped the late fruits of the Renaissance and utilized the legacy of antiquity to aid in the formation of her national tongue. And when peace and order were restored, the aristocracy and intellect of France combined to lay the foundations of that refined society and polished literature that were to be the envy and despair of Europe in the age of Louis XIV.

1. HENRY IV RECONSTRUCTS FRANCE (1598–1610)

Though Henry IV had inherited the royal title in 1589,[1] five years of fighting passed before he was officially crowned, and it was not till 1596 that he received the submission of the

Peace restored (1598)

[1] See above, page 454.

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last of the Catholic League. Meanwhile, he had been forced into war with Philip II of Spain, and peace at home was very uncertain with the real issue of the Wars of Religion still unsettled. Born soldier though he was, Henry was eager to restore peace, so that his country might have an opportunity to recover from the devastating turmoil of the preceding generation. In 1598, he brought the war with Spain to an end by the Treaty of Vervins, and in the same year he issued **Edict of Nantes** the epoch-making Edict of Nantes, which accomplished the still more important objective of securing internal peace for France by a fair settlement of the vexatious religious problem. Henry had become a Catholic for reasons of state, because he was to be the ruler of a country that was predominantly Catholic, but he had not forgotten his old Huguenot friends. The Edict of Nantes granted them complete freedom of conscience, the right of public worship in all places where it already existed and in a number of other specified places, and the right to hold any public office. As a temporary guaranty that these rights would be respected, the Huguenots were also given the privilege of governing and garrisoning some two hundred cities, mostly in southern and western France. This was a dangerous concession and caused trouble later, but the establishment of religious toleration was wise and just. That part of the edict remained in force for nearly a century. It reunited the kingdom and made France the one country in Europe where men of two different religions could dwell together in peace and equal citizenship.

With the restoration of peace at home and abroad, Henry IV was free at last to take up **Henry's task** his colossal task of reconstructing France, restoring the power of the monarchy, and rehabilitating French prestige in Europe. It was a task that might well have daunted a lesser man, for it involved every aspect of government. In the first place, the government must be rescued from bankruptcy and its finances put on a firm footing. Next, the people must be aided to recover their lost prosperity. Then the authority of the central government must be strengthened and the nobles reduced to obedience. And finally, the king must use all the power of the revived state, with the aid of skillful diplomacy, to teach the other powers of Europe that France was still a nation to be reckoned with.

For the carrying-out of this great task, no king in French history was better suited by nature than Henry IV, or, perhaps it would be fairer to say, **Henry and Sully** than Henry IV aided by that most careful, energetic, and honest of French ministers, the Duke of Sully. The restoration of France was the product of the cordial collaboration of these two men of very different character. They had been friends and companions in arms from their youth up. During the troubled years of the Wars of Religion, Henry had learned to depend on Sully, then Marquis of Rosny, for those compensating qualities which he himself lacked. They were both good soldiers, though Sully fought with a cold Calvinist fury that was in marked contrast to the king's reckless, swaggering gallantry, but it was in the council rather than in the field of battle that Sully proved his worth. For Henry needed someone to check his tendency to extravagance. He was genial, friendly, endowed with the personal magnetism and understanding of men's characters which are essential to a leader, but also inclined to be profligate. His best qualities of mind were clear intelligence, sound common sense, and the kind of constructive imagination that is needed to shape the general policies of a state. In short, Henry was a popular king and a wise statesman, but he had not the qualities that make an administrator. And France needed an administrator. Henry realized that need and knew that in Sully he had the man to meet it. A rigid Protestant, grim, cautious, economical, and unshakably honest, Sully would never be popular, but he could be trusted to the limit, and he had all the tireless energy and passion for detail that are the marks of the born administrator. Henry might conceive wise policies, but it was Sully who attended to the practical problems of the business of government.

Sully's most immediate and pressing problem was to free the government from its apparently hopeless financial embarrassment.

HENRY IV OF FRANCE

Henry of Navarre was a shrewd, yet dashing and gallant leader, and looked the part.

MARIE DE' MEDICI

Henry's wife, shown here from a painting by P. P. Rubens, lacked all of her husband's qualities as a statesman.

HENRY IV ENTERING PARIS IN 1594

The scene above marks the turning point in the Wars of Religion.

Years of foreign and civil wars, the weakness of the last Valois kings, and the confusion, inefficiency, extravagance, and corruption that pervaded every branch of the financial administration had combined to bring the state close to the verge of bankruptcy. The people were crushed by heavy and inequitable taxes; yet the royal income was utterly inadequate to meet current expenses. In part this was the result of a vicious financial system inherited from the Middle Ages. A badly organized multitude of officials and a criminally careless system of bookkeeping made waste and corruption almost unavoidable. Moreover, the method of levying taxes was unjust and terribly wasteful. The *taille*, a personal and property tax, which represented the largest part of the royal income, was paid almost entirely by the poorer classes, since nobles and clergy were exempt and the wealthy bourgeoisie could often escape their just share. In order to raise money quickly, this and other taxes were "farmed out" to private persons or corporations in return for a lump sum. The tax "farmers" then collected as much as they could — usually far more than they had paid the government — from the defenseless people. It has been reckoned that under a weak administration not more than twenty-five per cent of the taxes paid by the people ever reached the royal treasury. Sully made no serious effort to reform this vicious system, but he did try to ensure its being honestly administered. He imposed a reasonable amount of order upon the administration, insisted on a strict accounting for all income and expenditure, did away with a number of useless offices, forced dishonest officials to disgorge, and saw to it that the money collected in taxes did not disappear on its way to the treasury. By such measures, Sully was able to decrease the *taille*, while at the same time increasing the royal revenue, and by cutting down waste and extravagance he was able to provide plenty of money for all the legitimate expenses of government, including the cost of building up a strong army and financing public works and other measures for promoting general prosperity. By the end of Henry's reign, he had recovered much of the

Royal finance,

royal domain, alienated by his predecessors; had paid off nearly a third of the national debt; and had accumulated a substantial surplus for use in any emergency.

In his preoccupation with the finances of the royal government, however, Sully did not forget that the wealth of the state depends in the long run on the prosperity of its citizens. Careful though he was to keep down royal expenses, he spent money freely on the improvement of roads, bridges, canals, and harbors, thus stimulating the economic life of the state by providing safe and convenient means of communication. He was also greatly interested in the promotion of agriculture, which he believed to be the true basis of national prosperity. With characteristic energy, he undertook the draining of marshes, the reclaiming of wastelands, and the resettling of districts deserted during the late civil wars. In addition he opened up a foreign market for the farmers by removing the prohibition on the exportation of grain from the country. To all this the king gave his hearty support, and also added some important innovations of his own. Henry, indeed, was a sounder economist than Sully, and took an active interest in both industry and commerce, which his minister tended to ignore. It was the king who introduced the silk industry into France, stimulated other industries by subsidies and monopolies, made favorable commercial treaties with Spain and England, and founded the French colonial empire by sending out the first colonists to New France, the Canada of the future. And, most important of all, Henry gave to France a dozen years of peace and security, which was all a naturally industrious people needed to work out their own economic salvation. When Henry's reign ended, there was still much poverty in the country, but the general economic condition was vastly improved, and France had taken a long step in the direction of national recovery.

Economic recovery

Meanwhile, Henry had to deal with other than economic problems. Equally important was the task of restoring the authority of the crown, on which the security of the state depended. The civil wars, which had come

Subjection of the nobles

near to ruining the monarchy, had given a new lease on life to political feudalism. The great nobles had recovered a part of their old independence, and they were always a destructive and disorganizing force in the life of the nation, unless kept well in hand by a strong king. In his struggle for the crown, Henry had been forced to buy off the great nobles of the Catholic League, but once his position was secure he taught them that he was their master. More than once discontented nobles rebelled, but the rebellions were easily crushed. The mass of the people, and especially the solid middle class, were unshakably loyal to the king who had given them peace, security, and a chance to prosper. With their backing, Henry built up as strong a monarchy as France had yet seen. His government was an intelligent, unoppressive absolutism, and that was the best that France could hope for under the circumstances. France had no institutions capable of building up a constitutional monarchy, and the civil wars had proved that the only alternative to absolutism was anarchy.

Much of Henry's energy, too, was taken up with foreign affairs. He saw the issues **Foreign policy** clearly and pushed every advantage, so that the growth of France's prestige abroad kept pace with her internal recovery. The king's foreign policy may be summarized in a very few words. His main objective was to free France from the menace of the encircling Hapsburg powers, by weakening Spain and Austria in any possible way. The Hapsburg states were not as strong as they had been, but France still lay wide open to invasion from four different directions. To the south, Spain held Roussillon on the French side of the Pyrenees; to the north, she held Flanders, and to the east, Franche-Comté, both divided from France by indefensible frontiers; and to the southeast, Savoy, friendly to the Hapsburgs, opened the way to invaders from northern Italy. With her enemies inside her only geographical defenses, France would never be safe while the Hapsburgs remained strong enough for aggressive action. While giving his country time to draw its breath and recover its strength, Henry devoted himself to diplomacy. He won the alliance of the Duke

of Savoy, thus blocking the road from Hapsburg Italy; and in Germany he succeeded in mobilizing a group of Protestant princes in opposition to the Hapsburg emperor. Meanwhile, he was building up a national army and waiting for the right moment to strike a more forcible blow.

When the moment came, Henry rushed to war with his old enthusiasm, but death stopped him before he could accomplish anything. The cause **Cleves-Jülich** of the war was the death, in **succession** 1609, of the Duke of Cleves, Jülich, and Berg, three small but strategically important states on the lower Rhine, near the borders of France. There were two claimants to the succession, both Lutherans, though the people were Catholic. The Emperor Rudolf promptly sent an Austrian army to occupy the duchies, pending the settlement of the succession. Henry naturally considered this act a menace to France. He mobilized his troops at once and rallied his Protestant allies in Germany and Holland. It was to have been a general war against the Hapsburgs in both Germany and Spain. Everything was ready and Henry was about to join his army in the field when an assassin struck him down as he rode through the streets of Paris. The king's death paralyzed France. She withdrew from the war and the anti-Hapsburg alliance disintegrated.

2. RICHELIEU AND MAZARIN ESTABLISH ABSOLUTE MONARCHY (1624–61)

With the death of Henry IV, the character of French government changed abruptly for the worse. Fourteen years passed before France found **Interlude of** again, in Richelieu, a strong **disorder: the** hand to guide her destiny. **regency** Those years form an interlude of waste, misgovernment, rebellion, and a shiftless foreign policy, during which the best results of Henry's reign were frittered away. For the first half of that period (1610–17), France was ruled by a stupid and irresponsible woman, Henry's widow, Marie de' Medici, acting as regent for their young son Louis XIII, and by her worthless Italian favorites. The queen had no understanding of her late husband's policies. She reversed almost every

LOUIS XIII OF FRANCE

Upper left: The king, shown here in court dress, was far from brilliant, but had solid qualities of firm will and kindliness.

THE DUKE OF LUYNES

Left: The handsome Charles d'Albert, Louis's first minister, was also his first mistake as a king.

CARDINAL RICHELIEU

Upper right: The terrible cardinal, Armand de Richelieu, whom Louis chose to succeed Luynes and who remained Louis's chief minister until virtually the end of his reign, more than made up for the weakness of his predecessor.

one of them, with disastrous results. She discharged Sully and the rest of Henry's ministers; she wasted the money he had saved and allowed the administration to lapse back into its old state of inefficiency and corruption; she permitted the great nobles to rebel and bought them off, instead of crushing them by force; and finally, she reversed Henry's anti-Hapsburg policy and sought an alliance with Spain, the alliance to be cemented by the marriage of Louis XIII to the Spanish infanta.

Meanwhile, the young king was growing up, disregarded by his mother and humili-**Louis XIII** ated by her all-powerful favorite, the Italian adventurer, Concini, who had become chief minister of the kingdom. In his loneliness, Louis turned for friendship and counsel to his royal falconer, who accompanied him on the hunting expeditions that were his favorite pastime. With this rather obscure gentleman he planned the overthrow of his mother's arrogant minister. The plot was put into effect in 1617. Concini was killed and the queen-mother was banished from the court. The king then took over the government in his own right, with the former falconer, now Duke of Luynes, as his chief minister. The change, however, did not bring any marked improvement in government, for Luynes was a fool and the king was young and inexperienced. So the interlude of disorder continued until 1624, when Louis handed over the government to the capable hands of Cardinal Richelieu, who remained his chief minister almost to the end of his reign.

For eighteen years (1624–42) Richelieu was master of France. He dominated every **Richelieu** branch of the government and shaped the policies of the state. Yet he could not have done so without the steady support of the king. Louis gave him complete authority because he was convinced that Richelieu was the most capable man in France. That Richelieu overshadowed the king does not prove that the latter was a weakling, for no weakling could have backed the terrible cardinal with such stubborn determination against the hatred of the royal family and the whole court. For Richelieu was never popular. Indeed, Louis

himself never really liked his awe-inspiring minister, but he trusted him and approved his policies. Throughout his ministry, Richelieu devoted himself with fanatical energy to the accomplishment of two main objectives: first, the unification of the whole state under the absolute authority of the crown, and second, the raising of France to a dominating position among the nations of Europe. It was part of the policy of Henry IV, but only part; for Richelieu, though utterly devoted to the crown and the state, cared nothing for the welfare of the French people. He never realized, as Henry did, that the strength of the state depends on the prosperity of its people. He was prepared to sacrifice their interests ruthlessly to what he believed to be the good of the state.

That lack of human interest and understanding kept Richelieu from being a really great statesman, but in one respect at least his ruthlessness **Richelieu and** was justified. A stern hand **the nobles** was needed to control the great nobles, for under the weak rule of the regent and the young king they had resumed their old lawless ways. They must be crushed if the king was to be really king. In his devotion to the ideal of absolute monarchy, therefore, Richelieu became the avowed enemy of the nobles, and no name or title was too great to save a traitor from the executioner's block. He had spies everywhere, and one conspiracy after another ended in a series of executions before it could become a menace to the state.

The same motives determined Richelieu to crush the political power of the Huguenots. He was not a religious fanatic and did not believe in **Suppression of** the practical utility of persecu-**the Huguenots** tion, but the Huguenots as a political party were a menace to the king's authority and to the unity of the kingdom. The Edict of Nantes had left them in armed possession of a number of walled towns and with a religious-political organization of their own. Moreover, they were prepared to use their privileged position to make a bid for further independence. They had rebelled once in 1621 before Richelieu came into power, and he had been minister for only a year when they rebelled again. This time he had to

make peace, for the government was not yet strong enough to crush them, but he was working busily so that when the next opportunity occurred he would be ready to take decisive action. He had not long to wait. In 1627, the irresponsible interference of England on the side of the Huguenots precipitated another rebellion. The war lasted for two years, with most of the action centering around the siege of the strongly fortified seaport of La Rochelle. It held out for a year, but when it fell the Huguenot resistance soon crumbled. In 1629, the rebels submitted, giving up all their fortified strongholds and the last of their special military and political privileges. Richelieu had accomplished his purpose, and having done so, he wisely refrained from religious persecution. The main body of the Edict of Nantes, which guaranteed the Huguenots freedom of conscience and equal citizenship with Catholics, was left intact. Shorn of their political organization, but otherwise untouched, the French Protestants settled down to become loyal and useful members of the state.

Having now nothing to fear from the Huguenots, and not much from the great nobles, Richelieu was free to **Foreign policy** turn his attention to the aggrandizement of France on the international stage. His foreign policy was a revival, *in toto*, of that of Henry IV. His aim was to win security for France and a possible expansion of territory by weakening the Hapsburgs. He was the natural ally of all enemies of Austria and Spain, and would aid them with money or arms as the occasion demanded. To this end he devoted the largest part of his energy in the later years of his ministry. That story, however, belongs more properly to a later chapter dealing with the Thirty Years' War, in which he played a conspicuous part.

At the end of his life, Richelieu might well look back upon his career of service to the state with satisfaction. He **Administration** had accomplished everything he really cared about. He had raised French prestige abroad; he had crushed all dangerous opposition to the monarchy at home; and he had built up a strongly centralized govern-ment. Yet Richelieu's administration was far from being an entirely successful one, and nothing shows the limitation of vision which kept him from being a really great statesman more clearly than his inability to realize the extent of his failure. His successes had been won at too great a cost to the state, and he left France miserable and impoverished. The people were ground down by the excessive taxes raised to pay for his foreign wars; commerce and industry languished with little aid from the state; and even the government was drifting perilously close to financial ruin. Compared to the standard set by Henry IV and Sully, he cannot be called a successful administrator. He not only neglected the economic interests of the people, but he failed to check extravagance, waste, and corruption in the royal administration, so that both the government and the people suffered more than was necessary even to meet the heavy expenses of the war.

In only one respect did Richelieu attempt to reform the unwieldy administrative system. He sent out royal offi- **Intendants** cials, called "intendants," with arbitrary powers to take over many of the duties of the nobles, governors of the provinces, and other traditional local officials. This reform was in keeping with his general policy of centralizing the government of the state under the king's council and strengthening the authority of the crown at the expense of such feudal institutions as still survived. The intendants were usually well-trained, middle-class men, on whose loyalty the king could rely more securely than on that of the great nobles. Though not as systematically established under Richelieu as they came to be later, the intendants already formed the basis of a governmental bureaucracy that would be of great service in holding the country together in any political crisis.

The structure of central government which Richelieu had created was put to a severe test in the years following his death. For the king died **Mazarin and Louis XIV** within a few months after his minister (May, 1643), and the crown was left to a four-year-old child, Louis XIV, with his mother, Anne of Austria, acting as regent.

Such a situation almost inevitably spelled trouble, but Richelieu had bequeathed to the young king, with the centralized administration, an able minister to act as his successor, and together they saw the royal government through a troubled period of foreign war and rebellion at home to eventual triumph. The new minister was an Italian who had been for years in Richelieu's service, the Cardinal Mazarin. Until his death, early in 1661, he remained chief minister of France, and in that time he carried out most of Richelieu's policies to their final conclusion. Supple and conciliatory, where Richelieu was hard and ruthless, the Italian cardinal had not the awe-inspiring personality of his terrible predecessor, but he was intelligent and he walked faithfully in the path prescribed by his former master.

That path led him safely through the early years of the regency and to the con-

The Fronde clusion of the Thirty Years' War in 1648. But Mazarin was an even worse financial administrator than Richelieu. The expenses of the war grew heavier by accumulation, and with each year the burden of taxation became more intolerable to the people. Moreover, the great nobles who had hated and feared Richelieu hated his successor also, but did not fear him so much. In 1648, a group of the great nobles took advantage of the economic discontent to break into open rebellion in uneasy alliance with the citizens of Paris. This was the first of the two rebellions that are collectively known as the Fronde. It was quickly ended by a compromise. The trouble, however, was not ended. The next year the rebellion was renewed on a broader scale. For two years (1650–52) it threatened the hated minister and the whole system of absolute royal government. The danger would have been greater if the rebels had been united in their interests or had had the backing of strong popular support. But the Fronde was not really a constitutional struggle. The princes who led it were irresponsible, motivated by nothing more praiseworthy than the desire to ruin the cardinal and to weaken the royal government to their own selfish advantage. The solid middle-class adherents of the Fronde were soon disillusioned,

leaving the nobles and the mob to go their own reckless way until the rebellion crumbled. The futile activity of the Fronde was in reality the death flurry of political feudalism in France. Never again would the nobles take arms against their king. It left the monarchy stronger than ever, for it reinforced the conviction of the French people that the only hope for peace and security lay in the absolute authority of the king. One of the tasks begun by Henry IV and carried on by Richelieu was finished at last.

Another, however, still occupied Mazarin's attention. Although the Thirty Years' War had ended in 1648, France was still at war with Hapsburg Spain. Mazarin carried on the war with fair ability against a weakening enemy, and at last brought it to a successful conclusion with the Peace of the Pyrenees in 1659, whereby France acquired Roussillon and some other important bits of territory along her frontiers, in addition to that awarded her at Westphalia.[1] Mazarin had now not long to live, but he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had completed Richelieu's work. France was indisputably the first power in Europe; the Hapsburg states were tottering; and the young King Louis XIV, who was soon to take over the government into his own hands, would find himself the unquestioned master of his kingdom. If the French people still groaned under an insupportable burden of taxation; if the administrative system was still wasteful and inefficient; if the government was still not far from bankruptcy, that could not be helped. Richelieu's dream, if only a part of that of Henry IV and Sully, had been fulfilled.

Triumph of France and the king

3. GROWTH OF FRENCH LITERATURE AND CULTURE

The final establishment of absolute monarchy in a united state completed a long process of evolution. There was no doubt now that France was a nation, closely knit together and conscious of its national identity. The same period saw also the completion of another evolution, that of the national language, which had kept pace

Evolution of national literature

[1] See below pages 508–510.
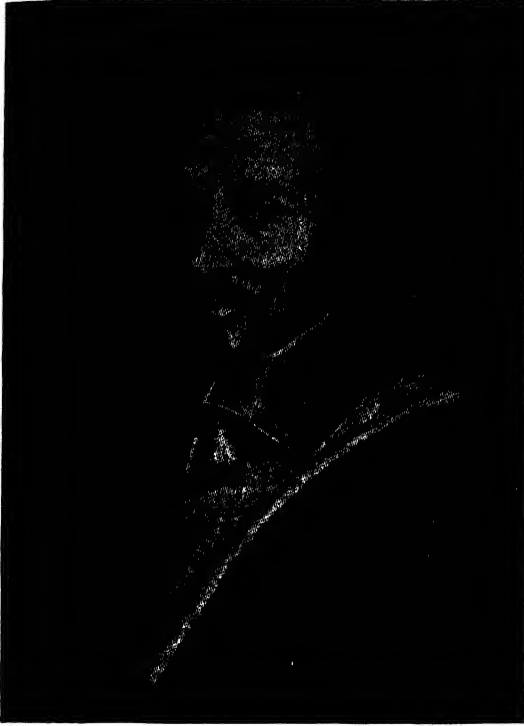
CARDINAL MAZARIN

Top left: The Italian cardinal who succeeded Riche-
lieu, as the above picture suggests, had a keen and
subtle mind.

TURENNE

Top right: This portrait of Henri de la Tour d'Auver-
gne, Vicomte de Turenne, gives a striking impression
of the great general who came to the aid of the govern-
ment during the Fronde.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

Left: This picture can scarcely have done credit to the
queen-mother who ruled France as the regent for Louis
XIV with Mazarin's aid.

through the centuries with the evolution of the state. This development was no more peculiar to France than was the growth of nationalism. Every country in Europe had developed a vital literature in the tongue of the people, though still marred by a variety of dialects corresponding roughly to the local divisions inherited from the feudal régime, before the classical revival of the Renaissance temporarily checked the development of the "vulgar" literature. For a time the ancient Latin of the humanists' adoration displaced the more modern languages. But the age of the Renaissance was also an age of rising nationalism, as the great territorial states were consolidated under strong monarchies, and in the long run nationalism proved stronger than the international heritage of ancient Rome. When once the first enthusiasm for the literature of antiquity had spent its force, the national languages asserted themselves more vigorously than ever. The new art of printing helped, for it made books cheap and circulated them more widely. A wider reading public, not thoroughly versed in Ciceronian Latin, demanded books in their native tongue. The humanists had made Latin too perfectly classical, so that it had become difficult for any but the most learned to read, and still more difficult to write. With the passing of the Erasmian age of humanism, Latin gradually subsided into the status of a dead language, reserved for the use of scholars. The vigor of the Renaissance passed over into the modern languages. The lessons of style and taste that the humanists had learned from the classics were now applied to the refinement of the vernacular. Moreover, the freer circulation of books made possible by printing, together with the closer union of all parts of the state into a conscious nationality, gradually wiped out local differences of dialect and cleared the way for the development of truly national literatures.

After the full daylight of the classical Renaissance in France had passed with the great age of the humanists, there was a long twilight in which the interests and influences of the Renaissance lived on in modified

The late Renaissance

form to inspire the founders of modern French literature. Before the end of the sixteenth century, two Frenchmen of this late Renaissance left the indelible imprint of their style and personality on the literature of their country. The first, François Rabelais (1494?–1553), belongs, almost, to the age of the humanists.

Rabelais

He was a profound classical scholar, and his egregious enjoyment of life was typical of the Renaissance spirit at its highest tide. But he foreshadows the coming age in his determination to write in his native language and for the people rather than for the limited world of scholars. His fabulous tales of *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel*, which won instant and lasting popularity by their wild humor and lusty glorification of the physical universe may be said to mark the beginnings of modern secular French literature. The second outstanding literary figure of the sixteenth century in France was a man of very different character, the thoughtful essayist Michel de Montaigne

Montaigne

(1533–92). He was a product of the troubled era of the Wars of Religion. That age of violent passions, however, had not made him a partisan. On the contrary, the conflict of dogmatic beliefs had suggested to his reasonable mind the possibility that neither side of the religious, or any other, argument was in possession of all the truth. With calm curiosity, he examined one after another the problems that vexed his age, and, having examined them from all sides, left them in his brilliant *Essays* illuminated but still unsolved. He was at once the heir to the inquiring critical spirit of the Renaissance and the father of modern rationalism. Nurtured on the classics, Montaigne brought to French prose a perfection of style that makes him as important a figure in the history of the language as in the history of thought.

Meanwhile, an earnest little group of Montaigne's contemporaries, raised like himself in the classic tradition, were working conscientiously at

The Pléiade

the task of refining and perfecting French poetry, by applying to it the lessons learned from the poets of ancient Greece and Rome. There were seven poets in the group, whence

the name of the Pléiade which they took for themselves. Their leader, and the only first-rate poet in the group, was Pierre de Ronsard (1524–85). By both precept and example he set a new and more conscious style in French poetry, while his friend Joachim du Bellay (1522–60) set forth the aims of the group in a *Defense and Illustration of the French Language,* asserting its potential equality with the ancient tongues.

Thus ordered, purified, and expanded by adaptation of the classics, the national language was already approaching

The Pré-cieux and the Academy

its modern form when Henry IV restored peace and began the rebuilding of the state. During the next half-century, the work of standardizing and perfecting literary French continued. Two generations of uninspired poets and second-rate writers devoted themselves to a laborious study of the rules of grammar, to perfection of form, and to precision and refinement in the use of words. This devotion to refined form won for them the name of "Précieux," originally a term of respect, but turned to one of ridicule when, having outlived their usefulness, they fell victims to the biting satire of Molière. The vigorous writers of the golden age of Louis XIV have overshadowed their less inspired predecessors, but they owed the excellence of the language they used in no small degree to the men who had worked so hard to perfect its form. The age of Richelieu, too, had provided French literature with a permanent tribunal of literary taste, consecrated to the standardization of the language, for the cardinal had founded the French Academy in 1635.

The refinement of the French language was closely connected with the development

Refinement of society

of a more refined society. Freed from civil war, the French aristocracy turned their attention to the perfecting of social life and manners. In countless salons, under the watchful eye of aristocratic hostesses, of whom none was more brilliant than the Marquise de Rambouillet, high society devoted itself to the study of form and the elaboration of rules for both manners and language. The Précieux and their feminine counterparts laid the foundation for that perfection of formal etiquette which later made the court of Louis XIV the wonder of Europe.

Respect for form and a growing consciousness of national unity under the absolute monarchy were the outstanding characteristics of French culture

Religion

in the seventeenth century, and they carried over into the religious life of the people. Religion, however, now that the wars were over and the Edict of Nantes had established legal toleration for the Huguenots, no longer occupied the foreground of French thought. A not unnatural reaction followed the intense religious strife of the past century, leaving the majority of the people somewhat disillusioned and indifferent. Thanks to the skillful work of the Jesuits, they remained within the church, but those champions of the Counter-Reformation seemed now more successful in keeping the people orthodox church members than in arousing vital religious enthusiasm. Their methods, indeed, left them open to the charge that the former was all they aimed at achieving. At any rate, the religion of the court and the aristocracy, and perhaps that of the mass of the people, like the literature and manners of the age, was more distinguished by attention to form than by emotional content or spiritual disturbance. This was not, however, universally true. There are in all ages men to whom religion is an overpowering emotional experience and who cannot be satisfied with formal observance. In the first half of the seventeenth century, a group of such deeply pious and sternly moral souls, under the name of Jansenists, led a reaction against the formal religion of their age and especially against the facile methods of the Jesuits. Their fate was the common fate of enthusiastic minorities. They were declared to be heretics and were suppressed by royal edict. But if the majority of Frenchmen were formally orthodox, the French church was not always on the best of terms with the papacy. The growing spirit of nationalism and the absolute claims of the monarchy led to a revival of the "Gallican" tradition of a French church controlled by the state and in its political structure more or less independent of Rome. The reasser-

tion of the "Gallican liberties," first stated in the fifteenth century by the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges, strained relations between the king and the pope almost to the end of the century.

Meanwhile, under the surface of good manners and formal religion, the skeptical rationalism of Montaigne was working quietly, to come to light again in the following century. And most important of all, the new **Rationalism and science** scientific spirit, posthumous child of the Renaissance, was beginning its work of transforming modern thought.

34

The Decline of the Monarchy in England

(1603–60)

WHILE IN FRANCE the first two Bourbon kings and their ministers were busy restoring the unity of the country after prolonged civil religious wars and were building a firm structure of absolute monarchy, across the Channel in England events were following an almost exactly opposite course. There, the first two Stuart kings were effectively, if unconsciously, destroying absolute monarchy and were driving a united nation, which had grown strong and prosperous during years of internal peace and firm government, to disunity and the final outbreak of civil religious wars. The end of the sixteenth century saw England approaching the close of one of the most glorious periods of her history, the reign of Queen Elizabeth. This last representative of the house of Tudor had guided England through troubled waters to confidence and security. She had defended England's independence against the aggressive power of Spain and had defended English Protestantism against the driving force of the Counter-Reformation. She left to her Stuart successors a country that was prosperous, loyal to the crown, and with a strong national consciousness that had found expression in a magnificent national literature. Yet it was a country that would need very careful handling if the Stuart kings were to continue the absolute government established by the Tudors. The story of the next half-century is the story of their utter failure to carry on the Tudor tradition. In that

crucial half-century, absolute monarchy was broken, never to be restored, and Parliament won for itself a permanent place in the government of England.

1. THE LEGACY OF THE TUDORS

The age of the Tudors came to an end in 1603 with the death of Queen Elizabeth. The crown then passed to the house of Stuart with the accession of James I. But if the reign of the Tudors was over, the results of their rule remained as a legacy to their Stuart kinsmen. One important part of that legacy was a tradition of absolute government. It was, however, absolutism of an unusual kind, dependent on conditions that were peculiar to England. The Tudors were satisfied with the practical exercise of royal power. They did not insist on defining their authority, nor did they put forward sweeping claims to unrestricted rule. On the contrary, they were scrupulously careful to cloak their absolute power in a decent covering of constitutional legality. Both Henry VIII and Elizabeth, whose reigns covered most of the sixteenth century, took great pains to secure the consent of Parliament for their most autocratic acts. This, in truth, had not been difficult, for their policies were for the most part popular with the majority of Englishmen; the people felt the need of a strong government in a time of general insecurity; and both Henry and his brilliant

daughter were masters of the art of persuading the people's representatives in Parliament that what they wanted was for the best interests of the state.

Under this system of legal absolutism, Parliament, though it lost the habit of independent initiative, was actually **Parliament** consolidating its position. In practice, the act of Parliament was little more than the official seal affixed to the expression of the royal will; but the fact that the king's authority was repeatedly expressed through act of Parliament built up a tradition that Parliament might use against the king, if the two ever came into conflict. In short, the Tudors kept alive a subservient Parliament to give legal or constitutional sanction to the acts of their absolute government; and as a result of that policy they left, as part of their legacy to the Stuarts, a constitutional body which was not yet conscious of its power, but which might become a menace to the authority of less popular rulers.

The potential power of Parliament depended largely on the peculiar structure of English society, and was in- **Tudor society** creased by certain changes that took place under the strong and peaceful government of the Tudor monarchs. Following the destruction of the greater part of the old feudal nobility in the Wars of the Roses, Henry VII was able to rid England of the last remnant of independent feudalism. In time, the Tudors created a new peerage to take the place of the old; but England no longer had anything that could be called a noble class, such as existed in every country on the Continent. Only those few peers who sat in the House of Lords were legally recognized as noble. All the rest of the landowning aristocracy, including the younger sons of the peerage, were classed as gentlemen (or collectively as the gentry), and were represented in the House of Commons. These country gentlemen were roughly of the same social class as the lords, though with many gradations of social importance, yet they were not cut off by any impassable barrier from the professional or commercial burghers of the cities, for younger sons of the gentry often enough sought their fortunes as apprentices in the business houses of the towns or entered the professions, and many a country gentleman owed his estate to some wool-trading ancestor whose daughter had married into a county family. It was from this class of the gentry that the great majority of the members of the House of Commons were chosen, whether as representatives of the country shires or of the towns. The English Parliament, then, was a body which represented all the influential classes in the state, and it was not split by any strong division of class interest between noble and common or between country and city.

There was a latent menace to absolute monarchy in such a Parliament, but during the Tudor period it remained steadfastly loyal to the crown. **National sentiment** England in the sixteenth century developed a strong national consciousness and an aggressive patriotism, as it rose from a position of insecurity and comparative insignificance in European affairs to confidence and power. And that national patriotism came to be more and more closely associated with loyalty to the ruling house. More than anything else, the struggle against the combined forces of the Counter-Reformation and Spain during Elizabeth's long reign contributed to this mingled feeling of patriotism and loyalty. The reverse side of English national consciousness was hatred of Spain and the papacy; for the conspiracies of Philip II to place the Catholic Mary Stuart on the English throne, and his later attempt to invade England with the avowed intention of restoring the Catholic Church there, united Catholicism with the threat of Spanish domination in the minds of the English people, just as it made Protestantism synonymous with English independence and reinforced their loyalty to Elizabeth, who stood as the defender of both. After the victory over Philip's great Armada, Englishmen felt a new pride in their country, and were obscurely conscious that that pride included the queen and the Protestant religion.

But if the victory over Catholic Spain made Englishmen more patriotic and more loyal to the queen, it also made them feel

less keenly the need of a strong monarchy.
England had at last won a sense

National security

of security to which it had long been a stranger. Protestantism and English independence were safe now. There was no longer any serious threat of foreign invasion or internal division. And to this feeling of national security was added a growing sense of personal security among the well-to-do classes of country and city, as a result of years of orderly government and an increasing national prosperity. Thus, the last of the Tudors left a country in which the influential classes were patriotic and loyal, but also more secure and hence more independent.

The Englishmen of Queen Elizabeth's day had good reason to be proud of themselves, their country and their queen,

National literature

and out of that pride there grew, among other things, a great national literature, which was not the least enduring part of the legacy of the Tudors. As in France, a literature in the language of the people had grown up in England during the Later Middle Ages, had then been superseded for a time by the Latin of the classical Renaissance, and was now revived in a more modern form with the growth of national consciousness. But still more than in France, the literature of the Elizabethan age reflects the patriotic enthusiasm of the people, even though literary traditions and forms might be borrowed from Italy or from the Latin classics. Edmund Spenser (1552–99) borrowed the romantic-epic form for his great poem, *The Faërie Queene*, from the Italians and colored it with classical allusions, but its theme was praise of England and England's queen. Shakespeare, too, though his genius was far too universal in its scope to be limited to a single theme, devoted many of his plays to the glorification of English history, while at the same time his immortal work so dignified the English speech that it need never again fear comparison with that of ancient Rome.

2. DECLINE OF THE MONARCHY — JAMES I AND CHARLES I (1603–40)

The man who fell heir to the Tudor legacy was Elizabeth's cousin, James Stuart (1603–

25), the son of the unhappy Mary Queen of Scots. Since infancy he had held the title of James VI of

James I

Scotland, and now in middle age he became also James I of England, thus uniting at last the two kingdoms of Britain. Few kings have entered upon the government of a country with better intentions than James, and few have ruled with more disastrous results. His character, ideas, and training made him singularly unsuited to the task of carrying on the Tudor tradition. Education he had in plenty. No more learned man ever sat on the throne of England. But his education was of a pedantic kind, and he was much given to theories of "kingcraft" that had very little relation to reality. He had had plenty of experience in government, too, but it was in the government of a country still partly medieval and certainly very different from England. For all his learning, he was hopelessly ignorant of the peculiar laws, traditions, and sentiments of the English people, or even of the fact that they had any. And if he never came to understand the temperament of the English people, he was equally unfortunate in his judgment of individual men. By a kind of fatality, he surrounded himself with friends who were either rogues or fools, and, because of the strong human affections that made him a lovable man, if an untrustworthy king, he allowed his worthless favorites to administer the government as they chose. James was not in any way a bad man. He was merely miscast for his royal rôle. Had he been a country gentleman with a taste for learning or a professor of philosophy and dialectic at one of the universities, he would have lived out a happy and useful life as an honored member of the community. But it is from such miscasting that human tragedies are made.

The new king's most cherished theory was that of the "divine right of kings." That kings received their authority directly from God and that to

Divine right of kings

oppose their will was to fly in the face of Providence was an idea already familiar on the Continent. It appealed to James because of its theoretical completeness, and also because his sad experience

with turbulent barons and stubborn Calvinist ministers in Scotland had persuaded him of the value of an absolute government which drew its sanction from some more stable source than popular consent. This theory he brought with him to England, and he never came to realize how antagonistic it was to the English tradition. Where the Tudors had ruled in fact, but had carefully preserved legal and constitutional forms, and had been satisfied with an authority that was all the more real for being undefined, James insisted on the extreme definition of his rights, and even when he was forced to make concessions in practice, he spoiled the effect by blatant assertions of his superiority to the law and to the will of the people as represented in Parliament.

The first three years of James's reign decided the fate of the Stuart monarchy, for in **Puritans** those years the new king committed himself to definite policies on all the most perplexing problems of government. One of his first actions was to announce a decided policy of opposition to the Puritans. It is difficult to say exactly what is meant by Puritanism, for the term has been very loosely used. It covers a variety of types and a variety of opinions on doctrine and church government. The Puritans whom James first met on his way down from Scotland were not the Puritans who later founded New England, nor yet those who made up Cromwell's godly cavalry. As yet, the term Puritan signified only the more extreme Protestants, more or less Calvinist in theology, who wished to "purify" the church of the remnants of Catholic ritual and practice that still remained as part of the Elizabethan settlement of the Church of England. That settlement had been essentially a compromise, and so long as the terms were not too rigidly defined, both "High Church" Anglicans, with a leaning toward ritual, and Puritans, who wished a simpler service, remained peacefully within the church. The Puritans, however, were anxious to have their position made more secure, and hence presented a petition to the new king asking recognition of their right to a modified service. James argued with the Puritan clergy, for he could never resist an argument, and in the end lost his temper. The real reason for his opposition was that he suspected them of wanting to adopt a democratic form of church government like that of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, which had already caused him so much trouble. James realized that absolute government would be impossible unless the state church were ruled from the top through the bishops. To destroy the episcopacy would be to strike a death blow to absolute monarchy. Shouting his famous epigram, "No bishop, no king," James swore that he would make the Puritans conform or would "harry them out of the land." James's bark was always worse than his bite, and very little active persecution followed. But he had made permanent enemies of a constantly growing number of stern and pious men, most of whom belonged to the influential classes of city burghers or country gentry. They could not as yet be called a party, but they formed the backbone of the opposition to all the king's unpopular policies.

While James thus alienated the left wing of Protestantism, he was equally unfortunate in his dealings with the **Catholics** Catholics, who stood at the opposite end of the religious spectrum. True to his large ideas of kingcraft, he at first treated the Catholics leniently, in the hope of uniting all religions under his beneficent rule. But when the fines levied on those who did not attend the Anglican Church were lifted, so many stayed away that he became alarmed and re-enforced them. Embittered by this betrayal of their trust, a group of extreme Catholics hatched a plot to blow up the Parliament buildings at a time when the king, his council, and the whole Parliament would be assembled in November, 1605. This was the famous Gunpowder Plot. It was discovered in time, however, and its chief result was to renew in the minds of English Protestants the fear and hatred of Catholicism which had existed before the defeat of the Armada. James might have utilized that feeling, but instead he turned it against himself by seeking an alliance with Spain.

In foreign policy, James looked to find a perfect field for the exercise of kingcraft.

JAMES I

Upper left: This portrait must, from contemporary accounts, have been rather flattering to the first Stuart king.

CHARLES I

Upper right: This is one of several portraits of Charles I painted by Van Dyke. The king's regular and rather delicate features suited Van Dyke's style.

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM

Left: George Villiers, the charming and brilliant but irresponsible favorite of the first two Stuart kings, is shown here from a portrait by P. P. Rubens.
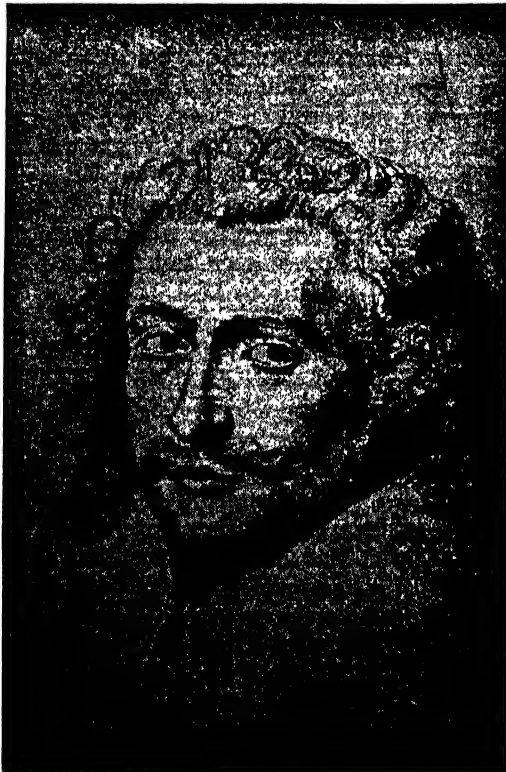
His theories were often very sound, but

Foreign policy they seldom worked out successfully, and about all he accomplished was the further exasperation of his already discontented subjects. His first move, the ending of the war with Spain in 1604, though entirely justified, was unpopular with the Protestant merchant class who had been carrying on an illicit trade with the Spanish colonies. The opposition to this move, however, was nothing to the sullen fury aroused by his negotiations, pursued from 1619 to 1623, for the marriage of his son Charles to the daughter of the King of Spain. These were the years when Spain was actively aiding the Austrian Hapsburg emperor in crushing Protestantism in Germany.[1] Protestant England looked on appalled, as the king deserted the German Protestants in their hour of need, stopped the persecution of Catholics in England, and worked to give England a Spanish Catholic queen, who might, in time, give England a half-Spanish and possibly Catholic king. Religious and national sentiment united in violent opposition. The negotiations failed, and young Charles returned from Spain, still a Protestant and a bachelor, to the great relief of the people. But the damage was done. "More than any other part of James's schemes . . . this project of the Spanish match made the ordinary man a Puritan at least in his politics."

The general discontent with the king's foreign and domestic policies found a means of expression in Parliament.

James and Parliament The time had come when that body, so long subservient to the Tudors, was no longer content to accept the dictation of a less popular ruler. The Commons was filled with men from just those classes that were most decidedly opposed to the government on religious, national, and commercial grounds. A majority of the members were Puritans, or at least strongly Protestant, and, though most of them were of the gentry, a large number held borough seats and represented the city merchants who regarded Spain as a commercial rival as well as a religious and national enemy. Independent, practical, and often austerely

[1] See below, pages 503-504.

pious men, they openly resented the extravagance of the royal government, the incompetence of the king's favorites, and the evil reputation of the court, which seemed much more immoral than it really was to simple gentlemen unused to the ways of the capital. To make matters worse, James showed no tact in dealing with them, and from the first alienated Parliament by disregard for their traditional privileges. He lectured his first Parliament on the subject of the divine right. The startled Commons replied with a unanimous expression of dissent. Hitherto they had not troubled themselves greatly about the definition of their authority, but now they began a careful study of English history, gathering together, and occasionally distorting, every precedent that would strengthen their position. The king's extravagance gave them their best weapon. Lavish in his gifts to friends and surrounded by careless and corrupt ministers, James was unable to live within the independent royal revenue. Additional taxation was generally regarded as subject to the consent of Parliament. At any rate, the Commons now asserted that right, and threatened to hold up appropriations unless the king would redress their grievances. Time and again, James dismissed a stubborn Parliament, only to be forced to call another. The struggle was still going on when James died and left a sadly discredited monarchy to his son.

Perhaps it was not yet too late to undo the damage of James's reign, but Charles I (1625–49) did nothing to heal the breach between king and **Charles I** people. He heartily subscribed to his father's theories of divine right; he continued to govern through the ministry of worthless favorites; and he was even more strongly opposed than his father had been to Puritanism. Charles was a dignified, cultured, and kindly man, loyal to his friends, but woefully lacking in the kind of imagination that is essential to a statesman. Though brought up in England, he had no more understanding of the English people than had the Scottish James, and he had much less understanding of the Scots whom he was also called upon to rule.

The events of the early years of Charles's

reign ended all hope of co-operation between king and Parliament. Until he was assassinated in 1628, the Duke of Buckingham, favorite of both James I and Charles, was the power behind the throne. The new king could scarcely have made a more injudicious choice than to entrust the government to this brilliant but unstable man. Under his reckless guidance, England careered into a hopeless war with Spain, the fatal marriage of Charles to the Catholic sister of Louis XIII of France, and a brief war with France that could end only in humiliation for England. The war with Spain and that in aid of the Huguenots against the French king should have won the support of Parliament; but the utter incompetence of Buckingham served only to enrage the Commons, while the French marriage aroused all the old fear of Catholicism. Parliament, therefore, refused supplies and threatened to impeach Buckingham. The king dismissed one Parliament after another with nothing accomplished, and finally tried the experiment of raising money for the war by forced loans and martial law. In 1628, however, Charles was forced to call Parliament again, and as the price of its co-operation in raising taxes, he accepted the Petition of Right. This petition, one of the corner stones of British freedom, was a clear statement of the illegality of the exercise of absolute power on four crucial points, martial law, the billeting of soldiers on the civilian population, arbitrary taxation, and arbitrary imprisonment. The first two were a protest against the means used by the king to support an army without funds, a protest inspired in part by fear lest the army be used to coerce the people. The second two points were designed to protect the right of Parliament to control such taxes as were not a recognized part of the royal prerogative, and to protect individual citizens from arrest and imprisonment by the king for political reasons. These provisions, if respected, would have made absolute government impossible. Charles accepted them; then broke them; and when Parliament in protest again refused supplies, he determined to rule without it.

For eleven years, from 1629 to 1640,

Petition of Right

Charles tried the experiment of personal government without calling Parliament. To the king, it seemed the only possible alternative. If he could not rule with Parliament — and he could not without abandoning his principles — he would rule without it. He recognized in part what that decision meant. He would have to give up all thought of a vigorous foreign policy for lack of funds, and would have to strain every legal means of taxation within the royal power to the utmost. What he did not realize was that such a policy was doomed to failure. Had Charles possessed a strong army, he might have coerced the whole population into the payment of unparliamentary taxes. Lacking that, he chose rather to distort the laws, laying a heavy burden of taxes on the relatively small but very influential class of propertied gentry and burghers who fell within the scope of royal taxes. This policy aroused a deep resentment among just those people whom he could least afford to offend, while at the same time it did not bring in enough money to maintain an army with which to meet a rebellion. One factor, however, worked in the king's favor. So long as he could avoid calling Parliament, the general discontent had no means of expression. Without leadership, the English people, unused to rebellion, were sullenly but helplessly passive.

Experiment in absolutism

So they might have remained if Charles had not, in addition to economic and political oppression, trespassed upon their freedom of conscience. He gave a free hand to Archbishop Laud, the most thorough exponent of High Church Anglicanism, whose greatest ambition in life was to force all England to conform to the strictest form of Anglican ritual and practice. Laud's plan was to smother Puritanism by preventing every possible means of expression. He banished all clergy suspected of Puritan leanings from the church; he censored the press; and he used the authority of the government to suppress all meetings for religious purposes outside the established church. Under this steady pressure, the gap between Puritan and High Churchman widened and became a more

Laud and the church

conscious antagonism. Religious doctrines and political theories became curiously involved, as men of many different types silently ranged themselves in opposition to king and church. Puritanism now represented a complex of ideas, sentiments, and resentments, held in varying proportion. The men who sat sullenly through the prescribed services of the Anglican Church, and muttered threats against the government as they returned home to read their Bibles in privacy, were characterized by some or all of the following — by a Calvinist belief in predestination, which was directly opposite to the Arminianism common among High Churchmen; by a strict morality that showed itself in stern simplicity of life and disapproval of Sunday games; by a growing hatred of ritualistic church services, of all bishops and of Laud's hand-picked clergy; and by an equally strong hatred of royal despotism. Parliament had long been a Puritan body. Now that Parliament no longer met, all Puritans were Parliamentarians, and all who resented divine-right absolutism, as practiced by Charles Stuart, were, more or less, Puritans.

It was Scotland that gave the signal for rebellion and provided the opportunity. In 1637, Laud and the king determined to extend the enforcement of Anglican service to Scotland, to replace the traditional Presbyterian form. This was sheer madness, as James I, who knew his stubborn Scots even if he never learned to know his Englishmen, might have told them. More accustomed to the ways of rebellion than their law-abiding English neighbors, the Lowland Scots rose as one man, and swore to a Covenant to defend their religion. Charles then marched north with a meager army to force them to obedience, only to find a nation in arms awaiting the attack with a godly fervor. Lacking money and with his people heartily out of sympathy with his plans, Charles could not raise anything like an adequate army. The two "Bishops' Wars" of 1639 and 1640 were no more than futile demonstrations. The king was forced to make a humiliating peace with his northern subjects and to promise them a large indemnity as the price of the

Revolt in Scotland

withdrawal of the Scottish army from England.

Absolutism without adequate financial resources had failed. In October, 1640, Charles summoned a Parliament to raise money to pay the indemnity. This was the Long Parliament, which lasted through years of opposition, civil war, and the experiment of the Commonwealth. It provided the long-awaited opportunity to organize the opposition to the king.

The Long Parliament

3. THE CIVIL WAR, THE COMMONWEALTH, AND THE PROTECTORATE (1640–60)

The members of the new Parliament were almost unanimous in their determination to curb the absolute powers of the monarchy. Led by John Pym, a Puritan gentleman of great ability, the Commons at once launched an attack on Laud and the Earl of Strafford, the two chief ministers of the king. Laud was sent to the Tower, while Strafford, more dangerous because more powerful, was condemned to death by an act of attainder. Parliament then proceeded by one act after another to strip the king of the powers that had made absolute rule possible. Provision was made for regular meetings of Parliament, which was not to be dismissed arbitrarily. The arbitrary and more or less extra-legal courts of star chamber and high commission were abolished, as were also those taxes which kings hitherto had been able to collect without consent of Parliament. In the course of a few months, this determined Parliament destroyed absolutism in England forever. For when the monarchy was restored in 1660, it was the limited monarchy left by these acts of 1640–41.

Parliament curbs absolutism

So far, Parliament had been nearly unanimous. The Puritan majority, however, were not content to stop there. They went on to a "root and branch" attack on the episcopal system in the church and to claim for Parliament powers over the army and the executive authority that would have made Parliament as absolute as the king had ever been. Divisions now began to appear in the ranks of the

Division of

Commons. Many men who had joined heartily in the acts to curb royal absolutism hesitated at proposals to transfer full authority from king to Parliament, contrary to constitutional precedent. And the same men, though willing enough to check the power of Laud's High Church bishops, suspected as they were of leaning toward Catholic practice, balked stubbornly at Puritan proposals to do away with the Prayer Book, endeared to them by years of familiarity. Parliament was dividing on religious and political grounds, with Puritans and Parliamentarians on one side, moderate Anglicans and rather reluctant Royalists on the other. At last in 1642 the crisis came, and men in Parliament and in the nation had to make a definite choice. In January, Charles made a frustrated attempt to arrest five members of Parliament who were recognized as the leaders of the opposition. In self-defense, the Commons took unconstitutional measures to raise an army. The king fled to Oxford, and with him went the Royalist minority in the Commons and a majority of the Lords. There was now open war between king and Parliament, or what was left of it.

All through the summer of 1642 the opposing sides were mustering their forces. In the long run, only a minority of the population took an active part, but they were the influential minority. The great mass of agricultural laborers remained neutral, save when pressed into the infantry on one side or the other. The volunteers were yeoman farmers, gentlemen, and the industrial and commercial classes of the towns. The line between Royalist and Parliamentarian, however, represented no clear class division. Yeomen and gentlemen fought on both sides, and, though London and the seaports were the strongholds of Parliament, there were Royalists in every city and a majority in some. In general the Royalists were stronger in the north and west, while Parliament could count on a majority in the eastern and midland counties. But even this geographical alignment was only partially valid. It was not a war of sections any more than it was a war of classes. In the final analysis it was a war of opposing political and religious principles or

Cavalier and Roundhead

sentiments. The ancient feeling of loyalty to the crown was the force that rallied men about the royal banner. Some of those who found that they could not desert the king in the face of a call to arms were Puritans, but most of them were Anglicans, Catholics, or men to whom religion was not a dominating passion. Among them were enough of the hard-drinking, hard-riding gentry to give the whole Royalist party the name of Cavaliers. On the other side were men in whom the memory of royal oppression was stronger than the sentiment of loyalty. For the most part they were Puritans, for it was the Puritans who had suffered most under the recent absolutism, and the stern determination to win religious freedom was one of the few sentiments strong enough to make Englishmen take up arms against their king. Yet not all Parliamentarians were Puritans, and not all Puritans were of the strict type painted by popular fancy. There were enough of the latter, however, to win for their party the name of Roundheads, from their refusal to wear the flowing curled wigs affected by their less godly opponents.

The war lasted four years (1642–46). The limits of space forbid our giving a description of the campaigns, nor would the attempt be particularly profitable. It was a strange, scrambled affair, with much aimless marching about. Only the Royalists had a definite strategy in the plan to converge on the city of London and capture it, which, however, never succeeded. Parliament had the advantage of holding the great seaports and controlling the wealthiest cities, so that they could draw supplies from abroad and could pay for superior equipment. The navy, too, was on their side, and Scotland was their ally. In the long run, though, the deciding factor was the New Model Army, recruited from among the most extreme Protestants and organized by the only real military genius whom the war produced, Oliver Cromwell. Well armed, well drilled, and kept under a strict military and moral discipline, the New Model were the shock troops of the Parliamentary army. Cromwell's "Ironside" cavalry proved their disciplined worth against Prince Rupert's wild Cavaliers at Marston Moor in 1644. By the

Civil war

OLIVER CROMWELL

Left: The plain stern face, shown in this picture, was well suited to the commander of the New Model Army and ruler of the Puritan Commonwealth.

A SESSION OF PARLIAMENT

Below: The English Parliament in session is shown here from a seventeenth-century engraving.
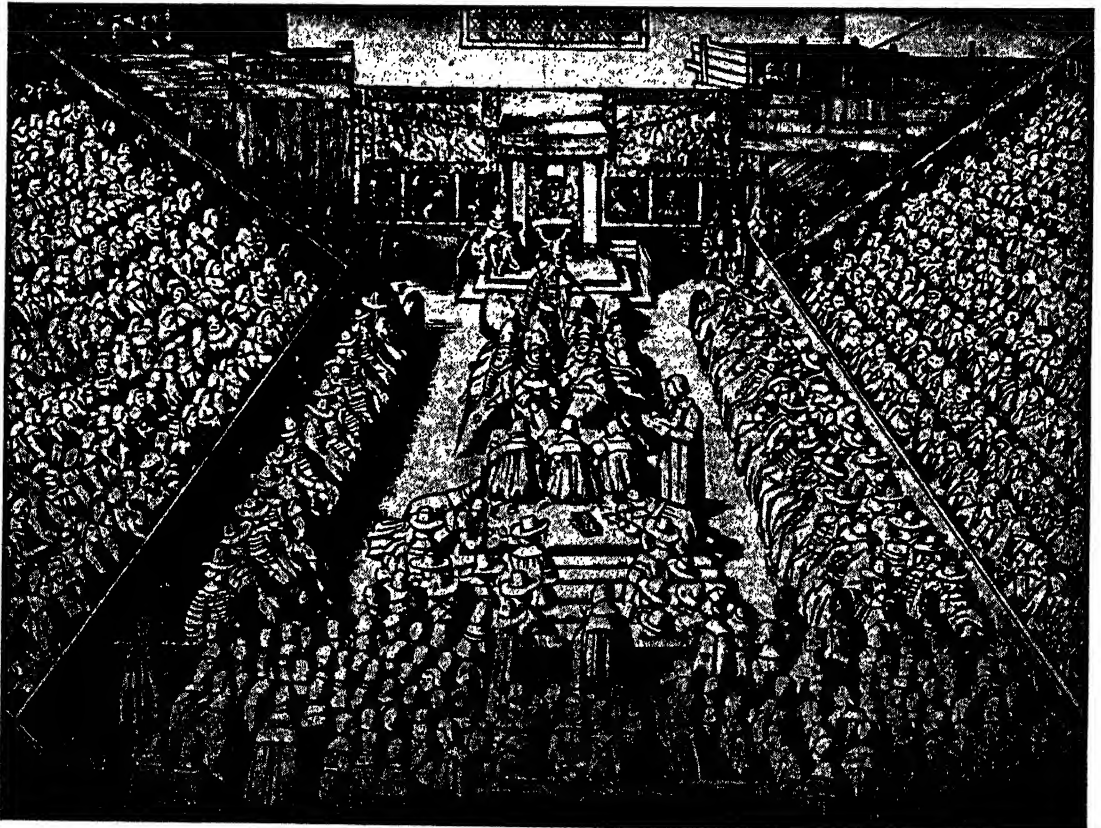
end of the war the New Model included about a fourth of the Parliamentary forces, and by far the most effective part.

With the surrender of the king in 1646, Parliament faced the difficult problem of arranging a permanent settlement. One question was what to do with the king. Few men were prepared to abolish monarchy. But could Charles be trusted to maintain a constitutional authority, limited by Parliament? And while Charles foiled all negotiations by his bewildering inconsistencies and double-dealing, another vital problem rose to the surface. As the price of the Scottish alliance, Parliament in 1645 had agreed to make Presbyterianism the state religion of England. It was a compromise that satisfied most Puritans, for some kind of state church was needed, though few were really Presbyterian in the Scottish sense. It did not, however, satisfy the New Model Army. This grim organization had been recruited from among the most extreme Protestants, men whose individualistic love of religious freedom made them oppose any state-controlled church. They were the Independents, differing among themselves in theological views, but united in the conviction that each congregation must be free to determine its own religion. Now, the Presbyterian Parliament, flushed with victory, made two serious mistakes. It persecuted Anglicans, on the one hand, thus embittering the defeated Royalists, and, forgetting who had won the war, it also passed persecuting acts against the Independents and proposed to disband the New Model without its back pay. The result was a second brief civil war, with Royalists, Parliamentary Presbyterians, and Scots in a curious alliance against the Independents. The latter, led by Cromwell, were again victorious. And, not to be cheated of the fruits of victory the army chiefs now took control. In December, 1648, they forcibly "purged" Parliament of its Presbyterian members, leaving only a small minority who could be trusted to do what the army wished. Two months later, this "Rump Parliament" abolished the House of Lords.

The Independent army was in the saddle, and in no temporizing mood. Parliament had betrayed their hopes of religious freedom, and they could not trust the king. All hope of a peaceful, amicable settlement that would preserve the things they had fought for seemed lost. They were riding the tiger, and there was nothing to do but to go on. Cromwell was now the undisputed leader of the army and what remained of Parliament. He had labored patiently to preserve a constitutional monarchy, but was now convinced that that was no longer possible. With grim courage, he accepted the logic of the situation and instituted the trial of the king. Charles Stuart met his death with dignity, while England staggered under the shock, and men who had fought against him united with those who had rallied round his banner to hail him as a martyr. The execution of the king wiped out the memory of his oppressive government and made the great majority of Englishmen Royalists at last. England was a republic now, but a republic ruled by a small minority of armed men who could not count on the support of the people.

During the next eleven years (1649–60), England passed from one experimental form of government to another. The first was the Commonwealth, a republic governed by a council chosen by the Rump of the Long Parliament, which still held the legislative authority. This was changed in 1653 by the forcible dissolution of the Rump, and a new constitution was substituted, making England a Protectorate, with Cromwell as Lord Protector and a carefully selected Parliament to hold the legislative authority. Even the most carefully chosen Parliament, however, could not co-operate with the army chiefs, and further changes followed, making Cromwell king in all but name. Whatever the form of constitution, in actual fact England was ruled by Oliver Cromwell with the backing of the army. It was not the kind of government that anyone wanted, perhaps least of all Cromwell. But it was apparently the only form of government possible at the time; the only form that could save the country from anarchy or further civil war. England was not yet ready to

Execution of Charles

Commonwealth and Protectorate

Independents vs. Presbyterians

restore the Stuart monarchy, and there was still too much division of opinion to permit of a true republic. The rule of Cromwell and the army provided a working government, which, however, dared not permit a freely elected Parliament. Such a government could not last long; but under the capable guidance of Cromwell it lasted long enough to give England time to recover from the civil wars and to restore her prosperity and her prestige abroad.

The internal government of England under Cromwell was peaceful and orderly, but the warlike spirit of the Puritan army had plenty of opportunity to express itself in relation to Ireland, Scotland, and the neighboring states of the Continent. During the period of the Commonwealth, Cromwell had to crush strong opposition in both Ireland and Scotland. In the former, the Catholic majority rose in support of the Stuart heir, the future Charles II. The Puritan army invaded Ireland and put down the Catholic rising with a barbarous cruelty such as they had never shown in dealing with their Protestant enemies. To this day, the "curse of Cromwell" holds an unforgettable place in the memory of the Irish people. In Scotland, where the opposition was Presbyterian rather than Catholic, Cromwell was much more merciful. After defeating the Scots, he left them with a settlement that was eminently fair, though unpopular because it was forced upon them by the English and also because Cromwell insisted on the toleration of other Protestant sects. Having restored peace to the British Isles, the militant Commonwealth turned to war with the Netherlands, the chief commercial rival of England. More than any other group in the population, the new government represented the commercial class. Cromwell zealously fostered their interests, reviving trade with the colonies and striving by a new navigation act to build up England's carrying trade at the expense of the Dutch. The war with the Netherlands proved that England had not lost her mastery of sea warfare and left her once more mistress of the Narrow Seas.

Cromwell's foreign policy

Later, Cromwell, as Protector, launched another naval war against Spain for similar commercial reasons and with equal success. Before his death in 1658, he had made England a ranking power again among the nations of Europe.

On the whole, Cromwell accomplished a great deal, and much that was of permanent value, for many of his economic policies were carried on by the restored Stuart monarchy. Yet his government grew steadily more unpopular. Englishmen who had fought against the king had not fought to substitute a military despotism for the ancient monarchy. The new government had not given the people political freedom, and, though Cromwell guaranteed a large measure of religious toleration to all save Catholics and Anglicans, the Puritan government instituted a moral oppression as irksome as the religious oppression of Charles had been. Under the pressure of what would today be called blue laws, enforced by the army, many a former Puritan turned Cavalier and many a former Parliamentarian turned Royalist. When the death of Cromwell left the Protectorate to his feeble son, the nation was very nearly unanimous in its opinion that only one course lay before it — to restore the Stuart monarchy in the person of Charles II, with adequate guaranties that the powers of Parliament, as fixed by the acts of 1640–41, would be respected. This decision was put into effect without further civil war, thanks to the intervention of General Monk, now in command of the army, who used his power to secure a freely elected Parliament, which invited Charles II to return. In 1660, the new king was welcomed home with delirious demonstrations of joy. England had a legitimate king again; but he would not be an absolute ruler, nor would any king in the future successfully revive the claims of the first two Stuarts. The Anglican Church, too, was restored and for a time persecuted dissenters; but the principle of religious freedom was not lost sight of and was soon to come into its own at least so far as dissenting Protestants were concerned.

The Stuart Restoration

35

The Thirty Years' War

THE FIRST HALF of the seventeenth century witnessed the last and greatest of the religious wars, a war that for thirty years (1618–48) devastated Germany and involved, before it was over, nearly every state in Europe. For more than half a century before the war began, the Religious Peace of Augsburg (1555) had served to maintain an uneasy peace between the Protestant and Catholic forces in Germany. But conditions had changed since 1555, and with the opening years of the seventeenth century it became increasingly apparent that the settlement could not last much longer. The revived energy of Catholicism under the impetus of the Counter-Reformation, the rising power of militant Calvinism, the territorial greed and jealous independence of the German princes, the dynastic ambitions of the house of Hapsburg in both its branches, and the national interests of France, Sweden, and other European powers all tended to increase the tension and to produce a situation that menaced the peace of Europe. In these years, Germany was a vast powder magazine, which any chance spark might ignite with devastating results. For there were more than religious problems involved. Political and economic motives played their part in the war from the first, and as the war continued, religious issues sank into comparative insignificance before the greed and mutual hatred of territorial states and ruling dynasties. When the war was over, Germany lay prostrate; the Holy Roman Empire had been reduced to an empty shell; and out of the final settlement emerged the modern state system of Europe.

1. THE BACKGROUND OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

The years immediately following the Religious Peace of Augsburg marked the high tide of Protestantism in Germany. For a time the momentum gained by the Lutheran Reformation in its early days carried it on to further conquests, especially in northern Germany. But as the century drew on, the tide turned. The Catholic Church in the period of the Counter-Reformation gained a new and aggressive energy and began to recover some of the lost ground. In every German state where the prince was still Catholic, the Jesuits set up their efficient schools and exerted a steady, tactful influence on both the people and their princes. One Catholic prince after another seconded their efforts by energetically enforcing the principle of the religious peace which gave the prince the right to dictate the religion of his subjects. Thus large sections of southern Germany, including Bavaria, the Austrian Hapsburg lands, and the ecclesiastical states of the Rhineland, were purged of their numerous Protestant population and became almost unanimously Catholic. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, German Catholicism had developed a decidedly militant spirit, and had found two powerful and devoted champions in the young

Counter-Reformation in Germany

Maximilian, Duke of Bavaria, and his contemporary, Ferdinand of Styria, cousin and heir of the Hapsburg emperor.

In contrast to this Catholic revival, Lutheranism seemed to be sinking into a state of passive apathy. All that was positive and aggressive in the Protestant faith was now concentrated in the growing Calvinism, which had established itself in several of the upper Rhineland states and in Bohemia, and had won over the Elector Palatine and the Elector of Brandenburg. The stern faith of Calvin provided the moral force needed to meet the revived energy of Catholicism, but the growth of Calvinism in Germany weakened rather than strengthened the Protestant cause, for Lutheran and Calvinist were divided by an antagonism almost as deep as that which separated Protestant and Catholic.

Calvinism in Germany

The growth of Calvinism, indeed, was one of the principal factors that tended to nullify the settlement arranged by the Religious Peace of Augsburg. In 1555, Calvinism had not yet become a power to be reckoned with in Germany, and the Calvinists had been excluded from the terms of the peace.[1] Thus, unlike their Lutheran neighbors, they had no legal status. But even the Lutherans were no longer fully protected by the religious peace. It had recognized the right of the Lutheran princes to hold those church lands which they had confiscated prior to 1552. A good deal of church land, however, was secularized (i.e., taken over by the Lutheran lay governments) after that date. So long as Protestantism was in the ascendant, no effective protest could be made, but as the Catholic forces gained new strength, they asserted that these lands were not included in the peace and still belonged to the church. A similar problem arose from the interpretation of that part of the peace known as the ecclesiastical reservation. According to this clause, ecclesiastical princes (bishops or abbots ruling territorial states) who became Protestant were to give up their land, which was to be retained by the church. This provision, however, had been violated

Defects of the Peace of Augsburg

on numerous occasions, and most of the bishoprics in northern Germany, as well as many smaller ecclesiastical principalities, had become secular Protestant lands.

The growing feeling of insecurity among the Protestant princes led in 1608 to the formation of an armed league, the Evangelical Union, under the leadership of the Calvinist Elector Palatine. It was largely a Calvinist league, for they were in the most serious danger, but some Lutherans were included, though the sequel was to show how little they were prepared to sacrifice for their Calvinist allies. The following year, the challenge of the union was met by the formation of a Catholic League led by Maximilian of Bavaria. The Protestant and Catholic forces in Germany were now ranged in hostile armed camps. Peace was maintained only by the even balance of power. Should any circumstance upset that balance, war would be inevitable.

Evangelical Union and Catholic League

This intricate adjustment of forces in Germany was further complicated by the rather anomalous position of the Hapsburg emperors. Though they were all orthodox Catholics, the emperors (Ferdinand I, 1556–64; Maximilian II, 1564–76; Rudolph II, 1576–1612; and Matthias, 1612–19), whose reigns occupied the time between the abdication of Charles V and the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, were not aggressive champions of Catholicism. Their interests were confined in large measure to the aggrandizement of their hereditary family lands, which included, besides Austria and the other Hapsburg territories in southern Germany, the kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary. In addition, of course, they held such vague authority over the entire Holy Roman Empire as still adhered to the imperial title. The princes of Germany, however, both Catholic and Protestant, had already gained a good deal of independence, and desired more. This fact tended to prevent any whole-hearted co-operation between the emperors and the other Catholic princes. Indeed, the emperor was pointedly left out of the Catholic League. The league might join with him in a common effort against the

Position of the Hapsburgs

[1] See above, page 427.

Protestants, but the princes of the league would be careful to see that the imperial authority was not strengthened by a victory over the Protestant princes. In the long run, the only support on which the Hapsburg emperors could count without question, outside of their own territory, was that of their cousins of the Spanish branch of the family. Always intensely conscious of their dynastic solidarity, the Austrian and Spanish branches of the house of Hapsburg, though divided since the abdication of Charles V, had maintained a very close relationship, reinforced by frequent intermarriages. Any German war involving the Austrian Hapsburgs, therefore, would certainly involve Spain also. And Spain, though greatly weakened through internal decay, was still to all outward appearances the greatest power in Europe.

As it happened, the Hapsburgs were involved in the coming war, and that from the very beginning, for the spark **Bohemia** that ignited the conflagration was the revolt of the Bohemian Calvinists against their Hapsburg ruler. The rebellion was motivated by a mixture of national and religious aspirations. Nowhere in Europe was national consciousness stronger than in this Slavic land, where a Czech population had for centuries been ruled by German kings, and heresy was ingrained in this people, whose ancestors two centuries before had defied the might of Catholic Christendom in memory of the martyred John Huss. Under the feeble rule of the emperors, Rudolph and Matthias, the Bohemian Protestants, the most aggressive of whom were Calvinists, had gained a measure of religious freedom. Their rights were guaranteed by a royal charter, but they depended in reality upon the weakness and tolerance of the emperor. This fact explains the consternation of the Bohemians when, in 1617, the childless Matthias designated as his heir his cousin Ferdinand of Styria, notoriously the most fanatical opponent of Protestantism in Germany. To make matters worse, Matthias forced the Bohemian Diet to accept Ferdinand as their hereditary king, in violation of the ancient tradition that the Bohemian crown was elective. Seeing both their reli-gious and national freedom endangered, the Czech nobles determined to strike without delay, before Ferdinand could consolidate his power.

2. THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR (1618-48)

The story of the thirty years of warfare, which opened with the Czech-Calvinist rising in Bohemia, is a rather complicated one, but it is made **Periods of** somewhat easier to follow by **the war** the fact that it falls readily into four major periods: (1) the Bohemian revolt, beginning in 1618; (2) the Danish intervention, beginning in 1625; (3) the Swedish intervention, beginning in 1630; (4) the French intervention, beginning in 1635 and lasting till the end of the war.

The Bohemian revolt was begun with a dramatic gesture of defiance. Determined to commit their fellow countrymen irrevocably to rebellion, a **Bohemian** group of Czech noblemen en-**revolt** tered the royal palace at Prague and heaved the emperor's representatives bodily out of a window, from which they fell, with considerable loss of dignity, but with no fatal injury, into the moat below. There was now no turning back. The Bohemians organized an army, though with characteristic irresponsibility the nobles refused to contribute the money necessary to make it really effective, while on the other side, Ferdinand began to mobilize his forces. He could count on a certain amount of support from Spain, the pope, and the Catholic League, and early in 1619 the opportune death of the aged Matthias gave him the additional prestige of the imperial title as Ferdinand II (1619-37). Still he might have been left practically alone to deal with his rebellious subjects if the Bohemians themselves had not called in outside aid and turned the rebellion into a general religious war. In the summer of 1619, the Bohemian Diet elected Frederick, the Calvinist Elector Palatine, King of Bohemia, and that rash young prince accepted the dangerous honor. The choice of Frederick had been inspired largely by the hope that he would be able to secure aid from his father-in-law, James I of England, as well as from the other Protestant princes of Ger-

many. But James, who was engaged in negotiations for a marriage alliance with Spain, contented himself with giving good advice, and the Lutheran princes had no desire to risk a war for the sake of Calvinism and the elector's territorial ambitions. On the other hand, the union of the Calvinist Palatinate with Bohemia threatened to upset the delicate balance between the religions, and drove Maximilian of Bavaria and the Catholic League to the assistance of the emperor. The campaign in Bohemia was brief and decisive. The combined army of the emperor and the league, commanded by Maximilian's veteran general, Tilly, routed the undisciplined Bohemians outside of Prague in the fall of 1620, and the unfortunate Frederick fled the country.

The net result of this first stage of the war was a triumph for militant Catholicism. Ferdinand proceeded to stamp out Protestantism in Bohemia with ruthless severity. The lands of the rebels were confiscated and a relentless persecution drove the Protestant populace to give up their religion or emigrate. Meanwhile, a similar fate befell Frederick's native County Palatine on the Rhine. Sincere Catholic though he was, Maximilian of Bavaria was not above demanding a high price for his services to his church. The emperor was forced to turn over to him Frederick's electoral title and with it his lands. The conquest of the Palatinate kept the war going till 1623, and the fear and indignation aroused among the Protestant princes by this high-handed act, coupled as it was with a threat to the rest of German Protestantism by swinging the balance of power to the Catholic side, ensured the continuation of the war on a still broader basis through foreign intervention.

For the present, German Protestantism seemed to have collapsed into a state of helpless passivity. But aid was soon forthcoming from outside Germany. England had broken off the marriage negotiations with Spain, and young Charles was eager to revenge his humiliation. The Dutch, too, were willing to co-operate in any Protestant alliance that would enable them to fight Spain. Finally,

Catholic triumph

Danish intervention

with the promise of aid from England and Holland, Christian IV of Denmark was ready to invade Germany and join hands with the Lutheran princes in a war against the emperor and the Catholic League. Christian's motives were partly religious, for he was a Lutheran; but in rather greater degree he was moved by the hope of winning territory and by the necessity of protecting certain secularized church lands already in the possession of his family. The Protestant princes of Germany, too, had lands as well as their religion to protect. The time seemed ripe for intervention as the Danes marched into northern Germany in 1625.

Meanwhile, the Emperor Ferdinand, unwilling to trust entirely to the army of the league and too impoverished to raise an adequate army himself, had turned for assistance to one of the most remarkable adventurers in the history of Germany, the enigmatic Wallenstein. This obscure Bohemian noble had fought his way to power, wealth, and titles by sheer ability and the driving force of an unscrupulous ambition. Born a Protestant, he had become a nominal Catholic, but was unencumbered by any religious loyalties. By skillful profiteering in confiscated lands after the Bohemian revolt, he had accumulated a colossal fortune, and he now offered to raise an army at no expense to the emperor, provided he were given a free hand to support it by plunder and to repay himself in conquered territory. His great military reputation, backed by promises of good pay and plunder, brought soldiers of fortune flocking to his banner from every country in Europe and representing every variety of religious creed. He had an army of over fifty thousand men when he marched north to co-operate with Tilly and the army of the league. Together they were too strong for Christian, who had found small support from his allies. The Danes were defeated at Lutter in 1626 and slowly withdrew from Germany. The Catholic-imperial forces were left in control of northern Germany, and Wallenstein proceeded to establish what amounted to an independent sovereignty in captured territory along the Baltic coast. It is not clear just what were the plans of this
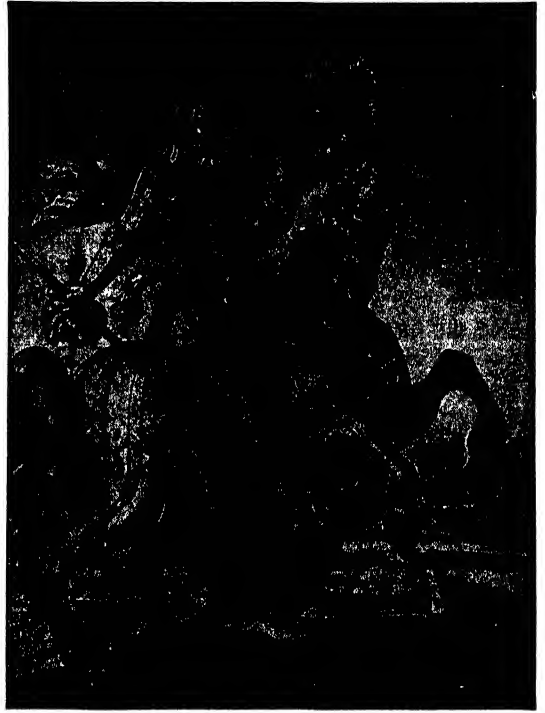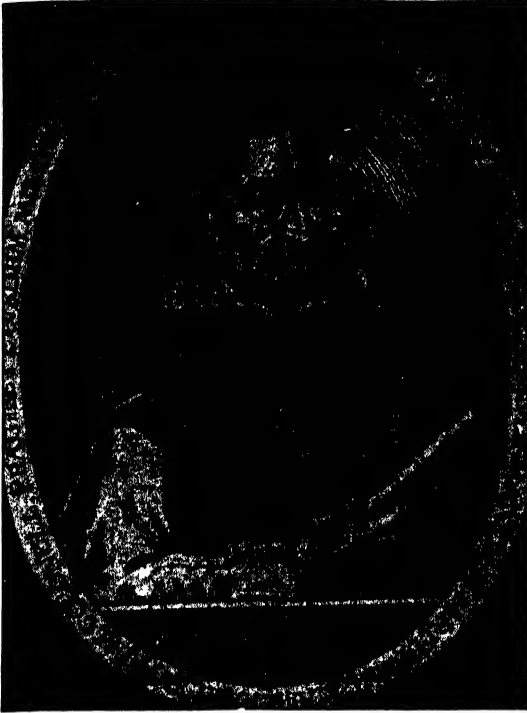
Wallenstein

WALLENSTEIN

*Upper left: The personal interference of this great
mercenary general was more than once a decisive fac-
tor in the Thirty Years' War.*

FERDINAND II

*Upper right: The Emperor Ferdinand was a consider-
ably less dashing figure than this picture would suggest.*

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS

*Left: Of all the leaders engaged in the Thirty Years'
War this Swedish king was at once the most able and
the most attractive.*
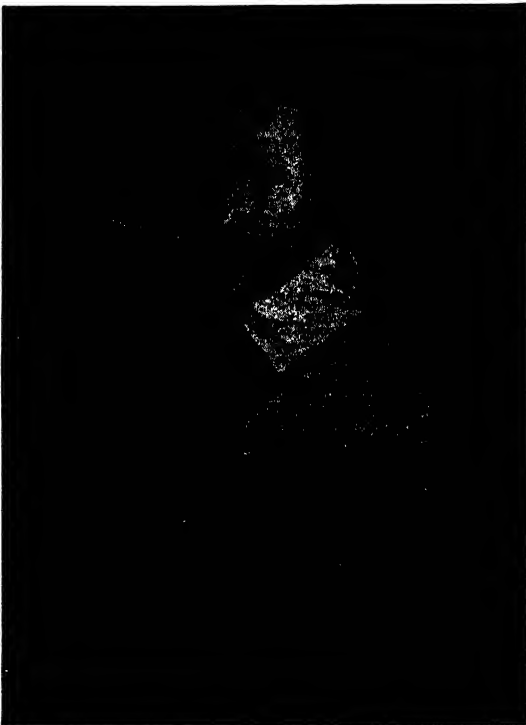
inscrutable genius; but he seems to have offered Ferdinand a military despotism, based on religious toleration, that would make Germany a united state under an absolute Hapsburg monarchy. The emperor, however, was too irresolute, perhaps too suspicious of his powerful general, and certainly too strongly Catholic to accept such a proposal. He listened instead to the urging of the Catholic League that he use his victory for the Catholic cause.

The league had not forgotten the confiscated church lands nor the secularized bishoprics and abbacies. If the lost ecclesiastical states could be won back to the control of the church, the provision of the religious peace which empowered a prince to dictate the religion of his people would enable Catholic bishops or abbots to stamp out Protestantism in some of the richest cities and territories in northern Germany. It seemed too good an opportunity to be ignored, and in 1629 Ferdinand issued the Edict of Restitution, commanding the restoration to the church of all ecclesiastical lands secularized since the Peace of Augsburg. The edict was a fatal blow to peace, for it aroused Protestant feeling from passive resignation to bitter resentment and ensured the continuation of the war, just at the time when the Treaty of Lübeck with Denmark seemed about to end it. To have carried out the edict would have meant taking from princes and people land and religious freedom which they had held securely for two or three generations. It would have meant the end of Protestant territorial supremacy in northern Germany. Further, the enforcement of the edict depended largely on Wallenstein and his personal army, for it could be put into effect only by a powerful army and by methods of brute force. And Wallenstein, who disapproved of the edict because it meant the ruin of his larger plans, was fast drifting into open antagonism to the league. Ferdinand would have to choose between the two. He had, in fact, already chosen. In 1630 he submitted to the demands of the league and dismissed his great general.

When Ferdinand thus gave up the only armed force strong enough to enforce his

Edict of Restitution

rash policy, a new champion of the Protestant cause had already landed in Germany. The decision of Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden (1611–32), to take up the cause of his fellow Lutherans in Germany opened the third period of the war, that of the Swedish intervention. The motives of Gustavus, like those of most of the participants in the war so far, were a mixture of religious partisanship and territorial greed, save that with this hero-king, "the Lion of the North," religion was a more sincere motive than with most and his territorial ambitions were but part of a long campaign to make his country secure and a power in the north. Ever since his accession, at the age of seventeen, to the throne of a beleaguered, impoverished, and divided kingdom, Gustavus had fought to consolidate his state and to win for it that supremacy in the Baltic upon which its economic and political life depended. His reign was from the beginning a perpetual war — war with Denmark, 1611–13, war with Russia, 1614–17, and war with Poland, 1617–29. As a result of each, he had won additional territory on the Baltic coast and a more complete control of the Baltic trade. Now all that he needed was a foothold in northern Germany to make the Baltic indeed a "Swedish lake." For years he had been watching the course of the war in Germany and biding his time. In 1630, he decided that the time for intervention had come. He was free from the threat of war elsewhere; the collapse of German Protestantism demanded instant action; and he had the promise of financial aid from France, whose cardinal-minister Richelieu was willing to forget religious differences in his eagerness to aid anyone who would indirectly serve France by weakening the Hapsburgs.

The Protestant deliverer received at first a cold welcome from the Lutherans whom he had come to defend. They had been overawed by the power of the emperor and the league and they were suspicious of the foreigner. The Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony maintained a stubborn neutrality, while the city of Magdeburg, which had declared for Gustavus, was captured and cruelly sacked be-

Swedish intervention

Protestant successes

cause the former would not permit the Swedish king to cross his territory to its relief. It was not till Gustavus had invaded Brandenburg and ranged his guns before the walls of Berlin that the elector finally consented to join forces with him. The imperialists under Tilly then tried to win over the Elector of Saxony by a similar show of force, but with the opposite result. The cautious elector was finally aroused to opposition and joined Gustavus with a force of some eighteen thousand men. Thus reinforced, the Swedish king fell upon the Catholic imperial army at Breitenfeld, not far from Leipzig, in September, 1631. The Saxon contingent proved worthless, but the Swedish army, which Gustavus had reorganized along entirely new lines, justified its reputation as the most formidable military machine in Europe. Outmaneuvered and outfought, Tilly retired with the shattered remnants of his army, while Gustavus proceeded on a triumphal march through the Rhineland into Bavaria, where Tilly was again defeated, and this time the old Bavarian general was left dead on the field. The Swedish king now dominated Germany, and the balance of power swung high in favor of Protestantism. In desperation the emperor turned again to Wallenstein. For months Gustavus and Wallenstein fenced carefully, but at last, in November, 1632, the two great generals met in a desperate battle at Lützen. The result was a victory for the Swedes; but it was a victory more disastrous than any defeat, for it cost them the life of their king. With his death the Swedish-Protestant cause lost direction and cohesion. Only Gustavus could have reaped the fruits of his brilliant victories.

For a time, however, the momentum of victory carried the Swedes on to further conquest under the guidance of the Chancellor Oxenstjerna, who acted for the child Queen Christina. **Peace of Prague** But they were weakened by heavy losses and by the defection of the Elector of Saxony, who refused to co-operate any longer, though he continued the war as an independent party. Meanwhile, Wallenstein was leisurely refitting his army in Bohemia and refusing to take decisive action.

Perhaps he was plotting treason. Ferdinand, at any rate, grew suspicious and decided, now that the greatest danger was past, to rid himself finally of his dangerous general. In 1634, Wallenstein was assassinated by some of his own soldiers. In the same year the Swedes were defeated at Nördlingen by an imperial army. The tide was turning against them and they soon lost a large part of their conquered territory. The emperor was quick to take advantage of this favorable turn to make peace with Saxony and the other German Protestant princes, for both sides were tired of the war, and the emperor's own resources were nearly exhausted. According to the terms of the Peace of Prague (1635), all disputed ecclesiastical lands were to be restored to those holding them in 1627. This amounted to a revocation of the Edict of Restitution. With the signing of the Peace of Prague, the religious phase of the war ended. And the war itself might have ended, had France been willing to permit it.

The religious significance of the war had always been a matter of secondary importance to Cardinal Richelieu. Heir to the foreign policy of **Richelieu's foreign policy** Henry IV, the cardinal's aims were clear and simple, however complex the methods he might see fit to use. He could never forget that France was still surrounded by Hapsburg territory. To make his country secure and powerful, the Hapsburg states must be reduced to impotence, and France must win defensible frontiers on the Rhine and the Pyrenees. So long as other powers — the German princes, Holland, England, Denmark, or Sweden — were engaged in the process of wearing down the resistance of Spain and Austria, Richelieu was content to wait, offering no more than diplomatic and financial aid to the enemies of the Hapsburg dynasty. After the Peace of Prague, however, the war seemed about to end with the Hapsburg power still not completely crushed. The Swedes were not included in the treaty, but they could not continue long alone. It was time for France to intervene with all her strength.

With the active intervention of France in 1635, the war broadened to truly European

THE SIGNING OF THE PEACE OF WESTPHALIA

The final scene of the great war is shown here from a painting by Terborch.

dimensions. Before declaring war on Spain and Austria, Richelieu had formed an alliance with the Swedes, the Dutch, who were to attack the Spanish Netherlands, and Savoy, which opened the gates to northern Italy. German princes were again involved in the war on one side or the other. For thirteen years the war continued, with few notable battles but terrible devastation of the occupied territory. Although there was fighting along the Pyrenees, in northern Italy, and in the Netherlands, it was still Germany that suffered most from the ravaging of native and foreign armies. During the early stages of their intervention, the French met with small success. In course of time, however, the undrained wealth and reserve energy of France began to tell against the already exhausted Hapsburg states. The French army became more efficient with experience and gained the additional advantage of able leadership when the command

French intervention

was given to two young generals, the Prince of Condé and Turenne, of whom the former was responsible for the decisive defeat of the Spanish army at Rocroi in 1643. Richelieu had died before this brilliant victory, but his successor Mazarin carried on the war with equal energy. As the war drew on, the French and Swedish armies joined forces, invaded Bavaria and closed in on the home territory of the emperor. Meanwhile, peace negotiations had begun. They dragged on interminably, but at last the terms were agreed upon and the Thirty Years' War ended in the Peace of Westphalia.

3. RESULTS OF THE WAR — THE PEACE OF WESTPHALIA AND THE PEACE OF THE PYRENEES

The Peace of Westphalia (1648) was the work of the first great European peace conference. It marks the end of the era of religious strife and the beginning of the new era of dynastic and national wars for economic or terri-

Peace of Westphalia

torial aggrandizement. In its adjustment of territorial boundaries and in the recognition of the sovereignty of states hitherto considered subject to the empire, it laid the foundations for the modern state system of Europe. Until the Napoleonic era, most of the further territorial changes were considered merely readjustments of the settlement of Westphalia.

The victors in the long struggle demanded, and received, additions of territory as compensation for their efforts. (1) **Territorial compensations** France, the laborer come late to the vineyard, profited most, receiving the strategically important bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, and the "sovereignty" of Alsace except for the free city of Strasbourg, thus making a notable advance toward the Rhine. (2) Sweden obtained western Pomerania and some neighboring territory on the Baltic, as well as the bishopric of Bremen on the North Sea. (3) Brandenburg received, in return for the surrender of western Pomerania, three secularized bishoprics and the succession to the archbishopric of Magdeburg, and was confirmed in the possession of eastern Pomerania. (4) The problem of the Palatinate was solved by dividing it between the Duke of Bavaria and the son of the late Elector Palatine, both to hold an electoral title.

The peace also recognized certain important changes in the political status of the powers involved. (1) **Political provisions** The Holy Roman Empire, though continuing to exist as a formal entity, was practically dissolved, since each prince in Germany was recognized as a sovereign power, free to make peace or war and to govern his own state independently. As a result, the authority of the imperial Hapsburgs was limited more than ever to their own hereditary lands, and their policy became more and more a purely Austrian one. (2) France and Sweden acquired, with lands in the empire, the right to vote in the imperial Diet. (3) The accomplished fact of the independence of Holland and Switzerland was formally confirmed, and they entered the state system of Europe as free and independent powers.

The religious issues of the war, almost forgotten, were settled in the simplest possible way by recognizing the facts of the existing situation. (1) **Religious settlement** Secularized church lands were to remain in the possession of those holding them in 1624. (2) The Calvinists were admitted to the privileges of the Religious Peace of Augsburg with the right, accorded to Lutheran and Catholic princes, to determine legally the religion of their states. The Peace of Westphalia did not establish religious toleration, but Germany was too impoverished for any prince to risk the loss of subjects by enforcing religious uniformity.

The most important results of the war, however, were not of a kind that could be summarized in the terms of a peace treaty. For three decades **Effects of the war** the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse had ridden through all the rich land of Germany, scattering death, disease, and destruction in their wake. Pitched battles were few and unimportant compared to the appalling loss of life from famine, disease, and the brutality of marauding soldiers. The armies on both sides plundered, burned, tortured, and killed, without regard to the supposed friendship or enmity of the helpless people. Such statistics as can be procured regarding the decrease in population in Germany and Bohemia during the war reveal an almost unbelievable situation. It is confidently asserted that the total population was reduced to two thirds and possibly to a half of what it had been. The relative loss of property was still greater. But even this shocking loss of life and property was perhaps less important in its lasting results than the complete moral and cultural degradation of a people who, in the preceding century, had given cultural and religious leadership to all northern Europe. It is a commonplace, all too true, to say that Germany was set back at least a century in the development of her civilization.

For Spain, too, the war was disastrous. She had been drained of her vitality and was to suffer still more, for she was not included in the Peace of **France and Spain** Westphalia. She had already lost Portugal, which had taken advantage of the war to assert her independence, and had

lost Roussillon to the French. Moreover, her possessions in Italy and the Netherlands were threatened. Nevertheless, Philip IV still hoped to recoup some of his losses, and Mazarin was loath to make peace till he had completed the ruin of France's most dangerous enemy. The war between France and Spain, therefore, continued. At first it seemed certain that nothing could save Spain from a crushing defeat that would leave her shorn of her most valued possessions. She was saved just in time by the outbreak of the Fronde in France. That futile rebellion of the French nobles distracted Mazarin's attention, and when it was over France was too weak to carry on the war alone. In 1657, Mazarin made an incongruous alliance with the Protestant regicide, Cromwell. Thus reinforced, France had again the advantage over her enfeebled enemy. In 1659, Philip IV was forced to accept a peace, which was humiliating enough, but not as bad as it might have been if France had been able to push home her first successes.

The Peace of the Pyrenees ended the long struggle between the rival dynasties of France and Spain. It ended also the last vestige of Spain's claim to ascendancy in Europe

Peace of the Pyrenees

and transferred that claim to France. By the treaty, France acquired Roussillon, which meant the winning of the Pyrenees as a southern frontier, and the county of Artois from the Spanish Netherlands. The peace was sealed by the marriage of the young king, Louis XIV, to Maria Theresa, the daughter of Philip IV. With the conclusion of this treaty, Mazarin could die content, for the greater part of the task begun by Henry IV and carried on by Richelieu was now complete.

The treaties of Westphalia and the Pyrenees restored peace to the greater part of Europe. But in the North war clouds still hung over the Baltic, where Frederick William of Brandenburg was exploiting the old enmity between Sweden and Poland with the aim of securing a free title to East Prussia. Even the warlike Baltic powers, however, were weary of war and in 1660 the intervention of England, Holland, and other great states was enough to bring the Northern struggle to a close. Brandenburg, Sweden, and Poland signed the Treaty of Oliva recognizing Frederick William's free sovereignty in East Prussia, and all Europe was at peace for the first time in more than a generation.

Treaty of Oliva

APPENDIXES

Chronological Outlines

The Preparation of History Reports

Genealogical Table

A List of European Rulers to the Middle of the Seventeenth Century

Suggestions for Further Reading

ASIA	AFRICA

5000

←————————————LATE   NEOLITHIC   CULTURE   WIDELY   DIFFUSED→

*An established civilization
in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley*

*A complex culture
in the Nile Valley*

4000

*Sumerian civilization
reaches its peak*

Old Kingdom
Probable beginning of First Dynasty
(c. 3400-2600 B.C.)

3000

Pyramid Age (Fourth Dynasty)
(2900-2750 B.C.)

Sargon I unites
Indus Valley   Akkad and Sumer
culture extant   (c. 2700 B.C.)

2000

Hammurabi consolidates
the Babylonian Empire
Chinese culture   (c. 2100 B.C.)
flourishes

Middle Kingdom
(Twelfth Dynasty)
(c. 2000-1800 B.C.)

New Kingdom
(c. 1500-1150 B.C.)

Destruction of Troy
1000   *Assyrians establish an*   (c. 1200 B.C.)   *Israelites enslaved in Egypt*   Carthage founded
empire   (845 B.C.)

Babylonian captivity   *Rapid expansion*
500   *of the Jews*   *of Phoenician trade*   *Persians conquer Egypt*

←————————————EXPANSION   OF   THE   PERSIAN   EMPIRE————————→

400

Alexander conquers Persia (331 B.C.)   *Alexander conquers Egypt*
300   ←————————HELLENISTIC   KINGDOMS   AFTER   ALEXANDER———→

Punic Wars (264-241 B.C., 218-202 B.C.)

200

Carthage destroyed (149-146 B.C.)
100   ←————————EXPANSION   OF   ROMAN   SUPREMACY————————
Romans dominate Asia Minor

Romans conquer Egypt (31 B.C.)
1 B.C.

World, 5000 B.C.-1 B.C.

EUROPE	Religion and Culture	Science and Technology	
			5000
→			
		Mathematics and astronomy first developed	4000
	Hieroglyphic writing devised	Time first measured by calendar and hours	
		BRONZE USED	
		Canals built	3000
Cretan and Mycenaean cultures co-exist		Galleys and sailing ships developed for war and commerce	
	Code of Hammurabi	Horses and chariots first used	2000
	Alphabets in Phoenicia and Greece		
The Homeric Age in Greece (c. 1000-800 B.C.)		IRON USED	1000
Rome founded (c. 850 B.C.) Persians attack Greece ome becomes a republic (509 B.C.)	Buddha and Confucius preach their doctrines		500
Athenian Empire at its height (c. 450 B.C.) hree Samnite Wars (343-290 B.C.) Alexander becomes master of Greece Rome achieves supremacy in Italy →	Hebrew Bible edited Development of Greek art, architecture, drama, and philosophy	Growth of Greek science, geometry, medicine	400
			300
Punic Wars (264-241 B.C., 218-202 B.C.)			200
Greece becomes subject to Rome → Julius Caesar (c. 102-44 B.C.) Gallic War (58-51 B.C.) Augustus Caesar	Roman law codified	Roman roads constructed	100
	BIRTH OF CHRIST		1 B.C.

ASIA	AFRICA	EUROPE

1 A.D. ←————ROME RULES THE KNOWN WORLD————→

←————————*Urban classes dominant in Graeco-Roman culture*————————→

←————————*Two centuries of relative peace and prosperity*————————→

100

←————————SIGNS OF DECLINE————————→

←————————*Growth of absolutism and failure of government*————————→

200

←————*Birth rate falls . . . . Mass impoverishment . . . . Art and literature decline*————→

←————————*Military anarchy*————————→

300 ←————————*Reforms of Diocletian*————————→

←————ROMAN EMPIRE DIVIDED INTO EASTERN AND WESTERN SEGMENTS————→

←————————*Constantine frees Christianity*————————→

Huns invade Europe		Visigoths cross Roman Frontier (376)

400

		Visigoths sack Rome (410)
		Roman legions withdraw from Britain
	Vandals invade Africa (429) and set up a Vandal Kingdom	*Visigoths form kingdom in south-western Gaul and Spain*
		Burgundians in eastern Gaul
Huns return to the Asiatic steppes and disappear		Vandals sack Rome (455)
		Ostrogoths invade Italy

500

Religion and Culture	Social and Economic Life	Science and Technology	
CHRISTIANITY SPREADS IN THE EMPIRE AS ONE FAITH AMONG MANY	*Slave labor reduces living standards of free labor by competition*	*Roman roads, bridges, aqueducts, and forts are triumphs of practical engineering*	**1 A.D.**
		Technology advances slightly	
	The Mediterranean world becomes one economic unit		**100**
Persecution of the Christians		*Roman science largely borrowed from the Greeks*	
Loss of faith in pagan religions	*Luxury increases for a small minority, poverty for the majority*		**200**
Apathetic resignation characterizes Roman society	*Agriculture declines*	*Catapults, battering-rams, and moving towers used in siege warfare*	
Increasing activity of Christian minority Edict of Milan (313)	*"Bread and circuses" help to pacify the proletariat*	*Roads decay and communications slowly fail as Roman economy and administration decline*	**300**
	Taxation ruinous		
Christianity becomes the state religion			**400**
RISE OF THE PAPACY Pope Leo the Great (440-61)	*Germanic tribes conquer and merge with the population of the Roman provinces*		
Monasticism spreads			**500**

	ASIA	AFRICA	EUROPE
500			

←————JUSTINIAN ATTEMPTS TO REËSTABLISH THE ROMAN EMPIRE————→

	ASIA	AFRICA	EUROPE
	Eastern (Byzantine) Empire survives in Constantinople, Anatolia, and the Balkans	Justinian overthrows Vandal Kingdom (533)	Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy submits to Justinian (535-40)
			Franks conquer Visigoth Kingdom in Gaul
600			Lombards invade Italy (568-605)
	Mohammedans conquer Arabia and invade Syria and Persia	*Mohammedans conquer Egypt and sweep across North Africa*	
700			Mohammedans defeat Visigoths in Spain (711-13)

SARACENIC EMPIRE STRETCHES FROM THE INDUS TO SPAIN

	ASIA	AFRICA	EUROPE
			Franks under Charles Martel check Mohammedan invasion of France
	Ommiad dynasty at Damascus reaches its peak		
800	*Saracen civilization flourishes under Abbassid Caliphate at Bagdad*		Charlemagne establishes his empire (800)
			Raids of the Northmen begin
			Danes invade England (866)
			Alfred the Great (871-900) repulses the Danes and founds the English Kingdom
900	*Saracens encourage trade, industry, and art*		Caliphate of Cordova established in Spain (928)
			Otto the Great revives Holy Roman Empire (962)
1000			
1050			

Middle Ages, 500-1050

Religion and Culture	Social and Economic Life	Science and Technology	
Benedictine Order founded at Monte Cassino (c. 520)	*Western Europe continues to decline*	*Roads and bridges fall into disrepair in Western Europe*	500
Pope Gregory the Great (590-604) Mohammed (570-632) The Hegira (622)	*Severed communications and dwindling trade ruin the cities; country life on farms and villas becomes self-centered and self-sufficient*	*Slight technical progress in early Middle Ages*	600
Lombards threaten the Papacy; Franks aid the Popes		*Saracens revive Greek science and medicine; develop "arabic" numerals and algebra* *Arabian science spreads from Persia to Spain*	700
Carolingian Renaissance: Slight revival of learning followed by further decline			800
	FUEDALISM DEVELOPS IN EUROPE *The manor becomes the economic and administrative unit*	*Open-field system prevails in agriculture*	
Papacy ineffective			900
Culture at lowest point of the "Dark Ages"		*Horseshoes and horse collars introduced* *Wheeled ploughs in use*	1000
			1050

ASIA	AFRICA	EUROPE
1050		CONFLICT BETWEEN THE POPES AND THE EMPERORS
		Pope Gregory VII (1073-85) and Emperor Henry IV (1056-1106)
		Norman Conquest of England (1066)
		Scandinavian peoples Christianized
Crusaders take Jerusalem (1099)		
1100		
		Investiture Controversy and the Concordat of Worms (1122)
Second Crusade (1147)		
1150		*Henry II of England holds a large part of France*
	Saracen civilization of North Africa and Spain slowly declines	←——— REVIVAL OF PAPAL POWER ———→
Third Crusade (1189-92)		Third Crusade (1189-92)
		Rising power of the French monarchy
		Franks take Constantinople in Fourth Crusade (1202-04)
1200		Albigensian Crusade (1207)
Rise of Mongol Empire from China to Poland and Hungary. South Russia overrun.		*Christians drive back the Moors in Spain*
1250 *Caliphate at Bagdad overthrown.*		*Teutonic Knights conquer Baltic Lands*
		Mongols defeat Poles and Hungarians
1270		←——— HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE DECLINES ———→

Middle Ages, 1050-1270

Religion and Culture	Social and Economic Life	Science and Technology	
Cluniac Reform	*Commerce revives*		1050
	Population rises	*Slow improvements in agriculture*	
Pope Gregory VII (1073-85)			
Reform of the Clergy			
Pope Urban II preaches the First Crusade (1095)			1100
	Industry and commerce stimulated by Crusades	*Industry and commerce stimulated by Crusades*	
Medieval hymns written	*Venice and Flanders become centers of foreign trade*		1150
Universities founded in France and Italy			
	A CITY-DWELLING MIDDLE CLASS EMERGES		
Under Innocent III (1198-1216) the Papacy reaches its peak of power	*Merchant and craft guilds are founded*	*Water mills used*	1200
Magna Carta (1215)	*Merchant law and economic theory evolve*	*Windmills invented*	
Franciscan and Dominican orders founded	*Legal reforms: the jury in England*		
	A money economy develops		
Age of Gothic cathedral building (12th and 13th centuries)		*Commerce brings about improvement of sailing ships*	1250
Development of scholastic theology			1270

ASIA	AFRICA	EUROPE
1270 ←————— Last Crusade (1270) —————→		Holy Roman Empire revives after an interregnum (1254-73)
Mongol Empire of Kubla Khan disintegrates after his death in 1294		*Growth of constitutional government in England*
		Swiss confederation (1291)
1300		*Centralization of the French monarchical government*
		Hundred Years' War begins (1337-1453)
Tartars rule Russia		
		The "Black Death" (1348-50)
1350		
		SPIRIT OF NATIONALISM GROWS IN ENGLAND, FRANCE, SPAIN, AND PORTUGAL UNDER NATIONAL MONARCHS
Turks conquer Byzantine Provinces and invade Balkans		
1400		*Later phases of Hundred Years' War*
		Joan of Arc executed (1430)
1450 Turks capture Constantinople (1453)	*Portuguese navigators explore Atlantic coast of Africa*	*Age of the Despots in Italy*
		America discovered; Africa circumnavigated, and the route to India found.
1500		The French invade Italy (1494)
1517		*Spain reaches the height of her power*

and the Renaissance, 1270-1517

Religion and Culture	Social and Economic Life	Science and Technology	
	Population continues to increase	*Mariner's compass in use*	1270
		Astrolabe and quadrant	
Papal power shrinks	*Period of city republics in Italy*		
"Babylonian Captivity of the Church": the popes at Avignon (1305-77)			1300
		Clocks improved	
German universities founded	*North-German cities organize the Hanseatic League*		1350
		Gunpowder introduced into Europe	
The Great Schism (1378-1417)	SOCIAL STRUCTURE CHANGES; *Feudal nobility declines*		
		Anatomy studied	1400
Council of Constance (1414-18)	*Influence of bourgeoisie rises*	*Perspective in art developed*	
	Power of capital mounts		
Council of Basle (1431-49)			
Spanish Inquisition			
ITALIAN RENAISSANCE: *Humanism* *The New Learning* *Painting and Literature*	*First national standing armies organized*	First printing done from movable type (c. 1447)	1450
		Astronomical tables evolved	
The Renaissance crosses the Alps		*Double-entry bookkeeping used throughout Europe*	1500
			1517

	ASIA	EUROPE	AMERICAS
1517	*Portuguese trading ships sail the Indian Ocean* *Magellan's voyage gives Spain a claim to the Philippines*	PROTESTANT REFORMATION BEGINS IN GERMANY *Charles V elected Holy Roman Emperor* Turks defeat Hungarians (1526) and besiege Vienna (1529)	*Spaniards conquer Mexico and Peru*
		Reformation introduced in England *Bourbon-Hapsburg rivalry*	*Portuguese in Brazil*
1550			
		Spain ascendant under Philip II (1556-98) Queen Elizabeth rules England (1558-1603) Netherlands revolt against Spain (1566)	
		Civil and religious wars in France	
		English Navy defeats Spanish Armada (1588)	
1600	*Dutch and English establish trade in East Indies*		*French in Canada*
			First English settlements
		Thirty Years' War (1618-48) *Richelieu consolidates the French Monarchy*	
	Turkish advance threatens Danube Valley	*The Germanies devastated by war*	
		Civil War in England (1642-48)	
1650		Peace of Westphalia (1648) ends Thirty Years' War Anglo-Dutch trade wars (1652-74)	
1660		Peace of the Pyrenees (1659) The Restoration in England (1660)	

Religion and Culture	Social and Economic Life	Science and Technology	
PROTESTANT REFORMA- TION BEGINS *Lutheranism* *Calvinism*	Peasants' War in the Germanies (1525)		1517
Anglicanism			
Council of Trent (1545-63)	*Prices rise* *Hanse towns and Italian cities decline*	Copernicus (1473-1543) offers new theory of astronomy	1550
Religious Peace of Augsburg (1555)		Vesalius (1514-64) lays foundations of modern anatomical study	
Reformation in Scotland and *the Scandinavian kingdoms*	NATIONAL TERRITORIAL STATES EMERGE	William Harvey (1578-1657) discovers circulation of the blood	
Counter-Reformation		*Telescope invented*	
Shakespeare (1564-1616) Cervantes (1547-1616)	*Trade shifts to Northern Europe,* *especially the Netherlands*	THE NEW PHYSICS: Galileo (1564-1642) Kepler (1571-1630)	1600
		Napier announces concept of logarithms (1614) Decimals introduced (1616) Descartes (1596-1650) evolves analytic geometry	
French Academy founded (1635)			
French drama develops			1650
			1660

THE PREPARATION OF

History Reports

IT IS NOT DIFFICULT to learn the forms which give written reports a professional character and value. The first helpful point to keep in mind is that most of the difficult work has already been done; the information needed has been assembled and is waiting in any average library. The second point to ponder is why so many thesis writers collect masses of material they won't need, omit to note down the source of valuable data they will want, and then spend hours hunting for half-remembered passages. Some of this waste of time is unavoidable, but it may be surprisingly reduced by system and experience.

A specific example will best indicate how a purposeful approach saves time and simplifies decisions. Suppose you were assigned a theme of three thousand words on *The Capitularies of Charlemagne*. Remind yourself that three thousand words means ten or twelve pages, 8½ by 11 inches, in double-spaced typing, and that this would correspond, probably, to some fifteen pages of handwriting. Next, *define your subject.* The dictionary will inform you that a capitulary is: "1. A member of a chapter, esp. of an ecclesiastical or a masonic chapter. 2. An ordinance; chiefly, in *pl.*, a collection of ordinances." If your textbook has not told you which type of capitulary you are investigating, turn to the encyclopaedias. Look up Charlemagne, note that he is also called Charles the Great, copy his dates, and the fact that the Capitularies were ordinances or decrees issued by this great Frankish monarch in the eighth century. You now have material for an effective opening paragraph which will identify your topic for your readers. But it will do much more than that for you. If you keep this paragraph in mind, it will save you three fourths of the errant reading you might otherwise do, for

it will remind you that you are seeking, not information merely, but *relevant* information.

The index shows what your textbook offers on Charlemagne and his times. Copy the suggestions for further reading, noting in particular any biographies of Charlemagne. Your next goal is the library. On your way there, try quizzing yourself on your topic. Why did Charlemagne issue ordinances? What particular problems were his Capitularies designed to meet? How were they registered and enforced? Did they improve his administration and benefit his subjects? Were they imitated by other rulers or preserved in later centuries? Such questions are not a waste of time: they will speed your research, for a question intelligently asked is half-answered. They will serve another purpose, too: they will make you think *organically* about your theme. Listed in succession they suggest a skeleton plan of procedure. Some students write out a synopsis *after* composing an essay and call this a plan. It is more constructive to survey your project, outline a tentative organization, then revise your strategy later if you must. Never forget that you are engaged in a limited operation. Your subject is specific, the length of your theme is indicated, the due date and the time you have for the assignment are set. The great poet and critic, Goethe, a shrewd judge of genius, affirmed that the superior mind first reveals itself by this ability to recognize limits, to construct a frame, and to work within it.

In the library your first and most valuable aid is the card catalogue: studied carefully the index cards tell you in advance several facts about a book. When you draw out a work on your subject, *it will save time* to copy exactly the author's name, the title of the work, the number of volumes (if more

than one), the place of publication, the publisher's name, and the date of publication. If you use a loose-leaf notebook or filing cards, you will find it a simple matter, afterward, to arrange all your references alphabetically by the author's surname. Thus, without more labor, you have a "bibliography" of books consulted with which to close your theme. If you think to add a word of comment to the card, characterizing each book, you will have a "critical" bibliography.

There is another reason for listing exactly all the books which you find useful. Any direct quotation, and any very significant statement or statistics which you incorporate in your theme, should be accompanied by a notation to indicate the source. Place a numeral after the quotation or statement and include a reference with the same number in a footnote, giving the author, work, and page where the information may be found. Such footnotes, whether inserted at the base of the page or listed at the close of the essay, should be numbered consecutively throughout.

A competently prepared history theme incorporates these five features: (1) A plan setting forth the main points or divisions in the order of development. (2) A foreword, or opening paragraph, defining as clearly and crisply as possible the scope and significance of the subject. (3) Footnote references acknowledging the sources and authorities drawn upon. (4) A list of the works consulted, preferably with a phrase or two describing each. (5) A logical presentation in readable prose of the information gathered.

To pause here would leave the impression that the writing of a satisfactory theme for a history course is mainly a matter of system and mechanics. Good writing, of course, demands much more than that: it demands talent and individuality. Not only does each student respond to and evaluate material in a unique manner, the mood and personality of the writer colors the information acquired. For instance, in reading about Charlemagne

you might be interested to discover that he was a contemporary of Haroun al Rashid of Bagdad, the Caliph of the *Arabian Nights.* Or you might be surprised to read that he lived in a society so unlettered that he never learned how to write. These facts, at first thought, you might discard as not relevant to a discussion of the Capitularies. But on second thought you might decide to include them, not for their logical but for their psychological value. You might feel they were worth mention because they would enliven your description, supply background and atmosphere, add a human touch. This impulse to "humanize" your facts is part of your effort to realize them more intensely, and it is a legitimate and fascinating aspect of history study. But it cannot be prescribed by any easy rule or formula. It is well to remember, too, when breathing life into the past and giving your imagination play, that fancy abhors footnotes and dramatizing data often distorts the truth. The ascertainable facts of history are usually so interesting and often so extraordinary that there is little need to apply artificial color to make them vivid.

REFERENCE WORKS

Of the many guides helpful to the history student only a few are listed here, but they will show the way to others.

Making Books Work, by Jennie M. Flexner (1943), tells the reader how to find what he needs in a library. Works of general reference in every field are classified in the *Guide to Reference Books,* 7th edition (1951), compiled by C. Winchell, and in *Basic Reference Books* (1939), compiled by Louis Shores. Students seeking to learn the scope and value of standard history studies and biographies will find *A Guide to Historical Literature* (1931), prepared by G. M. Dutcher and associates, a ready help. For historical facts and dates and lucid summaries of events the best one-volume reference is *An Encyclopedia of World History,*

edited by W. L. Langer (1948). Every student makes his own acquaintance with the various encyclopaedias and biographical dictionaries; the history student will probably find the *Britannica* and the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* most convenient. M. G. Mulhall, *Dictionary of Statistics*, has useful data to 1899; for more recent history the yearbooks, such as *The World Almanac* and *The Statesman's Year-Book*, and the supplementary volumes issued annually by the leading encyclopaedias, are full of facts and tables. To locate articles which appeared in journals or periodicals, the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* is invaluable. In the popular field where history and fiction blend, Jonathan Nield's *Guide to the Best Historical Novels and Tales* is a convenient aid.

The *Gateway to History*, by Allan Nevins (1938), and *Understanding History: A Primer of Historical Method*, by Louis

Methods

Gottschalk (1950), describe the aids, the problems, and the pitfalls on the historian's path; no serious student should overlook these handbooks. John C. Almack, *Research and Thesis Writing* (1930), and William G. Campbell, *A Form Book for Thesis Writing* (1939), explain in detail how to gather and present information correctly and effectively.

Man's changing concepts of the earth are traced by W. W. Jervis, *The World in Maps: A Study in Map Evolution* (1938). W. R. Shepherd,

Geography

Atlas of Medieval and Modern History (1932),

and R. Muir, G. Philip, and R. M. McElroy, *Putnam's Historical Atlas, Medieval and Modern* (1927), are standard history aids. For recent changes in Europe, Jean Gottman, *A Geography of Europe* (1950), is helpful, and many yearbooks carry maps of contemporary significance. There is charm and value in *A Literary and Historical Atlas of Europe* in the *Everyman's Library* edition, and the maps supplementing the *Cambridge Ancient, Medieval*, and *Modern History* series are detailed and valuable. For the United States C. L. and E. E. Lord, *Historical Atlas of the United States* (1944), is useful. The contemporary world is depicted with a wealth of detail in *The University Atlas*, edited by G. Goodall and H. C. Darby, 3d ed. (1944), and the *Atlas of Global Geography*, by Erwin Raisz (1944), has colorful and arresting projections. W. L. Godshall has prepared a helpful set of *Map Studies in European History and International Relations* (1940), with full references and instructions for the student on marking and coloring the base maps included. The troublesome question of the preferred spelling for geographic names may be solved in many cases by reference to the *Sixth Report of the United States Geographic Board*, issued by the Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. (1933). There are frequent supplements. Finally, for maps, area and population figures, spelling, pronunciation, and other data useful to students of history, *Webster's Geographical Dictionary* (1949) contains much compressed information of exceptional pertinence.

Genealogical Table

THE PATRIMONY OF CHARLES V, SHOWING THE ANCESTORS
FROM WHOM HE INHERITED HIS LANDS

Maximilian I, *m.* Mary of Burgundy	Ferdinand, *m.* Isabella
(1459–1519) (died 1482)	(1452–1516) (1451–1504)
Emperor, 1493 (Franche-Comté,	(Aragon, (Castile,
(Austria, Styria, Luxemburg,	Sicily, Spanish
Carinthia, Tyrol) Netherlands)	Naples, claims in
	Sardinia, New World)
	Navarre)

Philip (1478–1506), *m.* Joanna (1479–1555)   *Catherine*
(heir to all   (heiress to all   *of Aragon*
Hapsburg and   Spanish lands,   *(married*
Burgundian lands)   declared insane)   *Henry VIII)*

CHARLES V   *Ferdinand I (1503–64)*
(1500–58)   *Archduke of*
Emperor,   *Austria; King*
1519–56   *of Bohemia and*
    Hungary, 1526,
    Emperor, 1556

A List of European Rulers TO THE MIDDLE
OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

RULERS OF THE CAROLINGIAN FAMILY

Pepin of Heristal, Mayor of the Palace, 714
Charles Martel, Mayor of the Palace, 715–41
Pepin I, Mayor of the Palace, 741, King, 751–68

Charlemagne, King, 768, Emperor, 800–14
Louis "the Pious," Emperor, 814–40

WEST FRANKISH KINGDOM

Charles "the Bald," King, 840–77, Emperor, 875
Louis II, King, 877–79

Louis III, King, 879–82
Carloman, King, 879–84

MIDDLE KINGDOMS

Lothair, Emperor, 840–55
Louis (Italy), Emperor, 855–75

Charles (Provence), King, 855–63
Lothair II (Lorraine), King, 855–69

EAST FRANKISH KINGDOM

Louis "the German," King, 840–76
Carloman, King, 876–80
Louis, King, 876–82

Charles "the Fat," Emperor, 876–87, reunites
empire, 884, deposed 887

THE EMPERORS OF THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

SAXON EMPERORS
  Otto I, King, 936, Emperor, 962–73
  Otto II, 973–83
  Otto III, 983–1002
  Henry II, 1002–24
FRANCONIAN EMPERORS
  Conrad II, 1024–39
  Henry III, 1039–56
  Henry IV, 1056–1106
  Henry V, 1106–25
  Lothair III (of Saxony), 1125–37
HOHENSTAUFEN EMPERORS
  Conrad III, 1138–52
  Frederick I "Barbarossa," 1152–90
  Henry VI, 1190–97
  { Philip of Swabia, 1198–1208
  { Otto IV (Welf), 1198–1215
  Frederick II, 1211–50
  Conrad IV, 1250–54
INTERREGNUM, 1254–73
EMPERORS FROM VARIOUS HOUSES
  Rudolf I (Hapsburg), 1273–91

Adolf (Nassau), 1292–98
Albert I (Hapsburg), 1298–1308
Henry VII (Luxemburg), 1308–13
Louis IV (Wittelsbach), 1314–47
Charles IV (Luxemburg), 1347–78
Wenceslas (Luxemburg), 1378–1400
Rupert (Wittelsbach), 1400–10
Sigismund (Luxemburg), 1410–37
HAPSBURG EMPERORS
  Albert II, 1438–39
  Frederick III, 1440–93
  Maximilian I, 1493–1519
  Charles V, 1519–56
  Ferdinand I, 1556–64
  Maximilian II, 1564–76
  Rudolf II, 1576–1612
  Matthias, 1612–19
  Ferdinand II, 1619–37
  Ferdinand III, 1637–57
  Leopold I, 1658–1705

HAPSBURG KINGS OF SPAIN

Charles V, 1516–56
Philip II, 1556–98

Philip III, 1598–1621
Philip IV, 1621–65

THE KINGS OF FRANCE FROM HUGH CAPET

CAPETIAN KINGS
  Hugh Capet, 987–96
  Robert II, 996–1031
  Henry I, 1031–60
  Philip I, 1060–1108
  Louis VI, 1108–37
  Louis VII, 1137–80
  Philip II "Augustus," 1180–1223
  Louis VIII, 1223–26
  Louis IX (Saint Louis), 1226–70
  Philip III, 1270–85
  Philip IV "the Fair," 1285–1314
  Louis X, 1314–16
  Philip V, 1316–22
  Charles IV, 1322–28
VALOIS KINGS
  Philip VI, 1328–50

John, 1350–64
Charles V, 1364–80
Charles VI, 1380–1422
Charles VII, 1422–61
Louis XI, 1461–83
Charles VIII, 1483–98
Louis XII, 1498–1515
Francis I, 1515–47
Henry II, 1547–59
Francis II, 1559–60
Charles IX, 1560–74
Henry III, 1574–89
BOURBON KINGS
  Henry IV, 1589–1610
  Louis XIII, 1610–43
  Louis XIV, 1643–1715

THE KINGS OF ENGLAND FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST

NORMAN KINGS
  William I, 1066–87
  William II, 1087–1100
  Henry I, 1100–35
  Stephen, 1135–54
ANGEVIN KINGS
  Henry II, 1154–89
  Richard I, 1189–99
  John, 1199–1216
  Henry III, 1216–72
  Edward I, 1272–1307
  Edward II, 1307–27
  Edward III, 1327–77
  Richard II, 1377–99
LANCASTRIAN KINGS
  Henry IV, 1399–1413

Henry V, 1413–22
Henry VI, 1422–61
YORKIST KINGS
  Edward IV, 1461–83
  Edward V, 1483
  Richard III, 1483–85
TUDOR KINGS
  Henry VII, 1485–1509
  Henry VIII, 1509–47
  Edward VI, 1547–53
  Mary, 1553–58
  Elizabeth, 1558–1603
STUART KINGS
  James I, 1603–25
  Charles I, 1625–49
INTERREGNUM, 1649–60

Suggestions for Further Reading

PART ONE

1. Prehistoric Man

W. E. Caldwell, *The Ancient World* (1937), chap. I.
M. L. W. Laistner, *A Survey of Ancient History* (1929), chap. I.
E. M. Sanford, *The Mediterranean World in Ancient Times* (1938), chaps. I–II.
A. A. Trever, *History of Ancient Civilization*, vol. I (1936), chaps. I–II.
Ralph E. Turner, *The Great Cultural Traditions*, vol. I (1941), chaps. I–II.
C. E. Van Sickle, *A Political and Cultural History of the Ancient World*, vol. I (1947), chap. II.
Cambridge Ancient History, vol. I (1928), chaps. I–II.

LONGER STUDIES. V. G. Childe, *The Dawn of European Civilization* (1925); E. Perrier, *The Earth before History* (1925); G. H. Luquet, *The Art and Religion of Fossil Man* (1930); H. F. Osborn, *Men of the Old Stone Age* (3d ed. 1934); R. U. Sayce, *Primitive Arts and Crafts* (1933); G. G. MacCurdy, *Human Origins*, 2 vols. (1924); C. J. Warden, *The Evolution of Human Behavior* (1932); R. C. Andrews, *Meet Your Ancestors: a Biography of Primitive Man* (1945); William Howells, *Mankind So Far* (1944).

2. The Mediterranean World

W. E. Caldwell, *The Ancient World* (1937), chaps. II–V.
M. L. W. Laistner, *A Survey of Ancient History* (1929), chaps. II–IX.
E. M. Sanford, *The Mediterranean World in Ancient Times* (1938), chaps. III–VII.
A. A. Trever, *History of Ancient Civilization*, vol. I (1936), chaps. III–IX.
R. E. Turner, *The Great Cultural Traditions*, vol. I (1941), chaps. III–V.
C. E. Van Sickle, *A Political and Cultural History of the Ancient World*, vol. I (1947), chaps. III–X.
Cambridge Ancient History, vols. I–III (1926–29).

LONGER STUDIES. E. C. Semple, *The Geography of the Mediterranean Region: Its Relation to Ancient History* (1931); L. W. King, *A History of Sumer and Akkad* (1923); C. L. Woolley, *The Sumerians* (1929); M. Jastrow, *The Civili-* zation of Babylonia and Assyria (1915); J. H. Breasted, *A History of Egypt* (1912); W. F. M. Petrie, *The Arts and Crafts of Ancient Egypt* (1923); A. Lucas, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries* (2d ed. 1934); A. E. Cowley, *The Hittites* (1926); J. Baikie, *The Sea Kings of Crete* (4th ed. 1926); G. Glotz, *The Aegean Civilization* (1927); R. W. Rogers, *A History of Ancient Persia* (1929); A. T. Olmstead, *History of Assyria* (1923); T. J. Meek, *Hebrew Origins* (1936); R. A. S. Macalister, *The Philistines* (1914); B. L. Ullman, *Ancient Writing and Its Influence* (1932). SOURCES. H. Webster, *Historical Selections* (1929), part I; G. A. Barton, *The Royal Inscriptions of Sumer and Akkad* (1929); J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, 5 vols. (1906–07); C. H. W. Johns, *Assyrian Deeds and Documents*, 4 vols. (1898–1923).

3. The Greek City-States

W. E. Caldwell, *The Ancient World* (1937), chaps. VI–XIV.
E. M. Sanford, *The Mediterranean World in Ancient Times* (1938), chaps. VIII, IX, XII–XV.
H. Heaton, *Economic History of Europe* (1936), chap. III.
M. Rostovtzeff, *A History of the Ancient World* (2d ed. 1930), vol. I, chaps. XII–XVI, XVIII, XX, XXIII.
J. D. Beazley, "Greek Art and Architecture," in *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. V.
J. T. Sheppard, "Attic Drama in the Fifth Century," in *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. V.
W. L. Westermann, "Greek Culture and Thought," in *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, vol. I.
R. Turner, *The Great Cultural Traditions* (1941), vol. II, chap. X.
C. E. Van Sickle, *A Political and Cultural History of the Ancient World*, vol. I (1947), chaps. XXI–XXVII.

LONGER STUDIES. M. L. W. Laistner, *Greek History* (1932); G. Glotz, *Ancient Greece at Work* (1926); G. Glotz, *The Greek City and Its Institutions* (1930); G. M. Calhoun, *The Business Life of*

Ancient Athens (1926); A. A. Trever, *History of Ancient Civilization* (1936), vol. I; J. B. Bury, *History of Greece to the Death of Alexander* (2d. ed. 1922); W. S. Ferguson, *Greek Imperialism* (1913); R. W. Livingstone (*editor*), *The Legacy of Greece* (1922); G. Murray, *History of Greek Literature* (1902); M. P. Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion* (1925); A. E. Taylor, *Plato: The Man and His Work* (3d ed. 1929); W. D. Ross, *Aristotle* (2d ed. 1930). SOURCES. Homer, *Iliad, Odyssey;* Aristotle, *Ethics, Politics, Poetics;* Plato, *The Republic;* Thucydides, *History;* Herodotus, *Histories;* plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripedes, and Aristophanes.

4. THE HELLENISTIC AGE

W. E. Caldwell, *The Ancient World* (1937), chaps. XV, XVI.

E. M. Sanford, *A History of the Mediterranean World in Ancient Times* (1938), chaps. XVIII, XIX, XXII, XXIII.

M. Rostovtzeff, *A History of the Ancient World* (2d ed. 1930), vol. I, chaps. XXII–XXVI.

W. S. Ferguson, "Leading Ideas of the New Period," in *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. VII.

M. Rostovtzeff, "The Hellenistic World and Its Economic Development," in *American Historical Review*, XLI (1936), pp. 231–252.

R. Turner, *The Great Cultural Traditions* (1941), vol. II, chap. XI.

C. E. Van Sickle, *A Political and Cultural History of the Ancient World*, vol. I (1947), chaps. XXVIII–XXXIII.

LONGER STUDIES. G. Glotz, *Ancient Greece at Work* (1926); M. Cary, *The Legacy of Alexander: A History of the Greek World from 323 to 146 B.C.* (1932); W. W. Tarn, *Hellenistic Civilization* (1930); J. B. Bury (*and others*), *The Hellenistic Age* (1930); W. S. Ferguson, *Greek Imperialism* (1913); W. S. Ferguson, *Hellenistic Athens* (1911); P. E. LeGrand, *The New Greek Comedy* (1917). SOURCES. Plutarch, *Alexander;* Menander, *Comedies;* Theocritus, *Idylls;* Theophrastus, *Characters.*

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PRONUNCIATION KEY

Āle, chāotic, câre, ădd, ȧccount, ärm, ȧsk, sofá; ēve, hĕre (27), ĕvent, ĕnd, silĕnt, makĕr; īce, ĭll, charĭty; ōld, ȯbey, ôrb, ŏdd, sŏft, cȯnnect; fōōd, fŏŏt; out, oil; cūbe, ûnite, ûrn, ŭp, circŭs, menū; chair; go; sing; then, thin; natūre, verdūre (118); ĸ = ch in G. ich, ach; boɴ; yet; zh = z in azure.

(The numbers in parentheses refer to the Guide to Pronunciation in *Webster's New International Dictionary*.)

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