JUNIOR HISTORIES

THE ANCIENT WORLD

BY

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PREFACE

THE history syllabus of secondary schools is at present being revised. What changes, if any, will result from that revision one cannot tell. But it is safe to assume that Ancient History, in its widest scope, will still have its place in post-primary education. Some idea of how Man rose to the first civilisations, some knowledge of the great personalities and empires of antiquity, an acquaintance with the historical background of the Bible,—these must surely be provided by any liberal system of education. Yet a growing number of teachers would prefer not to devote a whole school year to such a course. This book aims at providing a reasonably complete review of the Ancient World in a term and a half's work.

After the first chapter, the book is built on a framework of continuous narrative, not too massive or depressing, it is hoped. Every opportunity has been taken to introduce variety through social and economic history and biography. If one is to deal at all with the rise and fall of the ancient empires, political and military history cannot be avoided, though an effort has been made to provide the minimum only. Nor is it altogether desirable that even younger pupils should completely escape the discipline of hard fact, especially as many of them take a positive pleasure in mastering the baldest, bleakest information. The frequent dates supplied are not intended to be learned off, but to help in the formation of a time sequence. The maps, however, should be in constant use. Teachers should insist on pupils knowing precisely where every place mentioned is situated. Not only will this help to make the narrative much more intelligible, and so less of a burden to the memory, but a respect

for accurate information will be developed, which is surely one of the marks of an educated mind.

A good deal of trouble has been taken to supply illustrations which shall not only stimulate interest, but provide information. In some cases the text is directly based on them. It would encourage the valuable habit of careful observation if pupils were asked to describe or even reproduce some of these in detail.

It will be obvious that the exercises provided at intervals are not meant to test knowledge of the text. They serve a variety of other purposes,—to stimulate interest, to encourage individual research, and to put pupils on the track of stories and information it was not practicable to include in the text. Bright pupils who have access to a good library may be left to hunt for themselves. Those less fortunate will need clues. Teachers who wish to extend the course over three terms could do so easily by devising additional exercises of this type. Some of them are more obviously in the nature of intelligence tests. The complaint is sometimes heard that History particularly lends itself to "cramming." If exercises are frequently set, the successful "crammer" will be relegated to his proper place in the scheme of things.

I wish to thank my colleague Mr. D. G. Richards, the illustration staff of Messrs. Macmillan and Co., Ltd., my friend Mr. Harold Bower, and Mrs. C. Tenen for their valuable assistance.

I. TENEN.

This edition includes the most recent theory as to the arrangement of the oarsmen in the trireme.

I. TENEN.

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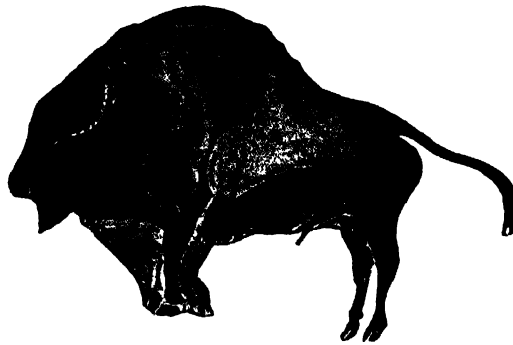
MAPS

N.B.—*The numbers in italics immediately after place-names in the Index are map references.*

TIME DIAGRAMS



CAVE-PAINTING OF A BISON

An enlargement of one of the figures shown in outline on p. 9. It is about five feet long.

CHAPTER ONE

PREHISTORIC TIMES

A. The Old Stone Age

History really begins when men were civilised enough to set down a record of their actions by cutting marks in clay and stone, or by writing on paper and parchment. They first began to do this about six thousand years ago, and we find them in these records already living in great cities, masters of arts and crafts, and divided into humbly- and nobly-born, poor and rich, all subjects of powerful kings. But perhaps you will be curious enough to ask whether we know anything about men's lives before written History begins. Yes, we know something about that too, and our knowledge is the result of much clever and patient study of the remains left by those very, very distant ancestors of ours, such as their own bones, the bones of the animals they hunted or tended, bits of their pottery or clothing, and, perhaps the most interesting of all, the wonderful drawings which they scratched on bones or painted on cave walls. The study of pre-historic man is by no

means complete yet, but we can at least take a few glimpses at the long, long ago.

The first glimpse shows us the earth as it was from thirty to twenty thousand years ago, and you will hardly want to go further back than that! The oceans and continents had not yet taken the shapes that we know to-day. The land masses were less broken up by seas. The climate of Europe in those far-off days varied in a mysterious way. For centuries it would be much hotter than it is to-day, then a long period of

REINDEER AND SALMON, CUT ON A PIECE OF STAG'S HORN

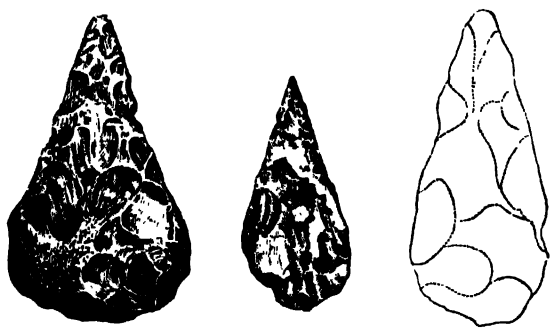
cold weather would set in, there would be endless snow-storms, till a thick sheet of ice covered the "top" half of our hemisphere, and even seas froze. Men would slowly retreat south before the advancing, pale-blue ice-wall, till a milder age returned. Under such conditions Man made little progress for thousands of years. You can think of the people of the early Old Stone Age, as it is called, as squat and hairy, with long, powerful arms and short, thick legs. They have low foreheads with a ridge over the eyes, chins that slope backwards, flat, broad noses and long, thick lips that barely cover their enormous teeth.

From Quennell's "Life in the Old Stone Age," by permission of Messrs. B. T. Batsford, Ltd.

MAN OF EARLY OLD STONE AGE

Making flint implement.

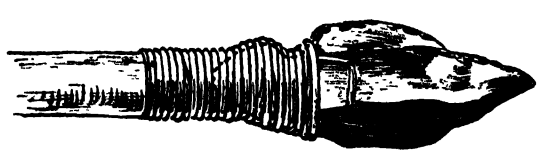
If they wear anything at all, it will be some animal's hide. While the women perhaps look for roots and berries, eggs or shell-fish worth eating, the men spend a good deal of their time hunting—for that is the main source of their food—various types of



From Tylor's "Anthropology" (Macmillan).

OLD STONE AGE FLINT HAND-AXES

hairy elephant and rhinoceros, hippopotamus, the huge sabre-toothed tiger, the boar, reindeer, bison and elk. At first their weapons were stone or wooden clubs and stakes. Then they learned how to knock



From Quennell's "Life in the Old Stone Age," by permission of Messrs. B. T. Batsford, Ltd.

OLD STONE AGE SPEAR-HEAD

sharp-edged flakes off flints and fasten them with sinews and vegetable fibres into the split top of a branch so as to form a spear. The core of the flint lashed to a stout stick would form a rough hammer or axe. You may not think such weapons would be of much help, say, against a monster tiger or a fifteen-foot-high

elephant, but often the quarry was first lured into some trap or pit. The meat was roasted, for there were no pots of any kind for boiling or even storing water. But men had already made the tremendous, all-important discovery of Fire. Thanks to that, they could survive the bitterly cold weather that often prevailed for long periods, they could lighten the darkness with torches, make their food more enjoyable, harden the points of stakes and wooden spears, and scare away the tiger that prowled round the camp at night.

How the Old Stone Age people produced fire we can guess from the methods used to-day by primitive tribes, who in many respects have not risen above the level of the earliest men. By studying the habits of such tribes, we get much clearer ideas of how the first men lived. The usual method of making fire among such people is to twirl a stick very quickly, either between the hands or by means of a thong, in a hole in a block of wood. The friction heats the tiny splinters that break off, till they burst into flame. It is also possible that quite early on some genius discovered that a shower of sparks could be produced by striking a flint against certain metallic stones, and that dried moss could be set alight in this way. This method, much later improved into the flint, steel and tinder outfit, became the usual way of producing fire right down to modern times.

There seems to have been little difference of race at this period; men looked pretty much the same everywhere. And we do not see signs of fighting on any large scale. Settlements were usually made on the banks of rivers (for remember that there was nothing to carry water in), particularly if there was a good supply of flints near by.

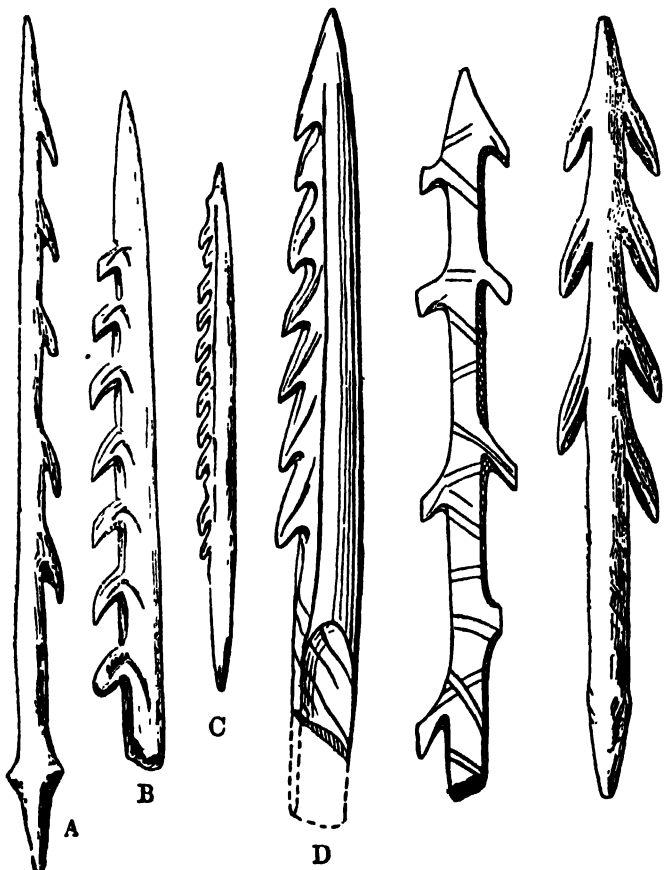
From "Ancient Hunters," by W. J. Sollas.

POINT OF A WOODEN SPEAR, OLD STONE AGE

From "Men of the Old Stone Age," by James Baikie, D.D. (A. & C. Black, Ltd.).

PEOPLE OF THE LATER OLD STONE AGE DURING ONE OF THE SHORTER ICE AGES

Man, in this age, lived an entirely open-air life. In wet, stormy weather a rough sort of shelter might

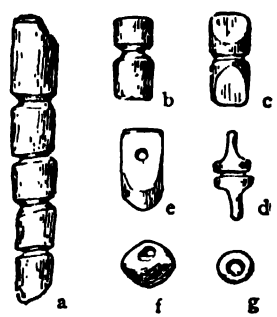


BONE HARPOON HEADS, LATE OLD STONE AGE

have been built by sticking a few boughs into the ground at an angle, and weaving twigs between them, but this would be more of a windscreen to protect the

fire than a hut to live in. People at this period were sometimes buried underneath their hearths, and so we find their bones along with those of the animals they had eaten.

After this glimpse of the earliest men, we must leap in Time over something like ten thousand years. Even after this jump, we are still in the Old Stone Age, but great progress has been made, perhaps because of the more temperate climate which Europe now enjoyed, though occasionally there were still short spells of bitterly cold weather. The people of this period



From Sollas' "Ancient Hunters," p. 367.

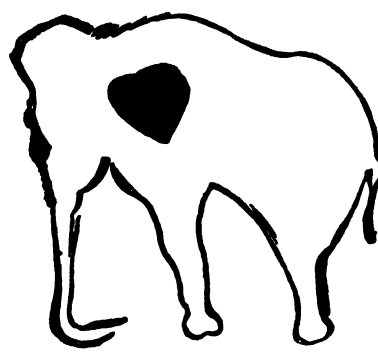
HOW BEADS WERE MADE IN THE LATER OLD STONE AGE

are less hairy and ape-like than the early folk, and their bodies are more upright, smooth and slender. Their chins and foreheads are fairly straight and they have longer noses. They still wear skins, but there is some attempt to shape them to the figure with rough sewing, done with bone needles and thongs. For though flint tools are now well-shaped, this is chiefly an age of bone-tipped weapons and tools, of a high standard. The reindeer is the most important animal of this period, and there is a good deal of fishing with harpoons. Men and women were now vain enough about their appearance to decorate themselves with necklaces and bangles

CARVED OUTLINES OF THE ALTAMIRA CAVE-PAINTINGS

of shells or animals' teeth, and with tufts of feathers. Sometimes they lived in tent-shaped huts, sometimes, when it was cold, in caves from which, often, they would first have to dislodge monster bears or lions.

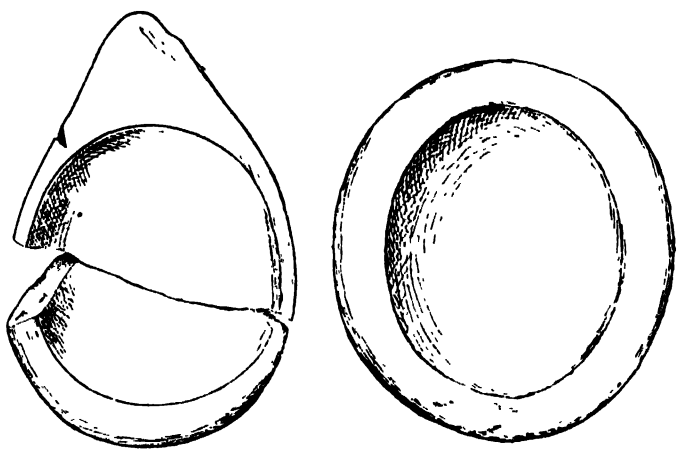
What makes us realise most vividly that already Man had made wonderful progress in some ways, are the marvellous wall-paintings, chiefly of animals, that have been found in such cave-dwellings. The finest of these are in southern France and northern Spain. In the Altamira caves, near Santander on the north



PAINTING OF ELEPHANT, WITH HEART MARKED

coast of Spain, the roof of a cave is closely covered with drawings of many bison, together with a few wild horses, boar and deer. The figures are about five feet long, coloured mainly in black and red, varied here and there with browns and yellows. The main lines of the drawings are actually carved out of the rock. The animals are shown strong, alert, vigorous, in all the poses which the hunter knew so well. And this gives us the clue to their meaning. They are not there for decoration. In many cases they are in a part of the cave which is hard to get at and which could never have been used to live in. Now in some cases the position of the animal's heart or a weak spot in its spine is

specially marked. As we have reason to think that there were witch-doctors in those days, it seems very likely that these drawings were used in some magic rites before a great hunt. Near some of the paintings have been found tools for carving the outlines, animals' shoulder-blades which had been used as palettes, materials for making paint, and hollowed stones to



A. A SANDSTONE LAMP, OLD STONE AGE
(After Rivière. × ½.)

B. AN ESKIMO STONE LAMP FOR COMPARISON
(After Hough. × ½.)

contain the grease which must have been the fuel of the earliest lamps. For without a clear, steady light these drawings could never have been made.

Apart from such paintings as these, figures of animals have been found so deeply carved on cave walls that they are almost statues. There are also quite a number of small but excellently cut statuettes of animals, especially of boar. Late in this period we find quaint paintings of hunters who seem to be using bows and

arrows, and there are also little carved figures of women.

It is rather early yet to start the history of Britain, which, for most of the Old Stone Age, was not yet even an island. But you may like to know that the skull of one of the very earliest men in the world was found at Piltdown by the river Ouse, in Sussex; while relics of the later Old Stone Age were dug up in Kent's Cavern at Torquay, south Devon, at Cresswell Caves, near Derby, and at Paviland Cave, in south Wales, near Swansea.

Exercises

1. With the help of your Geography books, etc., compare early Old Stone Age men with Australian "blackfellows" and late Old Stone Age men with Eskimos and Red Indians.
2. What use would the reindeer be to early Man apart from food?
3. Draw the bison on p. 1 and colour it in red and black.
4. Find out about the cave-paintings in Rhodesia.

B. The New Stone Age

Again we must make a Time-jump, and when we look at mankind once more, again, what great changes we see! We have reached a period some eight thousand years ago. By this time the land and sea masses of the globe have, roughly, their present outlines, and the British Isles are separating from the Continent. The climate of Europe is now temperate, there is a good deal of rain, and this produces long belts of forest, and many lakes and marshes. Men begin to show the main divisions of race. One type, the Mongolian, with straight black hair, yellow skin and slanting eyes, occupies most of Asia and America. The Negro type, with black skin, flat nose and thick lips, inhabits Africa south of the Equator, and similar

people are in south India and Australia; while Europe, the Near East and north Africa are inhabited by races whom we may call "white" for convenience. These latter can be further divided up into fair northern people and dark southerners, as long as we remember not to separate them too sharply, as they frequently overlap.

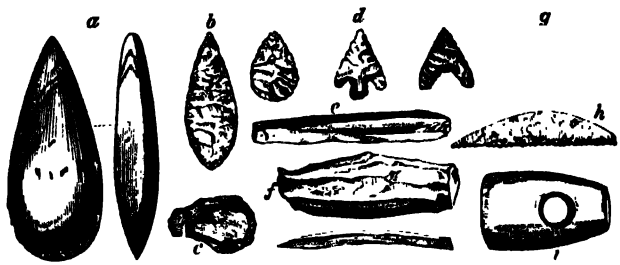
As for the great change in people's lives, we can sum that up by saying that Man has become a Farmer! He keeps cows, sheep, pigs and goats, and he uses their milk. He has given up hunting horses for food, yet he has not begun to use them as he did later. But the dog has obviously been his friend for a long time, and goes with him into the gloomy depths of the forest when he hunts the red deer, the bison, the giant ox, the wild boar and the fox. We can only guess how animals were first tamed. Perhaps young ones were caught and kept as pets.

People usually lived on bare hills like the Downs of south England. There was too much forest and swamp on the flat ground for people who had to graze cattle. Up there they made settlements in huts which consisted of circular pits or low stone walls covered by a thatched roof shaped like a bell-tent. These settlements were surrounded by stockades into which the cattle were driven at night to prevent them from straying, and to protect them against bears and wolves. (Much later, when the ugly habit of organised warfare was developed, there were elaborate trenches and high banks as well as ramparts of wood. You will find as good examples of these huge earth-works in Dorset and Wiltshire as anywhere in Europe.) You will not see much water on the Downs, and where it was not easy to get it from lower levels, they made artificial dew-ponds, lining a shallow pit with clay to form a moisture condenser.

(Near these earthworks terraces are sometimes found, down the hill-side. These, like the earthworks, belong to the Iron Age (p. 22).) But we know definitely that men already grew corn in the New Stone Age,

A NEW STONE AGE SETTLEMENT

another great advance on the Old Stone Age, and one which led directly to improved civilisation, as we shall see later. Now there are in various parts of the world wild plants corresponding to all our grain crops. People must have discovered that the seeds of these were a satisfying food. It must also have been observed that a seed planted in the ground produced a plant next year which yielded many seeds. Some thrifty soul thought it worth while to save a few seeds and bury them in a cleared patch of ground, and after carefully tending the green shoots next spring, he (or



From Tylor's "Anthropology" (Macmillan).

NEW STONE AGE IMPLEMENTS, INCLUDING FORMS ALSO IN USE IN THE FOLLOWING EARLY BRONZE AGE

a, stone celt or hatchet; *b*, flint spear-head; *c*, scraper; *d*, arrow-heads; *e*, flint flake-knives; *f*, core from which flint flakes are taken off; *g*, flint awl; *h*, flint saw; *i*, stone hammer head.

was it she?) was rewarded in autumn with a little crop of corn.

For all this digging, shovels made from the shoulder-blades of deer, and picks made from their antlers, were used. Apart from polished, ground, and sharp-edged spear- and arrow-heads, very serviceable axes and hammers of this period have been found, the stone heads carefully shaped and finished, and drilled with smooth holes (a great advance, this) for the handles. The latter too have the right sort of curve, and are made of "elastic" woods. Strips of wood have been found with small triangles of flint fixed in a line, and this suggests saws. With tools like these,

very profitable days could be spent down in the forest. You will find good specimens of these in the London museums.

You have probably asked already, "How did they carry and keep their water and their milk?" And the answer is, in earthenware bowls, for the use of pottery (and with it the practice of *cooking*) is another improvement on the Old Stone Age. Earlier on, leather bottles were used, and these were sometimes lined with clay, if they were leaky. We can imagine the clay lining one day going quite hard, because of

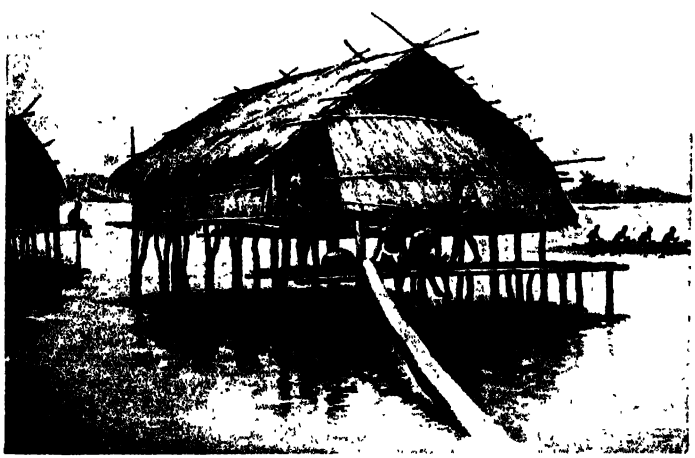
NEW STONE AGE EARTHENWARE JAR

some form of heat, and this is perhaps how the first jars were made. The study of primitive pottery, of the shapes and decorations, and traces of the contents, has constantly provided important clues for those who seek to solve the mysteries of early civilisation.

Late in this period spinning and weaving were practised, both with wool, and linen made from the flax plant. It is not easy to guess how these arts were invented. But we know that baskets were made, and plaiting is a simple form of weaving. However, it is a long step from that to the loom.

It is also late on in the New Stone Age that we first come across Lake-Dwellings. Instead of settlements

on low hills, we find large groups of people living on lakes and big rivers. Stakes were driven into the lake or river bed and large wooden platforms built on these, connected with the shore by a gangway. On the platforms they built their huts. The lake-dwellers are hardly likely to have been merely farmers. They must have lived more by hunting and fishing, gathering nuts, fruits and herbs in the great forests of that age. We can trace a long chain of lake-dwellings through the

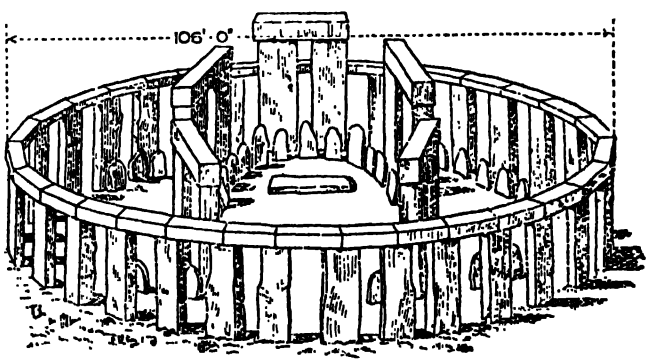


LAKE-DWELLINGS OF NEW GUINEA

Swiss and Italian lakes, south-eastwards down the Danube and north-westwards along the Rhine, through northern France and Belgium, to England, Scotland and Ireland. There was a lake-village at Glastonbury, east Somerset, as remains clearly show, and the English soldiers who hunted the rebels in Ireland in 1603 found many such settlements. They are common to-day in the East Indies.

These features of the New Stone Age, improved tools, crops and cattle, cooking, weaving and pottery, bring it nearer to life as we know it. And there is no

big, mysterious gap between the end of the New Stone Age and the present day. We know from drawings of circles and crescents that people were already observing the sun and the moon, as we should expect farmers to do. And we have reason to think that they were already beginning to study numbers and to consider some lucky, like twelve, because it split up so conveniently, and others unlucky, like thirteen, because it was so very awkward. But we still have to deal with the most impressive relics of this age, namely,



From "A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method," by Sir Banister Fletcher, 9th edition (Batsford).

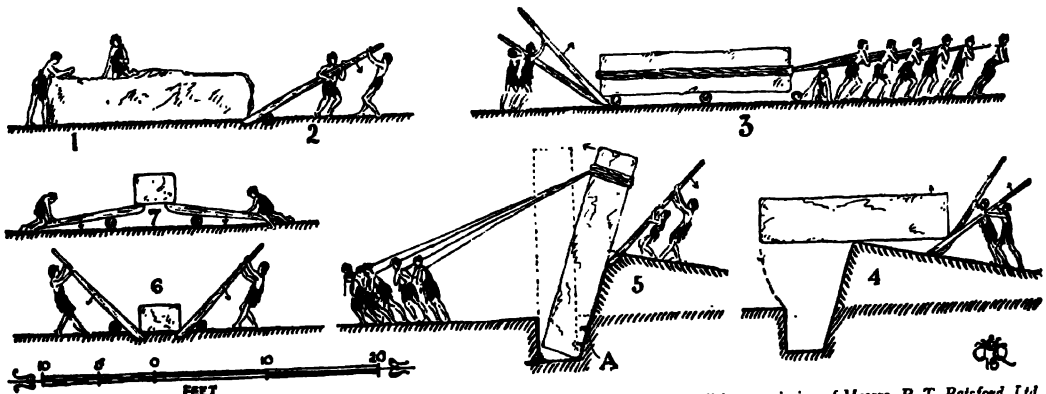
STONEHENGE AS IT WAS

circles of large stones, surrounded by earthworks and approached by stone-edged avenues. It so happens that by far the largest and most magnificent of all these monuments known to us was set up at Avebury, a few miles west of Marlborough, in east Wiltshire. But it was almost entirely destroyed not so very long ago by two farmers, who wanted the stone! There are other famous circles at Carnac, in Brittany. But the one you are most likely to see for yourselves is Stonehenge, on Salisbury Plain, in Wiltshire. It is partly in ruins now, so it will be simpler to describe it as it was over three thousand years ago. Inside an earthen rampart a

hundred yards across, which was approached by a perfectly straight avenue five hundred yards long, stood thirty tall blocks of stone arranged in a circle. The tops of these were linked by a circle of flat blocks, and these lintel stones were joined to each other and to the uprights by tongues and slots carved on the stones. Within this massive outer ring was arranged a second circle of small, separate blocks. Further in still stood, in horse-shoe formation, five pairs of tall blocks, each with its lintel stone, the central trio being taller and larger than all the rest. Within this horse-shoe lay another, composed of small separate blocks again. And finally, within this small horse-shoe lay a large flat slab of sandstone.

The large blocks are made of local stone, but the smaller blocks and the flat stone came from Pembroke in south Wales. There are three other stones which must be mentioned. One is some little distance down the avenue, the other two are inside the earthwork, but away from the big stone circle. A person who stood and looked down the avenue over the first stone at dawn on June 21st (or the longest day) would see the sun rise. Facing the other two stones, he would, in one case, see the sun set on June 21st, in the other he would see it rise on Dec. 21st (or the shortest day). We can assume that Stonehenge was a temple, and that it was connected with Sun-worship. Those who built it must have taken their religion very seriously.

Clustered thickly round Stonehenge are the burial mounds which are a special feature of the New Stone Age and of the first metal-using age (the Bronze Age), which immediately followed it. The New Stone Age mounds are in the form of a long oval, sometimes as much as a hundred yards long, surrounded by a low stone parapet, and some have a stone corridor leading to a stone cell inside the mound, where the actual burial took place. The round barrows, which belong to the Bronze Age, are much smaller and are shaped like a bowl turned over. They often contain

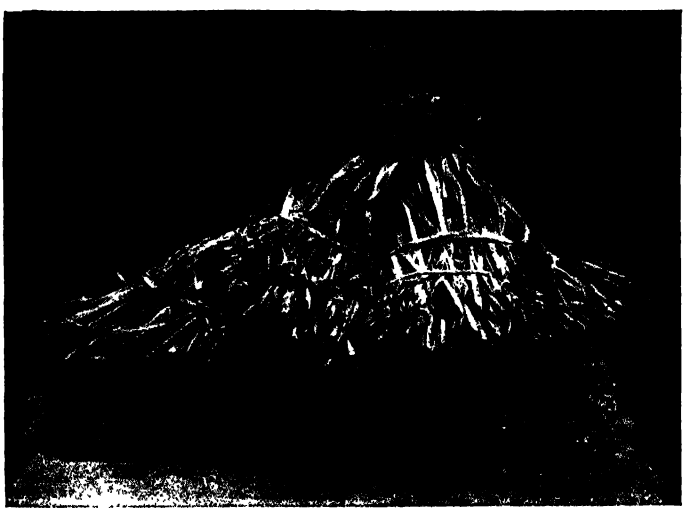


From Quennell's "Everyday Life in the New Stone, Bronze, and Early Iron Ages," by permission of Messrs. B. T. Batsford, Ltd.

BUILDING STONEHENGE

the ashes of a *cremated* body. Only important people, of course, were buried with so much trouble.

You will no doubt wonder how the people of the New Stone Age, with their simple civilisation, could have cut, transported and set up the huge blocks of which Stonehenge is composed. For the uprights of the outer ring are twelve and a half feet high, and the



LATE NEW STONE AGE AND BRONZE AGE HUT

The remains of a number of such huts may be seen in south-west Cornwall

cross-section of the lintel stones is, roughly, a three-foot square, while the uprights at the centre of the "horse-shoe" are no less than twenty-two feet high. Marks on the blocks show that stone and not metal tools were used. By means of poles, used as rollers and as levers, the blocks could slowly have been hauled along by teams of men pulling their hardest at long ropes. Embankments would be built up to the hole in which the stone was to rest. The end of the stone would be levered and rolled till it dropped over the side of the

embankment into the hole. Then, by ropes fastened to the top of the stone, it would be pulled upright. A similar method could be used to place the lintel stones.

All the same, it was a tremendous engineering and building feat, which would present difficulties even to modern builders. When we remember that even larger and more numerous blocks were used at Avebury, we need not wonder that many learned men believe that these earliest temples of ours were built under the direction of settlers who brought with them the higher civilisation of the Bronze Age, passed on from Egypt, perhaps, or Crete, about which we are next to read. Lately marks have been noticed on the Avebury stones which may be carvings. At any rate, it is a curious thing that near Stonehenge there are three hundred *round* burial mounds, and only two *long* ones. As Pepys, the famous diarist, wrote in the report which he drew up for Charles II after they had visited Avebury and Stonehenge, " Hard to tell, but may yet be told."

Exercises

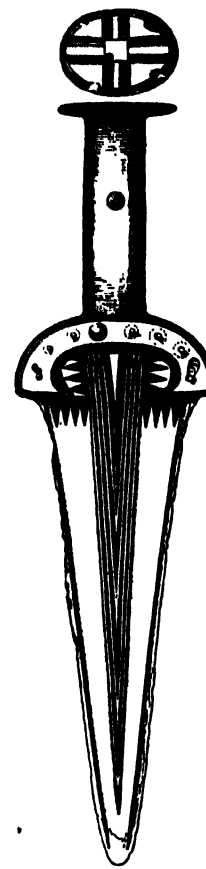
1. Look up in your dictionary:—palaeo-lithic, neo-lithic, mega-lithic, dolmen, menhir, barrow.

2. Find out from maps and guide-books about the pre-historic remains nearest to where you live or where you are going for your next holiday. Make your own drawings of them.

C. The Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age

We still have to move one stage further towards civilisation before we can begin real History with the stories of separate countries, based on written records. A special feature of this period is the invention of implements with metal heads or blades. The first metal used for practical purposes was copper, which is often found in a state sufficiently pure to enable it to be used at once. It is also soft enough to be hammered or bent

into shape when cold. We can imagine that one day some pieces of copper ore were accidentally put into a fire and so melted. The flat and shiny piece of metal which resulted would be curiously examined and perhaps twisted into a shape. And so Man discovered a new and very important art. Now a form of tin is often found near copper ore. Some of this tin must have been combined once with copper by some coppersmith, who noticed that the alloy made a much stronger metal. And so the Bronze Age began. Gold had been discovered earlier, but it was long used only for ornament. Iron came into general use later, and being a much more serviceable metal for hard use, it gradually ousted bronze.



British Museum.

BRONZE AGE DAGGER

By this time the ass, the horse and the camel had been tamed to bear man and his burdens, and cattle were used for ploughing. The use of rollers, for moving heavy weights, gave some clever mechanic the idea of the Wheel, one of the most important of human inventions. So carts came into use, and chariots too, for this was a great age for warfare; and one of the first uses to which metal was put was the manufacture of swords and daggers, apart from spear- and arrow-heads and shields. Trading too grew more extensive owing to the development of the sailing-ship. As in the case of all the early inventions, we can only guess what happened. One day, when there was a strong breeze, a man, in the hollowed tree trunk which was the earliest

type of boat, may have thrown a skin over some spear or harpoon which was sticking up out of the boat. And he found, to his surprise, that he was moving without any effort. He might have noticed that the skin was flapping merrily in the breeze, and being an

BRONZE AGE WOMAN WEAVING

intelligent fellow, he put two and two together. He fixed his spear more carefully and stretched the skin out. And so, perhaps, began the art of sailing, which reached its height in the " tea-clippers " of seventy years ago, with their acre of spread sail.

While most of Europe was still in an early stage of civilisation, covered with dense forests, with no good

After Quennell, "Everyday Life in the New Stone, Bronze, and Iron Ages," by permission of Messrs. B. T. Batsford, Ltd.

COSTUME OF THE

NEW STONE BRONZE EARLY IRON AGE

roads, seas and rivers were the most important highways. There was a brisk traffic along the Mediterranean and up the coasts of France and Spain to Britain and the North Sea, while good use was made of the larger French and German rivers. As we shall read in the next chapter, civilisation first began to make

EARLY IRON AGE HUT

The walls are of clay over basket-work, the roof of thatch. It has two " windows."

rapid progress in the countries adjoining the east end of the Mediterranean. Slowly, in the course of centuries, the greatest centres of civilisation moved further and further to the west. During the period we have now reached, after 1000 B.C., the wares of the Near East, particularly vessels, weapons and tools of bronze were exported to western Europe in return for metal ores. And with these oriental cargoes came new arts and new ideas.

What did people in western Europe look like

in the early metal ages? In the Bronze Age men wrapped a square piece of cloth round their bodies from under their arms down to the knees, and kept it in place with a belt tied round the waist. In cold weather they wore cloaks, pinning the top ends round the neck. The women wore a short-sleeved bodice and a long skirt, tied round the waist. All wore moccasins, and the men had leather stockings too. Both sexes used long pins to keep their hair up. In the Iron Age, men wore a short-sleeved vest and a kilt or trousers with bright tartan designs, and sometimes a cloak. Women wore a long frock with short sleeves. Both sexes wore their hair in long plaits, and were fond of metal bracelets and collars decorated with bright enamel. In both the Bronze and Iron Ages men wore long moustaches, but shaved the rest of the face.

And now, for a time, we must leave western Europe, still half-hidden in the mists before the dawn of History, and travel to lands in the East where great cities and temples already stood, shining clearly in the morning sun.

Exercises

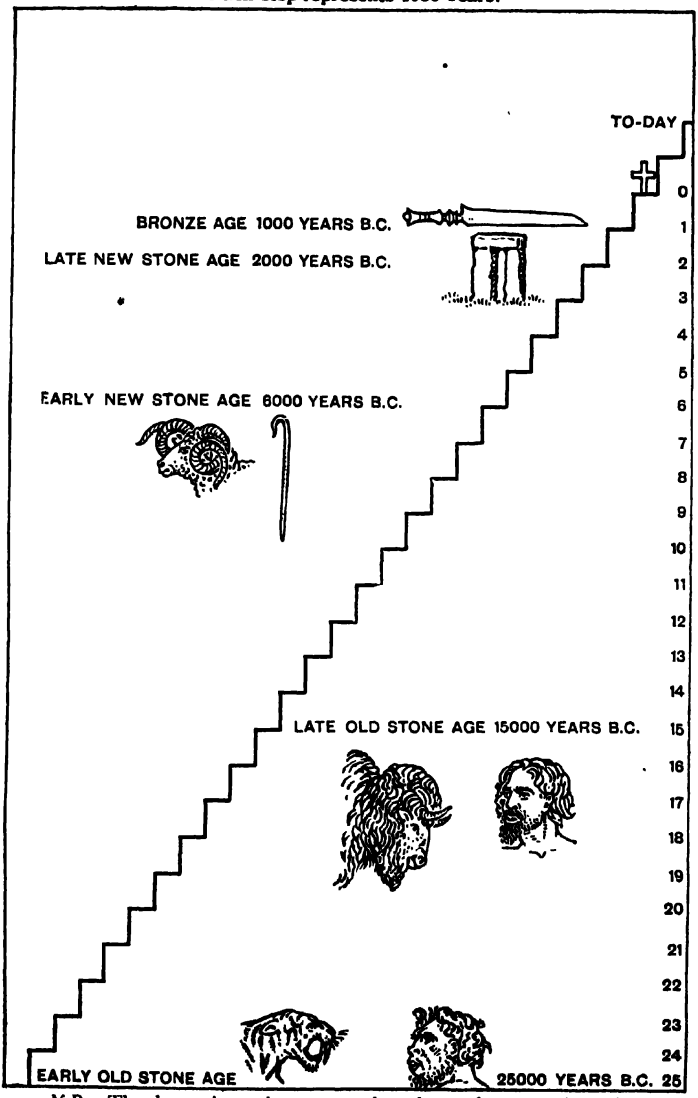
1. Look up in your dictionary:—celt, torque, domesticate, starboard.

2. Describe the prehistoric implements in your local museum and how they are arranged. Why are there so many of stone, so few of copper and practically none of iron?

3. Compare Robinson Crusoe's life on the island with that of a Bronze Age man. What advantages had Crusoe?

TIME DIAGRAM FOR PREHISTORIC AGES IN EUROPE

Each step represents 1000 Years.



N.B.—The dates given above are to be taken only as rough guides.

MAKING POTTERY IN ANCIENT EGYPT
A wall-painting in a pyramid.

CHAPTER TWO

THE EGYPTIANS, THE BABYLONIANS, THE CRETANS, THE HITTITES

A. The Early Egyptians

We have already dropped a hint (p. 13) that the man who first grew corn regularly, took a great step towards civilisation. Let us discuss this a little further. When a man found a patch of fertile soil he would want to settle there. Unlike the wandering shepherds or hunters, he would think it worth his while to build a solid house, and his wife would do her best to make it comfortable. He would plant little trees round it. He might never see them tall and thick himself, but he liked to think his children would live on at the farm and the trees would give them shade and shelter. If he had neighbours in his happy valley, he would come to some agreement with them about boundaries, lost cattle or the water supply, and so there would develop a greater respect and desire for law and order. A little temple might be built to the Sun-God or the

Earth-Goddess, and at certain times of the year they would meet for a festival. Before long there might be a hundred families in the valley, who felt vaguely that they belonged to a community.

Some of the men would become noted for being very handy with tools, and the other farmers would frequently ask them to put up a barn or mend a plough. One or two of these men would give up farming altogether and become carpenter, mason, metal-worker or weaver, their daily practice giving them increasing skill and speed. And so a class of craftsmen would arise who would pass a lifetime's experience on to their sons or the sons of other farmers who came as apprentices, because there were already enough brothers on the farm.

The most conveniently situated of such villages would grow into towns where craftsmen settled because there would be more regular work for them to do in such a central community. Farmers and their wives would come there to exchange their surplus produce for new tools, clothes or home requirements. In town or country some families, either through unusual prosperity or bold leadership in a time of danger, would win great respect, and if their descendants could cause that respect to be maintained indefinitely, and were very proud of their descent, we should have the beginnings of "nobility." As religion grew more complicated, priests would become an important class. Finally some very clever and daring noble would persuade or force the other nobles to recognise him as their leader, and he would be hailed as the first king of the land.

From what we said at first, we should expect all these processes to take place first in those parts of the ancient world where there were great stretches of fertile soil. And this is just what happened. For the first civilisations arose in Egypt in the valley of the Nile, and in Mesopotamia (or Iraq) along the lower course of the Tigris and Euphrates.

Look at Egypt on the map (p. 35) and see how

little of that country matters except the long valley of the Nile. It is only the last stretch of the Nile that you see on this map, although even this is about seven hundred miles long. For most of this distance (except for the large delta, once a gulf, that silted up) the river flows along a narrow valley which varies from five to thirty miles across. The valley ends abruptly in steep cliffs on either side, and from the top of those cliffs stretches the barren, uninhabited desert, one hundred to two hundred miles of it eastwards to the Red Sea, while westwards are the limitless wastes of the Sahara. Egypt, then, is really a long, narrow, sunken oasis, with the Nile for its well, where, since the dawn of History, corn, beans, date-palms and other fruit trees have flourished.

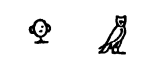
DATE PALMS

So hot is Egypt, and so little rain ever falls (they say London gets in a year as much as Egypt in a century), that the valley too would be a desert if the Nile did not overflow its banks every autumn in a mighty flood, and leave behind it, when it flows in its channel again, a covering of fertile mud which is at once ploughed and sown. When this rich soil dries up again, it is irrigated with water caught in dykes and pools during the flood, and when these too dry up, the water has to be baled up on a rough-and-ready sort of crane, from the river itself. The flood is due to the very heavy summer rainfall in the Abyssinian mountains where the Blue Nile and other eastern tributaries rise.

So the first thing we learn in History is that the Egyptians grew numerous in this fertile valley, and learned to combine together to control the water. They studied the sun, moon, and stars in order to

IRRIGATION ON THE NILE

know more accurately when the river would rise and fall, and simple geometry would be necessary to survey the fields. Very early on they learned to write, an art which proves that they were intelligent, and in turn enabled them to be more intelligent still. As in all the earliest forms of writing, they began with little pictures which told a story. Then they took a big step forward. You know when you play charades, you take a long word and split it up into short words which have really nothing to do with the long word, but which are accidentally contained in it. The Egyptians did the same. Supposing they wanted to write "before." They might draw a little picture of a bee and put next to it the figure four. In time the pictures were greatly simplified, for speed and convenience, so that for instance these signs,



grew into these

which could be drawn with quick strokes of the brush.

For most of their writing the Egyptians used paper, which they made by taking the inner rind of a tall, thick reed that was common in the marshes. They fastened strips of this together, then gummed another layer right across this at right angles. On this they wrote with a brush that was simply a stick frayed out at the end. They used black ink usually, with red for special headings, as we do.

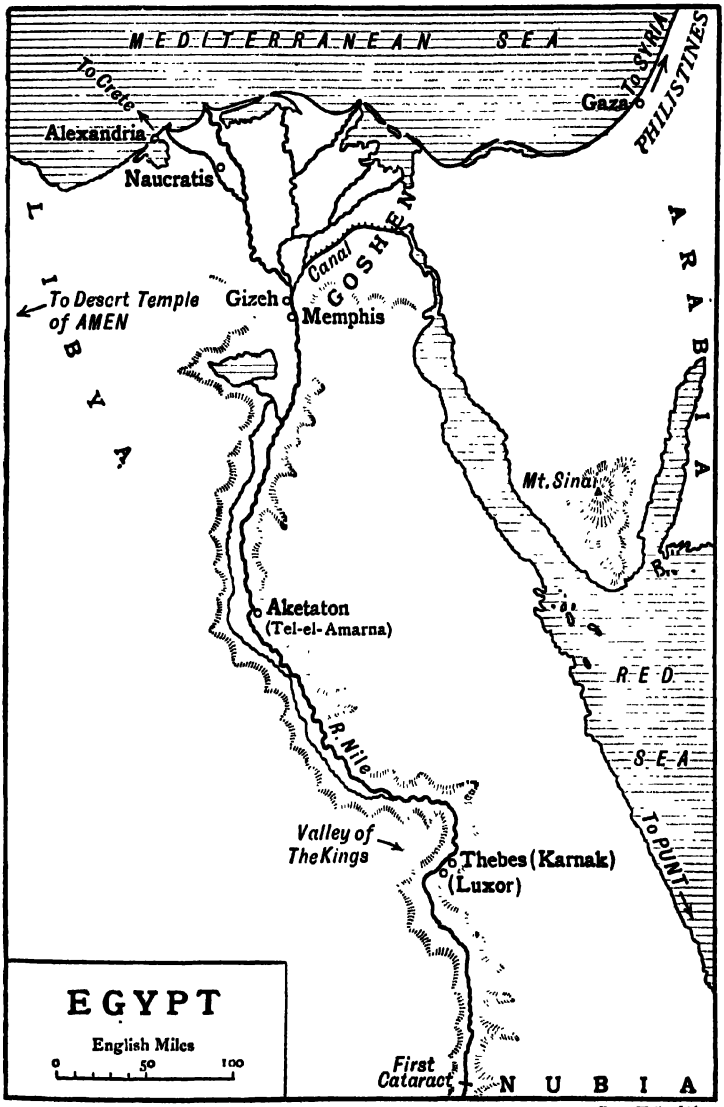
So Egyptian scribes wrote down particulars of crops and cattle, of cargoes that came up the river, of the building of huge temples and tombs. Priests wrote prayers and magic spells. And one of the earliest uses to which writing was put was to make careful records of the kings and queens of Egypt.

These rulers are divided into dynasties, a dynasty being a series of rulers descended from the same

ancestors, and so having some family relationship to each other. These records tell us that at first there were two kings of Egypt, one ruling the Delta, the other the upper valley, but that about 3500 B.C. the king of the upper river conquered the other and the two kingdoms were henceforth united, the capital being Memphis, about twenty-five miles south of modern Cairo and on the other side of the river. About 3000 B.C. a powerful line of monarchs began to rule (Fourth and Fifth Dynasties), who built those mighty tombs for themselves which we call the Pyramids of Gizeh, a few miles south-west of Cairo. You can begin to have some idea of the power that these kings controlled when you learn that each side of the largest pyramid is two hundred and fifty yards long, that it is a hundred and sixty yards high, and that it is composed of two million three hundred thousand blocks of granite, each weighing on an average two and a half tons, yet accurately placed to the fraction of an inch. The head of the Sphinx is really a statue of one of these monarchs, for the Egyptian kings were fond of erecting colossal images of themselves.

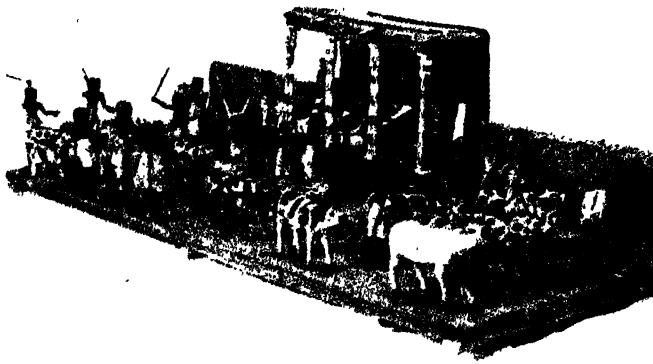
PAPYRUS REEDS

After about 2500 B.C. the kings were not so mighty, and local nobles and princes ruled their provinces pretty much as they pleased, so that the next three hundred years are sometimes called the Feudal Age of Egypt. Then about 2200 B.C. came another strong line of monarchs (Twelfth Dynasty), who brought the nobles to heel again, and whose reigns were long, peaceful and prosperous. They improved the control of the Nile waters by building great embankments, draining marshes and making careful observations and surveys of the river. They encouraged


MEDITERRANEAN SEA
To Crete
Alexandria
Naucratis
Gaza
To SYRIA
PHILISTINES
ARABIA
GOSHEN
Canal
To Desert Temple of AMEN
Gizeh
Memphis
LIBYA
Mt. Sinai
Aketaton
(Tel-el-Amarna)
RED SEA
R. Nile
Valley of The Kings
Thebes (Karnak)
(Luxor)
To PUNT
EGYPT
English Miles
0 50 100
First Cataract
NUBIA
Emery Walker Ltd. sc.

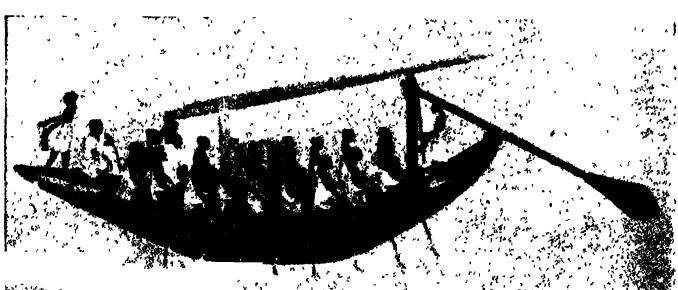
EGYPT

commerce with distant regions. A canal was dug from the most southerly point of the delta to the Red Sea. Gold came from Nubia, cedar wood from the forests of



Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

THE BIG "ROUND-UP." INSPECTION OF CATTLE ON AN EGYPTIAN ESTATE



Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

A BOAT ON THE NILE

Lebanon in Syria, strangely decorated pottery and richly dyed stuffs from Crete (see p. 54), and valuable spices and plants from "the land of Punt" at the southern end of the Red Sea.

To this age of sea-faring belongs one of the favourite fairy tales of the Egyptians. An Egyptian noble was sailing " to the mines of Pharaoh " in a large ship with a crew of a hundred and fifty bold sailors. A great storm arose, the ship was wrecked and only the nobleman survived, being washed on to an island, a pleasant place with all sorts of fruits growing and strange birds flitting by. The castaway lit a fire and had just eaten some fruit, when suddenly there was a roar like thunder, and the island shook. He looked around him and saw a huge golden serpent with a beard three feet long approaching him. But the monster was quite friendly, carried him gently to his lair and asked, " What has brought thee, little one, what has brought thee to this isle of the sea? " When the monster heard the tale of the shipwreck he said, " Fear not, little one, and let not thy face be sad. Thou shalt dwell four months in this isle with me and my brethren and my children, for there are seventy-five of us in all. Then a ship of thine own land shall come and

A QUEEN OF UR

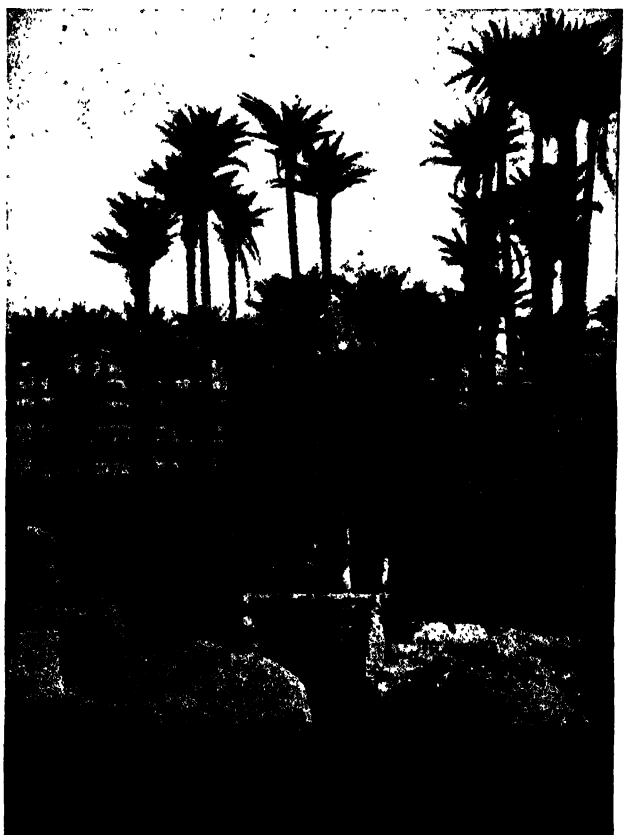
thou shalt go home and embrace thy wife and children." When the four months had passed, an Egyptian ship did arrive at the island. Whereupon the monster, who claimed to be Prince of the land of Punt, bade his guest a friendly farewell, loading him with gifts of perfume, scented woods, ivory and baboons.

About 1800 B.C. the peace of Egypt was rudely interrupted. So far we have not heard of invaders in Egypt. On all sides there was sea or desert to protect the land, and it was because of this that Egypt had enjoyed so long and so prosperous a history. Now on the other side of the Red Sea from Egypt lies the vast peninsula of Arabia. It was probably not so dry in those far-off days as it is to-day, and its grasslands supported many tribes of fighting shepherds. Many a time in History has the fierce onset of these Arabian tribes shaken empires. And they play their part in the earliest chapters. For a host of these Semites, as they are called, found their way across the Sinai peninsula and conquered Egypt. Their war-chariots terrified the Egyptians, who had never seen horses before. For the first time foreign kings sat on the ancient throne of Egypt. The records tell us little about the "Hyksos," or Shepherd Kings, for the Egyptians were very much ashamed and angry at their downfall. So let us leave the Egyptians for a while, with their hearts full of bitterness, and travel further east still, to learn something of another civilisation which had also grown up in a great river-valley.

B. The Early Babylonians

About a thousand miles east of the Nile delta lies another vast river mouth, where the united Tigris and Euphrates run into the head of the Persian Gulf. To reach it from Egypt you would have to make a very uncomfortable journey, whether you crossed the great Syrian desert or sailed round the immense peninsula of Arabia, *i.e.* down the Red Sea, along the Gulf of Aden and up the Persian Gulf, the hottest seas

in the world. When our story begins, that is, about 3500 B.C. (as in the case of Egypt), the two rivers ran



From "The Excavations at Babylon," by Robert Koldewey.

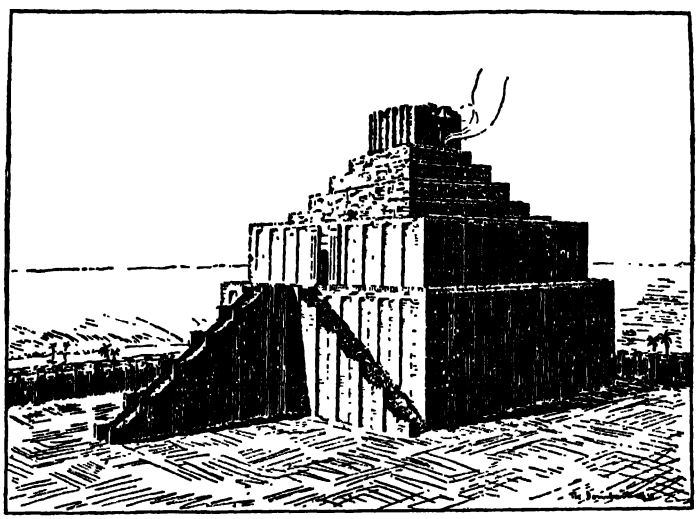
IRRIGATION ON THE EUPHRATES

A leather tank automatically dips in the river, rises and empties itself in the channel running between the date palms.

separately into the sea, although, then as now, there were minor channels connecting them. The district

between the river mouths was called Sumer. And in the last stretch of the Euphrates valley we find well-organised cities which already seem to have a long history behind them even in 3500 B.C.!

Judging from their sculptures, the Sumerians were a short, thick-set race. Their round heads and faces were shaven, and they wore a sort of thick woollen



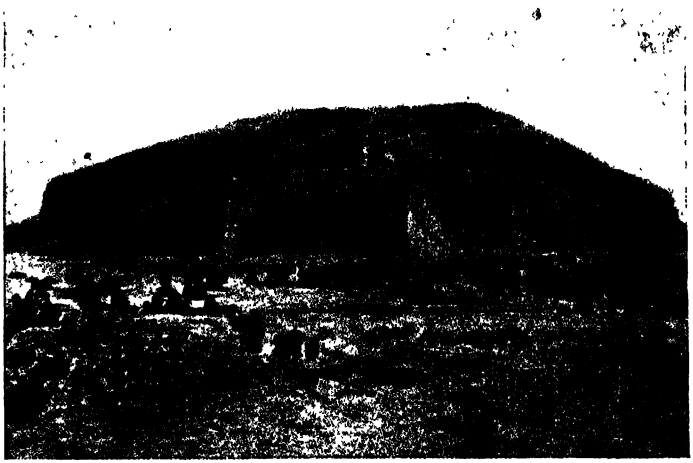
From R. Koldewey: "Das Wiedererstehende Babylon," by permission of Messrs. J. C. Hinrich.

THE ZIGGURAT OF UR, AS IT MAY HAVE BEEN

or sheepskin kilt and, in cold weather, a cloak. By careful drainage and irrigation they had turned the swamps of the river mouth into rich farm land, centring round well-built cities, each ruled by a king who was also the high priest. The cities were keen rivals, and there was endless war between them. In each town the most prominent feature was a tall temple-tower, close to but separate from the temple itself. These temple towers ("ziggurats" they called them) resembled the newer modern type of "sky-scraper,"

being a series of cubes of decreasing size piled on top of one another. A number of flights of stairs (or rather ramps) led up the outside of the tower to an altar near the top where the most solemn ceremonies took place. There is, no doubt, an echo of the building of some colossal ziggurat in the Bible story of the tower of Babel.

The temple itself comprised a whole collection of buildings, apart from the actual place of worship.



From "The Sumerians," by C. L. Woolley, by courtesy of the Clarendon Press.

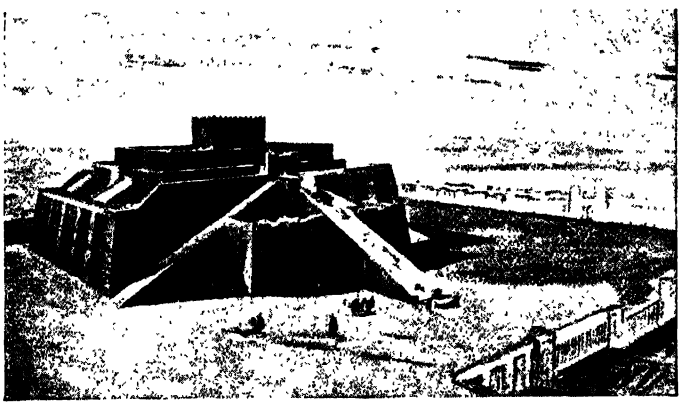
THE ZIGGURAT OF UR

Remains of the first storey, showing one front and two side ramps. As clay was the only building material easily available, the cities of the Euphrates were built of soft, sun-baked brick.

There was usually a large courtyard in front which acted as a public meeting-place, market and exchange. There would be the living-quarters of the priests, cells for pilgrims, places to store the produce from the large farms which every temple owned, and strong rooms for the deposit of gold and other valuables, for the priests acted as bankers. The city school was at the temple, too, the priests teaching boys and girls. Their system of writing was quite different from that of the

Egyptians, though it began in the same way with picture signs.

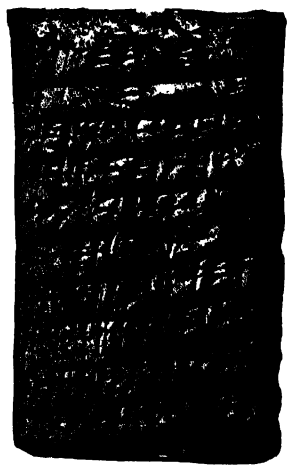
They took tablets of damp clay and pressed the end of a simple wooden tool into it so as to make narrow, wedge-shaped marks. Many thousands of such tablets have been discovered, and every big museum has some. When you see them, you will be struck by the smallness and neatness of the characters that run so evenly between the parallel lines ruled



THE ZIGGURAT OF UR, ANOTHER RESTORATION
From a drawing by F. G. Newton.

across. Important documents were specially baked to harden them, and had a wrapper of clay put over them which acted as an envelope or was sometimes made into a second copy of the document. This could be stamped with a special seal design by running an embossed little cylinder over it while it was still wet. As in the case of Egyptian writing, the early picture signs were simplified for convenience. Take, for instance, the sign for "sun" or "day." It was not convenient to draw a circle (the usual picture symbol everywhere for day) with the tool. So they made it in four strokes like this  . But then they got tired of

altering the angle of the tool, and they changed all the signs so as to make as few changes of angle as possible.



BRICK LETTER OF HAMMURABI

So " day " was written at last like this  . Here are other examples of these changes.

To the north of Sumer there later arose another group of cities, inhabited by bearded Semites from the southern deserts who had settled down to town life. This district was known as Akkad. For long there was rivalry between the two groups of cities, but finally the Semites conquered the Sumerians, and the two districts were united. But the Akkadians, realising that the Sumerians had a higher standard of life, copied

their arts and employed them as officials, but kept their own Semitic language.

It was later in this period, after another inroad of Semites, that one of the cities of Akkad, about four hundred miles up the Euphrates, grew to be the capital of the combined kingdom. This was Babylon, in its day the greatest centre of civilisation and commerce in the ancient world. One of the early rulers of Babylon, Hammurabi (2123–2081 B.C.), is the most outstanding figure in early History. He checked the enemies who constantly threatened Babylon from the mountains to the east and the north, and having safeguarded his realm from the terrors of invasion, he devoted his great energy and genius to making his people happy and prosperous. As befitted the descendant of a pastoral race, he spoke of himself as a good shepherd who carefully tended his flock. ". . . I dug the canal called 'Hammurabi-the-abundance-of-the-people,' which brings abundant water to the people of Sumer and Akkad. Its banks on both sides I turned into corn land. The scattered people of Sumer and Akkad I gathered, with pasturage and watering I provided them and settled them in peaceful dwellings."

A very important relic of Hammurabi has come down to us. (It is now in the Louvre, Paris, but there is an exact copy in the British Museum.) It is a pillar of polished black stone, eight feet high. On one side of its rounded top there is a carving of Hammurabi in conference with Shamash, the Sun-God and lover of Justice. Beneath this, round and round the pillar, there are over three thousand six hundred lines of writing, setting out the ancient laws which the king had collected and arranged. The Code, as it is called, was severe, and inflicted many barbarous punishments, but we know from other sources that the full penalty was seldom exacted, and the wrongdoer was often let off with a fine. We learn from the Code that people were divided into four classes, nobles, priests, common people and slaves. The punishments for the nobles were the most severe. The priests were numerous, and the

most highly educated class. The chief gods they served were Marduk, the special hero-god of Babylon itself,

Brit. Mus. *Photo. W. F. Mansell.*

THE TOP OF THE STELE OF HAMMURABI

Showing the king before Shamash the Sun-God.

Ishtar, the cruel goddess of love and war, and Shamash, the Sun-God and lover of justice. Women were allowed to enter professions, and trade on their own

account, and in other ways enjoyed rights which with us they have only regained in modern times.

After the reign of Hammurabi the glory of Babylonia declined. The Hittites (of whom we shall hear more later) began to raid from the north-west. More serious still, the Kassites, mountain tribes from the east who used horses, first raided, then in growing numbers settled in the land, and finally annexed it. So that Kassite kings ruled Babylon for six hundred years (1746–1169 B.C.). But it still remained the most important city of its period. It drew traffic from the Mediterranean and from the Far East, by land and by sea. And it was not merely the greatest city of merchants. Its central position in the ancient world and its high standard of civilisation made it the teacher of less developed nations. Its laws and its alphabet, its weights and measures, were adopted by the surrounding peoples. It is from the Babylonians that we get our divisions of time, for they put astronomy on a scientific basis. They divided the year up into a period of twelve moons, and they knew that this did not quite correspond to a year according to the sun, so they corrected their calendar accordingly. They divided the month into weeks of seven days, each seventh day being a "Sabattu" or day of rest, and the day they divided into twenty-four hours. They discovered the planets and named the days after them. They observed the twelve groups of stars through which the sun seems to pass in the course of the year, and so gave us "the signs of the Zodiac." It was they who divided the circle into three hundred and sixty degrees, and invented sun-dials and water-clocks. They used simple algebra.

The Babylonians were greatly interested in forecasting the future, especially by studying the organs of sacrificed animals and by that special form of astronomy which we call astrology. Both these practices spread throughout the ancient world. They had a silly and dreary idea of the life after death, namely that people lay half awake and motionless in dust and gloom, and so they dreaded death.

And now, till its glory revives again about eleven hundred years later, we must leave Babylon and its ziggurats adorned with coloured tiles, its date palms and orchards, caravans and barges, its priests, gardeners, merchants and officials, and the shepherds and fishermen in their mud-and-reed huts by the Euphrates.

From "The Palace of Minos at Knossos," by Sir Arthur Evans.

A PRIEST-PRINCE OF CRETE

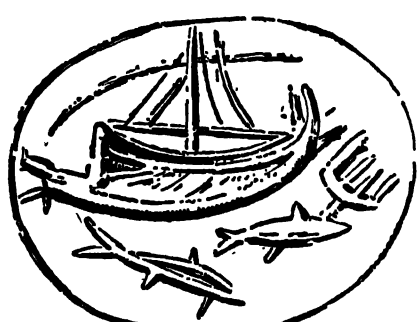
A beautifully coloured wall-painting in the palace at Cnossus.

C. The Cretans

The third of the earliest civilisations in the world, which we are going to study now, is quite

different from the other two. It was a sea-empire with its capital in the island of Crete, which lies between Greece and Egypt. We know very little as yet about its history, and perhaps we shall never know very much. It came to an end very suddenly, and there are hardly any written records, nor can we yet understand the few that are left. The Greeks had legends about a powerful king named Minos who lived in Crete long before their history began and who ruled the seas with his strong navy; and the early Greek poet Homer wrote:

> "There is a land amid the wine-dark sea
> Called Crete; rich, fruitful, girded by the waves,
> She boasts unnumbered men and ninety towns.
> . . . . .
> One city in extent the rest exceeds,
> Cnossus, the city in which Minos reigned."



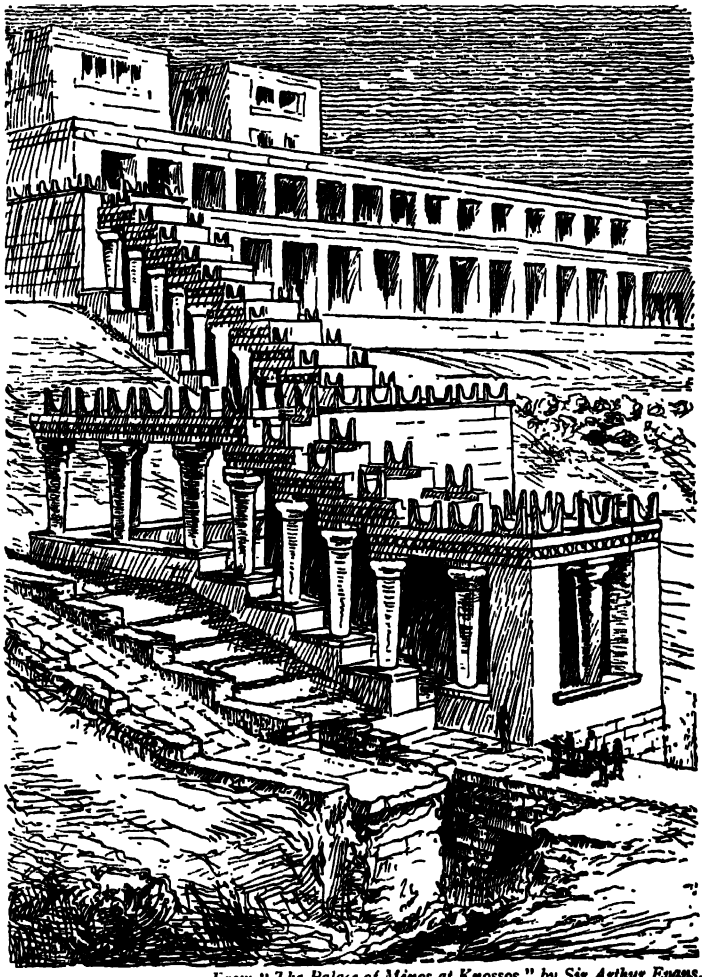
From "The Palace of Minos at Knossos," by Sir Arthur Evans.

CRETAN SEAL-STONE SHOWING SHIP AND DOLPHINS

But until recent years nobody dreamt that there was any truth behind these legends. Then an English scholar began to dig in Crete, and he dug up a whole civilisation which had never been even suspected before. So that although we still know very little about the history of the Cretans, we know a good deal about their way of life, which is at least as interesting, if not more so!

Both at Cnossus near the north coast, and at Phæstus near the south, excavations revealed luxurious palaces (with curiously modern sanitation) not on the colossal scale of the Eastern empires, but elaborately planned, with a great number of smaller rooms surrounding the main halls and courtyards. These palaces are obviously the residences of kings who are in close contact with numerous retainers, and the subjects in these capital cities live compactly in crowded streets grouped round the palace. Crete is a mountainous island, so we do not look for vast, fertile plains. The population was bound to crowd into a few sheltered corners round the harbours, and to seek prosperity from trade. There are no strong walls to protect the Cretan cities, for they were subject to Cnossus and relied on the navy to protect them from invaders. Nor had they any large temples corresponding to those of Egypt and Babylonia, for they worshipped chiefly a deity whom we can call Mother Nature, in small shrines either indoors or in caves and groves.

Among the chief features of the palace at Cnossus are first a large hall, the walls of which are beautifully painted. A throne made of stone stands against one wall, and benches of stone are arranged all round the hall. This hall is often referred to as the Throne Room. A handsome staircase leads from it to the queen's hall and apartments. There are courtyards surrounded by rows of the curious Cretan pillars which are narrower at the bottom than at the top. There are stoves in many of the rooms and baths with excellent copper piping. Underneath the palace is a perfect maze of cellars used mostly as storehouses for large jars of olive oil, wine and corn, and this is perhaps the Labyrinth which is mentioned in the legend of Theseus (p. 57). Near the entrance to the palace is a large open court which was probably used for watching games such as boxing, wrestling and a strange form of bull-fighting in which unarmed boys and girls seized a charging bull by the horns, swinging on to his back, then clean off again.



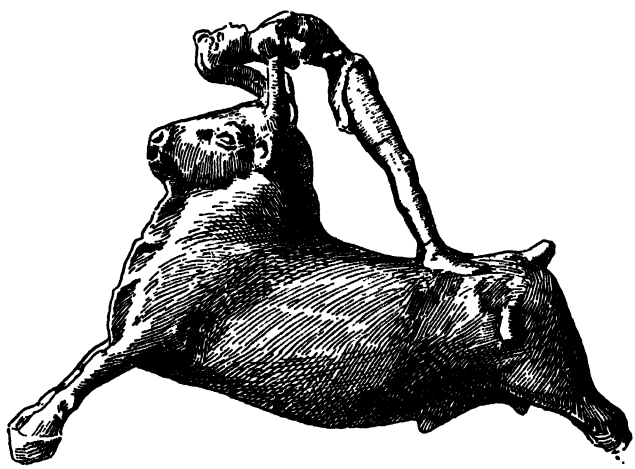
From "The Palace of Minos at Knossos," by Sir Arthur Evans.

STAIRCASE AND TERRACE OF THE PALACE OF CNOSSUS

From "The Palace of Minos at Knossos," by Sir Arthur Evans.

IN THE QUEEN'S APARTMENTS, PALACE OF CNOSSUS

The delight of the Cretans in athletic displays is one of the things that make us think of them as belonging to the West, and as fore-runners of the Greeks. Both men and women had long, black hair, carefully arranged in curls which hung down well below the shoulder. The men usually wore little else but a long loin-cloth, finely embroidered, or a kilt, and high boots. The women wore a long, flounced skirt with an apron-



From "The Palace of Minos at Knossos," by Sir Arthur Evans.

BRONZE FIGURE SHOWING CRETAN BULL-SPORT

like basque and a close-fitting bodice cut very low in front. They seem to have been a high-spirited, artistic race, fond of sport and enjoyment. From its very position, without other evidence, we could assume that Crete traded with Egypt, Asia Minor and Greece, and very probably with south Italy and Sicily. The Cretans exported wine and olive oil, stuffs dyed with rich purple obtained from a little shell-fish, sponges, delicately engraved jewellery and great quantities of fine pottery of original design and beautiful colouring. They had sharp eyes for the denizens of the blue-green waters

From "The Palace of Minos at Knossos," by Sir Arthur Evans.

A CRETAN LADY

over which their vessels plied, and they made designs of dolphins, flying-fish, and the octopus lurking for his prey behind pumice rocks and seaweed. They brought back to Crete timber and resin for their ships, building materials for their palaces and houses, horses, ivory, and copper for their tools, weapons and plumbing.

From "The Palace of Minos at Knossos," by Sir Arthur Evans.

CRETAN JAR SHOWING OCTOPUS, CORAL AND SEA-WEED

Like all traders of the ancient world, they were unscrupulous. They kidnapped people and sold them as slaves, and when a tempting opportunity arose, they turned even to piracy.

During this period (2000–1500 B.C.) there were a number of cities in south-eastern Greece which reached a high standard of Bronze Age civilisation, if not quite as high as that of Crete. The best-known of

these, owing to the impressive remains of their fortress-palaces, are Mycenæ and Tiryns in the district later known as Argolis. The huge, rough stones of which their massive walls are built and the rock-tombs of their princes remind us of the late Stone Age (p. 19). Many of these cities, as their decorations clearly show, had some connection with Crete, but we cannot tell as yet whether they were colonies, or whether their inhabitants were of the same stock as the Cretans, or whether they were simply subjects or allies of Crete. Another Ægean town of great importance was Troy, on the north-west coast of Asia Minor.

From "The Palace of Minos at Knossos," by Sir Arthur Evans.

CRETAN WINE-JAR SHOWING DOLPHINS, CORAL AND SEA-WEED

Athens, later to grow into one of the most illustrious cities of the ancient world, seems in its earliest history to have belonged to the subject class. According to its old legend, Athens was compelled to send to Crete, every nine years, seven of its choicest youths and seven maidens, who were there thrown to the Minotaur, a monster with the body of a man and the head of a bull. This monster was kept in an underground dungeon approached by a maze of passages known as the Labyrinth. From what we have read on p. 51, we know that there was a certain amount of grim truth behind this fantastic legend. The third time the Athenian youths and maidens were sent to Crete, the king's son was among them, a fearless

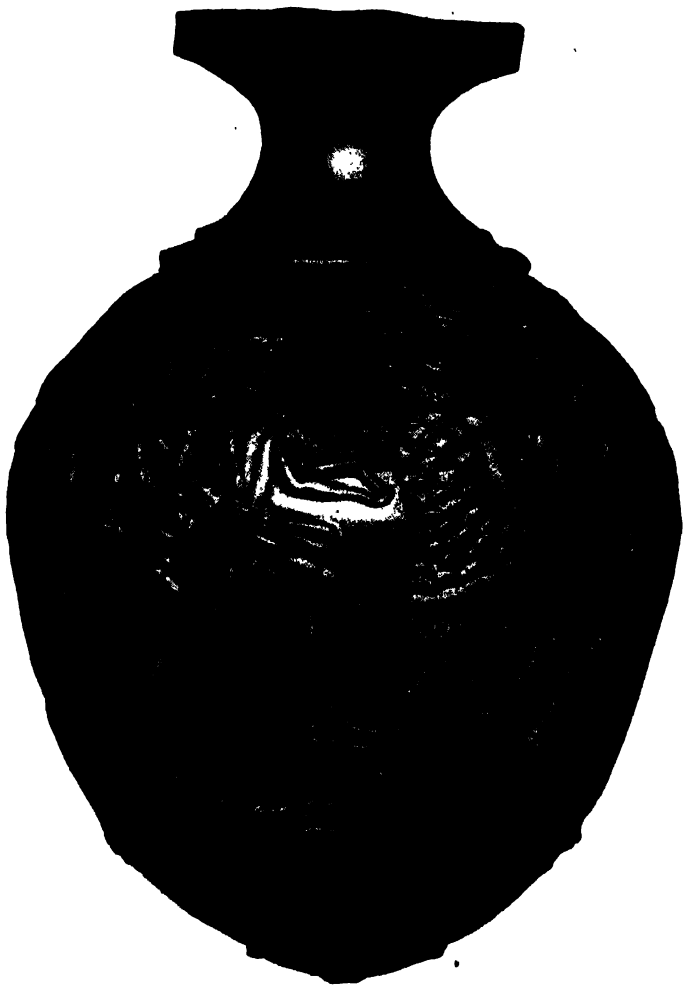
youth named Theseus. Ariadne, daughter of Minos, helped Theseus to kill the monster, by drugging the guards and lending him a ball of thread and a sword, by means of which he killed the Minotaur and found his way out of the Labyrinth. This had been built for Minos by Dædalus (= Craftsman), an Athenian exile, who at last, weary of making things for Minos, escaped from Crete by air, as it was impossible to escape by sea, because of the Cretan navy. You have probably already heard the story of how Dædalus built wings for himself and his son Icarus, and how they escaped in this way from Crete. Icarus was drowned through disobeying his father's instructions. Dædalus reached Sicily. Minos pursued him there, but was killed by the king of Sicily's daughter.

CRETAN COIN
Showing Minotaur.

"Minos" may not have been the name of just one king, but a title, like "Pharaoh" in Egypt. So that the whole period is sometimes called the Minoan age. About 1400 B.C. Cnossus and the other towns were suddenly and violently destroyed, probably by fierce, barbarous tribes from the north, of whom we shall hear more later. Crete never really recovered from that disaster. What was the fate of the Cretan navy before these invaders landed we do not know. But from that time the glory of the sea kings declined.

D. The Hittites

Up to quite recent times very little was known of the Hittites. They are mentioned in the Bible as if they were merely one of the Syrian tribes whom the Israelites had to conquer before they could settle in Palestine. But we know now that their settlement in northern Syria was only the southward bulge of a great empire that sprawled right across eastern Asia Minor, and that they played a much more important



From "The Palace of Minos at Knossos," by Sir Arthur Evans.

CRETAN VASE SHOWING HARVEST FESTIVAL

part in the first chapter of History than was ever suspected. They were a yellow-skinned race with slanting eyes (" Mongols," p. 12), large, curving noses and retreating chins. Their hair was arranged in a sort of pig-tail down their backs. They wore top-boots to get through the snows of their highlands, and they are even shown sometimes with snow-shoes.

From Koldewey's "Excavations at Babylon" (Macmillan).

HITTITE GOD AS SOLDIER

They seem to have settled in Asia Minor about 3000 B.C. and to have united with the tribes there in a union by consent, in which these tribes agreed to follow the lead of the Hittites but local rights were respected. The Hittites remind us in many ways of the Romans (about whom we shall read a good deal, later on). They were good fighters, probably using iron weapons and war chariots long before the other nations of whom we have read. They were well disciplined, built fortified camps in war-time and were closely supported in war by the other tribes, with whom they had carefully-worded contracts as to duties and privileges. In this way too they remind us of the Romans, the careful manner in which agreements of every kind were drawn up, and their respect for a legal contract. This well-organised empire of a practical people had its chief capital at Hattusas (= Silvertown)

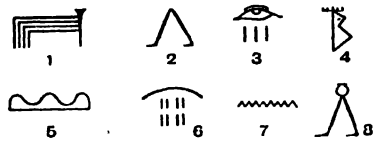
in north-central Asia Minor. Excavations there have revealed a double line of massive town-walls strengthened by numerous towers and finely carved gateways. Their palace-fortresses were built in a similar style. It is interesting to note that the royal double-headed eagle, used as a symbol of certain modern empires, was a Hittite device. At first they had their own system of writing on clay, and we do not yet understand it, but they also adopted the Babylonian system, and it is from careful records in the latter language that we have discovered the little that we know of their history.

They were mainly a nation of cattle-breeders and metal-workers. But Asia Minor is a high and rather bleak country, and the Hittites decided to cross the passes of the Taurus Mountains and seize a part of the Fertile Crescent, which is a name historians are fond of giving to the belt of fertile land which runs from Palestine up to Syria, then across to the upper reaches of the Euphrates and down the valleys of Mesopotamia to the Persian Gulf. About 2000 B.C. the Hittites began to find their way into the Crescent. They once carried out a terrible raid on Babylon, and returned home laden with rich spoils. At last they won northern Syria and also the upper valley of the Euphrates. And where the caravans from the Far East forded that river on their way to the Mediterranean, a rich city arose, Carcemish, which became a sort of second capital, and where some of the finest Hittite remains are being dug out. But by this time Egypt had become a fighting empire, with ambitions of its own in Syria which clashed sharply with those of the Hittites. Let us see how this had come about.

Exercises

1. Look up: hiero-glyphic, feudal, cuneiform, style, the derivation of "paper" and "Bible."

2. Which of these early Egyptian and Babylonian signs do you think means "rain," "king," "mountains," "water," "house," "sorrow," "carrying," "moving"?



3. Make a model of a ziggurat.

4. Why are there so few Babylonian remains compared with those of Egypt? What was the chief Babylonian building material?

5. What is at the other end of the rope held by the Priest-Prince shown on p. 49.

CHAPTER THREE

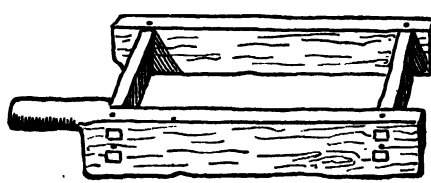
THE EGYPTIAN EMPIRE

A. The Conquering Pharaohs

The Hyksos reigned in Egypt about two hundred years (1800–1600 B.C.). Then the Egyptians rose and expelled them, and native Pharaohs sat on the throne again. But this was not enough. They seem to have been furiously determined to make sure against future invasion from any direction, and they acted on the principle that attack is the best defence. The boundaries of Egypt were pushed westwards to guard against invasion from Libya, southwards up the Nile as a protection against Nubia and Punt. The greatest danger, however, was from the princes and cities of Syria, who had probably helped the Hyksos. The Syrians were encouraged by the Hittites to resist. But the great conqueror, Thutmose III (1501–1447 B.C.), year after year led his armies into Syria and dealt crushing blows, till not only the left arm of the Fertile Crescent (p. 61), but its top, too (the upper reaches of the Euphrates and Tigris), were entirely in his power. A strong navy on the coast of Syria supported his army, threatened the Hittites on the south coast of Asia Minor and compelled Crete and Cyprus to obey him. Thus arose in the Eighteenth Dynasty, the Egyptian Empire. Empire is the name we give to a large area of land inhabited by different races, and ruled over by a conquering race which keeps its power by a strong army and navy and by careful organisation. Thutmose was proud of his conquests, and had accounts of them

written and engraved. He had four obelisks made (tall square pillars with pointed tops), and they have spread his renown further than he ever imagined, for one is now in Constantinople (Istanbul), one in Rome, one in London and one in New York.

The Egyptian Empire reached its highest glory under Amenhotep III (1411–1375 B.C.). Thebes, the capital of the Empire, was enriched with the spoils of many nations and adorned by architects and artists who could command the labour of huge slave-gangs, Syrians and negroes, the conqueror's prisoners of war. Temples, palaces and monuments, lavishly adorned with gold and silver and painted with brilliant pictures, gleamed against a background of rich foliage. Numer-



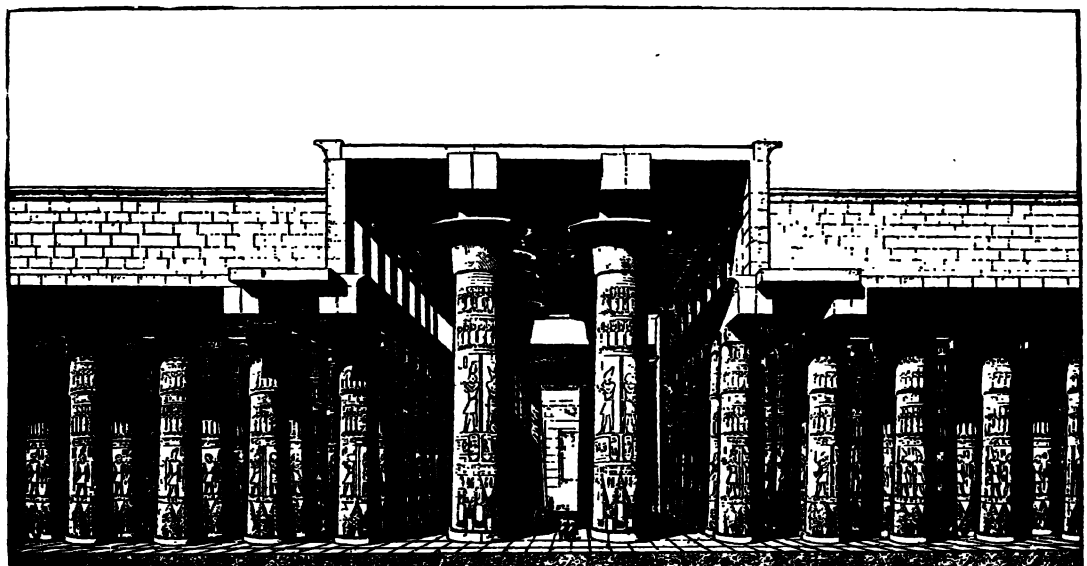
EGYPTIAN MOULD FOR BRICK-MAKING

ous flags and bright-coloured awnings added to the gaiety of the scene, and the river was crowded with shipping of every kind.

To this period and that of the following dynasty, the Nineteenth, belong the mighty temples which, even in their ruined state, greatly impress visitors to Karnak, the modern name for Thebes. The ancient temples erected by earlier kings had been neglected by the Hyksos, and the Empire Pharaohs rebuilt and extended them on a magnificent scale. At right angles to the river lay a whole series of buildings comprising the temple of Amen. The main features of this were a spacious open court surrounded by a colonnade and next to it a huge covered hall, the largest hall with pillars ever erected by men. The main pillars down the centre of the hall are sixty-nine feet high, and a

hundred men can stand on the top of each. The walls and pillars of the temple were carved and painted with the exploits of Thutmose III and other conquerors. A stately avenue of carved rams ran from the temple gates to the river. On the south side of the temple was a large artificial lake which reflected its glories. From this stretched a park a mile and a half long, with an avenue and statues down the centre connecting the temple of Karnak with another temple of Amen on the river bank at Luxor, the southern suburb of Thebes. This too had a large hall with towering pillars. These buildings could have been erected only by a nation whose architects, artists and craftsmen had reached a very high level of skill, which challenges comparison with those of any other period of history, including our own.

The next Amenhotep (1375–1360 B.C.), the fourth of the line, was a very different man from his father. The glory of the Empire, the worship of Amen, did not interest this young king at all. He devoted his life to suppressing the worship of Amen and all other gods, and encouraging the whole Empire to recognise Aton, the Sun-God, as the only God. Perhaps he thought this would be a better way to bind the Empire together than a chain of garrisons. Everywhere the temples of Amen were closed and his name erased from all monuments, even though this involved cutting out his father's name too and changing his own to Akenaton ("He in whom Aton is satisfied"). However he differed from his ancestors in other ways, Akenaton inherited their strong will, for he abandoned Thebes and all its glories and built himself a new capital two hundred miles lower down the river, Aketaton, now called Tel-el-Amarna. Though he failed to establish his new worship, which declined after his death, it marks him out as the greatest teacher of religion before Moses. For though his God is a sun-god, Akenaton has an enlightened idea of him as Creator and Sustainer of all living things and Father of all men, whether Syrian, negro or Egyptian. Here is one of his hymns to Aton:

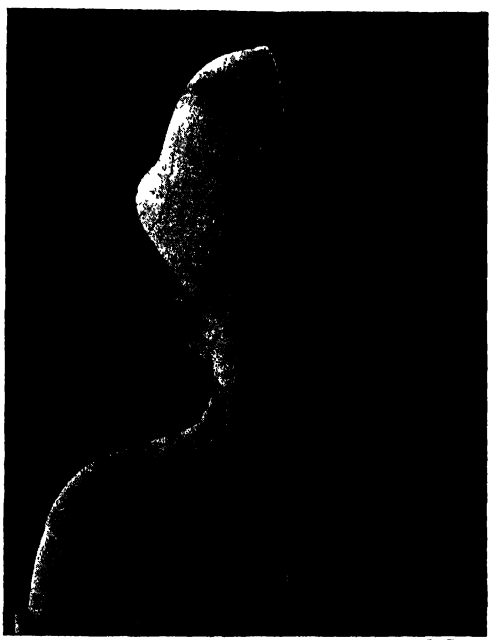


After Perrot and Chipiez, "Art in Ancient Egypt," by permission of Messrs. Chapman & Hall, Ltd.

THE GREAT HALL OF PILLARS IN THE TEMPLE OF AMEN AT THEBES

Restoration of the hypostyle of the temple of Karnak.

* "All cattle rest upon their pasturage,
The trees and the plants flourish,
The birds flutter in their marshes,
Their wings uplifted in adoration to thee.
All the sheep dance upon their feet,
All winged things fly,
They live when thou hast shone upon them."



A.G. Photo.

KING AKENATON

Akenaton abandoned the stiff ceremonies of previous Pharaohs, who had to pose as demi-gods, and lived in public and in private as the father of a happy family. He influenced the artists and sculptors of his age to adopt a simpler, more natural and life-like style, depicting human beings and animals as they really were.

His successor and son-in-law, who was first known as Tutankaton, could not for long resist the

* Based on "Cambridge Ancient History."

pressure of those who believed in the old order of things. He returned to Thebes and changed his name to Tutankamen. Twelve years ago his tomb was found in that valley in the cliffs across the Nile from Thebes, where the kings and queens of the Empire were buried. Although precautions were taken to protect from

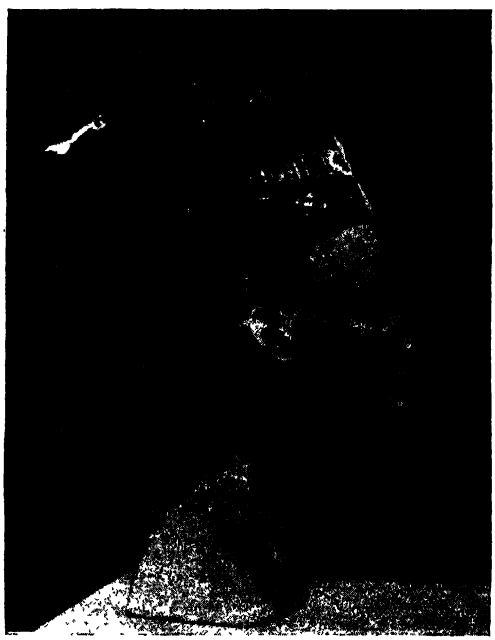


Photo. W. F. Mansell.

QUEEN NEFERTITI, WIFE OF AKENATON

interference these burial galleries, cut out of rock, all of them but this have at some time or other been rifled by robbers. But Tutankamen's tomb had escaped these attentions, and a wonderful collection of jewels and furniture was taken out, showing the very high standard of workmanship at the end of the eighteenth dynasty. But artists and dreamers cannot rule an empire. The recent changes in Egypt itself and the

Photo, W. F. Mansell.

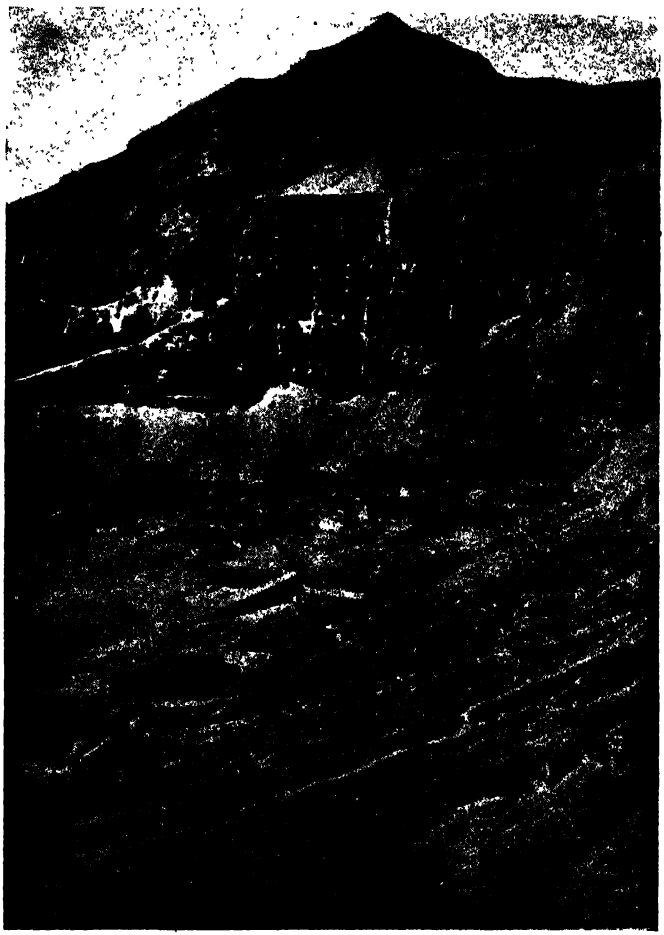
RAMSES II CONQUERING HIS NORTHERN ENEMIES

A wall-painting.

neglect of the Empire had encouraged Egypt's enemies and more distant subjects to stir up trouble. A line of mighty warrior-kings was needed. And round about 1300 B.C. such kings arose, in the nineteenth dynasty.

We may be quite sure that the Hittites took advantage of the forty years' weak rule in Egypt to push forward into northern Syria again and to encourage rebels and invaders in southern Syria and Palestine. The Hittites seized Kadesh, an important town on the river Orontes which had given Thutmose III more trouble than any other of his conquests. A long war between Egypt and the Hittites broke out, and a fierce battle took place outside Kadesh. The Egyptians were saved only by the personal bravery of the king, Ramses II, and his charioteer, who, on their own, charged the whole mass of Hittite chariots and drove them across the river into their own infantry, while the retreating Egyptian army rallied for very shame.

In 1272 B.C., the Egyptians and Hittites made a treaty, and after that they were on friendly terms. For they were both threatened by other enemies, especially from the north. For a long time now fierce, barbarous tribes had been pushing south through Greece and Asia Minor and driving out the tribes already settled there. These in turn had pushed their way into the Hittite empire, and were at first accepted as allies. Later, fresh hordes had poured down, till at last they swept the Hittite Empire away, Hattusas being sacked round about 1200 B.C. A few years after the storm descended on Egypt. A great horde of mixed nations came through Syria with a long train of ox-waggons, while a large fleet sailed down the coast. Ramses III met both sets of invaders, and, thanks chiefly to his archers, defeated them by land and sea. Carvings in Egyptian temples show these invaders as carrying large round shields and broad swords, and wearing a high head-dress of feathers and a short kilt. Greek records of a later date give a similar description of the tribes of south-western Asia Minor, and it is very probable that the chief invaders came from this district, though they probably



From Perrot and Chipiez, "Art in Ancient Egypt," by permission of Messrs. Chapman & Hall, Ltd.

TERRACES AND TEMPLE OF QUEEN HATSHEPSUT

The first important queen in History. Unlike most of the Egyptian monarchs of her period she disliked war, and worked for peace and prosperity. The temple is situated on the bank of the Nile opposite Thebes near the entrance to the Valley of the Kings.

TIME DIAGRAM FOR THE E

B.C. 1000

Ramses III checks Philistines 1190

Ramses II checks Hittites 1275

Thutmose III conquers Asia 1450

Hyksos expelled 1600

Hyksos conquer Egypt 1800

Kassite rule ends 11

Kassites conquer Bab

B.C. 2000

12th. Dynasty begins 2200

Hammurabi
King of Babylon 210

Feudal Age begins 2500

United Kingdom of
Akkad and Sumer

B.C. 3000

Pyramid Dynasties begin 3000

United Kingdom of Upper
and Lower Egypt (about 3500)

City States of Sume

B.C. 4000

B.C. 5000

Earliest Kings 5000

Earliest Kings 50

EGYPT

BABYLON

N.B.—The dates given a

...IEST CIVILISATIONS

Cretan civilisation ends 1000

Cnossus sacked 1400

Cnossus capital of Crete 2500

Earliest Cretan Navy 4000

Hattusas destroyed 1200

Hittites invade Syria 2000

Hittites settle in Asia Minor

B.C. 1000

B.C. 2000

B.C. 3000

B.C. 4000

B.C. 5000

CRETE

HITTITES

only roughly correct.

brought with them Cretans and perhaps a few Achæans (see p. 108), ancestors of the Greeks. The invaders settled in south-western Palestine, to which country they gave their name, as they were called Philistines. They were always regarded there as foreigners and intruders.

B. Life and Death in Ancient Egypt

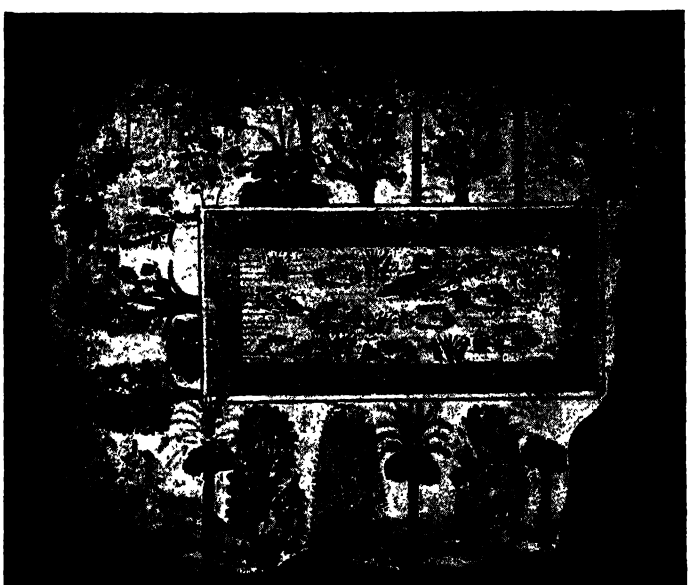
After this we shall have little more to say about the history of Egypt, although that long and interesting story is not yet ended to-day. But let us now find out something about the ancient Egyptian way of life. First of all, what did these Egyptians look like? They were a dark-skinned race of slim build and small features. The upper classes wore wigs with long elaborate curls. All men were clean-shaven, but men of high rank wore a false beard on state occasions, as a symbol of wisdom. Everybody put a blue or green ointment on the eyelids to avoid sore eyes, owing to the glare of the sun. The warm, dry climate made heavy woollen clothing unnecessary. Men of the lower classes wore a simple loin-cloth, while those who were richer wore a short, pleated kilt of fine white linen fastened by a handsome girdle. Usually this was all they wore, except for a deep collar, finely enamelled, which is more correctly called a pectoral, because it lay mainly on the breast. Men of higher rank sometimes wore a short-sleeved white tunic. Women wore a long close-fitting frock of fine linen with shoulder straps or short sleeves, and a pectoral. On special occasions sandals were worn.

When they were not required at Court or in the army, Egyptian nobles lived on their country estates. Their villas were set in beautiful gardens surrounded by walls. There were ornamental ponds in which water-lilies and the lotos flourished. There were sure to be fruit trees and flowering shrubs. The house itself, in its general outward appearance, resembled the most modern type of house which is being built nowa-

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

GIRLS WITH BASKETS OF WINE AND MEATS AND LIVE DUCKS
(Metropolitan Museum and Cairo.)

days, for it was simple and cubic in design and was covered with a sort of rough, white plaster. In front was a porch supported on "lotos-bud" columns. The doorway was simple but elegantly proportioned, the bottom often being wider than the top, a common



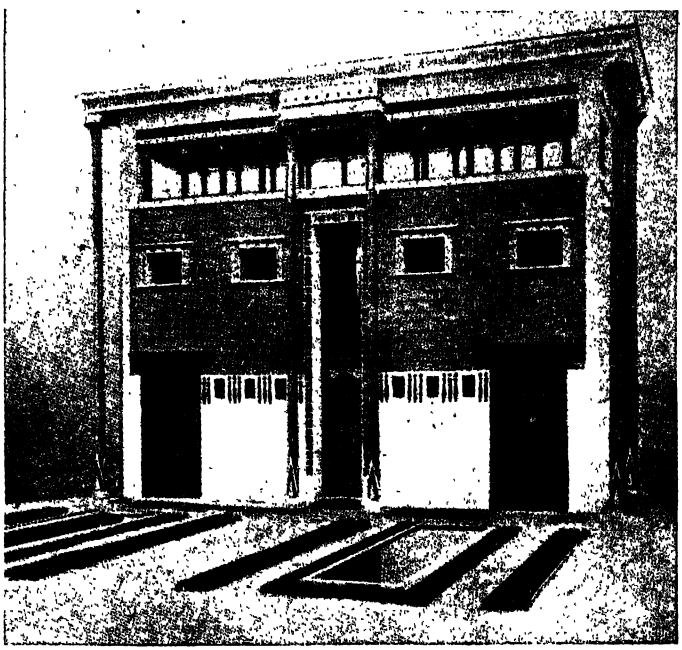
British Museum. *Photo. W. F. Mansell.*

THE POOL OF AN EGYPTIAN GARDEN

A wall-painting in a tomb. Notice the details.

feature of Egyptian design. The windows were just square holes left in the walls, covered with coloured awnings or shutters when required. Often there was a long window in the upper storey, which made the bed-room little more than a sleeping-porch. Pleasant days were spent in punts on the river, fowling and fishing, and there were banquets at night with a good deal of music.

The Egyptians are the only race of the earliest period who have left us anything like what we call literature. They had a good many fairy tales, they wrote love-poems and they alone of the earliest peoples had quite a good sense of humour, which came out in



From Sir Banister Fletcher's "History of Architecture," 9th ed. (Batsford).

AN EGYPTIAN HOUSE

some of their writings and drawings. This and their obvious interest and pleasure in animals and plants make them seem quite close to us in spirit. We have already seen, in connection with the religion of Akenaton, that they could rise to a lofty idea of a single God, though a good deal of Egyptian religion consisted of the superstitious worship of animal-headed gods. At their best they had equally fine ideas about man's soul.

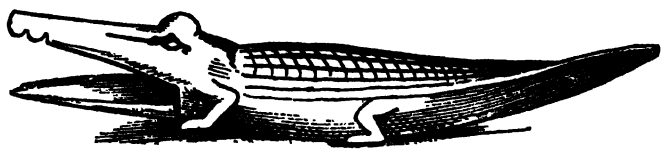
These arose out of the worship of Osiris, the god who judged men's souls after death.

The Egyptians do not seem to have got their idea of the life hereafter clearly thought out, but at any rate they had much more definite beliefs than the other nations. At first they believed that a man's physical life went on after death. And that is why so much trouble was taken over the bodies of important people when they died. After elaborate medical treatment the body was wrapped in hundreds of yards

MAKING BRICKS IN ANCIENT EGYPT

of fine linen bandages so that it should not decay for hundreds of years. Corpses treated in this manner are known as mummies. The top of the coffin too was sometimes made into a likeness of the dead person, in case his body decayed. Food and furniture were put into the tomb as well, and, if he were a rich man, models of his servants. But when the worship of Osiris developed, there grew up the idea of a soul, which, after a terrifying journey through a demon-haunted hell, passed into a Hall of Judgment, where the soul was examined and judged. The souls of the evil were devoured at once by monsters, but the virtuous

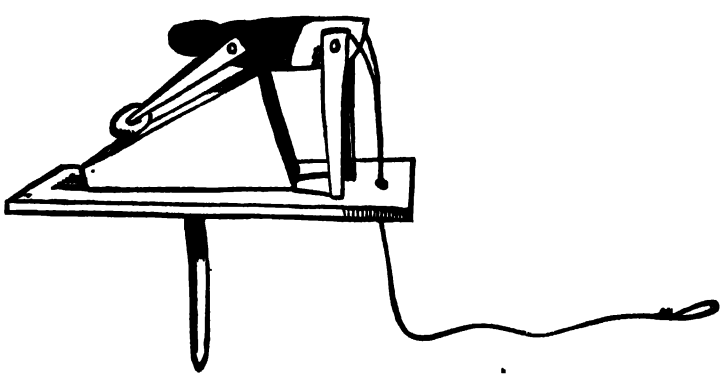
passed on to a heaven which was very much like Egypt at its most pleasant. There was a good deal of superstition in these beliefs, and one could buy from the priests magic spells supposed to ensure a safe journey



From "Life in Ancient Egypt," by Adolf Erman.

EGYPTIAN TOY CROCODILE WITH MOVABLE JAW

through Hell, and even a "pass" in the soul's examination. Yet in spite of the belief in the soul and the supreme importance of a virtuous life on earth, the elaborate burial practices went on. Corpses were still mummified,



EGYPTIAN TOY MILLER

and because noblemen wanted slaves to attend to them when they reached their heavenly villas, models of all that a rich man might require were buried with him. These models were carefully made, and from them we get a very good idea of Egyptian life. The pictures on pp. 36, 75 are photographs of such models.

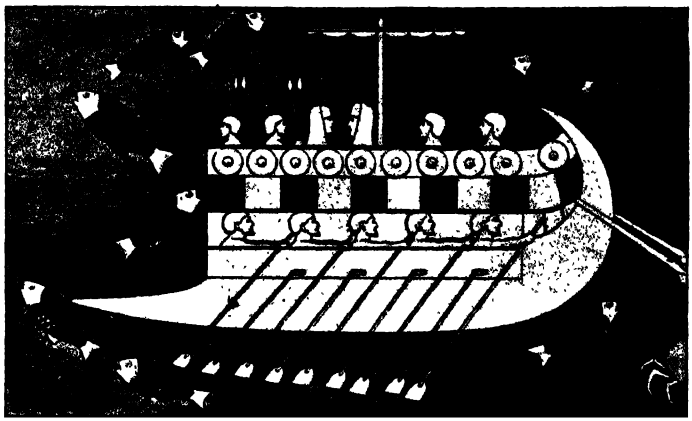
Exercises

1. Find out all you can about "the Rosetta Stone."

2. Describe the ancient Egyptian objects in your nearest museum.

3. Draw an Egyptian country house or a nobleman in full dress.

4. How can we guess that the boat shown on p. 36 is going *down* the Nile? What is the man at either end doing?



A PHŒNICIAN WARSHIP

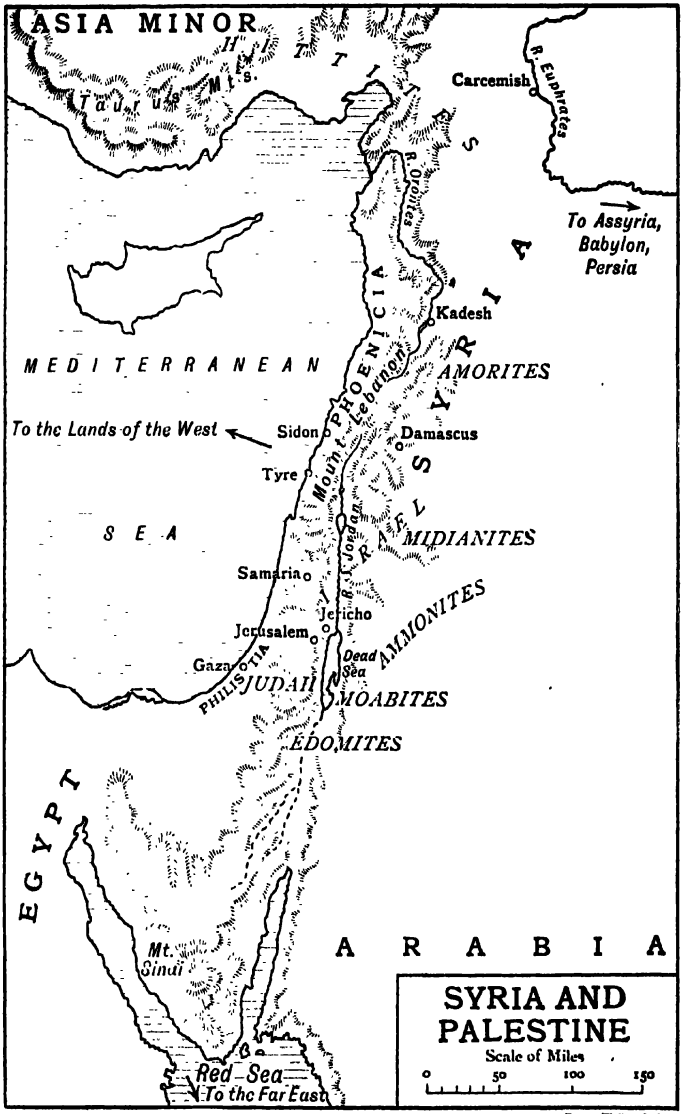
CHAPTER FOUR

THE RISE AND FALL OF ISRAEL

A. The Early Hebrews, the Philistines and the Phœnicians

From what we have just been reading, we gather that between the years 1200 and 1150 B.C. the Hittite Empire vanished, and the Egyptian Empire, though it escaped disaster, had exhausted itself. We also find that during this period the long Kassite rule at Babylon (p. 48) came to an end and was followed by anarchy, while what was left of Cretan civilisation after the disaster of 1400 (p. 58) died out completely. We might therefore expect that the smaller nations that lay between the old empires should rise into greater prominence during this period. And that is just what happened.

First of all let us talk about the Hebrews. You probably know something of their early history already from your reading of the Old Testament. You remember how Abraham left Ur, a Sumerian city (p. 42), and crossed the desert to the land of Canaan, which later came to be known as Palestine. He and his



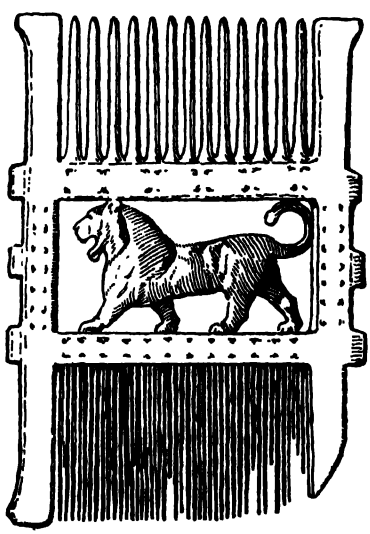
Emery Walker Ltd. sc.

descendants prospered there and their flocks and herds multiplied, for the ancestors of the Hebrews were wandering shepherds. From time to time they visited Egypt, and in the story of Joseph we read how one of them rose to a high position there. Then we next hear that the Hebrews or Israelites were slaves in Egypt and how Moses won their freedom, gave them a sacred code of laws and led them across the Sinai peninsula back to the land of Canaan which God had promised Abraham that his descendants should occupy. Moses died just before they entered the land, but they found a new leader in Joshua. Round the south end of the Dead Sea they went, and up the east shore so that they had to cross the Jordan to enter Palestine. Then they attacked and conquered first Jericho, and later other cities.

The Bible story tells us in a simple and dramatic fashion what was probably a very long and complicated business. It is a strange thing that no Egyptian records tell us anything of these events. We know that an Egyptian governor of Syria complained to Pharaoh of the raids of " the Habiru," but it is very doubtful whether these were the same as the Hebrews. Other Semitic tribes from the desert were constantly trying to establish themselves in Palestine and Syria, but they never got beyond the eastern fringe. The Israelites reached the heart of the land, but their position for a long time was insecure. First the previous inhabitants of Canaan in their walled cities resisted stubbornly for a long time. Then the envious Semites who had been stopped on the eastern boundaries, the Edomites, Moabites, Midianites and others, made serious raids. To the north-east of the Israelites there grew up later the rival city-kingdoms of Syria, the strongest of which was Damascus. To the north the Phœnicians occupied the two best ports, Tyre and Sidon, and were building up a trading empire. On the south-west they were shut off from the sea again by the Philistines (p. 74) in their city strongholds.

Against the latter there was a bitter and, for

long, unsuccessful struggle. Out of it rose the earliest kings of the Israelites, first Saul, and then his bold and clever captain and son-in-law, David, who began to reign about 1000 B.C. Under David and his son Solomon, the Hebrew kingdom enjoyed its short spell of power and prosperity. It included two distinct districts, the southern, more mountainous and poorer half, inhabited mainly by shepherds, and the more



PHŒNICIAN IVORY COMB

prosperous northern area, in which there were more cities, which shared the civilisation of their neighbours, and too often their religion also. But the Hebrews, in spite of their numerous backslidings, were developing a new idea of God. Even when He was looked upon simply as the jealous tribal God of the Hebrews, He was their One and Only God, and an invisible spirit who had no images, a great advance this upon any previous religions. The southern and more lonely area, where life was simpler, tended to hold purer

religious ideas. The north was inclined to be more tolerant of its neighbours' gods.

But David and Solomon welded the two provinces for a time into unity, and David selected the stronghold of the Jebusites, a defeated tribe, to be the capital, Jerusalem. In it his son built the first permanent temple to the invisible God, Jehovah, from the proceeds of a prosperity which resulted from a united kingdom, some sort of control over the Syrians, friendship with Egypt and a close alliance with Phœnicia. The Phœnicians were finding their way right across to the other end of the Mediterranean and even into the Atlantic, the Cretans and the Egyptians being no

WINGED ASHUR
War-standard of the Assyrians.

longer able to check them. They were bringing the products and arts of the East to the backward West, and though they thought simply of profits, they were spreading civilisation. Possibly the Phœnicians also wanted to link up with sea traffic from the Far East via the Red Sea, and it would therefore be to their interest to keep on good terms with the well-organised realm of the Hebrews, which lay across the route to the south. But the glory of Solomon; such as it was, was a short-lived thing of no great importance. His temple, judging by the measurements given in the Old Testament, was a small chapel compared with the mighty edifices of Thebes and Babylon. Solomon himself was not faithful to the God whose temple he built. On his death the kingdom split up into two

hostile realms, the southern, known as Judah, keeping Jerusalem as its capital, while the north came to be known as Israel, with a capital at Samaria. They were both trodden underfoot in turn by two strong empires which were growing up to the east. It was the religious ideas which the Jews developed in suffering and exile which give them their important place in History. We will deal with these in due course

Exercises

1. Why are there no ancient Hebrew monuments or inscriptions?

2. What incidents can you remember in the Old Testament connected with the struggles of the Hebrews against (*a*) the cities of Canaan (*b*) the Philistines, (*c*) the Semite tribes across the Jordan (*e*) the Syrians?

B. Assyria, New Babylon, and the Fall of Jerusalem

By far the strongest of the states that rose to prominence when the old empires declined was Assyria, a name that roused terror and hatred among all surrounding nations in the days of its might. It had grown up from the city of Ashur, high up the Tigris. It was founded about 3000 B.C., and copied the civilisation of the Sumerian cities. For centuries the Assyrians were subject, first to Babylon then to the Hittites. But steadily they improved their armies till they were strong enough to drive the Hittites from the Tigris and the Euphrates, and expel the Kassites for a short time from Babylon.

The collapse of the old empires gave the Assyrians too their chance. Under the greatest of their early kings they marched westwards in triumph till they reached the Mediterranean on the coast of Phœnicia (1100 B.C.). But the Assyrians could not as yet sustain such a high pressure, and two hundred and fifty years

elapsed before their period of supremacy really began. They were the least attractive of the early peoples. Organised as a whole nation for war, they did not produce artists, scholars, prophets of their own, nor were they useful even as enterprising traders like the Babylonians or Phœnicians. They were highly efficient, unscrupulous and brutal fighters, pure and simple, who lived on the toil of the countries they conquered. They had the "gangster" mind. Their worship of brute strength shows itself by the exaggeration in their sculptures of bulging muscles and thick sinews, and their beastly pleasure in cold-blooded cruelty is all too plainly shown in their hunting and war scenes. Wealth brought them greedy luxury rather than refinement.

The period of Assyria's triumph begins with their fighting some tribes on the upper Euphrates who, by controlling the fords, interfered with Assyrian caravan routes. Successful here, they were led on to challenge the Syrians of Damascus, who were sometimes supported by the kings of Israel. The best-known Assyrian king of this period was Shalmaneser III (859–824 B.C.). His successors for about a century were kept busy by their enemies nearer home, especially Babylonia, which, under the rule of the war-like Chaldeans (see p. 94), was constantly refusing to be treated as a subject state. But about 750 B.C. the Assyrians set themselves once more to become masters of the lands at the east end of the Mediterranean. Damascus was destroyed in 732 B.C., Samaria (p. 86) in 722. Many of the Jews were deported, and subjects from other parts of the Assyrian empire took their place. An Assyrian governor was put in charge, and so the kingdom of Israel came to an end.

For a time the kingdom of Judah, which had been careful not to provoke the Assyrians, was left alone. But the ambition of King Hezekiah, slily encouraged by Egypt and Babylon, led to the siege of Jerusalem and other cities by Sennacherib's armies, 700 B.C.

The Assyrians had greatly developed the art of besieging cities. While their skilful long-range archers, often including the king himself, poured volleys of arrows at the defenders on the battlements, ponderous battering-rams were thudding at the wall, those working them being often completely protected by thick screens of metal or leather. At length, with a crash and a cloud of dust, part of the wall collapsed, the spearmen and archers swarmed through the breach, and before long the sacred war-standard of the Assyrians, the archer-god Ashur with his winged disc, was planted on the walls.

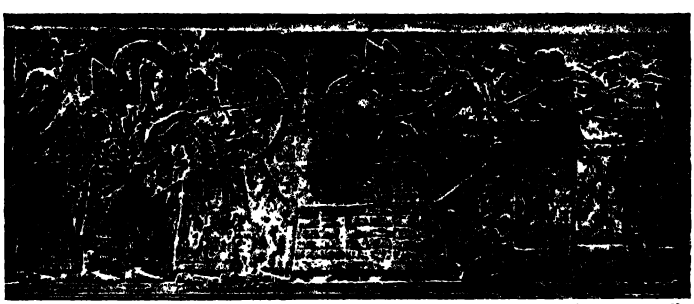


Photo. W. F. Mansell.

ASSYRIANS BESIEGING A CITY

However, Jerusalem itself resisted obstinately, partly owing to the faith of the prophet Isaiah, and was not actually captured, though Hezekiah at length agreed to pay tribute. Babylon, becoming more openly disloyal, was sacked by Sennacherib in 689; yet such was the respect of the Assyrians for its ancient renown that he helped to rebuild it again. He loved to express in building his pride as a conqueror. He chose for his capital a city which had also in earlier times been the capital of Assyria, Nineveh (opposite modern Mosul), high up the Tigris, about forty miles before it reaches the open plains. A marshy tributary runs into the river here, but he diverted it, drained the swamps and built a huge brick mound as the foundation of his

palace. The latter had noble arches for its doorways, and was adorned with large white slabs and columns of gleaming alabaster on which he illustrated his exploits. The pillars of the palace were cased in silver and gold, and Sennacherib was particularly proud of its human-headed, gigantic bulls and lions cast in bronze, fitting and common symbols of Assyrian might, and valuable as demon-scarers. For the citizens he laid out a large park, and among the novelties he

SENNACHERIB IS TOLD OF VICTORIES IN PALESTINE
Carved alabaster in the palace of Nineveh.

introduced there was the cotton plant from India, " the tree that bears wool."

Sennacherib was murdered in Nineveh by his eldest son, who was jealous because a younger son, Esarhaddon, had been recognised as heir. The latter drove out his wicked brother, and not only established himself firmly in Assyria itself and in Babylonia, with the whole of Syria and Palestine at their greatest extent, but he also conquered Egypt, which was continually encouraging its northern neighbours to rebel.

On his death in 669 B.C. a younger son, Ashur-

banipal, succeeded him, though the elder was allowed to rule Babylon. Under Ashurbanipal Assyria reached the height of its power and luxury. The conquest of rebellious Egypt was completed by the recapture of Memphis and the destruction of Thebes, though the Assyrians never completely subdued the country and had to allow native rulers to govern in their name. Elam, a warlike mountain kingdom east of Babylonia, which for centuries had raided the rich cities of the

ASSYRIAN WINGED BULL

river valleys, was reduced to a vassal state. A revolt of Babylonia led by Ashurbanipal's brother and joined by the Elamites and northern Arabs was crushed.

All this fighting occupied the earlier part of the reign. For about the last ten years the king in undisturbed peace enjoyed at Nineveh the luxury for which he became proverbial. He frequently enjoyed the royal sport of Assyria, lion-hunting from a chariot, and he kept lions in his palace grounds. He established a great library where the ancient stories, chronicles and scientific works of Babylonia were copied and carefully stored, and the records of Assyria were brought

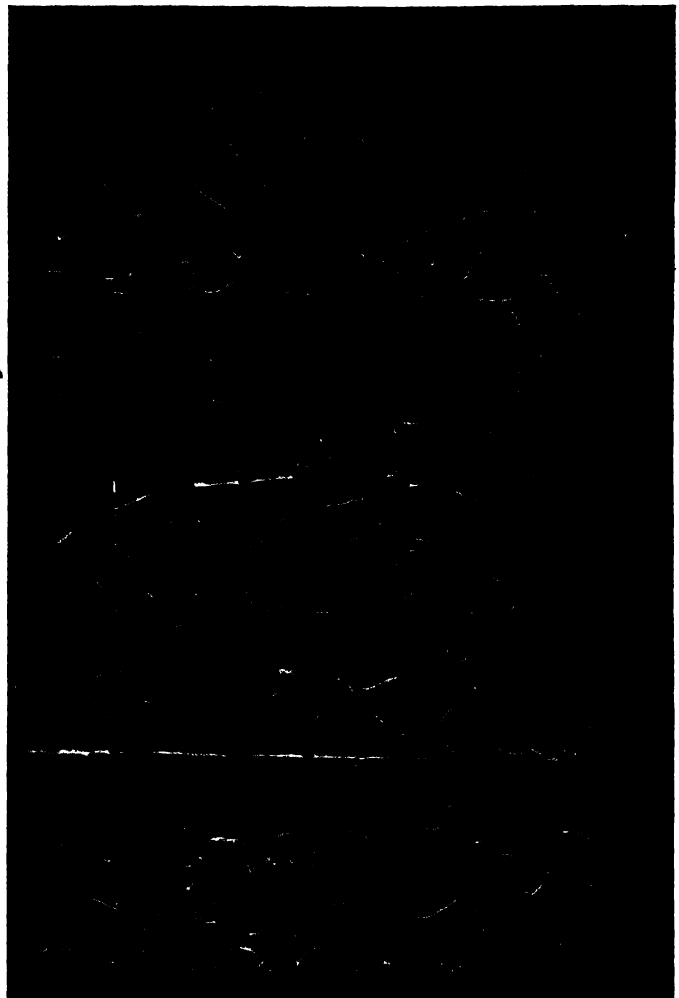


Photo. W. F. Mansell.

ASSYRIANS DESTROYING AND LOOTING A CITY

up to date under his supervision. Thousands of clay tablets from this library are now in the British Museum. They were found by British excavators in the ruins of the library, scattered about as on the day when her bitter enemies sacked Nineveh. But no records of events after 639 B.C. have been found, though we know that the reign lasted till 626 and that Egypt became free again.

The last years of the greatest of the Assyrian kings

Photo. W. F. Mansell.

LIONS IN THE PALACE GROUNDS AT NINEVEH

were darkened by his own illness, and strife within his own family and his kingdom. But he could hardly have foreseen how soon and how completely Assyria's power was to be shattered for ever. The long years of fighting had used up her reserves of "man-power," especially as the population was declining for other reasons. The civil war that arose in 626 exhausted her further still. To the south and to the north lay powerful enemies, the Chaldeans of Babylonia, and the Medes (see Section C), who had copied her methods of fighting and were awaiting just such an opportunity. They plotted together and struck hard. In 612 B.C.

Photo. W. F. Mansell.

ASHURBANIPAL FEASTING IN THE PALACE GARDEN AT NINEVEH

Notice the details of this picture. The queen's throne is similar to that of Sennacherib on p. 89.

the proud city of Nineveh was turned into a heap of smoking ruins, and its pleasant park became a desert. The Assyrian armies fought on for some years, but were at last destroyed. The population was enslaved or submerged by its neighbours. The language disappeared. So were the curses of Israel's prophets fulfilled.

We have already (pp. 87, 92) heard of the Chaldeans, one of the many tribes out of vast Arabia who had drifted northward. They had settled in the cities of the lower Euphrates, and their vigour won for them in time the control of Babylon. In the long reign of their great king, Nebuchadnezzar (650–562 B.C.) the son of the conqueror of Nineveh, Babylon again became the wonder city of the world. The Egyptians at first disputed the supremacy of the Babylonians, but they were soon driven out of Syria and Palestine. But the fall of Assyria had roused hopes of independence in Judah, and though the defeat of the Egyptians, their allies, compelled the Jews to submit at first to Nebuchadnezzar, they soon rebelled against him. All too soon he was battering at the gates of Jerusalem, which was captured in 597 B.C. Its chief men, including the king, Jehoiachin and the prophet-priest Ezekiel were taken to Babylon.

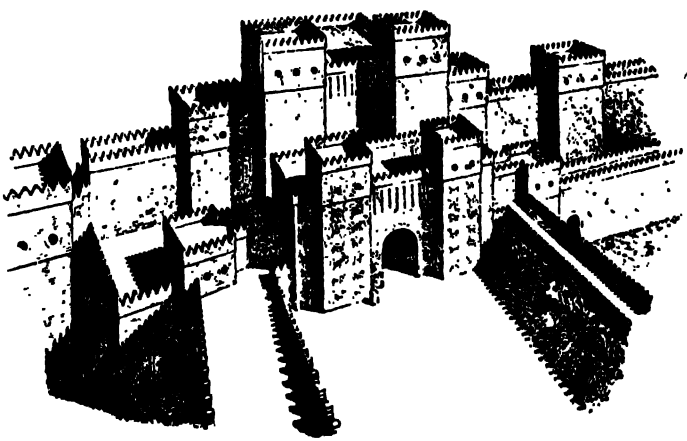
But the "kingdom" of Judah was left and Nebuchadnezzar appointed a new king, Zedekiah. The Jews were slow to realise the might of new Babylon. Ten years later, in spite of the warnings of the prophet Jeremiah, Zedekiah rebelled. Again Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, and Jeremiah was put in prison for advising surrender. The city was captured, the temple and palace pulled down and the whole town set on fire. Zedekiah and the remnant of his army were caught while trying to escape across the Jordan. He suffered the usual fate of rebels then, being at once blinded. Along with most of the population of Jerusalem he was taken to Babylon, and thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Ezekiel, that Zedekiah should see the king of Babylon, should go to Babylon, but should not see the land of Babylon. So ended the king-

From "The Excavations at Babylon," by Robert Koldewey.

A VIEW OF BABYLON TO-DAY, SHOWING THE ISHTAR GATE

dom of Judah (586 B.C.). Jeremiah was at first made prisoner too, but was released with a number of others, because they had not agreed to the rebellion. Even now the remaining Jews would not keep the peace in Jerusalem, and with a heavy heart Jeremiah went away to Egypt.

The exiled Jews were not oppressed in Babylon. Some of them were dazzled by its wonders, and settled down soon without any great discomfort in what was

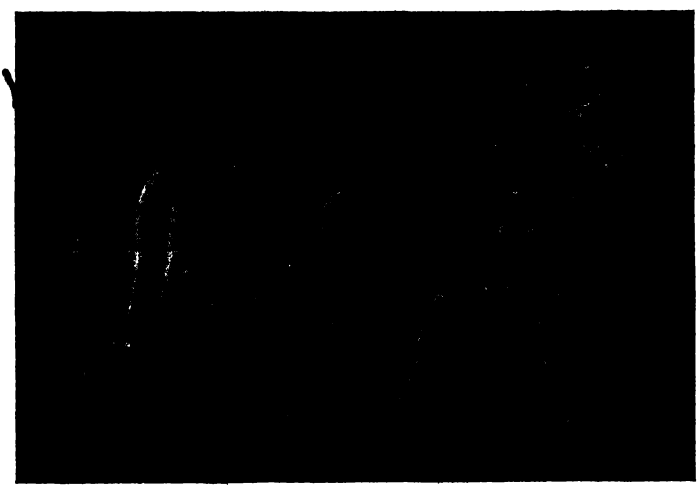


From R. Koldewey's "Das Wiedererstehende Babylon," by permission of Messrs. J. C. Hinrich.

THE ISHTAR GATE, AS IT WAS

the greatest city, perhaps excepting Rome, of the ancient world. It was in the shape of a triangle, the base of which ran along the left bank of the palm-fringed Euphrates. In the northern angle lay the mighty ziggurat of Marduk and the docks and business part of the town. In the southern angle were the restored temples of the old Babylonian gods. About the centre of the base towered the palace of Nebuchadnezzar, with its lofty terraced gardens, "the Hanging Gardens of Babylon," which were one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world. A broad highway, used

in solemn processions, joined the palace to the temple district, and where it began there was a particularly fine gateway, dedicated to the goddess Ishtar (p. 47). The twin towers of this gate, decorated with beautifully coloured glazed tiles and animal designs, are the most important relic of the vanished glory of Babylon as yet unearthed. The tiles, no doubt, protected the bricks from weathering away (p. 43). Mighty walls of incredible thickness surrounded the city.



From "The Excavations at Babylon," by Robert Koldewey.

A BULL ON THE ISHTAR GATE

The animal figures in coloured tiles can clearly be seen in the photograph on p. 95.

Some of the Jews, then, adopted the ways and even the much inferior religion of Babylon, thinking of the God they had worshipped in Jerusalem as a tribal god who had deserted his people. A few, the most thoughtful, pondered on the teaching of Jeremiah that true religion was not confined to the temple of Jerusalem with its altars, sacrifices and ritual. They began to realise that the true worship of God was an

attitude of the human spirit towards the Divine Spirit, not confined to any particular place or even to any particular people. But many of the Jews still longed passionately for Jerusalem, and dreamt of returning there some day and restoring the Temple. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. Upon the willows in the midst thereof we hanged up our harps. . . . If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I remember thee not, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy" (Psalm 137).

These Jews looked with growing hope at the rising power of the Medes (p. 92), once the allies of the Chaldeans against Assyria, now their most dangerous rivals, especially as Nebuchadnezzar's successors were weaklings.

C. The Persians

The Medes, and with them a closely related race, the Persians, came originally from what we call the steppes of Turkestan, where they had become better horsemen than any other previous race of the ancient world. They had wandered down by the shores of Lake Aral and the south end of the Caspian Sea and had settled, the Medes in the mountains to the east of the Fertile Crescent on the borders of Assyria, and the Persians on the east of their Gulf. By destroying Elam, and the strongly organised little kingdom which had long existed in the north round Lake Van, Assyria had removed their chief rivals, and when Nineveh fell, the Medes spread into and beyond north Assyria, into what we should call Armenia, and beyond that to the river Halys, the old Hittite centre (p. 40). The Persians occupied Elam with its ancient capital Susa.

In 549 B.C. Cyrus, the ruler of the Persians, overthrew the Median king and easily joined the two kindred nations under his rule. The Persians thus began a wonderful series of conquests which, in thirty

years, gave them a well-governed empire which lasted for two hundred years, and stretched from the Indus to the Nile, and from the Dardanelles to the Persian Gulf. Advancing to the western limit of the Median Empire, Cyrus crossed the Halys and, capturing Sardis (546 B.C.), added to his dominions Lydia, which occupied western Asia Minor and had a fringe of Greek city-states on its west coast (see p. 108). You may have heard the phrase "as rich as Crœsus." Crœsus was the Lydian king whom Cyrus overthrew. The conqueror now retraced his steps and advanced on Babylon itself. Its feeble king had left all the government in the hands of his deputy, the prince Belshazzar. You must read for yourselves in the Book of Daniel, if you have not already studied that interesting part of the Old Testament, how Belshazzar gave a great feast at which the holy vessels from the temple of Jerusalem were used by the revellers, and how the Jewish cup-bearer, Daniel, interpreted the mysterious writing which suddenly appeared on the wall and struck terror into Belshazzar's heart.

Daniel's prophecy came true, for in 539 B.C. Cyrus captured Babylon with little trouble and made it one of his capitals. With Babylon he acquired Syria and Palestine. After winning and successfully organising in ten years the greatest empire the world had yet seen, Cyrus was killed, fighting a savage tribe beyond the Caspian Sea (529 B.C.). We know little about his son and successor, Cambýses, except that he conquered Egypt in 525 B.C. His successor Darius (522–486 B.C.) not only extended Persian rule in Egypt further south and west, but pushed the north-western corner of the Persian empire further out till it included Macedonia, Thrace and many of the Greek islands of the Ægean, while the eastern frontier was advanced to the Indus.

The Persians were tolerant towards their subjects and gave the Jews of Babylon permission to return to Jerusalem, to take back with them the holy Temple vessels and rebuild the Temple. Cyrus may have first given permission, but there were so many diffi-

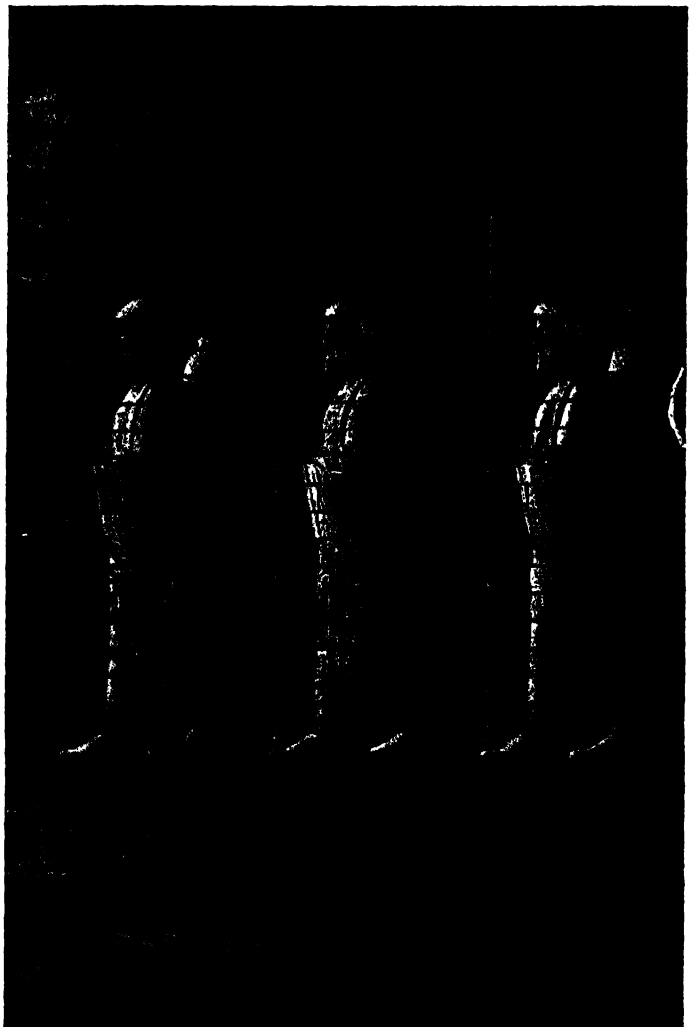


Photo. Alinari.

SOLDIERS OF THE ROYAL PERSIAN GUARD

An enlargement of the coloured tile decoration of the walls shown on p. 103.

culties that it required a special decree of Darius before the work was really begun. There was no question of restoring the monarchy of Judah. Henceforth the High Priest was looked upon as the leader of the Jews. It was about this time that there was begun the arrangement of their sacred writings that we know in translation as the Old Testament. It gave the world not only by far the finest ideas of God yet known, but also of men's duty to Him and to their fellow men. And more than once it foretold the coming of a Messiah or Saviour.

EXERCISES

1. What can you discover from the pictures in this book and from other sources about the costume etc. of the Assyrians and of the Chaldeans?

2. What Hebrew prophets mention (*a*) the Assyrians (*b*) the Chaldeans and (*c*) the Persians?

3. Who ruled the countries of the Fertile Crescent, before the Great War (1914–1918 A.D.)? Who rules them to-day?

4. From the details given on pp. 96, 97 draw a plan of Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar.

5. Why does the Old Testament describe the city of Ur as "of the Chaldees," though it is mentioned in this book as a city of Sumer?

CHAPTER FIVE

HELLAS

A. The Revolt of Ionia

Let us look more closely at the vast empire which the Persians had acquired within a generation. As we have said, it lasted for two hundred years, and it gave millions of people better government than the world had hitherto seen. It took one of the greatest conquerors in the history of the world, Alexander the Great, to overthrow it. It is therefore entitled to a certain amount of respect.

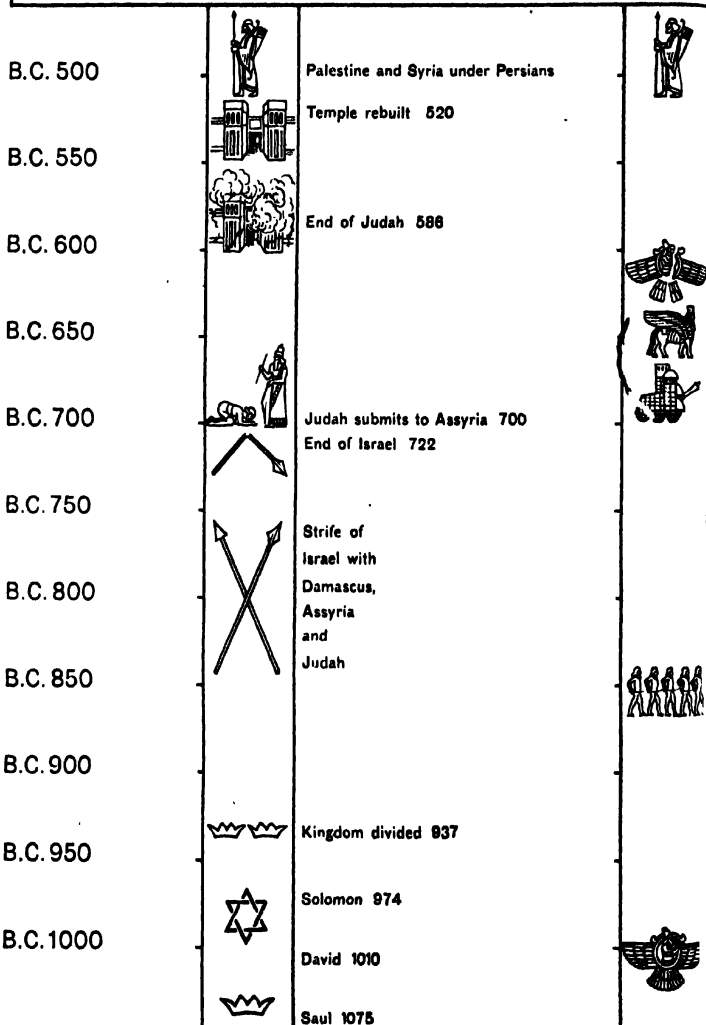
The subject races of the empire were expected to pay a certain sum in taxation each year, to send recruits to the army, and, of course, to recognise "the Great King" as their master. If they carried out these duties, they were left pretty much to themselves, though naturally the heads of the government in each province were Persians. The whole empire was divided into twenty natural districts. These were known as satrapies, and the governor, usually of noble birth, was called the satrap. There was nobody above him but the king himself. But he was helped (or, if too ambitious, hindered!) by a royal secretary, who read the king's orders before passing them to the satrap. There was also an inspector who went from province to province. His duties are explained by his title, "The King's Eye." The king had a luxurious pleasure palace at Persepolis in Persia. For the conquest of Lydia and Babylonia had put an end to the old Persian simplicity, when it had been enough for a young noble to learn how "to ride, shoot, and tell the truth." But a monarch who personally directed

From Pillet's "Le Palais de Darius à Suse," by permission of Messrs. Paul Geuthner.

COURTYARD OF THE PALACE OF DARIUS THE FIRST AT SUSA

Notice the wall decoration.

TIME DIAGRAM FOR THE RISE AND FA



a under Persians

· Assyria 605
Nineveh 612
/ar 626

)anipal's victories in
Elam and Babylonia 670-640

ddon conquers Egypt 675

.herib captures Babylon 689
:rusalem 700

:s of
inesar III

'g

Babylonia under Persians B.C. 500

Fall of Babylon 539 B.C. 550

Nebuchadnezzar sacks Jerusalem 586

Chaldeans sack Nineveh 612 B.C. 600

B.C. 650

Chaldeans supreme in Babylonia c. 700 B.C. 700

B.C. 750

B.C. 800

B.C. 850

B.C. 900

B.C. 950

Chaldeans settle in Sumer B.C. 1000

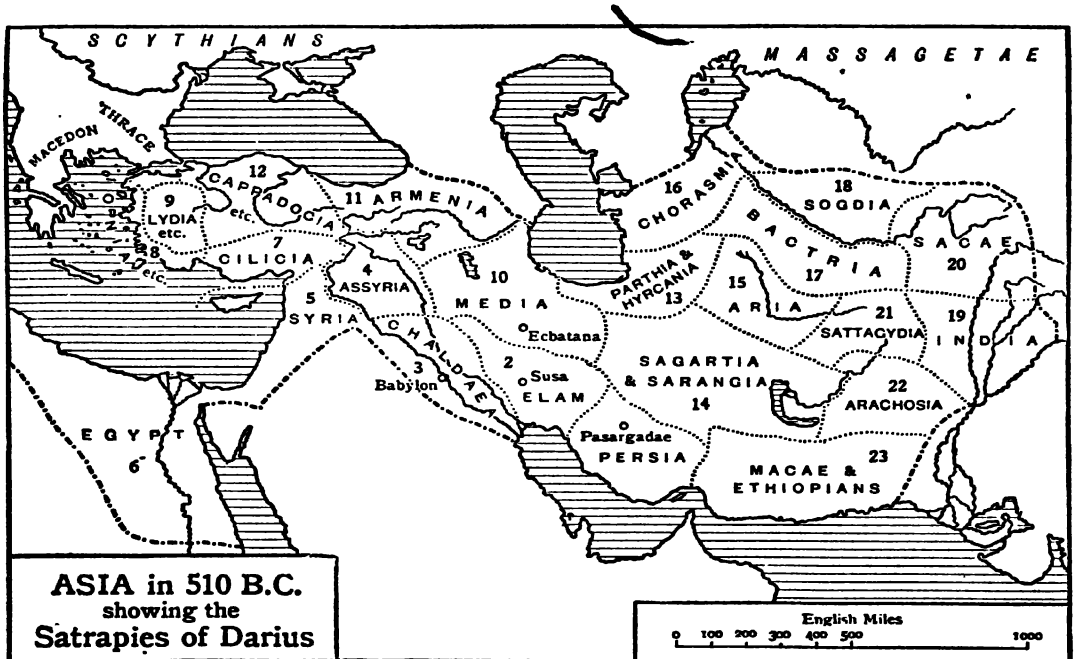
CHALDEA

such an empire was an extremely busy man. So he was usually at the ancient Elamite capital, Susa. If it grew too hot there he would go up into the cool of the mountains at Ecbatana, the Median capital, and a cold winter would find him at Babylon.

It would have been impossible for the king to move about so much and keep in touch with his satraps if the Persians had not developed the best means of communication that had yet been known. Good roads linked the far-flung provinces with Susa, along which were hostels about every thirteen miles. At each was a troop of mounted couriers ready to ride at any hour of the day or night with the king's despatches. "Neither snow, rain, fire nor the approach of night," says the Greek historian, Herodotus, "prevents these messengers from fulfilling their allotted course." Ordinary travellers and traders too got the benefit of these roads and hostels, though they were liable to be searched by the king's men. It is said that it took an ordinary traveller ninety days to travel from Sardis to Susa, but a royal despatch would cover the distance in less than a week. Bridges were built over the larger rivers and ferries arranged for the smaller ones. At wide intervals there were barracks for the royal garrisons. There were not many of these, for the empire did not depend so much on force, but their position was very carefully chosen.

There are no great temple buildings to describe, for the chief religion of the Persians did not require them. They followed a great teacher named Zoroaster, and believed that the world was the scene of a long struggle between the spirit of good, "The Right," and the spirit of evil, "The Lie." In the distant future the Right was bound to triumph. Meanwhile, every person ought to enrol himself as a supporter of the Right. Otherwise he was considered a supporter of the Lie. Fire-worship was connected with this religion. "Parsees" simply means "Persians."

In 516 B.C. Darius crossed the Dardanelles, and, pushing inland through Thrace, crossed the Danube

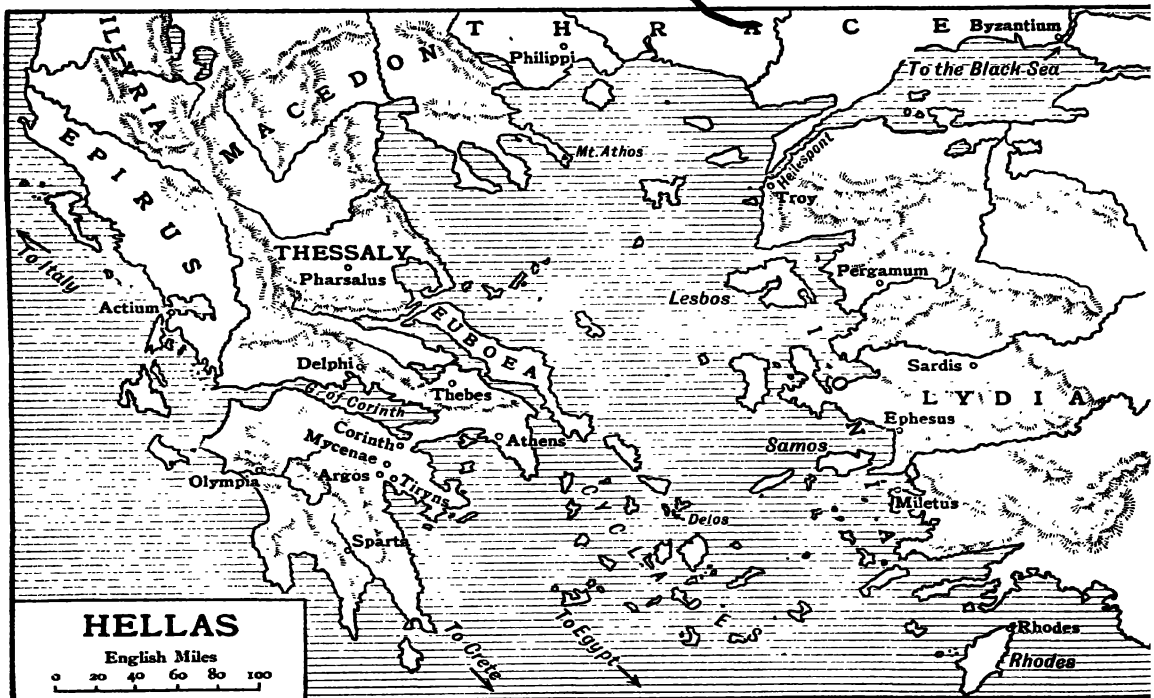


THE PERSIAN EMPIRE

and compelled the Scythians and other fierce raiding tribes to submit. We do not really know yet why Darius carried out this big invasion of Europe, the first of its kind in History. It gave him control of all the north side of the Sea of Marmora, but it was not a great success. And it encouraged his discontented Greek subjects of Ionia, which comprised the west coast of Asia Minor and the islands off it, to rebel against him. The Greeks here were annoyed partly because their trade was in a bad way, owing, as they thought, to Persian interference, and partly because the Persians allowed "tyrants" to rule in the Greek cities of Ionia after the Greeks on the other side of the Ægean had abolished them. To understand what a "tyrant" was, we must leave Darius for some time and turn to the history of Greece.

B. The Cities of the Hellenes

We have already noticed (p. 70) how, somewhere round about 1200 B.C., fierce tribes began to push slowly southwards and south-east down the Balkan peninsula and destroy or weaken the old civilised states near the east end of the Mediterranean. One large group or series of tribes, united by similarity of dialects, religion and race, after a very long and confused struggle, occupied not only what we now call the mainland of Greece, but also the islands of the Ægean and the west coast of Asia Minor. We must always bear in mind the two latter divisions also, because Greek life and the Greek spirit were just as vigorous there as on the mainland. In fact, for the earliest period of Greek history, they are the most important parts of "Greece." They were nearer to the old civilisations, and their flourishing Bronze Age cities, though captured and no doubt sacked, were not utterly destroyed. As had happened before in the Fertile Crescent (p. 61), the tribes of fighting shepherds settled down in old-established cities. (The story of the siege of Troy by "Achæan" chieftains


ILLYRIA
MACEDON
THRACE
Byzantium
To the Black Sea
Philippi
Mt. Athos
Hellespont
Troy
EPIRUS
THESSALY
Pharsalus
To Italy
Actium
Lesbos
Pergamum
EUBOEA
Delphi
Thebes
Sardis
LYDIA
Gulf of Corinth
Corinth
Athens
Ephesus
Samos
Mycenae
Argos
Tiryns
Olympia
Miletus
Delos
CYCLADES
Sparta
Rhodes
To Crete
To Egypt
HELLAS
English Miles
0 20 40 60 80 100

who now ruled the ancient cities of eastern Greece probably belongs to this period.) The northern invaders and the old Ægean stock must have intermarried. And thus arose in time a new and fine race, whom we know as the ancient Greeks. They called themselves Héllenes, and when they thought of the Greek world as one, they called it Héllas.

For Hellas never really became a single, united country, even in the last stages of its history, when it was conquered by great military empires. The Greek always thought of himself as an active citizen of some particular city-state, which was usually quite free and independent. He felt at times a certain kinship with the Greeks in other cities, but his supreme and, in fact, his only loyalty was to his own city. Its fate and government lay in his own and his fellow-citizens' hands. He might hate and fight another Greek city not many miles away more fiercely than he fought and hated the Persians. This strong and eternal jealousy between the Greek city-states, which affected the history of Hellas, was chiefly due to geography.

Greece is not a large or a rich land. Most of it consists of mountains which, though not very high, are steep, and make travel slow and difficult. (Even to-day you would not find it altogether a comfortable business to tour the interior of Greece.) The soil is thin and there are great masses of rock everywhere, often beautifully coloured and delightful to look at, but not much use for food crops. The old civilisations we have read about depended on great level stretches of fertile soil, which fed large populations, easily united. Only here and there in Greece were there stretches of fertile soil, in river valleys, for corn- and cattle-raising. In most places the climate and the ground were suitable only for gnarled and twisted little olive trees with grey leaves, or vines that produced the sweetest of wine-grapes. So there could be only a limited number of cities in Greece, with a limited population, in the few fertile valleys or where the rocky coast bent to form a deep, convenient har-

bour. Nor was communication between the cities by sea always as easy as it may seem from the map. For

GATHERING OLIVES IN ANCIENT GREECE

there are many promontories on the mainland coast, haunted by dangerous winds and treacherous currents. So the men who lived two valleys or three headlands away from your little province, or in the next island

that was a blue smudge on the horizon, though they were Greeks, were sometimes strangers and rivals, and perhaps your bitterest foes.

The same jealousy displayed itself within the city. Class and party feelings were fierce. In most cities there would be a powerful minority who wanted the government to be in the hands of a few nobly-born and wealthy men. Their opponents would be the mass of citizens who wanted power to be more widely spread, for most Greeks were intelligent, independent and ambitious enough to want a share in their city's government. So there was a long-drawn-out struggle between Aristocracy (Power for the Best People) and Democracy (Power for the Common People). According to legends, there were kings in the cities in the early days. But these had long ago been abolished, except in the old-fashioned warrior-state of the south, Sparta, where there were two kings at once to lead the army, even in historic times. After the kings, the cities had been ruled by noble families. Where this rule had been harsh and selfish, a revolution often took place which resulted in a "tyrant" being appointed.

This word has come to mean a harsh despot. But at first among the Greeks it simply meant a dictator who suddenly arose to supreme power in his city by crushing the nobles with the help of armed followers and the consent of the humbler citizens. At first the "tyrant" might be very popular in his city. The poorer people would be relieved of some of their burdens. And the city would often be adorned and improved by the tyrant and made a more pleasant place to live in. He might build new temples and greatly improve the old harbour, lay out a fine boulevard or encourage sculptors, poets, musicians, philosophers. But very few men can exercise supreme power without being spoiled by it. The fear of a fall from power as sudden as his rise, made the tyrant suspicious of all, and he and his armed followers came to be hated. Between 600 and 500 B.C. was

the period of the tyrants in most Greek cities, and you will remember that one of the grievances of the Ionian Greeks against their Persian overlords was that they were compelled to have tyrants (who, of course, were friends of the satraps), when other Greek states had abolished them (p. 108).

After the age of tyrants, the nobles never regained their privileged position in politics, though their private influence was still strong. By this time there was a class of wealthy men who were not of noble birth, but who agreed with the nobles in wishing to keep the governing power in the hands of the "upper classes." The opponents of the democrats were now called "oligarchs," *i.e.* those who believed in "Rule by the Few." After the period of the tyrants some sort of balance was worked out between democracy and oligarchy, the more old-fashioned and agricultural states tending towards the latter, the enterprising, commercial cities having a bias towards democracy. But always in the Greek cities there was in the background the possibility of a fierce, if brief, civil war, in which the leaders would not hesitate to plot with the leaders of a similar party in another town, or even, later on in Greek history, to get help from the Persians. These lines from an early poet, who was on the losing side in a revolution, give us some idea of the bitterness that arose between men who jostled daily in the narrow streets and accused one another face to face at the Assembly in the market-square:

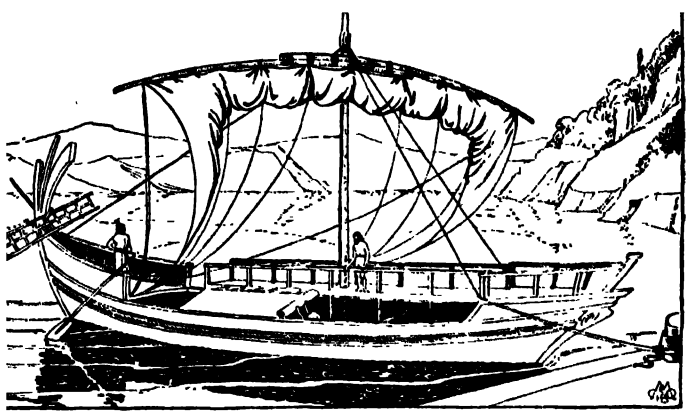
> "Unchanged the walls, but, ah, how changed the folk!
> The Base, who knew erstwhile nor law nor right,
> But dwelled like deer, with goatskin for a cloak,
> Are now ennobled; and, Oh sorry plight!
> The nobles are made base in all men's sight!"

We can see, then, that in their earlier days the Greek cities had to face the problem of limited space and food supply, growing population, and fierce party strife. One way in which they solved it was to send

out " colonies," just as an over-crowded hive of bees throws off a swarm to settle elsewhere. Greek traders were successfully competing against the Phœnicians (p. 85) and carrying all over the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea their excellent olive oil (in universal demand as a food and for lighting), their strong, sweet wines, pottery made from island clays, tastefully designed and decorated, and fine woollen goods manufactured in the coast towns of Asia Minor from the fleeces of sheep bred on the hills of the interior. They brought back metal ores and goods, corn and dried fish. The very useful invention of coinage was spread by them in the form chiefly of artistic silver coins, each city of course having its own design, and the ancient method of barter declined. The early Greek merchant-ships had a high, curved stern, like all ancient vessels, but the bows went straight down or even sloped backward, and contained the hole for the anchor cable to slide through. A gangway ladder was slung across the top of the stern and a little distance along the side was mounted the large paddle for steering. As a rule there was not a complete deck, but a platform at either end, joined by a passage with railings along the centre of the ship. There was only one mast, secured by two fore-stays and a back-stay. Across the mast was slung the yard, composed of two slightly curved poles lashed together, and from it hung the broad rectangular sail. This was composed of about eight vertical strips, with rings along the seams through which ran the ropes for reefing or letting out the sail. (For a vivid picture of the trade-rivalry between Greeks and Phœnicians, read the last two stanzas of Arnold's poem " The Scholar Gipsy ").

Greek traders no doubt brought back information as to favourable sites for new cities, wherever there were good harbours or fertile areas not already occupied. After solemn ceremonies the emigrants departed from the mother-city to found far-off a new city of their own, which might or might not remain

on friendly terms with their old home, but was, in any case, completely independent of it. Some went to the shores of the Black Sea and the waterways connecting it with the Mediterranean, whence came metal ores, corn and great quantities of dried or salted fish. The legend of Jason and the Golden Fleece is perhaps an echo of the first visit of Greeks to the remote eastern shore of the Black Sea. There were



From Quennell's "Everyday Things in Archaic Greece," by permission of Messrs. B. T. Batsford, Ltd.

GREEK MERCHANT SHIP

From a Black-figure Vase at the British Museum.

two colonies on the north coast of Africa, one at the mouth of the Nile, Naucratis, and one on the great bulge due south of Greece, Cyrene. There were so many Greek colonies in south Italy that it came to be known by the Greeks and the Romans as "Great Greece," and the Greek cities of east Sicily were among the most renowned in the whole Greek world. That the sites of the Greek colonies were well chosen is proved by the fact that many of them are useful harbours to-day, and some are still of first-rate importance. Among these are Sinope, Trebizond and

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Constantinople [Istanbul] in the Black Sea area; Taranto, Reggio and Naples in south Italy; Messina, Catania and Syracuse on the east coast of Sicily; and Marseilles, which, by way of the Rhone valley, was their gateway to north-western Europe. Most of the colonies were founded roughly between 700 and 600 B.C.

C. The Persian Wars and After

It is high time now to return to the story of the revolt of the Ionian cities against their Persian overlords and the "tyrants" whom the latter supported. Not all the Greek cities of the Asian coast joined, by any means. There were actually just a few in the central district led by the proud city of Miletus. They appealed for help to the Hellenes of the mainland across the Ægean Sea. Only two cities answered their appeal, Athens, and Eretria, a small town on the inner coast of the large island of Eubœa. They believed themselves to belong to the same great division of Greek tribes as the Ionians, and they sent twenty ships and some soldiers. The rebels marched inland to the rich and important city of Sardis, once the capital of the kingdom of Lydia (p. 99). While they were there, the city was destroyed by fire. The Athenians then returned home (498 B.C.). Although the rebel Ionians were not backed by the cities of Greece, they held out for five years, until at last Miletus was captured. Even then the Persians were wise enough not to restore the tyrants in Ionia. But that was not the end of it. After he heard of the burning of Sardis, king Darius ordered a slave to say to him three times whenever he dined, "Sire, remember the Athenians." Apart from his keen desire to punish the impudent intruders, Darius had made up his mind that the Persian empire would not be safe at its western end unless it included Greece.

So he tightened his grip on the big half-Greek provinces of Thrace and Macedon and sent a large

army along their coasts which was to turn south and conquer Greece, while a fleet was to keep pace with it and supply it with stores. The fleet was wrecked off the dangerous promontory of Mount Athos, one of the three prongs sticking out of the northern coast, and this expedition was abandoned (492 B.C.). In 490 the Persians decided to try again. Heralds were sent round to all the cities in Greece to demand "earth and water," the Persian symbols of submission, and in most cases they got it. But Athens and Sparta refused. That summer a fleet sailed from the island of Samos with a Persian army on board, looped south, and swept through the group of islands to the south-east of Greece which the Greeks called the Cyclades, because they seemed, from the holy island of Delos where Apollo was born and worshipped, to lie round in a circle. The Persians spared that island, but seized the rest. Then they sailed up the channel between Attica (the little province round Athens) and the long island of Eubœa, till they reached Eretria. They burned the unlucky town and killed or carried off most of its inhabitants, thanks to traitors.

Was it to be the turn of the Athenians now? They despatched a runner to Sparta to ask for help. He covered the hundred miles in two days. The Spartans, owing to religious superstition, replied that they dared not march till the moon had been full. Yet the Persians were already about twenty-five miles from Athens. With anxious hearts the citizens put on the heavy armour of the "hoplite" (the standard Greek infantry soldier). There were greaves to fit round the calves, padded bronze plates that were fastened either by straps at the back below the knee and above the ankle, or kept in place simply by the springiness of the curved metal. Then came the sleeveless leather jacket, with straps hanging down all round to protect the bare thighs. If this did not already have small bronze plates sewn on to it, two large bronze plates were fitted on to the chest and back and strapped together at the sides. Rounded pieces were fastened

over the shoulders. Over the right shoulder and across the body came the sword-belt, and the two-foot sword in its sheath rested against the left thigh. Now the padded helmet with its cheek-pieces, nasal, eye-

A HOPLITE

holes and great crest of dyed horse-hair was fitted on, tilted well back to keep the face free till the hour of battle. Last of all they took their shields and spears, the four-foot, round shield, made of a wooden frame, bronze-rimmed, with several thicknesses of leather stretched across. The left arm was slipped through the curved piece of wood that fitted across the centre

at the back till the elbow took the weight of the shield, and the fingers gripped the leather loop near the rim. The spear was seven feet long, the shaft of wood, the long blade and head of steel.

News came that the Persians were camping on the coast of Attica close to their ships, near the village of Marathon, and guiding them was the ex-tyrant whom the Athenians had expelled a few years before. But among the Athenian officers was one who knew something about Persian methods of fighting. He persuaded the general to go and meet the Persians at Marathon. Nine thousand Athenian hoplites marched over the hills till they came in sight of the plain and bay of Marathon. There was the Persian camp, and the sea was dotted with ships, hundreds of them. For days the Athenians watched, from a well-chosen position which commanded both the inland road to Athens along which they had come and also the coast road. A thousand more hoplites joined them from their gallant and friendly little neighbour, the city of Platæa. At last the Persians were seen to be filing across the plain southwards, obviously making for the coast road to Athens. The Greeks came down from the hills on to the plain to stop them. There were twenty thousand Persians, but they had not brought their cavalry with them, rather a mistake on their part. The showers of arrows from Persian bows did not do as much damage as usual, thanks to Greek armour. The hoplites advanced at a trot and their spears played havoc in the Persian ranks, for the latter, in their long-sleeved jackets of thin mail, and trousers, had little else to protect them but their wicker shields. The two wings of the Persian army were easily driven back, but the centre resisted for a time. Then the Greek wings faced inwards and the Persian centre, attacked on three sides, collapsed. There was a wild stampede for the boats. And the famous battle of Marathon was over.

But the danger to Athens was not yet over. The Persian survivors were taken on board and their

fleet moved south to attack Athens by sea. The hoplites hurried homeward, and as they reached the outskirts of their city, they saw the Persian fleet at anchor off the harbour. But soon it disappeared. The prompt return of the Athenians and the news that the Spartans were at last on their way was too discouraging (490 B.C.).

Let us think for a moment why the victory of the Greeks was important for the history of civilisation. From what you have read on pp. 99–106 you know that the Persians were not ignorant barbarians. Their rule was mild compared with that of the Assyrians. Large masses of people were better ruled than they had ever been before. But these masses had as little control over their own fate as a herd of cattle. The will of the Great King and his satraps was the law, just as it is the farmer who decides what field the herd shall graze in and when it shall go to slaughter. But the Greeks stood for a system under which citizens in their Assembly voted on important questions put before them by the magistrates of the Council whom they had elected. They were the first people in History who insisted that government must be by consent of the governed. And this bold independence had a good deal to do with all that wonderful progress they made in art, literature, science and philosophy, which we are to read about later in the section called "The Greek Spirit."

Darius had other troubles to deal with now, including a revolt in Egypt. So he left the Greeks alone, and died not long after. But his successor, Xerxes, renewed the fight. He collected a huge army and navy, with the firm resolve of conquering the whole of Greece. This army was too big to be shipped across the Ægean, so the previous plan was to be repeated, of marching along the coast of Thrace and Macedon, with the fleet sailing close by. But first the army would have to cross the Hellespont, the strait between Asia Minor and Thrace that to-day we call the Dardanelles. The first pair of bridges that Xerxes built was swept away

by a storm. So he beheaded the unlucky bridge-builders, inflicted three hundred lashes on the turbulent waters of the strait, and appointed a new staff of engineers. You may be sure they took care to build solidly. First of all two separate lines of ships were

securely moored across the strait. Then along each line six thick cables were fastened. Over these planks were laid, and fastened down with another set of six cables. Above these came the roadway made of wood and earth, with railings at each side. About three hundred thousand men were hustled over the bridges under the lash, and two days passed before the last

man was over. To save the fleet the dangerous voyage round stormy Mount Athos (p. 118), a canal had previously been cut through the upper end of the promontory.

Meanwhile the Greek cities had been sufficiently alarmed to send delegates to a general conference. Even now, however, they could not entirely overcome their jealousy of one another. The states of southern Greece, led by Sparta, would have been quite ready to leave northern Greece to its fate, if they had not badly wanted the help of the strong Athenian navy. And the Athenians insisted on a stand being made against the Persians somewhere in the north. At about the level of the northern end of the island of Eubœa, the main road from northern Greece went close beside the sea along a cliff. This passage was called Thermópylæ, "The Pass of the Hot Springs."

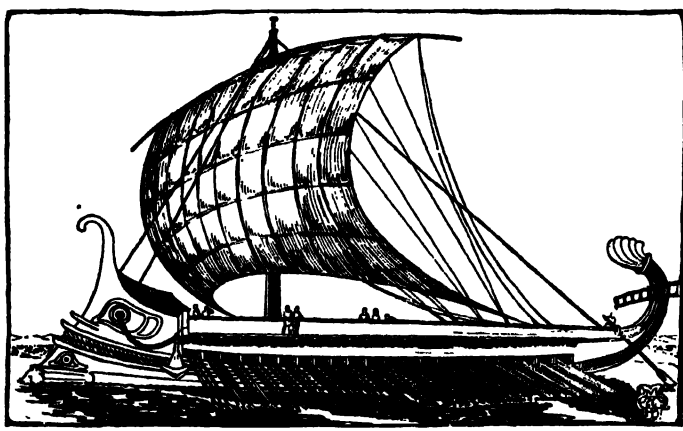
The conference grudgingly decided to send seven thousand men to hold the pass, led by Leonidas, war-king of Sparta. Of course they had many more hoplites to dispose of than this, but they said the rest would follow "later." Leonidas took six thousand men to guard the west end of the pass, which the Persians were approaching, while the other thousand were sent to guard a secret track which curved up the steep mountain side above the pass and so provided another route for active men. For two days the Persians attacked the west end of the pass, and lost so many men that "Xerxes leapt thrice from his throne in agony" as he watched. Then they found out about the steep track and sent their finest troops, "the Immortals," along it. The Greeks who should have held the track bolted to the mountain top, and the Immortals worked their way along the mountain side towards the other end of the pass. When Leonidas got to know what was happening he sent most of his army to guard the other end of the pass against the Immortals, while he himself stayed with his three hundred picked Spartans at the west end, and there he was killed. We do not know for certain what

happened to the main body of Greeks at the east end of the pass, but we do know that the Immortals got into the pass. The Greek survivors from either end made a last stand on a little hill in the centre of the pass by an old wall, and one after another they fell (480 B.C.).

The Greek fleet watching off the coast retreated and the Persian army and navy advanced on Athens. The conference decided to build a wall across the Isthmus of Corinth, the narrow neck of land joining north and south Greece, and to keep the allied army behind. This, of course, meant that Athens was doomed. Most of the population was taken away to the neighbouring islands before the Persians arrived. A handful of brave men remained to hold the Acropolis, the great, diamond-shaped rock that rises above the city—its citadel and the site of its chief temples. After a time the Persians captured the Acropolis and set it on fire, and the old ex-tyrant (p. 120) returned with them at last for a short time to his native city. The conference of Greek allies wanted the Greek fleet to retire to the isthmus, too, and angry debates took place. The Athenians and the inhabitants of the neighbouring islands naturally refused to abandon their families to the Persians, and as they formed more than half the Greek fleet, the southern Greeks had to give way and very unwillingly agreed to a sea-fight close to the islands.

The man who caused this battle to be fought was a wise Athenian named Themistocles, who a few years before had persuaded the Athenians to build up a large fighting navy. A rich vein of silver had been found on property belonging to Athens, and he had prevailed upon his fellow citizens to spend the profits from the silver mine on a navy, a new harbour (the Piræus), and fortified walls joining the city to the harbour. The standard Greek warship of this period was a "trireme." This word means "Three-Oar." Now old-fashioned books will tell you that a trireme was a ship with three banks of oars. But modern

ship-designers say that such a vessel is impossible. We know that sometimes "quinqueremes" were built, and, according to the old idea, that ought to mean a vessel with five banks of oars, and that is surely ridiculous! More probable explanations are that there were three men to each oar, or that groups of three men, with an oar each, sat together on a slanting bench, so that there was a little interval between their



From Quennell's "Everyday Things in Classical Greece," by permission of Messrs. B. T. Batsford, Ltd.

GREEK TRIREME

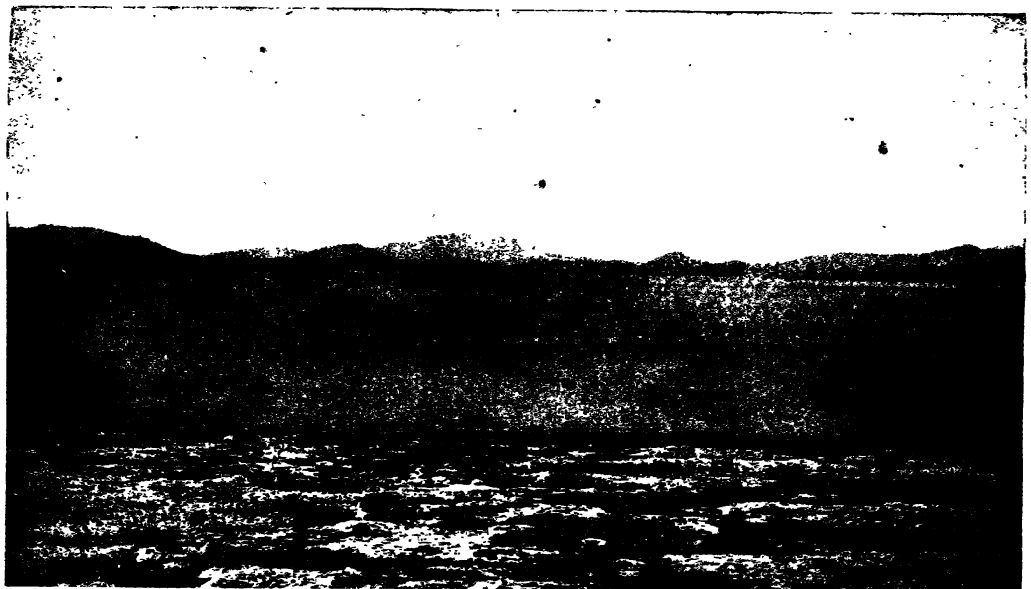
oars.[1] In between the two rows of short benches that ran along either side of a trireme was a narrow gangway, along which walked the boatswain and his piper, giving the time of the stroke to the oarsmen. (Those of you who are interested in ship designs might also like to know that the trireme was about a hundred and forty-five feet long, fifteen feet broad and drew four to five feet of water.) The trireme also had a large mast and sail of similar rig to the merchantman, but these were stowed away during battle. It had the same arrangement of anchor, steering-paddle, and

[1] The most recent theory is that the rowers sat in groups of three, one man being immediately above the second, while the third man sat slightly above and 'outboard' of the upper man, in a gallery projecting from the ship's side.

gangway ladder fitting on the stern. But the prow swept forward so as to form a strong ram below water level. The idea was to bear down at full speed and ram your opponent hard amidships. Besides throwing his oarsmen on that side into panic and confusion, you hoped to tear a big hole in his side. Then you promptly back-watered and left the sea to do the rest. That was a real sailors' way of fighting. Of course, if you had a lot of marines on board, you could turn it into a landlubberly affair of coming alongside and boarding your enemy, amid a glorious confusion of snapped oars, your own having been shipped in time.

Even at the last minute, the southern Greeks talked of bringing the fleet south, and in desperation Themistocles sent a secret message to Xerxes to say that the Greek navy was so afraid of the Persians that it was going to slip away, and that Xerxes would do well to attack at once. His advice was taken. A few miles west of Athens is the bay of Eleusis, and the Greek fleet was in it. The mouth of this bay is almost closed by the island of Salamis. Xerxes sent his Egyptian fleet to close the farther exit. His Ionian fleet, probably not too loyal, was to guard the exit nearer to Athens; while in front of the Ionians the Phœnicians, on whom he most relied, attacked the Greek fleet in this nearer channel. But the Persian vessels were so numerous that in the narrow channel they fouled each other, and the Greeks crashed through them and won the first renowned sea-fight in History (480 B.C.). The poet Byron, who helped the modern Greeks to win their liberty from eastern tyrants, describes it thus—

> "A king sate on the rocky brow
> Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
> And ships, by thousands, lay below,
> And men in nations;—all were his!
> He counted them at break of day—
> And when the sun set, where were they?"



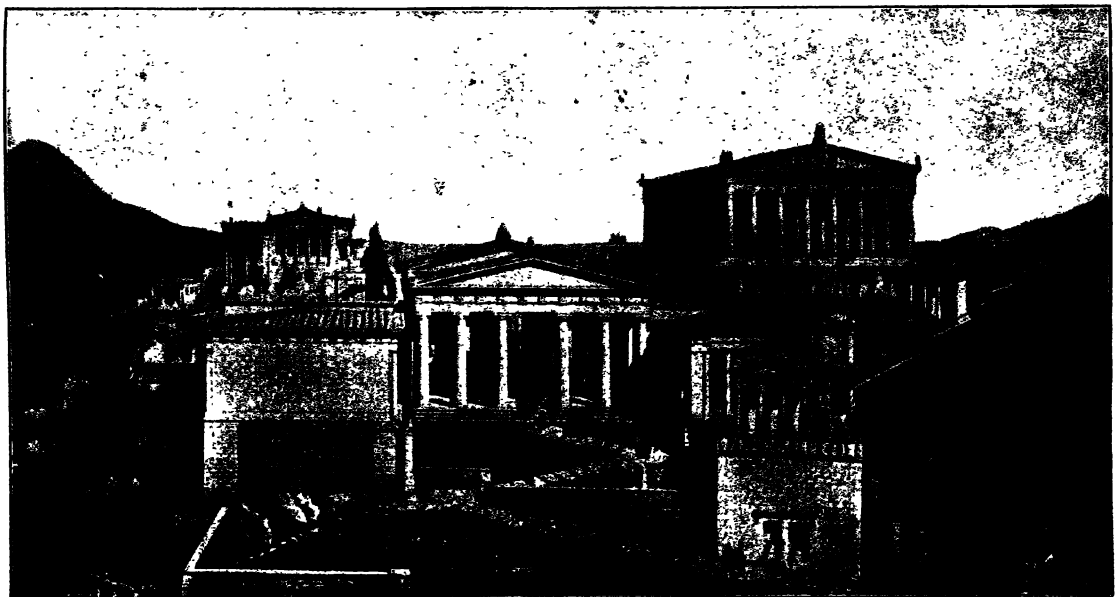
THE STRAITS OF SALAMIS

Seen from the north-west coast of Attica in the foreground. 2, the village of Salamis; 5, the entrance to the Piræus.

From a photograph in the possession of the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies.

Xerxes himself now returned home, afraid that his bridges might be destroyed in another revolt of the Ionian cities. But he left a good general behind with a large army. Next spring the Persians again invaded Attica, and drove the Athenians once more to their close neighbours in the islands. But soon there was, at last, a really good muster of the Greek allies, and the Spartan king-general had thirty thousand hoplites under him. A long-drawn-out battle took place among the mountains near Platæa, the gallant little city some thirty miles north-west of Athens which had helped at Marathon and at Salamis. The Persians were well led, and their arrows did a good deal of damage. The Athenians failed to take up their proper position, and only the fine discipline of the Spartans saved the day. At last the Persian general was killed, his men ran away to their strong camp, but the Greeks stormed it and slaughtered them (479 B.C.). The Persians never again invaded Greece. They were soon driven from Thrace, and a large Greek fleet won the straits back. Soon there was another revolt of the Ionian cities. And the Persians were satisfied with playing on the jealousies which soon sprang up again, to prevent a really serious counter-attack of the Greeks against Asia Minor.

As you may imagine, the adventurous and enterprising spirit of the Athenians was roused to the utmost by the victories over the Persians, and in the next fifty years Athens reached the summit of its glory. "O rich and renowned and with violets crowned, O Athens, the envied of nations!"—so a playwright of this period begins one of his choruses. An alliance of Athens with numerous island and sea-coast towns, to maintain a large navy against Persia, was gradually turned into an Athenian sea-empire, for many of the states preferred to send money instead of triremes. But the Athenians saw to it that they themselves kept up a strong navy, and began to treat the weaker states as if they were subjects, and the money contributions as a tax, which had to be paid



From Tucker's "Life in the Roman World of Nero and St. Paul."

THE WEST END OF THE ACROPOLIS AT ATHENS

Showing the Propylæa in the centre, the statue of Athene to the left of it and the Parthenon on the right.

regularly at Athens, where it was spent exactly as the Athenians pleased. Military colonies of poor Athenian citizens were planted where they could watch the "allies" and guard the vital corn-route to the Black Sea. The "Long Walls" (p. 124) connecting Athens with the harbours of the Piræus were completed.

The Persians had destroyed the temples on the Acropolis. The Athenians took the opportunity to rebuild on a magnificent scale with fine white marble which they could obtain from a neighbouring mountain. The most striking features were first, the elaborate pillared gateway at the west end, the only approachable end, of the rock. This they called the Propylæa or Porch. Passing through this, one looked straight at a gigantic bronze statue of the goddess "Athene Our Champion," and the Athenian sailor homeward bound strained his eyes for the far-off flash of her helmet and spear-top in the sun. To the right of this lay the new "Temple of Athene the Maiden" which we know as the Parthenon, the finest building the Greeks ever erected. Like all Greek temples, it was quite simple in design. It was oblong in shape, with a double row of pillars at either end, a single row down either side and a shallow-gabled roof. Its beauty consisted in its elegant proportions, marvellous craftsmanship, and its sculptured decorations, and of these we shall have more to say later. At one end of the Parthenon was the chapel of the goddess, and in it stood another huge statute of Athene, made of wood covered with gold (for the clothing) and ivory (for the skin). The goddess stood smiling in majesty, with a great three-crested helmet on her head and a golden robe over her body. Her right hand held a golden statute of Victory and her left hand rested on her shield. By her coiled a huge sacred snake. It was the masterpiece of the great sculptor, Phidias.

During this period Athens was practically ruled by one man, the wise, dignified Péricles. For thirty years (460–430 B.C.) he was annually re-elected as chief magistrate. His eloquence and bold imagination

enabled him to dominate the Assembly of citizens and to win steady support for his ambition, to make "Athens the school of Hellas." As Athens grew more imperial abroad, she became more democratic at home. Under the rule of Pericles a large proportion

Photo. W. F. Mansell.

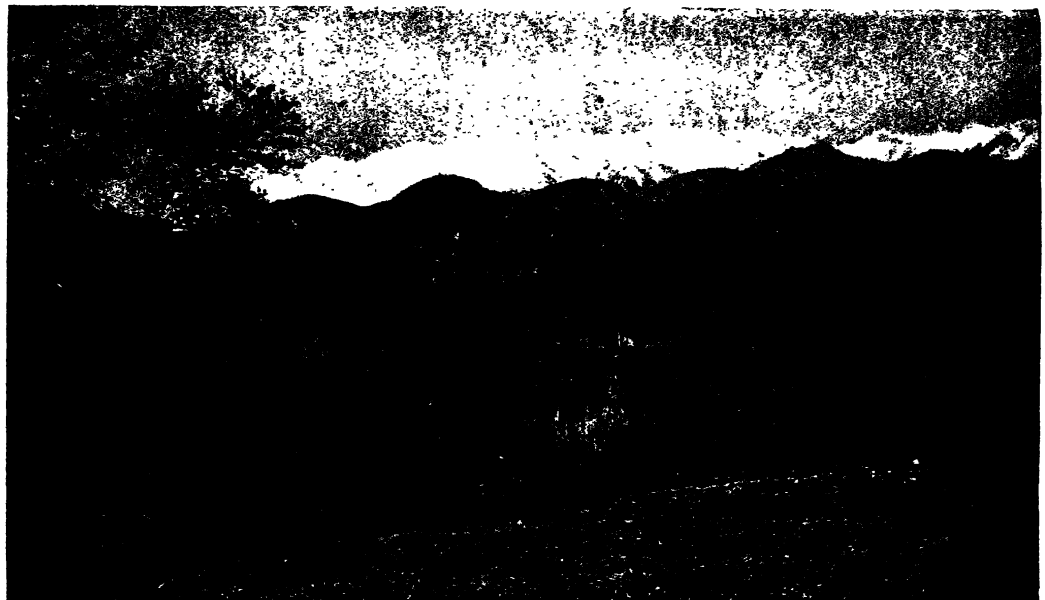
PERICLES

of citizens found some sort of paid public employment, as magistrates, councillors (five hundred strong), jurymen (of whom several hundred were required), oarsmen and sailors (two hundred for each trireme), and as regular soldiers. And rich citizens thought themselves lucky if a year went by without their being

called upon to undertake some very expensive public duty—to equip, man, and take personal charge of a trireme (the city provided the hull), to pay all the expenses of an embassy to a distant city or temple, or to train the chorus for a play in the public theatre. Most appointments, including the highest, were filled by the very democratic method of drawing lots. It says much for the intelligence of the Athenians that such a system worked.

The pride and progress of the Athenians was looked on with jealous eyes by the Spartans, who were strongly contrasted with them in every way. They believed themselves to be descended from a different branch of the old invaders (p. 108), the Dorians, who had hardly intermarried with the Bronze Age Greeks, but had enslaved and degraded them and wiped out their civilisation. So that the Spartans retained more of the fierce warrior-spirit of their ancestors, but lacked the quick wits, enterprise and love of beauty that the more mixed blood of the other Greeks produced. A good Spartan never wearied his slow brain with philosophy, politics or poetry. He left all that sort of thing to those "smart" Athenians. As for commerce, he believed, like the more backward squires of eighteenth-century England, that "Trade was the ruin of a nation." The Spartans' whole duty and aim in life was simple, to be the finest soldiers in the world—you had to be perfectly "fit," and hard as nails, to handle your spear, sword and shield like an expert, to know your place in the line and keep it unto death, to obey orders whatever they were, and keep your mouth shut. They did not bother to put a wall round their city, just an overgrown village which lay by the river Eurotas in a warm, fertile valley in far-southern Greece. They trusted to their own valour and renown, and to the ring of high mountains round them. And their confidence was justified. For Sparta was never captured during the centuries of Greek history you are reading of here.

Quite early in his life it was made clear to a



THE VALLEY OF THE EUROTAS, NEAR SPARTA
From a photograph by H. D. Acland.

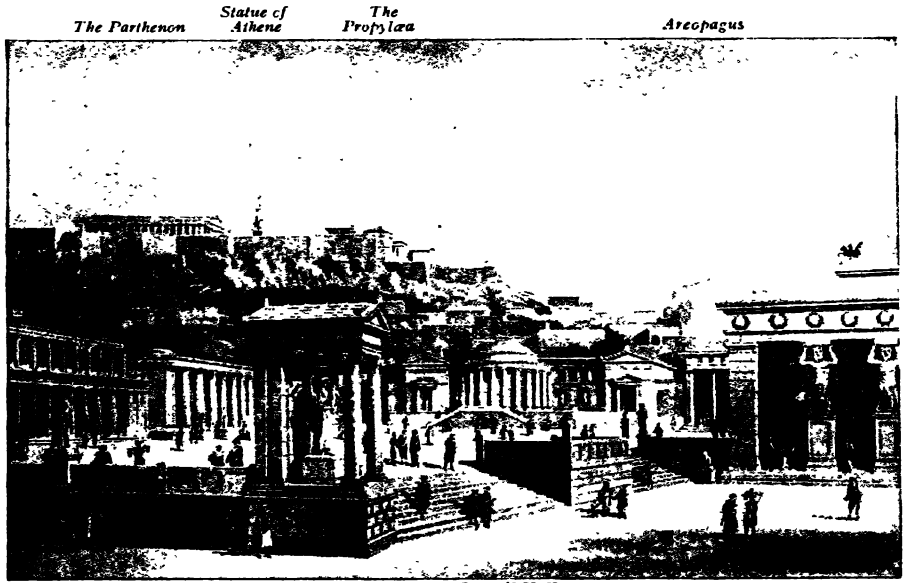
Spartan that he lived, not for himself or his family, but for his city. At the age of seven he was taken away from home and brought up at a sort of army school. He was pretty sure to be a healthy boy because sickly babies were just put out on the mountains to die! There was no room in Sparta for weaklings. The boys were under strict discipline, but no doubt most of them enjoyed the open-air life with its adventure and comradeship. Even the drill and marching might be fun if you did it to the music of fifes and sang stirring war-songs. And then for practice in scouting, you would sometimes be sent to steal your food from the farms, which were all worked by Helots or serfs, the old population whom the Spartans had conquered. There was no disgrace about this stealing for food, unless you were caught, and your captain, whom you were specially anxious to please, called you a clumsy idiot in front of all your friends. You may have heard the story of the boy who brought back a young fox and hid it in his tunic. He did not want anyone to know about it, and he let it bite him to death rather than reveal his secret.

The older boys were sometimes put on a sort of secret service duty to spy on the Helots, who greatly outnumbered the Spartans and hated them. Any Helot who showed too bold and independent a spirit was liable to disappear mysteriously. Even when a young Spartan married, it was some time before he was allowed to set up a home of his own, and even then, he was expected to take the main meal of the day in the barracks along with the other men in his "platoon." Women in Sparta had more freedom and appeared much more often in public than women in other Greek cities. For they too were expected to keep themselves fit and develop a martial spirit, so as to become worthy wives and mothers of the world's finest soldiers. It was a true Spartan mother who, when her son was going off to the war, handed him his shield and said as her only words of farewell, "Come back with this or on it."

The Spartans' jealousy of Athens was encouraged by Corinth, the rich trading city on the narrow neck of land that joins north and south Greece. Many traders, taking goods by sea from one side of Greece to the other, preferred to unload on one side of the isthmus and reload on to another ship on the other side only a small distance away, rather than make the dangerous voyage round the promontories of the south coast. Corinth was the chief business rival of Athens and was friendly with Sparta, as were many other cities of southern and central Greece, anxious to curry favour with the Spartans and determined not to become subjects of Athens. There was a revolt against Athens among subject cities to the north-east on the Black Sea corn-route. Corinth and Sparta helped the rebels. The Athenians, in their pride of empire, took up the challenge, and a long, dreary war followed (431–404 B.C.).

Pericles decided not to take the big risk of fighting a pitched battle against the Spartans and their allies. He brought into Athens all the people from the outlying villages and let the Spartans do their worst. It was not much use the Spartans besieging Athens, for, thanks to the Long Walls (p. 130), food and other stores could be imported through the Piræus as long as the Athenian navy ruled the waves. And though Sparta was helped by Corinth and other naval allies, none of them was strong enough to challenge the sea-power of Athens. So the Spartan league attacked the scattered Athenian garrisons and allies, hoping to tempt Pericles into sending out a large relief force.

If he had been in charge of the war for a number of years, the result would have been different. But in the second year of the war, owing to overcrowding in Athens, a great plague broke out and Pericles died of it (429 B.C.). Not long before his death he delivered a funeral speech over the Athenians who were killed in the first year of the war. In the version of this speech which has come down to us in the pages of the great Athenian historian, Thucydides,



THE MARKET-PLACE AT ATHENS (RESTORED) WITH THE ACROPOLIS BEYOND

This was where the citizens held their assemblies. The speakers' platform is on the steps.

From Sir Bannister Fletcher's "History of Architecture," 9th ed. (Batsford).

we get an idea of the Athenian spirit at its best. Let us take a passage here and there, and remember that it is getting on for two thousand four hundred years ago

Acropolis Museum, Athens.

ATHENE MOURNING FALLEN ATHENIANS

She is wearing the Dorian chiton.

since these words were spoken. "Our city is thrown open to the world, and we never expel a foreigner or prevent him from seeing or learning anything. And in the matter of education, while our enemies from early

youth are always undergoing laborious exercises in order to make them brave, we live comfortably and yet are just as ready to face the perils which they face. We do not suffer in advance, but when the hour comes, we can be as brave as those who never allow themselves to rest; and so our city is just as admirable in peace as in war. For we are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes. We improve our minds, but we are none the less manly. We use wealth, not for talk or vulgar show, but when there is a real use for it. To admit poverty is no disgrace among us; the real disgrace is in doing nothing to avoid it. . . . Such is the city for whose sake these men nobly fought and died; they could not bear the thought that she might be taken from them; and every one of us who survive should gladly toil on her behalf."

Years went by without any decisive battle in this struggle between sea-power and land-power. The most prominent Athenian in the later stages of the war was Alcibíades. As a young man of wealth, fashion and noble birth he had done many wild and foolish things. But he had a keen brain and a fine imagination, and he might have led the Athenians to final victory. In 415 B.C. he persuaded the Athenians to answer the appeal of certain cities of Sicily and attack the important and wealthy city of Syracuse, one of the chief allies of Sparta and Corinth. The finest expedition that had ever left a Greek city was ready to leave the Piræus with a hundred and thirty-four triremes and hundreds of transport vessels when, one night, someone defaced the statues of the god Hermes which stood at many street corners in Athens. This caused a terrible scandal, especially as Alcibiades was accused of being responsible. He wanted to be tried at once, but as he was one of the three commanders of the expedition, he had to sail with it. No sooner had it reached Syracuse than the Athenians recalled Alcibiades for trial. It was a very stupid thing to do. He escaped on his way back, and, thirsting for revenge, when he later heard that he and his kinsmen had been condemned to death,

he went to Sparta, where they were glad to have him.

Of the two other commanders with the expedition to Syracuse, one was a first-rate soldier, but he was killed early on. The only commander then left was slow and over-cautious, and had been against the expedition from the start. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that it ended in ghastly failure. The naval allies of Sparta made great efforts and badly damaged the Athenian fleet. On the advice of Alcibiades the Spartans sent one of their best officers out to Syracuse, and by his energy he destroyed the elaborate siege-works by which the Athenians hoped to starve out the great port. At last the Athenian commander decided to retreat from Syracuse to some friendly port whence he could take his men back to Athens. If he had done this suddenly, he might have brought it off. But an eclipse of the moon, which in the ancient world was regarded with superstitious awe, took place on the very night when the retreat should have started. The Athenians waited a few days. The Syracusans got to know of the retreat, followed the doomed invaders and massacred them by a river, into which the thirst-maddened Athenians had plunged in frantic disorder. Those who survived were brutally ill-treated, till sooner or later death brought merciful release from the prison-quarries of Syracuse.

COIN OF SYRACUSE, *c.* 410 B.C.
Head of Arethusa, amid Dolphins.

Even this terrible disaster did not daunt the Athenians. They fought on grimly for another ten years, and towards the end the scene of the chief fighting was off the coasts of Asia Minor and the Dardanelles, for now the Black Sea corn-route was being threatened by the enemies of Athens, helped by the

Persians. The Athenians let Alcibiades come back, for he had helped them to victory in this district by sending valuable information. As a character in a play put it, "They love, they hate, they cannot do without him." But he was blamed when one of his friends lost a battle, and he retired to a castle of his on the Dardanelles. One night it was set on fire, and as he ran out, mysterious enemies stabbed him to death. The end of the fighting came when a hundred and sixty Athenian triremes in the straits were easily captured in a sudden raid, while the crews were on shore. It is hard to believe that there was no treachery behind this. Peace was made in 404 B.C. on condition that the Athenians pulled down their Long Walls and gave all subjects back their freedom.

The war had lasted so long that, when it was over, many Greeks could not settle down again, and became professional soldiers, willing to fight for anyone who would pay them. The most famous exploit of these wandering soldiers of fortune was the Retreat of the Ten Thousand, led by an Athenian officer, Xenophon. Those of you who learn Greek later are fairly sure to read his book about "The Great Trek." Cyrus, the brother of the king of Persia, thought that he himself would make a better ruler. So he hired a large army to drive his brother from the throne, and the backbone of this army was ten thousand hoplites from the various cities of Greece. A battle took place near the river Euphrates about twenty miles north of Babylon, and though the king's army was defeated, Cyrus was slain. The satrap (p. 102) asked the leaders of the Greeks to meet him and discuss terms of peace. They agreed, and were all massacred. Well might the Ten Thousand feel nervous, in the heart of the Persian empire, without leaders or any idea of what they were to do next.

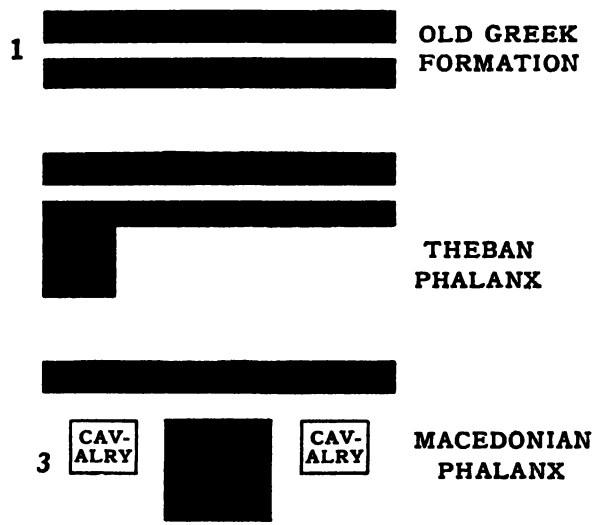
Then Xenophon, who was serving as an ordinary soldier, felt that, as a man of education and intelligence, he ought to undertake the responsibility of getting the men out of this unpleasant situation. He decided not

to march back westwards because there would have been many Persian garrisons to deal with. So he took them north, first across the hot, sandy wastes by the Tigris, then up past the ruins of Nineveh through the heights where the Tigris and Euphrates have their sources, into the snow and ice of the Armenian mountains in winter, harassed by fierce mountain tribes who ambushed them in narrow passes and dropped great boulders on them. At last they climbed a hill, and the first men on top raised a glad cry, "Thalassa," "the Sea." Though it was the Black Sea, they were soon in a Greek port, Trebizond, and that was all they asked (400 B.C.).

Of course, for a time, the Spartans were popular, and no one could or wanted to dispute their claim to be the masters of Greece. The Athenians had lost their empire but had not lost that which made them really great, and some of their finest thinkers and artists flourished after 400 B.C. Soon the Spartans showed themselves to be just heavy-fisted bullies and were hated more than the Athenians had ever been. Even their prowess as soldiers was sharply challenged by Thebes (do not confuse it with the Egyptian city), an old town about thirty-five miles north-west of Athens, the centre of a district renowned for its sturdy but stupid yokels. For a short time the Thebans found a great leader, Epaminondas, whose friend drove out the Spartan garrison from Thebes. When the Spartan army came for revenge, he defeated it severely and afterwards led his men several times into southern Greece, invading Spartan territory, to the astonishment of all Greece. He was the inventor of a new battle-formation. Hitherto Greek armies had formed up for battle in a long, narrow oblong. Epaminondas decided to thicken the left wing of his oblong even if the rest of it had to be thinner. He relied on the thick end to bend the enemy's right wing back at once further and further till it broke off. This was the beginning of the "phalanx," an arrangement which the Macedonians improved further still (see p. 144). He also

compelled the large provinces to the north, Thessaly and Macedon, where the inhabitants were not purely Greek, to treat Thebes with respect. And among the hostages he took from them, who had to live at Thebes, was a young Macedonian prince, Philip, of whom we shall hear a good deal soon.

About 350 B.C., then, the Greek cities were played out, as regards politics. Jealousies within the



HOW THE PHALANX DEVELOPED

cities and between the cities had been too strong to prevent any one city from uniting the whole of Greece, as Rome later united the whole of Italy. And in ancient times the Greeks never did become a united nation. The Macedonians and the Romans conquered Greece, as we shall read, but it still remained a land of city-states. We can well afford to leave its politics alone for a time and note that Greek sculpture and literature were still of the finest at the period we have reached, and that men were less fanatical about

their city and their social class. There was a more tolerant spirit about, and the most thoughtful men realised that women and slaves and even "barbarians" were human beings, capable of deep feeling and entitled to some consideration. It was also realised that, unless they were very annoying, it was much more sensible to trade with your neighbours, whether they were Greeks, Persians or western folk, than set their town on fire and so lose customers. For this was an age when commerce greatly expanded, and Greek products were common not only in the coastal areas of the "colonies" (p. 114), but further inland still in Italy, France and Spain, and among the nomad Scythians to the north of the Black Sea. We still have many of the fine silver coins of this period, Athenian "owls," Corinthian "ships," and the valuable golden coins of Asia Minor.

COIN OF ATHENS, 5TH CENTURY, B.C. Owl and olive spray.

We have now come to the last division of Greek history that we are going to deal with at present, the rise of the military empire of Macedon under two great rulers, Philip and his son Alexander. The two kings before them had already worked hard to weld the tribes and cities of Macedon into a compact and united country, and Philip completed the task. He realised that a country which means to progress must have access to the sea and so he conquered the cities on the coast of Macedon, although the Athenians claimed control of them. He knew the Greeks regarded his country as half barbarian, so he set himself to make it as Greek as possible. He insisted on those around him using the pure Greek language of the Athenians, and Greek writers or artists exiled from their own city would find a ready welcome at his court. He appointed the great philosopher, Aristotle, to be his son's tutor.

Above all, he made the Macedonian army the

most efficient in the world. The phalanx now formed a solid block, bristling with twenty-foot spears, which attacked the centre of the enemy's line. A nimble foe might have surrounded this rather clumsy formation, but it was guarded on either side by masses of heavy cavalry who charged and drove off the enemy's wings opposite them. Then the cavalry wheeled inwards on either side, attacking in flanks and rear the exposed centre of the enemy, already badly shaken by the massive thrust of the phalanx on its front. If cities had to be besieged Philip had a siege-train of the latest engines.

Satisfied with the size, strength and wealth of Macedon, Philip began to think of Greece. When he was a hostage of Epaminondas (p. 142), he had learned all he could about Greek politics and fighting methods. He knew that the Greeks, divided by jealousy, could not stand up to him for long. Yet he did not want simply to crush them by brute force, for he respected them (especially the Athenians), and wanted them to respect him and accept him as their natural leader. So he offered to lead the Greeks in a great campaign to put an end, once and for all, to the Persian menace. Persia was still a rich, strong and flourishing empire with a large navy, and there were at this time rulers in Persia who thought that Greece ought to be and could be conquered.

Of course, most of the Greeks "saw through" Philip and his bright ideas, and looked on him as a much greater menace to their liberty than the Great King. The Athenian orator, Demósthenes, whose speeches are considered models of the most perfect Greek prose, was never weary of warning his fellow-citizens, and the rest of Greece, against Philip's real ambitions. Yet some Greeks preferred to trust Philip. Two religious quarrels broke out at this time among groups of Greek cities, and Philip in each case was invited to interfere. The second time, Thebes and Athens grew alarmed and made an alliance against him. He utterly defeated them at the battle of

Chæronea, north-west of Thebes (338 B.C.). After that no Greek city felt like challenging him. Sparta refused to help him, and although he threatened to attack it, he never did. He called a conference of all Greece to meet at Corinth and help him to plan the war against Persia. While the preparations were going on, he returned to his capital, Pella, and was stabbed to death at his daughter's wedding. He had recently divorced his first wife, Alexander's mother, and married again, and no doubt she had planned the murder.

Alexander was a handsome, athletic young man of twenty when he succeeded his father, and he had already shown, helping his father, that he was a splendid soldier. But the Macedonians and Greeks would not believe he was just as much their master as his father had been. Revolts broke out everywhere, encouraged by Thebes. He promptly suppressed them, and a second conference at Corinth meekly invited him to lead the Greeks against the Persians. Then he disappeared far up north beyond the Danube, no doubt to make sure the tribes there did not attack Macedon in his absence. Thebes again revolted. He came back and just blotted the city out, enslaving those inhabitants who were not massacred. And Thebes was not the only city he caused to disappear from the face of the earth.

In 334 B.C. he crossed the Hellespont with about thirty thousand infantry, of whom twelve thousand were Macedonians, and five thousand heavy cavalry (Thessalians and Macedonians), as well as his siege-train. He soon met the first Persian army at the river Granicus and completely defeated it. There was little to stop him now in Asia Minor and he moved south-east across it. At the temple of Gordium they showed him a chariot to the pole of which the yoke was fastened by a complicated knot. There was a prophecy that whoever undid it would be the master of Asia. After fumbling about with it in vain, he drew his sword and cut it, and so gave us the proverbial phrase.

At the south-eastern corner of Asia Minor, where it joins Syria, another large Persian army tried to bar his way at Issus, led by the king himself, Darius III. It was utterly defeated (333 B.C.), and Darius fled to Susa, leaving his mother, wife and children at Alexander's mercy. He treated them kindly. Rejecting

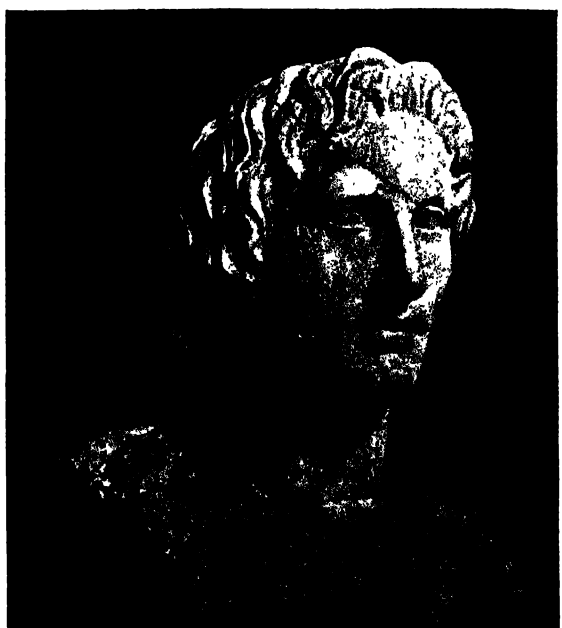


Photo. Alinari.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Darius's offer of all west of the Euphrates, he swung south into Syria, and met with no opposition except from the Phœnician city of Tyre (p. 83). It was on an island about a mile from the coast, and, relying on its sea-power, had made its own terms with previous conquerors and proposed to do the same now. Here was a chance for Alexander's engineers to show what they could do. They built an embankment from the

Anderson Photo.

DARIUS FLEEING FROM ALEXANDER

This fine mosaic was transferred from a house in Alexandria to a house in Pompeii.

mainland to the town (it is still there), and brought their giant catapults and battering-rams along it, while the ships Alexander had managed to collect from his allies and subjects surrounded the island, each with some sort of engine on board. After seven months of wild fighting, Tyre was captured and wiped out, and so the Persians lost their most important naval depôt.

Gaza, once the stronghold of the Philistines (p. 83), also made an obstinate defence under its Persian governor, but it was captured in 332 B.C., and Alexander pushed on westwards into Egypt. It had never been loyal to the Persians, and Alexander was welcomed in its ancient capital, Memphis (p. 34), where his fleet rejoined him. He sailed with it to the western mouth of the Nile and there founded a new port for communication with Greece and to take the place of Tyre. It was a great success, for it soon became one of the finest cities of the ancient world and it is to-day still a place of importance—Alexandria. From there Alexander made a long desert march westward to the temple of Amen, and its famous oracle, to be officially recognised as king of Egypt. The tactful priests told him what he had been suspecting for some time, that not Philip, but the greatest of the gods was his real father!

Having now made sure that no large Persian army or navy would threaten him from the rear if he marched into the heart of Asia, he returned to Syria and passing through Jerusalem, Samaria and Damascus, struck across the Euphrates and Tigris (331 B.C.). Not far eastward from the ruins of Nineveh, in a great plain between Gaugamela and Arbela, Darius with an enormous army faced him again, and after a furious struggle was again defeated and fled. A long march to the south brought Alexander to Babylon, where he was welcomed. Turning eastward he came to Susa, another of the Persian capitals (p. 98), where in the treasure house he found the statues of two Athenians who had killed a tyrant. Xerxes had taken them with him when he sacked Athens (p. 124), and now they

were sent back there. The next stage in his march was his entry into Persepolis, the capital of the original Persia, where, during the drunken revels, the luxurious palace (p. 102) was set on fire.

There was still another of the Persian capitals to be visited, Ecbatana (p. 106), and Alexander was all the more anxious to visit it as he had heard Darius was there, and he could not rest until he had the Persian king in his power. When he reached the old capital of the Medes, he found that Darius had retreated towards the Caspian Sea. After paying off most of his Greek soldiers, he hurried north-east in a wild pursuit of the king, which ended with Alexander and a small troop of the hardest riders in his army finding the body of the Great King, just recently stabbed to death by the Persian generals. It was left for a wandering Macedonian soldier to give the dying monarch a cup of water just before Alexander arrived. It is said that Alexander threw his own cloak over the fallen king and sent him honourably to his mother to be buried with his ancestors in Persepolis (330 B.C.).

From this time Alexander regarded himself as the king of Persia, and showed it often by his dress, court-ceremonial and the favour which he displayed to the best Persian satraps, who were reinstated in their posts, to the disgust of the Macedonians. They would not believe that he was out to reconcile the East and the West, and sneered at him for aping an oriental sultan and putting soft "barbarians" on a level with the hardy conquerors of the world.

We need not follow Alexander in too great detail during his astonishing tour of conquest in the remote eastern provinces of the Persian empire, in most of which he established cities named after himself. In 329 and 328 B.C. he was in what we should call Afghanistan and Turkestan. In 327 he crossed the upper Indus and its tributaries, and fought, defeated and re-instated the first of the Indian princes. His Macedonians refused to go any further, and we can hardly blame them. So he came down the Indus,

and while a fleet sailed westward from its mouth to the Euphrates, he marched through what we call Baluchistan and southern Persia in 326 B.C. back to Persepolis, and through Susa and Ecbatana in 325 B.C. back to Babylon, which he proposed to make the capital of his empire.

As you may well imagine, there was a tremendous amount of business awaiting him there. He had upset the old organisation of a vast empire and had done little yet to devise a new one, simply keeping things going by appointing temporary governors, Macedonians, Persians and local men. He began to train the Persians in the latest Macedonian fighting methods, including the use of catapults in battle. He married a Persian wife and got most of his generals and many of his men to do the same, celebrating all the intermarriages at one great feast. He began to prepare a fresh expedition, to conquer Arabia and establish a sea-route to India. And suddenly, after a hard bout of drinking (a weakness in which he resembled his father), he fell into a violent fever. As he lay dying, 323 B.C., every Macedonian soldier in his army passed by his bed, one by one, to give him a last salute.

This present age of ours is not as ready as previous ages were, blindly to admire men who once made a stir, and to call them "great." Alexander is often referred to as "the Great," but recently people have asked "Why?" And we ought to think over this question a little. Was he just a man-killer on a big scale, or was the fighting a necessary step towards a great improvement in the lives of forty million people? That Alexander was in many ways a very interesting and romantic person cannot be doubted. Handsome, athletic, wonderfully hardy, he was the best soldier in his own army. His training and his handling of the army were both first-rate. But he was more than a fine general and a born leader of adventurers. It is true some think that his tour of conquest was a stupendous wild-goose chase, that Alexander did not

know himself what he was really after. It is also true that at times he was stupidly reckless, mad with rage, absurdly conceited, or blind drunk.

And yet it is quite likely that he had in his mind schemes for greatly raising the level of civilisation over the huge area he conquered, helped by loyal governors without distinction of race. He was an explorer as well as a conqueror, and there were scientists on his staff to help him to get much sounder ideas of the geography of the East than anyone had had before. There were Phœnician traders with him, too, and we may be sure that he discussed with them the old idea of a through trade route from the far East to the far West (p. 85). If he had lived another twenty or even another ten years, the history of the Ancient World might have had a different ending altogether.

As it was, his Macedonian generals divided his empire among them, and their descendants became kings. And throughout all the western provinces, though the Greek language and Greek names lasted for centuries, especially among the educated classes, the local way of living was hardly changed.

Exercises

1. What great modern Post Office building has inscribed on its front the words about the Persian couriers given on p. 106?

2. Draw a hoplite, a trireme (with a section amidships), and a plan of the Acropolis at Athens, placing the improvements of Pericles.

3. What is *our* name for Iskanderiya (Egypt)? How do you explain the names Iskanderun (Syria), Iskander-uneh (Palestine), Iskander or Kandahar (Afghanistan), Lake Iskander (Turkestan)?

4. Why was the New Testament written in Greek? Why is there Greek on the Rosetta Stone (p. 80)?

From "The Excavations at Babylon," by Robert Koldewey.

REMAINS OF A GREEK THEATRE AND GYMNASIUM AT BABYLON

A striking proof of Alexander the Great's success.

After Adler's reconstruction, by permission of Messrs. B. G. Teubner.

THE LIGHTHOUSE AT ALEXANDRIA

D. The Greek Spirit

We shall hardly mention the *history* of the Greeks or the Macedonians any more in this book, if history is just a matter of wars and politics. Yet this section about the Greeks is the most important of all. It is probably the most important section in the whole book.

For about two hundred years after the death of Alexander (that is, until the Romans conquered these lands), in the new or improved cities of Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt that sprang up under his influence, Greek sculptors, builders, philosophers and scientists were doing work which was still first-rate. For instance, those Greek statues with which you are most familiar nearly all date from this period. There were great universities and libraries at Alexandria, at Pergamum in north-western Asia Minor and on the island of Rhodes off its south-western coast. The new towns of this wider Greek world enjoyed a far better "lay-out" than those of earlier Greece. They represent the first widespread attempts at what we call nowadays town-planning. They had fine "civic centres," that is, well-planned groups of public

buildings; there were parks, the streets ran in long, straight lines, with great improvements in the way of paving and sanitation, and ordinary houses were much more comfortable.

The ordinary dwelling-house of the earlier Greeks had not been particularly comfortable according to our ideas. It was of the "courtyard type" customary throughout the ancient world, in countries where the climate was warmer and the way of living altogether simpler than ours. The house, of one storey as a rule, presented blank walls on the outside, except for the entrances, for there were no outer windows, and, in fact, no glazed windows anywhere such as we are used to. A short passage led from the entrance to the courtyard, round which the rooms were grouped. For most of the year the household worked and played in the courtyard. The rooms were for sleeping in and for use mainly during the three wet months of the year. Curtains, more often than wooden doors, covered the entrances to the rooms, and light was admitted either through the open doorway or through an opening in the wall above it. There was no fire-place, nothing of the water and drainage system we are used to, and when it was dark, the only lighting available was from torches or simple little lamps burning coarse olive oil. There was little furniture; one or two small, low tables, hardly any chairs, and low wooden couches for bedsteads or for use at feasts—none of the soft upholstery and bedding with which we are pampered! If there was a kitchen, it was a simple affair, because Greek food was usually quite plain—vegetables, fish, olive oil, fruit and wine. The Greeks, living so much out of doors in a (usually) mild climate and eating such food, obviously did not require as elaborate a dwelling or as much household gear as we

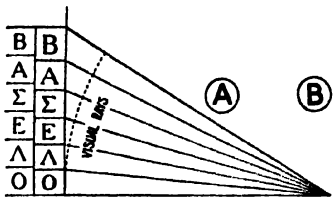
A GREEK LAMP

It was filled with oil through a hole in the centre of the depression in the top. The wick came out of the front hole.

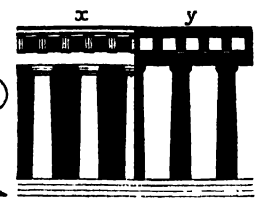
do. But their furniture and pottery, in spite of its simplicity, was usually of elegant design and tastefully decorated.

The temples and other public buildings in our last period of Greek history were larger and more elaborate than those, say, of Pericles' life-time. You can get some idea of their size from the remains in the British Museum. But the artists and craftsmen of Asia Minor and the islands, who flourished between 300 and 200 B.C., though their work was on a bigger scale, never excelled the satisfying proportions, the excellent taste and workmanship of the Parthenon. Let us take another look at that fitting symbol of Athenian pride. We have already described its general design on p. 130. By comparison with the finest cathedrals of the Middle Ages, the building of a Greek temple may seem to you to be an easy matter. It looks quite a simple arrangement of straight lines and plain columns. If the lines of the steps were really dead straight, they would seem to you to sink in the middle. Actually there is a very slight upward curve in them. The pillars too look straight enough. Yet, in fact, there is a slight bulge at the centre of each, which enables them to bear a heavier weight and also gives an illusion of perfect straightness. There are other examples of fine craftsmanship like this throughout the building. The pillars, six feet in diameter, show that the Parthenon is in the Doric style, the simplest and usually the most elegant type of Greek building. They come straight down on to the pavement without any sort of pedestal, the edges between the flutings are quite sharp, and there is only a simple rounded stone joining the top of the column to the square tile underneath the roof edge. In the Ionic and Corinthian styles, which became more fashionable later, the column rests on some sort of pedestal, there is an interval between the flutings, and the top is decorated with a "ram's-horn" design in the Ionic style, and in the Corinthian with an elaborate arrangement based on acanthus leaves.

OPTICAL CORRECTIONS IN ARCHITECTURE



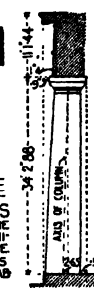
CORRECTION OF APPARENT PROPORTIONS
FROM AN INSCRIPTION ON THE FACES OF THE ANTÆ OF A TEMPLE AT PRIENE

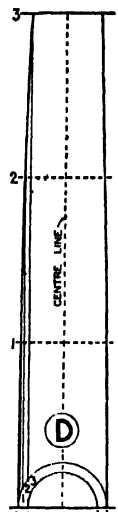


COLOUR EFFECT ON PROPORTIONS

x THE METOPES & NAOS WALL BEING BLACK THE COLUMNS APPEAR STURDIER & THE ARCHITRAVE, TRIGLYPHS & CORNICE HAVE IMPORTANCE.

y WITH REVERSED COLOURING THE COLUMNS APPEAR THINNER & HIGHER & THE ENTABLATURE LOSES IN IMPORTANCE.

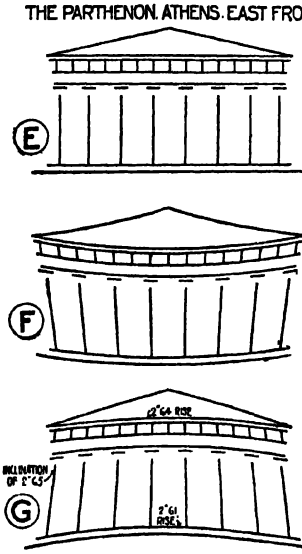




D METHOD FOR ENTASIS

a b c d ARE BOTTOM & TOP DIAMETERS RESPECTIVELY. DESCRIBE SEMICIRCLES ON THESE. & AT c ERECT PERPENDICULAR CUTTING LARGER CIRCLE IN 3 DIVIDE SEGMENT a 3 & HEIGHT OF COLUMN INTO ANY NUMBER OF EQUAL PARTS SAY 3 - & NUMBER - BOTH 1, 2, 3 FROM A. THRO POINTS 1, 2, 3 IN SEGMENT ERECT PERPENDICULARS CUTTING CORRESPONDING DIVISIONS OF THE HEIGHT. THRO THE POINTS THUS OBTAINED DRAW CURVE

THE PARTHENON, ATHENS. EAST FRONT

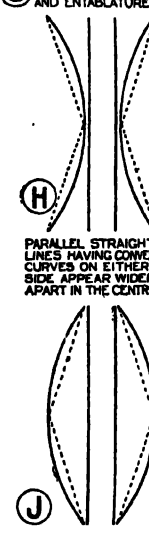


E THE TEMPLE FRONT AS IT APPEARS IN EXECUTION WITH CURVED HORIZONTAL LINES AND INCLINED VERTICAL FEATURES AS AT G.

F THE TEMPLE FRONT AS IT WOULD APPEAR IF BUILT AS AT E WITHOUT OPTICAL CORRECTIONS.

G THE TEMPLE FRONT ARRANGED WITH VERTICAL AXES INCLINING & WITH CONVEX STYLOBATE, ARCHITRAVE - ENTABLATURE & PEDIMENT PRODUCING RESULT AS AT E.

C THE PARTHENON
INCLINATION OF COLUMNS AND ENTABLATURE



PARALLEL STRAIGHT LINES HAVING CONVEX CURVES ON EITHER-SIDE APPEAR WIDER APART IN THE CENTRE

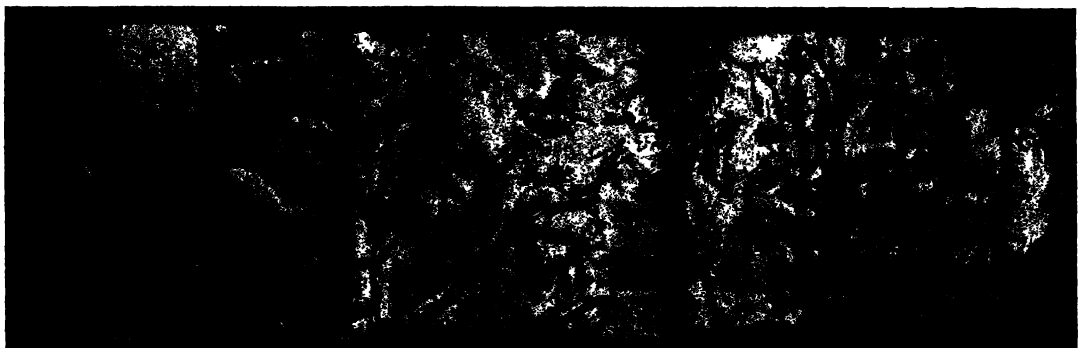
PARALLEL STRAIGHT LINES HAVING CONCAVE CURVES ON EITHER-SIDE APPEAR CLOSER TOGETHER IN THE CENTRE.

A SIMILAR EFFECT PRODUCED BY INCLINED-LINES AS INDICATED IN H & J BY DOTTED LINES

From "A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method," by Sir Banister Fletcher, 9th edition (Batsford).

Phidias (p. 130) himself is said to have planned the decoration of the upper surfaces of the outside of the Parthenon. The gable roof provided a triangular surface high up at either end of the temple. One of these showed Athene with the Sun-God, the Moon Goddess and the Fates. The other showed the contest of Athene with Poseidon, god of the Sea, for the possession of Attica. All round the outside, in the space between the tops of the pillars and the edge of the roof, was shown the battle of the Centaurs (half horses, half men) with the savage tribe of Lapithæ which broke out at a wedding feast in their native Thessaly, when all had had too much to drink. In this subject there is the suggestion of the Greek contempt for brutishness and any serious loss of self-control. On the corresponding place inside the pillars, that is at the top of the actual temple walls, was another long series of sculptures showing the solemn religious procession which every four years carried a new robe (stretched on a ship's yard-arm) to the Parthenon for the great statue of Athene (p. 130). There are the elders, maidens, various officials, those who carried the holy utensils for the sacrifices, the sheep, the musicians, the robe-carriers and, perhaps the finest section of all, the Athenian cavalry, handsome young men in short cloaks, riding their fiery steeds with graceful ease. You can actually see most of these in the original at the British Museum, together with models of the Parthenon.

Nobody surpassed, or is ever likely to surpass, the Greeks in portraying in marble or bronze the utmost grace, beauty or dignity that the human figure can attain. The world has agreed to accept their statues of gods, goddesses, and athletes as ideals of male and female beauty. There are other things that sculpture can express, such as personality, character and emotion. Greek artists were not so much interested in these. Their best work was done in moulding physical perfection, and they were unwilling to distort the face by any strong emotion. After the time of



British Museum. *Photo. W. F. Mansell.*

YOUNG MEN OF THE ATHENIAN CAVALRY

From the Parthenon frieze of the Panathenaic procession.

Phidias, the best-known Greek sculptor was Praxítelés. The picture shows his famous statue of the god Hermes playing with the infant Dionysus, who became the wine god. The arm which has been lost probably

Photo. W. F. Mansell.

HERMES WITH THE INFANT DIONYSUS
Cast of the marble statue by Praxiteles.

dangled a bunch of grapes. This is one of the very few original statues by the great masters which are still left to us. Though the figure is supposed to be a god, you can see that it is really some perfectly proportioned young athlete.

The best Greek sculpture is equally wonderful whether it shows the figure quite nude or clothed in the gracefully simple styles worthy of Hellas. The Greeks were so proud of their healthy bodies that they thought nothing of exercising in public quite naked. In fact,

Photo. Alinari.

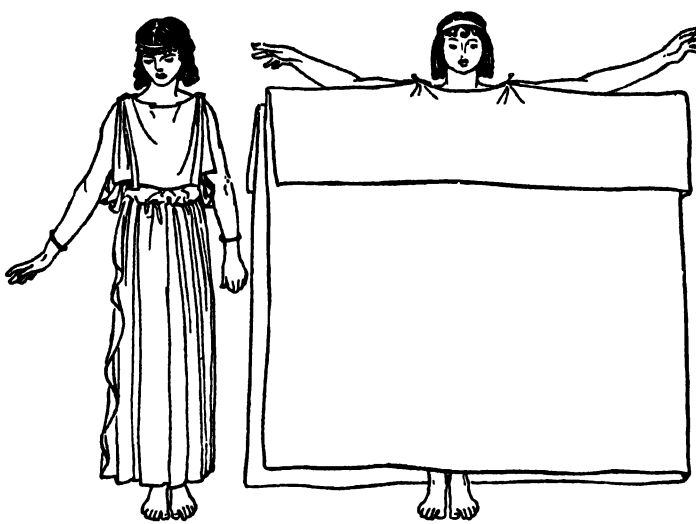
ARTEMIS, GODDESS OF THE CHASE

She is wearing the Dorian chiton deeply pouched at the girdle. Her cloak is wound round her.

our word "gymnasium" means the place for training where you don't wear anything. At Sparta this applied to women too. Under these conditions it was not difficult for sculptors to find glorious specimens of manhood or womanhood for models. One of the most striking things about Greek sculpture is the mar-

vellously skilful way in which the most delicate folds of clothing were reproduced in marble or bronze.

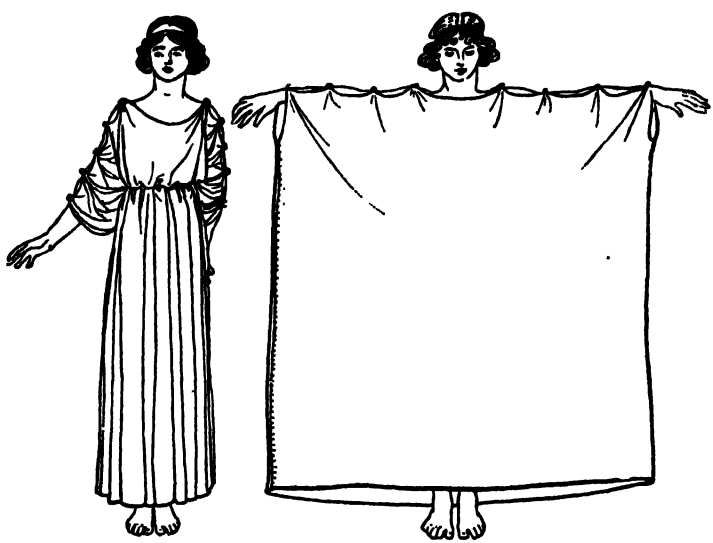
These folds may seem to you from statues to be very elaborate, but actually the design of women's dress was quite simple. The main garment was a long tunic called the chiton (pronounced "kytone"). There were two styles of this, the Dorian and the Ionian, these names corresponding to the two main tribal



THE DORIAN CHITON

divisions of the Greeks. If you girls can borrow the rather large pieces of material required, and some safety-pins, you can easily make these garments yourself. For the Dorian style you want a piece five feet wide and seven or eight feet long. (It was usually made of very fine wool.) Hold it the short side up and turn down about a foot at the top. Now fold it vertically in the middle, the overlap outwards, and bring the open edges together. Get in between the two surfaces and bring your arms above the level of the shoulders. Now get

someone to pin the back and front together over your shoulders. Your arms will remain bare. The part that you turned down gives an extra thickness on the upper part of the body, back and front. Tie a girdle round the waist and pouch the garment over it. Artemis, the hunting goddess (= Diana), in the picture is wearing the Dorian chiton drawn up high, by means of the girdle, for running. Athene (on p. 137) is



THE IONIAN CHITON

wearing it full length. For the other style, the Ionian, the material must not be so wide, as there is no overlap. The width required is your length from shoulder to ankle. Fold it vertically in two, as before, and get in the middle. This time you will have to cut a hole in the closed side near the top, and sew up the open side from the bottom upwards, till only a similar hole is left on that side too, for this is going to be a sleeved gown. Then get the back and front pinned together over your outstretched arms with four or five

pins on either side. Draw the garment in at the waist with a girdle, pouch it over the girdle, and you are now wearing the Ionian chiton. This was usually made of fine linen.

Out of doors and in winter women usually wore in addition a sort of wrap known as a himátion. It was in the form of a horizontal oblong, worn in various ways. One of the commonest was over both shoulders and perhaps the head as well, with the spare length thrown over the left shoulder to hang down the back. The Athenian lady in the picture is wearing it this way. Sandals were usually worn out of doors. Clothes were often coloured, and if white, usually had a decorated edge. Men wore a short-sleeved tunic of varying length, or just the himation, or both. For hunting and riding they wore instead of the himation a short cloak fastened on one shoulder with a brooch, a broad-brimmed hat and high boots.

Photo. W. F. Mansell.

ATHENIAN LADY, ABOUT 400 B.C.

Notice the graceful folds of the himation, worn over the head.

The admiration of the Greeks for bodily perfection is shown by the tremendous popularity of the great athletic festivals, especially the one held every four years at Olympia, in the north-west of the great peninsula that forms southern Greece. To win a first prize there was a sure way to become the hero of your city and a celebrity of Hellas. The Greeks reckoned their dates according to Olympiads, the first of which they estimated to have taken place as long ago as 776 B.C. according to our system. Thousands of visitors came, even from the most distant cities of

Hellas, wending their way over dusty summer roads to camp or lodge near an out-of-the-way temple of Zeus, the greatest of the Greek gods. At this time more than any other, Greeks felt that they were all Hellenes and one nation, for warfare ceased once the sacred heralds came round to the cities to give notice of the games, as it was a religious festival too.

Competitors had to come early to Olympia, and after proving to the judges that they were of genuine Greek birth on both sides, they were put through a period of official "training." The games lasted five days and took place on a plain between two rivers, at the very foot of a thickly-wooded hill, watched by the wildly excited spectators from great embankments. The first day the chariot and horse races took place, very expensive forms of sport in which only the rich could afford to compete. Then in a separate enclosure, a little over two hundred yards long, were held various foot races. Our word "stadium" is taken from the Greek word for this distance. For races of more than one lap there were posts at either end round which the competitors would have to turn. There was a two-lap "hoplites' race," to be run in full armour with shield. All contests were sharply watched by stern judges armed with long forked rods with which they did not hesitate to lash anyone who fouled or cheated, besides fining him heavily later. The other events were the long jump, throwing the discus, throwing the javelin, wrestling (three falls a win), and boxing (head blows only, with fists wrapped in leather straps). These five events were grouped together so that one could win a prize on the whole competition as well as in separate events. Later, a brutal and un-Greek event was added, which we should call "all-in" wrestling. Anything was allowed except biting or gouging your opponent's eyes out. The prize you won at the games was simply a wreath of wild olive-leaves which would wither before you returned home. But your city would gladly give you a much more valuable souvenir, as well as honour

you with privileges perhaps for the rest of your life.

Greek temples have been mentioned several times in this chapter. What of the gods and goddesses for whom they were built? Was the Greek religion worthy of the Greek spirit at its best? No, we must confess that it was not. The gods were thought of vaguely as living "in heaven," but sometimes visiting their most famous temples or other haunts such as certain mountains. It is obvious that their origin lies in the worship of various natural forces and the oldest arts. You may have heard their Latin names already, so we will give them after the Greek names. Zeus (Jupiter) was the god of the sky and the ruler of the other deities. His wife was Hera (Juno), the queen of heaven. Apollo was the god of the Sun, of music and of archery. His sister was Artemis (Diana), goddess of hunting. Poseidon (Neptune) was the god of the sea, Ares (Mars) the god of war, Hephæstus (Vulcan) the god of fire and metal work, Hermes (Mercury) was the heavenly messenger. Pluto was the god of the underworld, Athene (Minerva) was the goddess of wisdom, Aphrodite (Venus) of love and beauty, Demeter (Ceres) of corn. No doubt you have heard the story of how Persephone, Demeter's daughter, was carried off by Pluto to the underworld to be his queen. After a long search Demeter found her daughter and got permission from Pluto for Persephone to live with her for six months of each year. Learned men tell us that this story arose out of the wonder and gratitude of the ancient world at the mystery of the Seed, its disappearance into the ground and its reappearance as a plant months later.

Besides these, "heroes" were worshipped, mighty men of divine birth who wrought great deeds for the benefit of mankind. The best-known of these is Herakles (Hercules). And then there were nymphs and other spirits of the woodland, the river, mountain and sea, of whom one might suddenly catch a glimpse in some very lonely place before they vanished into a

tree, a rock or a wave. The best that can be said of this side of Greek religion was that it was harmless,

Photo. Anderson.

HERMES, EURYDICE, AND ORPHEUS

and that there was no cruelty or terror behind it. The worshipper prayed simply and made some kind of offering. In Greece, as throughout the ancient world, domestic animals and birds were killed as

sacrifices to gods, because of a very old belief in the magic power of blood.

Some of the Greeks, however, had deeper religious feelings and were not satisfied with the vague belief that after death, men in the underworld lived as ghosts a shadowy imitation of their life on earth. There were sects which taught doctrines of atonement for sin, which would earn the worshipper a blissful union after death with various deities. Such beliefs and practices were known as " mysteries," and many slaves, as well as women, took part in them. They were connected, some with the worship of Demeter and Persephone, who naturally would have special knowledge of the underworld, some with Orpheus, the magic musician. You perhaps have already heard the story of how his young wife, Eurydice, died of a snake-bite. Orpheus found his way down to the underworld and through the terrors that guarded it, to the throne of Pluto and Persephone. Even they were softened by his sad music, and allowed him to take Eurydice back, escorted by Hermes, on condition that Orpheus did not look back at her till they reached the world above. At the very exit of Hades, his yearning for Eurydice overwhelmed him. He turned to look at her—and lost her for ever.

An even wilder sort of worship of the same " mystic " kind was connected with Dionysus (Bacchus), the god of wine. The worshippers met on mountains at night by torchlight. They wore deerskins and garlands of vine leaves and carried wands of ivy. To the noise of cymbals and flutes they danced, ever more and more wildly, and tore to pieces the animals of sacrifice. One after another they went into a mad frenzy, which they looked on as a union with Dionysus, till they fell in utter exhaustion.

A special feature of Greek religion was the habit of consulting the gods, especially Zeus, about the future. At certain special places it was thought to be possible to obtain prophecies from the gods through their human mouthpieces. The most famous of these

"oracles," as such places were called, was that of Apollo at Delphi (near the centre of the northern coast of the Gulf of Corinth). Here the god was supposed to answer questions through the mouth of his priestess when she went into a holy frenzy. The oracle of Delphi was famous throughout the ancient world. Crœsus, king of Lydia, consulted it when the Persians were threatening him (p. 99). He was told that if he crossed the Halys, he would destroy a great kingdom. Taking this to be an encouragement, he attacked the Persians and did destroy a great kingdom—but it was his own. For the oracle often gave a reply that might be taken more than one way.

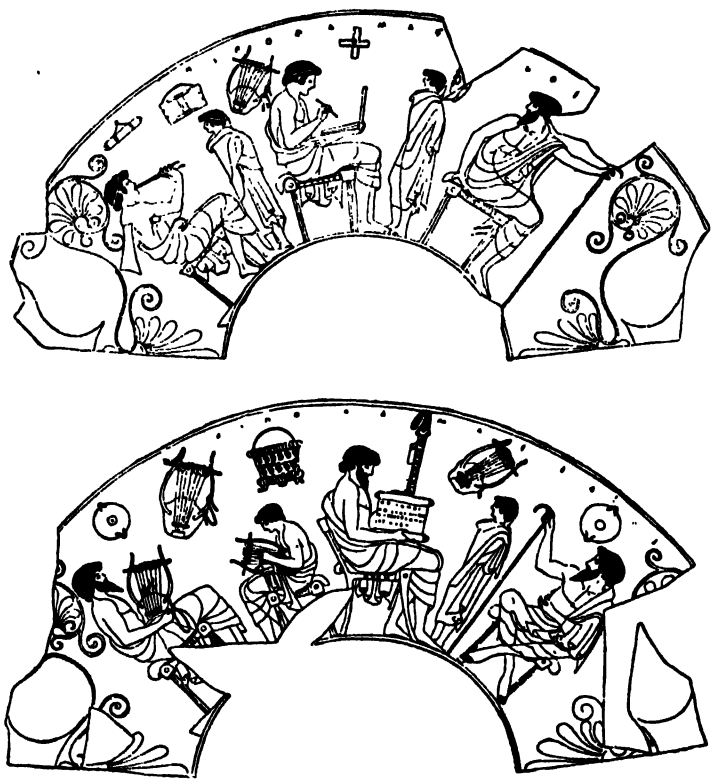
Such a religious system may not lead you to think more highly of the Greeks. And indeed it would not be right for you to get the impression that the Greeks as a whole were a race of "supermen." Even the Athenian Assembly made some cruel and stupid decisions. It was the large number of exceptional men whom the Greeks, a small nation, produced, which is the glory of Hellas. Sometimes these men were honoured, sometimes, if their ideas were very unusual, they were persecuted. The ordinary Athenian, if he could afford it, was quite content for his sons to have the education which the Greeks called "music and gymnastic." The words meant rather more then than they do now. The boys went to private schools. There was no such thing as public education, such as we are used to, in the ancient world, or at any other time, until about sixty years ago. The small Athenian, with his himation wrapped neatly round his shoulders and arms, was expected to walk to and from school modestly and quietly, escorted by a slave called "the pedagogue" (a word which really means "boy-keeper"), who waited in the school. The boys were taught writing, for which they used tablets * of soft wax and a sharp-pointed piece of wood, and simple arithmetic, first using a ball-frame. They learned to read, and when they could do that, they were expected to learn whole books (that is, scrolls or

* But for lengthy writings the Greeks and Romans used reed pens, ink and paper.

Photo. Alinari.

ATHENIAN MEMORIAL OF MARATHON ON THE ROAD TO DELPHI

" volumes ") of poetry off by heart, particularly Homer and plays (see p. 179). At the same school they were taught to sing and play the lyre and perhaps the flute as well. Every well-educated Athenian was expected



AN ATHENIAN SCHOOL

to be able to sing a song at a dinner-party and accompany himself, if necessary, on the lyre.

All this part of education came under the heading of " music." " Gymnastic " meant every sort of physical training, and here again we must remember that it was only the sons of the richer

Athenians who could get this. It included practice in the athletics of the Games, and such accomplishments as swimming and riding. Later on came instruction in the use of weapons. When a young Athenian became eighteen, he was solemnly registered

YOUNG SOLDIERS ON PATROL DUTY
Showing riding costume

as a citizen and began two years' service as a soldier, receiving full military training and doing patrol duty, if there was peace.

Our own word "school" comes from a Greek word meaning "leisure." And the reason why a good many Greeks had leisure to cultivate their minds

and bodies was that they were supported by the labour of a large slave population. We need not go into detail about the lives of these slaves. As elsewhere, if they worked in the house or in a workshop and had a kind master or mistress, their lot would not be too hard. If they worked on farms, or in mines or quarries, their life was one of drudgery, with wretched food and quarters. Most slaves came from the backward parts of northern Greece such as Thrace and Macedon, from the more barbarous parts of Asia Minor and from the Black Sea district. The policemen at Athens, city-slaves, were Scythian bowmen. Many, of course, were born slaves, others were prisoners of war or had simply been kidnapped by slave dealers, for the slave trade was an important industry throughout the ancient world. Aristotle, the philosopher and scientist, defended slavery, and others used the weak and silly argument that some men were "naturally" slaves. But there were more enlightened Greeks who frankly admitted that the fact that one man was free and another a slave was just a matter of luck, and that some slaves were better men than their masters.

This brings us to one of the finest features of the Greek spirit at its best, the ability to free the mind from prejudice, whether arising from custom, social class, religion or race, and to view the problems of life and human fellowship with cool, clear yet kindly minds. How few people even to-day are capable of doing that! Some of the best of the Greeks thought hard and long in order to answer the question "What is Virtue?" They were not satisfied with the answers of ordinary religion and custom. And in discussing this very difficult problem they were willing to accept the rule laid down by one of them, "Let us follow the argument, whithersoever it leads." Very few of us would be willing to do that when our own pet beliefs were being challenged.

The person who did more than anyone else to produce this spirit among the Athenians, and many others since, was a flat-nosed, long-bearded little man

called Socrates. He had a family to keep and no slaves to work for him, as his wife often pointed out, but he spent most of his time wandering round the squares and gymnasiums and talking to young Athenians. He would ask them some simple question, but before he had finished with them, there would have been a long and hard discussion, consisting mainly of artful questions by Socrates, and answers from the young men which came less and less promptly. Socrates said that he never taught anything and never wrote anything. He just wanted to ask a few questions, he said. Most of what we know about his methods, we guess from the works of his disciple Plato, who differed from him in many ways, but made him the chief figure in his Dialogues or supposed conversations between Socrates and various young Athenians.

These bright young men must have thought the little philosopher very odd at first, but they grew extremely fond of him. Xenophon was one, and even Alcibiades was proud to claim him for a friend. Nor was Socrates just a talker. He showed in more than one campaign that he was a first-rate soldier, cool and fearless in battle, and indifferent to hardship. And his moral courage was just as great. Of course, many Athenians disliked Socrates, for it is not pleasant to have your firmest beliefs challenged and made to seem rather silly. Many fathers were shocked when their sons came home and said they did not believe in the gods any more, or even asked what right fathers had to order their sons about! It was also an unfortunate coincidence that some of the young men who most admired Socrates came to a bad end, and others were enemies of democracy. We need only remember Alcibiades himself. You will not be greatly surprised, then, to hear that when he was nearly seventy years old, Socrates was brought to trial for corrupting the youth of Athens, and for not believing in the deities of Athens. He was found guilty, but the jury did not want to punish him severely. However, he went on to exasperate them by claiming free

keep by the city for his services to it, instead of accepting a fine. He was sentenced to death, and although he might easily have escaped, refused to do so and drank the official cup of poison, after calmly discussing the immortality of the soul (399 B.C.).

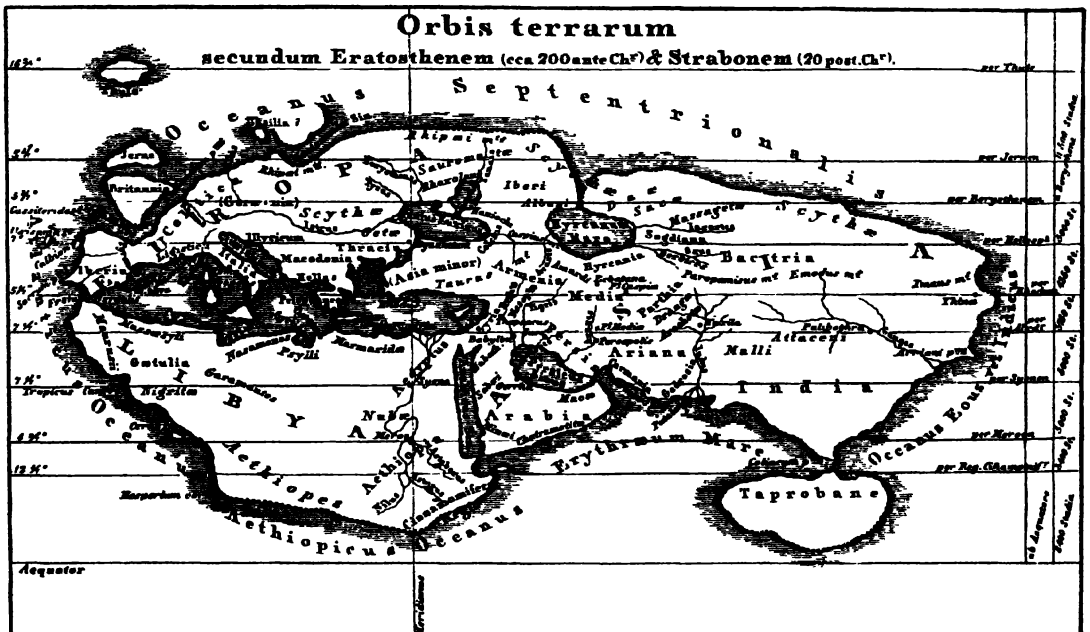
Unlike Socrates, Plato was of noble birth, a wealthy man and very well educated. He became a follower of Socrates when he was twenty, and after his teacher's execution he travelled in Egypt, Sicily and the Greek towns of south Italy, and returned at last to Athens and opened a college that became famous. It has given us the word "Academy," for it was established in a park just outside Athens, sacred to a local "hero," Academus. Apart from his works about Socrates, Plato, in perfect Greek, wrote a good deal about the Perfect State. Since his day, others have written their Utopias, or visions of an ideal commonwealth, and, like Plato's, each scheme has been limited by the ideas of the age in which it was written. So, Plato could not get beyond the city-state. But the great value of his writing was that it made men realise that they themselves were responsible for the conditions in which they lived, and that these could be improved by careful planning. Plato died in 347 B.C.

Aristotle was a Macedonian and his father was doctor to King Philip's father. He came to Athens and was a student at Plato's Academy. After Plato's death he left Athens and was for a time tutor to Prince Alexander, as we have already seen. When Alexander became king, Aristotle went back to Athens, where he was so respected that the city gave him, for use as a college, a gymnasium called by a name which you probably think of as that of a theatre, the Lyceum. Aristotle studied and taught every branch of knowledge—all kinds of philosophy, all systems of politics, all departments of science. He was unwilling to theorise, unlike many people before and after him, until he had collected much accurate information. He and his students recorded an immense number of facts. To give his study of politics a foundation of

fact, his students analysed a hundred and fifty-eight systems of government. To increase his knowledge of "natural history," a phrase of his which we have adopted, there were at one time a thousand men in Greece and Asia collecting information about plants and animals. And Alexander during his conquests sent him cases of specimens. Many of you who are reading this book may, in a few years' time, know more physics, chemistry or biology than Aristotle ever knew. But the vast and accurate knowledge of these subjects which we possess to-day is the result of methods similar to those of Aristotle, long and patient first-hand study of specimens and observation of facts.

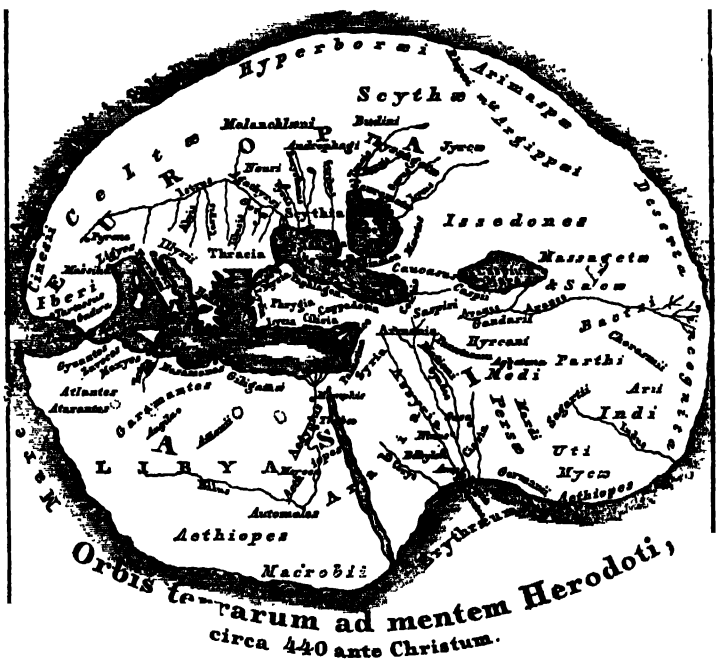
But before and after Aristotle there were very clever Greeks who studied Nature and made important discoveries or brilliant guesses, though they did not organise the study of science as well as he did. They taught that the movements of the heavenly bodies were controlled by laws of mechanics, that the sun and the moon were huge globes, "perhaps as big as southern Greece," that all matter was composed of tiny atoms which attracted and repelled one another. One of them laid down the principle which in recent times has been called "the survival of the fittest." The names of some of the Greek scientists who lived after the time of Alexander you may know already. One was Euclid, another was Archimédes. (About the latter there are many interesting stories.) They were both connected with the university of Alexandria, which has already been mentioned. It was there that the first steam-engine was made, and though the invention was not followed up, this age devised quite a number of powerful and ingenious machines worked by levers, cranks, screws, cogwheels and pulleys.

It was also at Alexandria that the first attempt was made to catalogue all the stars. (An astronomer of this age discovered that all the planets, including the earth, revolved round the sun, but nobody would believe him.) There was a great college for doctors there, too, where the first serious attempts to study



MAP OF THE WORLD ACCORDING TO ERATOSTHENES WITH SLIGHT CORRECTIONS MADE BY THE ROMANS

the working of the human body were made. The Macedonian ruler of Egypt, Ptolemy, sent condemned criminals there to be experimented on. Great progress was made in geography, too. Eratósthenes, by measuring the difference between the height of the sun at



MAP OF THE WORLD ACCORDING TO HERODOTUS ABOUT 440 B.C.

noon in Alexandria and at the First Cataract of the Nile, five hundred miles away, calculated the diameter of the earth to be 7850 miles. He also drew a very fair map of the world as then known, the first map to be based on lines of latitude and longitude. To the far north-west it showed two large islands, Britain and Ireland, and beyond them still another, probably Iceland.

The link between the geographers and historians of Greece is Herodotus. In his early life he was connected with a town in Asia Minor where he took an active part in resisting the tyrant. Apart from visiting most of the Greek cities on both sides of the Ægean Sea, he travelled in Asia Minor, Persia, Syria and Egypt. Finally he settled down in a Greek city in southern Italy, and there wrote a history of the wars between the Greeks and the Persians. It is written in a free and easy style which enabled him to tell many interesting stories which have nothing to do with the wars, and to describe the wonders he had seen in his travels. Some of these are of course exaggerated; but as we find out more and more about the ancient world, and there is much still to be explored and studied, we realise that in many cases where he was under suspicion, Herodotus was telling the truth after all.

The other Greek historian of great renown was Thucydides. He was a rich Athenian who, during the great war between the Athenians and the Spartans, was in command of a small squadron of triremes off the coast of Thrace. He neglected his duty there and in disgrace went into exile for twenty years. That is about all we know of his own life. During his exile he wrote a history of the war which had brought about his own ruin. Up to recent years there were very few histories indeed, at whatever period they were written, which were so scrupulously fair, and in which the facts had been so carefully checked.

The excellent style of these two histories, the first so natural and lively, the latter so dignified, has secured for them an honoured place in the great treasury of Greek literature. The Greeks were a race of artists, if by that word we mean people who can create or appreciate beauty. They showed it in their language and literature, as much as in anything else, particularly in that form of Greek which the Athenians used. A gracious and musical language, used by a race of vivid imagination, keen wits and passionate

feelings—and the result naturally was delicate poetry, stately tragedies, lively comedies and powerful oratory.

It is impossible here to give a full catalogue of Greek writers. We shall deal only with the few whose names, if not their works, you are sure to come across in time. Among the Greeks, as elsewhere, poetry came earlier than prose. Greek literature made a splendid beginning in Ionia with two long poems, said to have been written by the blind poet, Homer. The Iliad (Ilium = Troy) deals with some episodes in the ten years' siege of Troy by early Greek chieftains. The Odyssey tells of the ten years' wanderings of one of these chieftains on his way home after Troy had fallen. They are written in a long, rolling rhythm which suggests, even as it describes, waves breaking on rocky shores and breezes sweeping through the pines on a mountain side. After Homer come the song-poets of the islands, who wrote most musically in the intervals of their stirring, adventurous lives. The greatest of these, perhaps, was a poetess, Sappho, considered by some as the greatest of all women who ever wrote poetry.

It was at Athens that the finest plays were written, whether tragedies or comedies. The word "tragedy" means "goat-song," and plays probably arose out of the songs and recitations with which Dionysus, the wine god, was honoured when the goat was sacrificed to him, for goats were altogether too fond of nibbling young vine-shoots. The more serious songs and recitations developed into drama, the merry ones into comedy. There were three great writers of tragedy at Athens. The earliest of these, Aéschylus, who fought at Marathon, Salamis and Platæa, is said to have done much to put plays into the shape which later became familiar, and to have decided a number of points as to how the plays were to be produced on the stage. In the next generation came Sóphocles, who, as a handsome boy of sixteen, had already won prizes both for "music" and "gymnastic." There was keen rivalry between him and Æschylus at the

drama competitions which were regularly held at Athens. Æschylus is said to have been so annoyed when Sophocles once won the first prize which he

Photo. Anderson.

SOPHOCLES

He is wearing the himation only. By him is a case of his works.

himself had expected, that he retired to Sicily. When Sophocles was old, his son, anxious to get control of the family property, brought him to court, asserting that his father was growing silly with age and was

not fit to be in charge of the household. At the inquiry Sophocles simply read out a chorus from his latest play, not yet produced, and the judges dismissed the case. Another of his plays so pleased the Athenians that they made him one of the generals for a campaign.

The third and latest of the three, Eurípides, is to many modern readers the most interesting. His plays have the usual form, with the speeches and dialogues in the same sort of iambic line that we find in Shakespeare. There are the usual musical recitations by the chorus. His plots are similar to those of the other tragedy writers—that is, old legends of the gods, " heroes " and ancient princes of Greece. But every now and then he puts into the mouths of his characters the most advanced ideas, which must have shocked the more old-fashioned among his listeners. Even though his plays were part of a religious festival, he questions the wisdom of the gods in them. He voices the grievances of the silent classes, the women and slaves. As was to be expected from a close friend of Socrates, he is constantly doubting beliefs which the " plain man " thought to be beyond all doubt.

The best-known writer of comedies is Aristóphanes. He had strong opinions about the fashions and politics of his age, and he merrily mocked all he disliked with the freedom of a privileged jester. He often poked fun at Pericles and Socrates and their advanced ideas. His work has a fine swing about it, and now and then his choruses have gleams of poetic beauty. About a hundred years later came the comedies of Menander. They dealt rather with the private life of the Athenians, the troubled course of true love and the sly tricks of slaves. His works were closely copied by Latin playwrights and have been widely imitated.

All these plays were acted in the open air. Near the south-eastern corner of the Acropolis, directly below the Parthenon, was a great semicircular enclosure called the theatre of Dionysus, and it was as part of the wine god's festival that plays were acted,

day after day. There were stone seats in the lower part of the theatre, but the upper part was simply the grassy slope of the hill. On the diameter of the semi-circle, at the middle, an open space was left for the chorus. This space was called the "orchestra," which really means the dancing-place. In front of it was an oblong platform, the actual stage, and a low oblong building at the back of it with entrances on the stage.

There was very little in the way of stage scenery, just a simple setting to represent the front of a temple or palace. In most Greek tragedies all the action takes place on the same spot and is supposed to occur within twenty-four hours. No violence was acted on the stage itself before the spectators. If someone, for instance, had to be murdered, it was always done behind the scenes. The site of a Greek theatre had to be very carefully chosen so that the actors might be heard by the farthest spectators. You would not like to make a speech, say, from the centre of a football ground to ten thousand spectators on the stands. So the actors wore elaborate masks which must have functioned as amplifiers. It did not matter that the expressions of their own faces were not visible, as these could not have been very distinctly seen by most of the spectators in any case. To increase their height and bulk, they also wore high-heeled boots (buskins), and padded clothes.

There was a small charge for admission to the theatre, but if you were poor you could get a free ticket. You may be sure that every part of the great slope was packed with citizens, rich and poor alike, with their wives and children. Sharp eyes and ears are intent on the stage, and not a syllable nor a gesture is missed. A messenger has just finished telling the tale of a great disaster to the stricken Prince. The Chorus (p. 181) and their flute-player, pacing with measured tread round the orchestra, begin a dirge. Above there is a bright blue sky, in the distance the faint but never-ending chirrup of cicadas. A

From "Our Hellenic Heritage," by H. R. James.

A MODERN VIEW OF THE ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS

From the south-east, showing ruins of Parthenon and, on the left slope, approximate site of theatre.

TIME DIAGRAM FOR PERSIA

B.C. 250

B.C. 300

Persian Empire
conquered by Alexander

B.C. 350

B.C. 400

March of the Ten Thousand 401-400

Persian

intrigues

to keep

B.C. 450

Greeks

disunited

Persians checked
in the West

B.C. 500

Persians supreme
in the East

B.C. 550

Persians begin
conquest of the East 549

B.C. 600

Persians allies of
Medes and Chaldeans

PERSIA

GREEC

GREECE AND EARLY ROME

lexandria

hief Greek centre

f commerce

nd learning.

eath of Aristotle 322
eath of Alexander 323
lexander invades Asia 334
acedon supreme in Greece 338
eath of Plato 347

ise of Thebes 371

eath of Socrates 399

/ar of Athens
nd Sparta 431-404

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ericles 460-430

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ersian invasions 490-479

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B.C. 250

The

Romans

become

B.C. 300

masters

of

Italy

B.C. 350

B.C. 400

Quarrels

of

Patricians

B.C. 450

and

Plebeians

B.C. 500

Rome a republic 509

Rome

B.C. 550

under

Kings

B.C. 600

ROME

breeze rocks the slim cypresses. This is a fitting time and place to take our last view of the Hellenes.

Exercises

1. Would you rather have been an Athenian or a Spartan?

2. The columns of the Parthenon are not quite parallel to each other and the corner columns are thicker than the others. Why?

3. Look at the pictures and statues of clothed Greeks in this book and elsewhere and decide what garments they are wearing.

4. In the pictures of a Greek school on p. 170 what four subjects are being taught? Who are the men with long sticks?

5. What stories are told about Archimedes? What discoveries did he make?

6. Who was called " the father of History " and who " the master of those who know "?

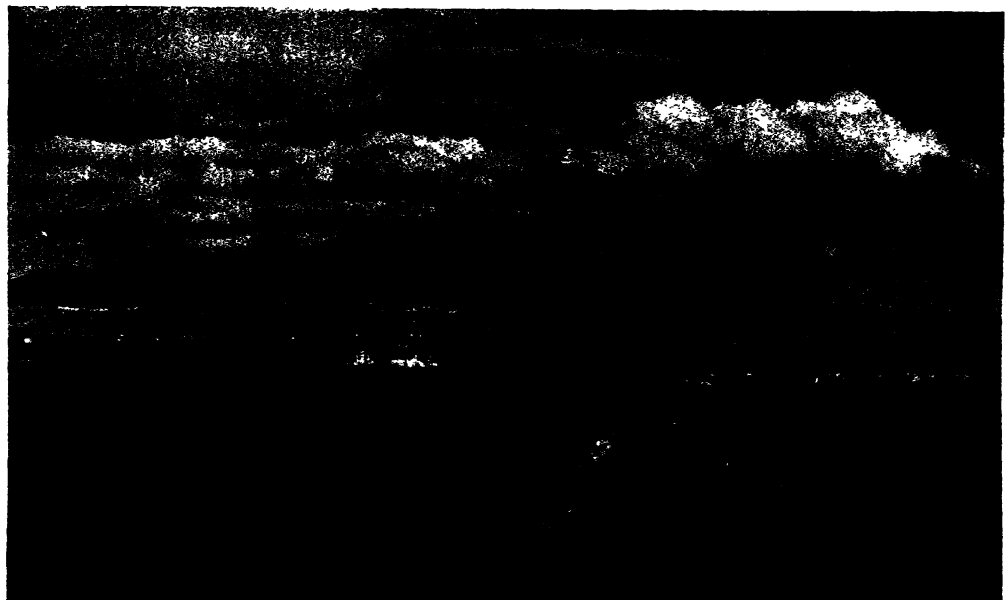


Photo. Anderson.

THE ALBAN HILLS

Seen across the Roman plain.

Photo. W. F. Mansell.

THE ROMANS WERE FOND OF PORK

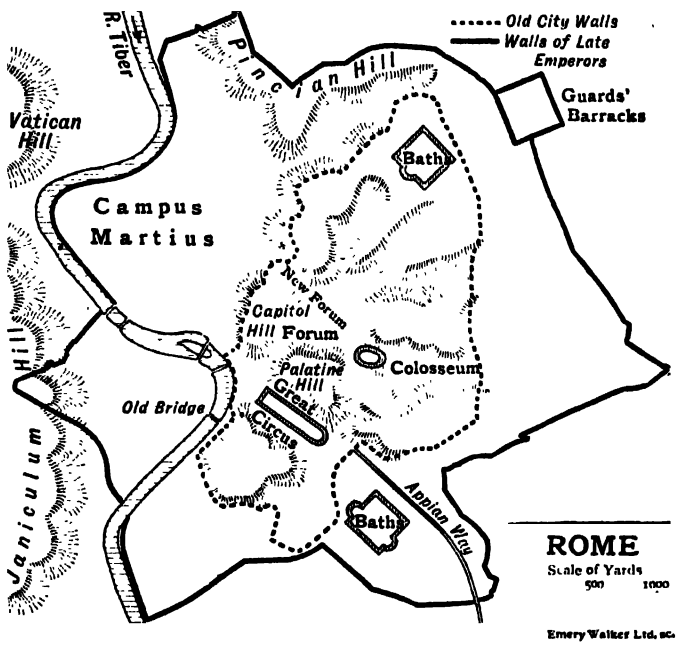
CHAPTER SIX

THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

A. The City on Seven Hills

Rome to-day is still the centre of an empire and the capital of a great country. It is still a crowded and most interesting city; but though there are some impressive relics left of its ancient grandeur, we cannot expect a town that has always had a large population to remain anything like it was two thousand years ago. Yet there are some things that do not change. The natural boundary of the city on its western side is still the yellow-green river Tiber, with the ridges of the Janiculum and the Vatican rising from its further bank. The Romans of to-day, most evenings of the year, can enjoy, as much as their far-off ancestors did, the glorious crimson sunsets over those ridges, when the whole city for a few moments seems to catch fire. There is still an open, public space in the upper loop of the Tiber, the one that curves away from the city, where the Field of Mars was in ancient times. The Pincian Hill, the northern outpost of Rome, and its public gardens

where "umbrella" pines and cypresses grow, is the rendezvous of the fashionable world out for a stroll in the cool of the evening, as it was in the days of Cicero and Cæsar. The hills on which Rome was built have shrunk with time. But the Capitol, small yet steep, still dominates them. Looking south-east from its topmost



height across a bare plain, the Roman Campagna, you see, twelve miles away, the blue Alban hills, that lead up to the Apennines, the great central "spine" of Italy. If you walk about the streets of Rome in July or August in the afternoon, especially if you are reckless enough to stay on the sunny side, you will realise before very long why well-to-do Romans of the ancient world deserted the capital at that time of the year and fled to their villas among the cool woods and waterfalls of the Albans or on the cliffs of the lovely bay of Naples.

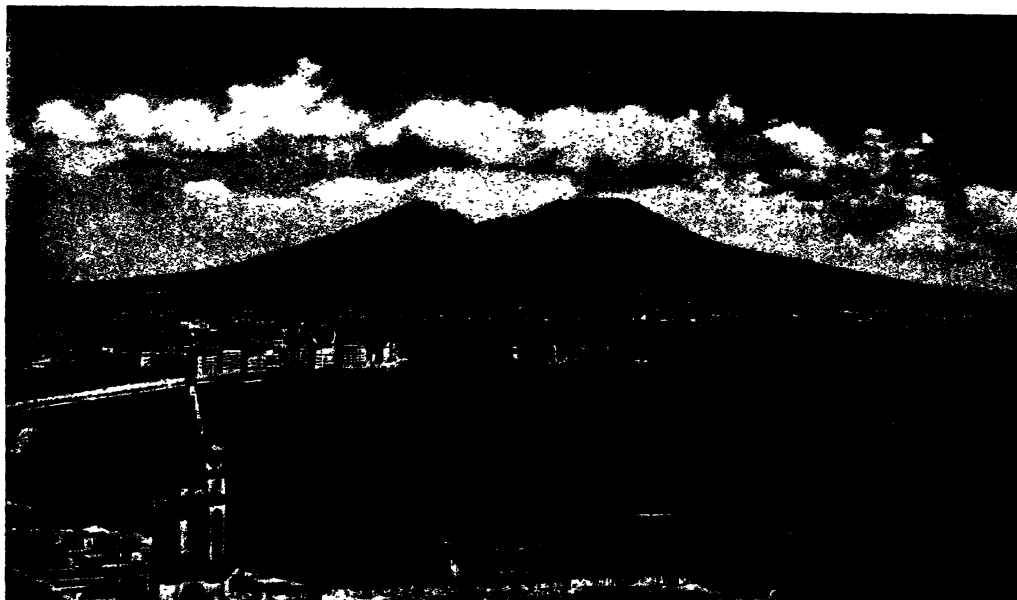
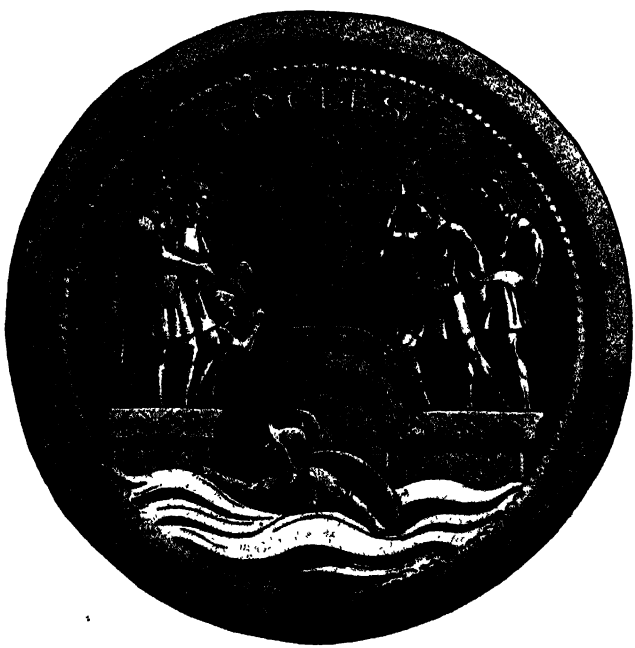


Photo. Anderson.

THE BAY OF NAPLES

A view from the district fashionable in Roman times.

The history of Rome really begins about 500 B.C., *i.e.* when Athens was under the rule of "tyrants" and the Greeks cities of the Asia Minor coast were restless under Persian overlords. It was about that time that Rome became a republic. According to legends, which contain a certain amount of truth, for a hundred and



HORATIUS SWIMMING TO SHORE

fifty years before that, Rome had been ruled by kings, the last of whom had been hated "foreigners," Etruscans from the large province immediately to the north of Rome. These Etruscans, a thick-set race with long, black hair, seem to have had an eastern origin. We do not yet know much about them, as they have left no literature and we cannot yet understand their inscriptions. They seem to have been descendants of

Lydians (p. 99) or even Hittites (p. 70) who had emigrated to the far west. At any rate they had a higher standard of civilisation than the native tribes of Italy, and we can assume that under their rule early Rome made great progress.

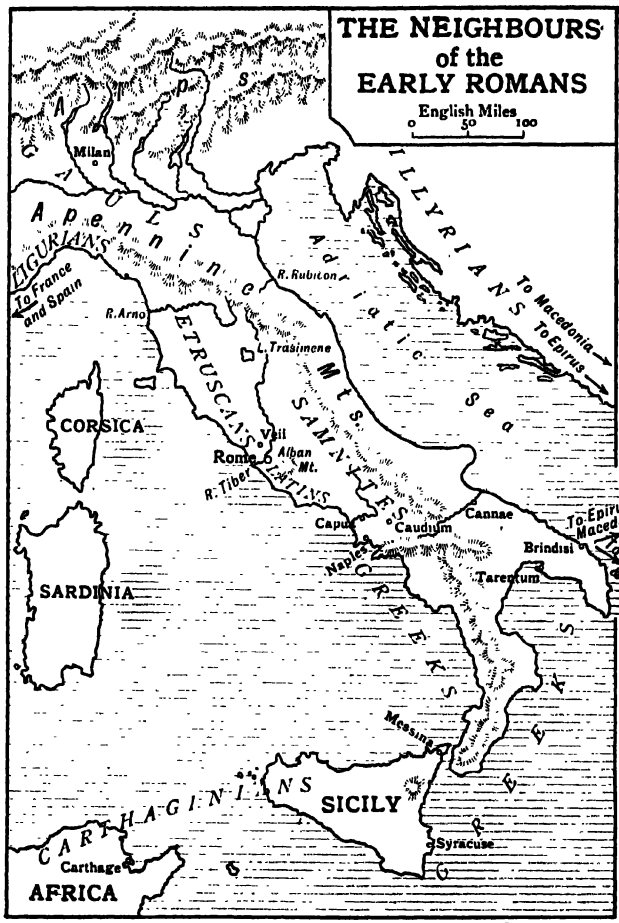
The legends tell us how the last king of Rome, Tarquin the Proud, by his harshness and arrogance goaded the Romans into rebellion, and they drove him out. Of course, he made determined efforts to get back, helped by his friends and kinsmen among the Etruscan chiefs. You must have heard of at least one story concerning that struggle, how Horatius and his two friends defended the wooden bridge over the Tiber, the only one in those days, against the royalist invaders suddenly pouring down from the Janiculan hill. In "Lays of Ancient Rome" (by Macaulay) the heroic spirit of those early days of the republic is wonderfully revived. You remember how the bridge began to collapse with Horatius still on it, for the Romans had feverishly cut through its supports at their end, and how with a prayer he jumped into the river and swam, fully armed, to the bank, so that "even the ranks of Tuscany could scarce forbear to cheer."

Before we go any further with the history of Rome, a problem must be stated, and in the rest of the chapter you must look for different parts of the answer, which is not a simple one. The problem is this—why did the Romans become first, masters of Italy, then lords of nearly the whole of the world known in their days? They began as one of many Italian city-states, and not a specially well-situated or enterprising one at that. At the period when our story begins, no one would have dreamt that the small town on the Tiber, about fifteen miles from its mouth, was destined to be mistress of the world. The Etruscans in their strong towns were masters of a large, rich province immediately to the north of them. The largest of these towns, Veii, was only twelve miles from Rome. And to the south lay Capua, also founded by Etruscans, a large and flourishing city in the fertile province of Campania.

In the early days, the Capuans, living their easy and luxurious lives, must have despised the Romans, who were content with simple living and drudgery.

In the north of Italy, in what we to-day call Piedmont and Lombardy, lived large numbers of Gauls, tall, mostly fair, and warlike people, an important branch of the Celtic race which in the Bronze and Early Iron Age occupied a good deal of north-western Europe. Even to-day in north Italy you will frequently come across fair, blue-eyed Italians. Fierce fighting took place between the Romans and the Gauls before the war-loving northern hordes submitted. The Romans never regarded the northern plain as really Italian. To them it was a continuation of the country we call France. Italy began officially not at the Alps but at the first part of the Apennine range that slants across the peninsula from the Gulf of Genoa to the Adriatic. The great river basin between the Alps and the Apennines they called "Gaul on our side of the Alps." On the shores of what we call the French and Italian Rivieras and in the limestone hills behind, as well as in Corsica, lived very fierce tribes known as Ligurians. All along the south coast of Italy, from Naples to Tarentum (p. 117), and in the east of Sicily, there were Greek cities. They were mostly content to live as Hellenes and take little notice of Italian affairs. But we shall hear of Tarentum and Syracuse again. In western Sicily, here and there in Sardinia, and on the nearest parts of the African coast, were the cities of the Phœnicians, by far the most important being Carthage. Returning to Rome after our tour round Italy, we must note that a long stretch of mountain country to the south-east was occupied by the Samnites, a race as proud, hardy and well-disciplined as the Romans themselves.

We have given this complete list of the neighbours of early Rome in order to state the first part of our problem (p. 192) in greater detail. In doing so, we have forecast a good deal of the earlier history of Rome, because all these neighbours were in turn defeated and subdued. Not that the Romans set out with the idea


THE NEIGHBOURS of the EARLY ROMANS
English Miles
0 50 100
Milan
CISALPINE GAUL
Apennines
LIGURIANS
To France and Spain
R. Arno
R. Rubicon
Adriatic Sea
ILLYRIANS
To Macedonia
To Epirus
L. Trasimene
ETRUSCANS
Veii
Rome
Alban Mt.
R. Tiber
LATINS
SAMNITES
Mts.
CORSICA
SARDINIA
Capua
Naples
Caudium
Cannae
Brindisi
Tarentum
To Epirus & Macedonia
To Greece & Egypt
GREEKS
Messina
SICILY
CARTHAGINIANS
Carthage
AFRICA
Syracuse
Emery Walker Ltd. sc.

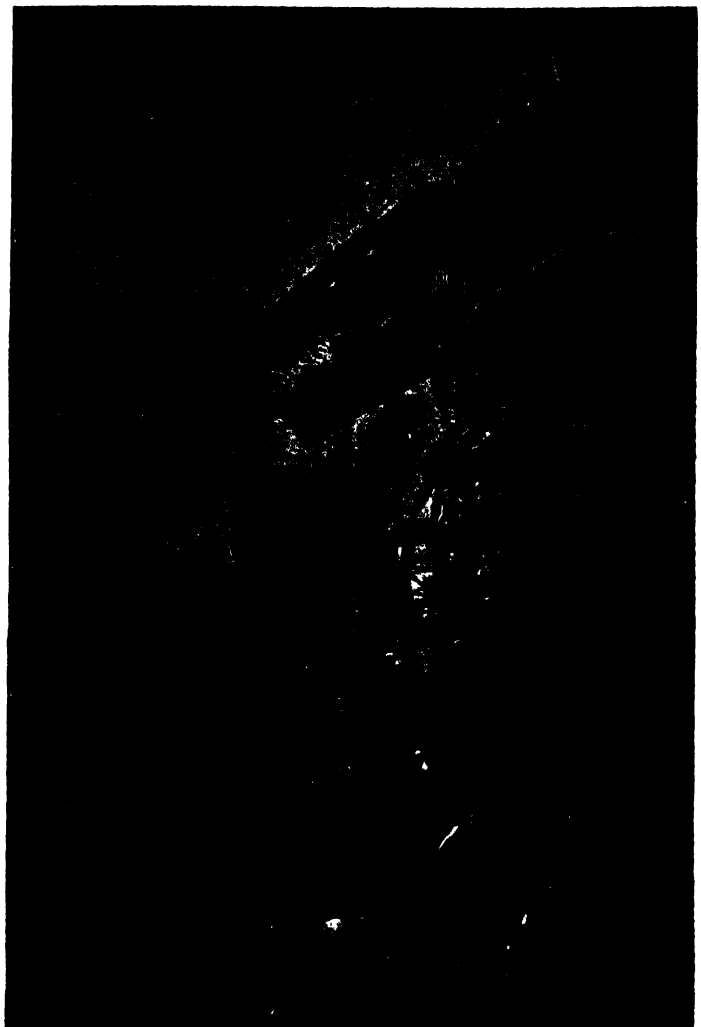
of conquering the whole of Italy. It was done partly in self-defence, partly in response to requests for help made to them by allies. Some of the reasons for the success of the Romans we can set down here. The first may be given briefly as Discipline, enforced by harsh punishment, but also arising from a strong instinct in Roman character. In contrast with the Greeks, who insisted on their rights, the Romans thought first of their duties. According to Roman ideas the Greeks asked too many questions. It was enough for a Roman that his father, his magistrate, or his officer had given an order. To carry out that order, however unfair or unpleasant, was all the "Virtue" or "Justice" a true Roman need trouble his head about. This instinct for obedience probably arose from the custom that gave every Roman father absolute power over his sons, even when they were grown up, married, and fathers themselves. In theory a Roman father could put his son to death for serious disobedience, and sometimes this terrible privilege was exercised. There was at various times bitter class-feeling in Rome between the aristocrats (patricians) and the ordinary population (plebeians), but it was not allowed to wreck the State, the instinct for unity being too strong.

Another reason was the intense pride of the Romans and their boundless confidence in themselves. "Rome is bound to win in the end," they always thought. And because they felt sure of that, in the end they always did win.

A different sort of reason was their skill as civil engineers, backed as it was by the Roman readiness for hard physical toil in any climate. They considered no task beyond their powers. If a lake had to be drained, a road taken over mountain or marsh, a wide, swift river bridged, the tools and gear were sent for, or were made on the spot, and in anything from a few days to a few years the task was done. If a city had to be starved into surrender, the Romans thought nothing of building ten or even twenty miles of elaborate trenches and ramparts round it. Once the ring was complete

an enemy's chance of getting in or out of that city was a very poor one. The Romans were not fond of the sea, and were not what we should call good sailors. But if the need arose, they could turn a forest into a navy in a few weeks, and crush Gallic tribes used to sailing the Channel and the Bay of Biscay, or the Carthaginians of north Africa, with all their five hundred years' experience of the Phœnician galley.

We need not go into great detail about the wars which made a Latin tribe, living between the Tiber, the Alban hills and the sea, masters of Italy, But you may like to hear some of the stories connected with these wars. Under pressure from tribes beyond the Alps the Gauls of north Italy swept down into Etruria. A friendly city appealed to the Romans for help, and the latter sent ambassadors who very foolishly joined in a battle against the Gauls. These, enraged, advanced on Rome and utterly defeated a Roman army by the river Allia, a tributary of the Tiber, only six miles from Rome. The anniversary of that defeat was always regarded as an unlucky day by the superstitious Romans. There was a panic flight of most of the inhabitants from the lower part of the city. A small force of the bravest men undertook to defend the citadel and the temples on the Capitol hill. Some of the old men also stayed behind in the city. Too old to fight, they meant to sacrifice their lives for Rome some other way. The Gauls celebrated their victory with revels, and it was some time later that they entered Rome, advancing slowly and cautiously, uneasy at the strange silence of the deserted city. Soon they came across the old men, each sitting on a chair of ivory, clad in his state robes, as motionless as a statue. Then a Gaul stroked the white beard of one of the elders, perhaps to see if he was really alive. The old man at once struck him with his staff, whereupon he and the others were killed. They died willingly, believing their deaths would appease the anger of the gods at the sin of the Roman ambassadors. The Gauls then burned the city and attacked the Capitol. For months



THE GAULS AND THE GEESE ON THE CAPITOL
Notice the statue of the Wolf and the Twins.

they failed to take it. Once they found a secret way up the rocks and climbed up at night. Not a sentry heard them, not a dog barked. But there was a flock of geese in the Capitol, kept in the temple of Juno. They did hear the Gauls, and all cackled their hardest till one of the sleepy guards awoke, only just in time. But at last the garrison was starved out, and the Gauls had to be bribed with gold to go away (390 B.C.). There were later raids, but in these the Gauls were defeated, their swarms of cavalry and blood-curdling battle-cries now causing less terror. In time the Romans felt strong enough to send armies to north Italy, and after several wars the Gauls, checked by a line of fortress-towns, accepted Roman rule.

About fifty years later came the first of a series of wars with the Samnites. These hardy mountaineers constantly raided the rich plains of Campania, and when Capua itself was threatened, it appealed to Rome. The Samnites readily accepted the challenge, and proved themselves the most dangerous rivals the Romans ever had. The most famous incident in these wars is the Roman surrender at the Caudine Forks. A Roman army, in a hurry to help allies on the far side of the Samnite country, rushed headlong into a trap almost as soon as they had crossed the Samnite border. They had to go through one mountain pass, across a little plain encircled by steep hills, then into a second pass. When they reached the entrance to the second pass, they found it completely blocked and guarded by Samnites. They hurried back to the first pass, and found that while they were crossing and re-crossing the plain, the Samnites had been busy there too. It was hopeless to try to climb up the rocks elsewhere. There was nothing for it but to surrender.

The Roman general agreed to the terms demanded by the Samnites to end the war, but before his men were released, they had to pass under the yoke, *i.e.* their arms and all their clothing but one garment were taken from them, and amid jeers and blows they had to slip through the space formed by a horizontal

spear lashed half-way down two upright ones. Now although the consuls (magistrate-generals) as well as all other officers had sworn to get the treaty passed by the Senate (see p. 202), when they returned to Rome they did nothing of the kind, and it is this part of their conduct which is beyond argument dishonourable and unRoman. The Senate refused to recognise the treaty and at their own request sent all the officers back as prisoners to the Samnites. The latter refused to have them unless, of course, all the men who had surrendered at the Forks were returned as prisoners too (321 B.C.).

It was not till 290 B.C. that the wars came to an end, the Samnites still remaining independent, though they had to give up their leader who had trapped the Romans at Caudium, and he was put to death. They remained bad neighbours, ready to help any enemies of Rome. More than two hundred years later they took advantage of Rome's desperate troubles to get revenge. At that time the Romans were fighting fiercely among themselves, while their best commander was away in the east, fighting the most dangerous king the Romans ever had to deal with. At the very gates of Rome, the army which had been brought back from the east utterly defeated the Samnites. Their land was laid waste, the inhabitants killed or sold as slaves, and Roman colonists took their place.

The power of the Etruscans was greatly weakened by the raids of the Gauls. But the strongest of their massive cities still defied the Romans whenever a chance occurred. One by one, however, they fell victims to obstinate Roman sieges. By about 300 B.C. all the Etruscans were in varying degrees subjects of Rome.

Rome's chance to obtain control of southern Italy occurred through a quarrel with the leading Greeks of Tarentum, who were inclined to be impudent busybodies. The other Greek towns had long looked up to the Tarentines as their leaders. But in 282 B.C., harassed as often before by raids of southern Italian tribes, some of them appealed to Rome for help, and admitted Roman garrisons. Of course the Tarentines

were furious. Now the Romans some time before had agreed never to send their ships into the great square bay in the foot of Italy on which Tarentum lies. Through some mistake a small Roman fleet strayed in and was fiercely attacked by the Tarentines. When the Romans sent a deputation to settle the quarrel, the mob jeered at its leader's attempts to speak Greek, and threw mud at his toga. "Laugh now," he said sternly, "but you will weep when you wash this toga with your blood." A ten years' war followed, in which the Tarentines were helped by Pyrrhus, the ambitious young prince of Epirus, the large province to the north-west of Greece that comes within fifty miles of the heel of Italy. He was anxious to win renown as "the Alexander of the West." He copied the methods of his famous kinsman, and at first his phalanx (p. 144) and his war-elephants badly frightened the Romans. But though he claimed his first battle with them as a victory, his own losses were so heavy that he said to his staff, "Another such victory and I shall be ruined." Hence our phrase "a Pyrrhic victory." He tried his luck in Sicily, but the Carthaginians (p. 193) severely harassed him. On his return to Italy the Romans defeated him so heavily that he was glad to leave. Soon after this Tarentum surrendered (272 B.C.) and the Greek cities accepted the Romans as their overlords.

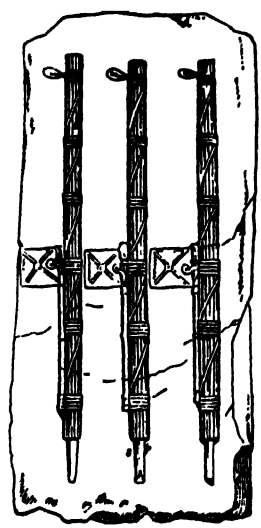
The struggle with the Ligurians was a very slow and tedious business. Long after they had been driven from the coast, along which ran the main road to France and Spain, these savage, wiry little men in their hill-forts defied the Romans for centuries. But the Romans, learning by painful experience, adapted their fighting methods to mountain warfare, and by sheer grim persistence wore down the Ligurians at last.

By establishing numerous colonies of Roman citizens, giving many of their nearer subjects, especially the Latins, some of the privileges of Roman citizens, and allowing the more distant ones to govern themselves, as long as they paid taxes and supplied soldiers when required, the city by the Tiber bridges made its

rule tolerable to most Italians most of the time. A city-state now for the first time governed a large country.

B. S.P.Q.R.

You may have noticed the above four letters in pictures of ancient Rome and wondered what they meant. They stand for the Latin words SENATVS POPVLVS QVE ROMANVS (the V's are pronounced as U's.). That means the Roman Senate and People, and it sums up the government of Rome in the days when it was a republic. It is high time we got some idea of how this government worked.



FASCES
Notice the axes.

When kingship was abolished, the wide powers of the king were divided among a number of elected magistrates, whose authority was bestowed on them by the whole citizen-body. The chief officers of the republic were the two consuls, presidents in peace and also commanders-in-chief during war. Of course this was not at all a convenient arrangement, but in the early days of the republic, the Romans seem to have been very much afraid of the possibility of a "tyrant." It was arranged that either consul should issue orders for a month, and while he was the senior he was attended by the twelve lictors, a sort of police guard. Each lictor carried a bundle of rods, and while the consuls were generals, an axe, fastened together with a red leather strap. These were known as the fasces, and were a warning to all of the consul's power to flog and behead, a punishment regularly inflicted on traitors of any kind. The consuls held office for one year only

at a time, but they could be re-elected after a number of years, and there were Romans who could boast that they had been consul three times.

In any very serious crisis of war or politics the senior consul could appoint a supreme emergency magistrate called the dictator. Even the consuls had to obey him, and his lictors, unlike those of the consuls, carried axes in the City. The dictator was appointed for six months only, and he was expected to resign earlier.

The most important regular magistrates after the consuls were the prætors, also annually elected. They were what we should call Chief Justices. The third group of high officials was the ædiles, whom we may describe as the Chief Constables of Rome. Every ambitious Roman hoped to be, in turn, ædile, prætor, consul, and so to pass through what was known as "the Course of Honours." These magistrates on state occasions sat on handsome ivory chairs and their togas had a broad purple stripe round the edge.

In the early days of the struggle for power between the patricians and plebeians (p. 195), the latter had elected magistrates of their own, called tribunes, to protect them. But even when the quarrel was over, these ten Tribunes of the Common People were still elected and kept their very wide powers. In theory they could imprison any magistrate but a dictator, and in practice they did exercise their right to veto public business of any kind. This extraordinary privilege became doubly important when they were allowed to listen to debates in the Senate.

The mention of the latter very dignified body of Roman aristocrats reminds us that we are still waiting for an explanation of the letters at the head of the section. The word "Senate" itself, connected with "senex," the Latin word for "an old man," tells us that there was in Rome, as in many city-states, a large committee of "elders" who, if they could do nothing more, debated matters of state and gave advice to the governing power. In the days of the kings, Roman senators were chosen from noble families by the kings.

The Senate remained when monarchy ended. The consuls took its advice, as the kings had done, especially as it became the custom for every high official, if he had carried out his duties without disgrace, to be made a senator for life, when his year of office was over.

Soon the Senators came to be the real governing body of Rome. They were supposed only to advise the consuls, but they could make things very awkward if their "advice" was not taken. A resolution of the Senate came to have as much legal force as a full law agreed to by all the citizens. If a magistrate did not consult them about any important matter, or ignored their wishes, they could hold him up by a resolution, by stopping his expenses or by getting just one of the Tribunes of the Common People to use his veto. The Senate controlled Rome's dealings with foreigners and none but a senator could be an ambassador. In addition to this control of the government, the Senate's power extended to the law courts. As Rome became richer and more powerful, fresh courts became necessary. But instead of making new, permanent law courts, the Senate set up from time to time what they called a Committee of Inquiry, which became just as powerful and permanent as a High Court, but was under the senators and not the magistrates.

After all this you will naturally ask how much power was left for the assemblies of the People, the official partners of the Senate in the supreme authority of Rome. The answer is quite simple. Very little, except the power to elect the chief officials, to declare peace or war, and to vote on such laws as the Senate put before them. So that while the great trumpets blew less and less often at sunrise from the Capitol and the city walls to call out the People to an assembly, the Senate met more and more often. On the platform at one end of the Senate House sat the chief magistrates on their ivory chairs, the lesser officials on their red leather folding stools, and the tribunes all together on a bench. On important questions the senators "divided" into "Ayes" and "Noes" as in our own Parliament.

In the early days of the republic the patricians had tried to keep power of every kind entirely in their hands. It is quite likely that the common people were worse off under them than they had been under the kings. Not only were they kept out of the magistracies and not allowed to learn anything about the laws and the numerous sacred ceremonies on which all Roman public affairs depended, but they were very harshly treated whenever they fell badly into debt, which seems to have happened often. Many poor men were made slaves in this way, and the law even allowed a man's creditors to cut him in pieces, if they could satisfy their greed in no other way.

In the first century of the republic (500–400 B.C.), there was a sharp struggle between the classes, with very little bloodshed, however. The patricians clung to their privileges with true Roman stubbornness, but in the end the plebeians won practically equal rights. Sometimes they threatened to leave Rome altogether and found a city nearby on their own. They actually did leave twice for a short time, and the patricians, with no army to defend Rome, were distinctly frightened. Sometimes the plebeians rallied round a popular leader till he looked like becoming a "tyrant." The patricians hated and feared this threat of what they called a "king" as much as the other method of protest. The fact that there was never actually a "tyranny" at Rome is worth thinking about. A better way out of the quarrel was when broad-minded men on either side agreed upon necessary changes. It took about two hundred and fifty years before all citizens were equal, that is, in theory at any rate. Wealth and social influence still gave certain families in practice frequent control of the government. But as Rome grew more prosperous, and after the two classes were allowed to intermarry, the old quarrels about privilege of birth, debts, and the price of corn came to an end.

It has just been pointed out that sacred ceremonies played a great part in public life among the

Romans, even more so than among the Greeks. The Romans worshipped similar gods and goddesses to those of the Greeks (p. 165) with even vaguer ideas about these deities. Like all the ancients, they slaughtered animals as part of their worship. They drove hard bargains with their gods, very carefully worded, like contracts made by lawyers. But one

Photo. Brogi.

TEMPLE OF APOLLO, POMPEII

Pompeii, in Campania, was covered with a thick layer of ashes as a result of the eruption of Vesuvius (in the background) in 79 A.D. From the excavations there we have learned much about Roman life. It was practically a suburb of Naples.

branch of their religion, which caused them to look for "omens" before beginning any sort of public business, seems particularly strange to our ideas. Anxious to find out whether the gods approved of whatever the magistrates or the generals were going to do, they looked for omens in various ways. They sacrificed animals and examined their internal organs. If

anything unusual was found, that was a bad sign. They watched the flight of birds across the sky; and paid special attention to thunder and lightning, for in this way Jupiter Best and Greatest, whose temple on the Capitol was the holiest building in Rome, obviously expressed his opinion. They kept sacred chickens and solemnly watched how they fed. If they ignored the grain and ran about chirping, that was bad. But if they gobbled it up so greedily that seeds fell from their beaks, the gods approved. There is a story of an impatient Roman admiral who, when he was very anxious to begin an important battle, was warned that the chickens would not eat. "I'll see to it that they drink, at any rate!" he roared, and threw the holy chickens, coop and all, overboard. Needless to say, he lost the battle. Sometimes a bad omen could be very inconvenient, and so lies and sly tricks were permitted. It seems strange that such absurd antics, arising from the lowest ideas of the Babylonians (p. 48), passed on by the Etruscans, should have been taken seriously by a nation which finally ruled most of the known world. After Jupiter, the Romans most revered Vesta, goddess of Hearth and Home. In her temple burned an eternal fire which was never allowed to go out. Her nuns were known as the Vestal Virgins, and girls from the noblest families were proud to join them. The official priests and priestesses of Rome were held in great respect. They took a prominent part in public life and sometimes influenced politics.

C. "See to it, Romans, every head is bowed,
But spare the conquered when you've crushed
the proud."

The best work that the Romans did in their earlier history was to win central Italy by hard fighting and fair dealing. This section will tell how the Romans won the first part of their world-empire. Perhaps their success was essential for the better government of the

world later on. But we cannot always admire their methods. More than once they showed themselves cruel, treacherous and selfish.

Their hardest struggle was against the great trading republic of Carthage, situated on a fine harbour on the north coast of Africa, a day's sail from western Sicily. It was said to have been founded by Phœnicians from Sidon (p. 83), and it had become the greatest centre of commerce in the western Mediterranean. The neighbouring parts of north Africa, as well as western Sicily, were subject to it, and it had depôts in Sardinia, Corsica, the Balearic Isles and south-eastern Spain. In these waters the Carthaginians enforced a monopoly of trade, and their galleys promptly rammed any strangers "poaching" there. The fertile land near Carthage was carefully farmed and divided up into large estates, where great landowners and merchant-princes had their magnificent villas bowered in palms. But for its main wealth and power Carthage relied on its docks, markets and workshops, its merchant navy and the squadrons of quinqueremes which protected it.

Its government resembled that of Rome. There were two "Justices" like the consuls, and a council like the Senate. But they were controlled by a few very rich and powerful merchant-princes. Their rule was based entirely on money and the force it could buy. They kept large gangs of slaves, extorted all they could from their subjects, and hired soldiers of any nation to keep both in order. They were cunning and energetic, and had the confidence which centuries of power bestow.

On the Sicilian side of what we call the straits of Messina lies the old town of that name. A body of Italian hired soldiers seized the town and terrorised the district as pirates and brigands. The Greeks of Syracuse naturally attacked them, and the brigands appealed both to Rome and Carthage, and by their treachery to both caused (264 B.C.) a fierce struggle between the two republics which was only decided

after three exhausting wars, and ended with the disappearance of the city of Carthage.

Syracuse joined the Romans, and between them they soon won over most of Sicily. But the strong navy of the Carthaginians had to be reckoned with. Thanks to that, they could hold out in the harbours of west Sicily and also cut off the Romans in Sicily from Italy. The Romans set to work and built scores of quinqueremes and triremes. They were helped by the Greeks of south Italy, who had agreed to supply ships and sailors just as Italian subjects had to supply soldiers. But the Romans feared the seamanship of their rivals. This they countered by a quite simple invention. They made a drawbridge thirty-six feet long and wide enough for two soldiers abreast to run along. On the underside of this they planted a massive spike, slightly curved. They fixed a short, stout mast in the prow of each of their battleships and fastened the drawbridge to it so that the bottom pivoted freely round the bottom of the mast while the top, with the spike pointing outwards, was slung to the top of the mast and could easily be dropped. Somebody noticed the resemblance of the drawbridge to a giant crow squatting on the deck. When the enemy came close enough the "crow" was dropped and the spike buried itself in his deck. Then the Romans swarmed across and seamanship ceased to matter.

Although the Carthaginians seem to have been quite baffled by the "crow," the war dragged on for years. Hundreds of battleships were built and lost by both sides in battles and storms. At last the Carthaginians were completely exhausted, and peace was made in 241 B.C. The Romans levied a heavy fine and took all Sicily except the territory of Syracuse. A few other towns were left independent, but most of the island was treated as conquered territory. There was no attempt to try to make it an extension of Italy by granting part-citizenship. The Romans imitated the Carthaginians in their selfish abuse of power. They imposed heavy taxes on Sicily and confiscated most of the land.

Greedy Roman landlords rented it, and working the land hard with gangs of slaves, a by-product of the war, exhausted the soil, but soon became rich. The Sicilian farmer who lost his land was, of course, ruined quickly. The Italian peasant-farmer was ruined more slowly but almost as thoroughly, since quantities of cheap, slave-produced corn were henceforth imported from Sicily into Italy. Roman officials sent out to Sicily saw to it that their stay in the island should be a profitable one. The collection of taxes was left to business companies who handed over a lump sum to the government and then collected what they could from the tax-payers. You may be sure that the companies, with soldiers to back them, did not lose on the deal. Then there were Roman money-lenders, willing to oblige the farmer or tax-payer with ready cash, at a high rate of interest.

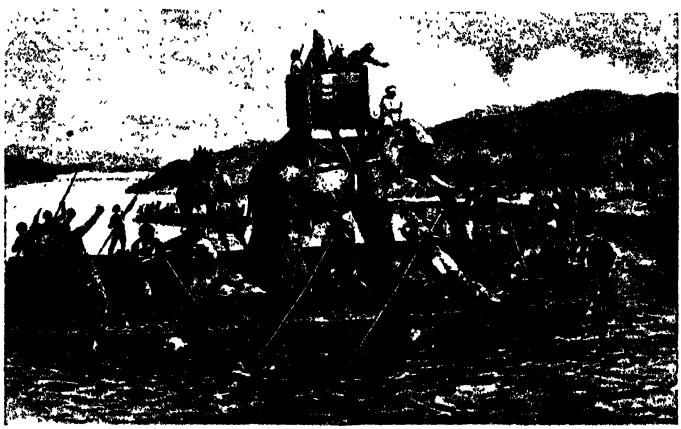
All this sounds rather gloomy, but that is the sort of thing that went on in all the "provinces" of the Roman empire in its early stages. It will help you to understand why the Romans were so ready to go to war at this period and why their empire spread so quickly. The prospect of looting and enslaving the world simply intoxicated them. No doubt any other men in any age would not have been proof against such temptation. Not long after the first war with the Carthaginians, the Romans seized Corsica and Sardinia, helped by subjects of Carthage who had revolted. And soon after, they finally crushed the Gauls of north Italy (p. 193) and captured their capital city, Milan.

After putting down a terrible rebellion of north African tribes, joined by their own mercenaries who had not been paid for a long time, the Carthaginians tried to make up for their losses by extending their rule in southern Spain. They opened up gold and silver mines there and won the tribesmen over to support them. Their governor in Spain, Hamilcar, was the general who had put down the African revolt and before that, during the war, had given the Romans great trouble in western Sicily. Both he and his

son-in-law were killed in Spain, but the three sons of Hamilcar had been trained to carry on the work. The cleverest of these, Hannibal, had been brought up with the army in Spain, and when he was only a young boy his father had made him take a solemn oath of eternal hatred to Rome. When he became governor in turn, at the age of twenty-six, he soon extended the Carthaginian empire northwards to the river Ebro. Now the Romans had recently made an agreement with the Carthaginians that the latter should not pass that river. For the Romans already had their eyes on north-east Spain for themselves. But to make things even more awkward for Hannibal they had made a treaty with a town a good way south of the Ebro, which they were hardly entitled to do. This town, Saguntum, Hannibal attacked and captured. He took no notice of the Romans' protest, so they complained to Carthage. There the authorities could not make up their minds. The Spanish empire had been very much a family affair, and the government were not greatly interested in it. But Hannibal was popular with the poorer Carthaginians. When the Roman ambassador asked the Justices sternly whether they wanted peace or war, they asked him to choose. He said, "Then I give you war."

Hannibal had already made his plans. He meant to invade Italy and break the rule of the Romans there. He felt sure that the Gauls, only just conquered, would join him, and probably the Samnites and others in the heart of Italy would revolt. The Roman navy was too strong for him to cross by sea, and he would not take the coast road from Spain into Italy as that was sure to be strongly guarded, and the Greeks of Marseilles were friendly with the Romans. Hannibal always planned to give his enemies an unpleasant surprise. In the spring of 218 B.C. he left New Carthage, his headquarters in Spain, and marching near the east coast, passed Saguntum, the Ebro, and the Pyrenees. Then, thrusting his way through the tribes of south-east Gaul, he crossed the Rhone.

The Roman consul, who was having some trouble with Gauls in north-west Italy, now hurried via Marseilles up the Rhone, but found he was three days too late. So he sent his army on to Spain to watch Hannibal's brother, Hasdrubal, who had been left behind with a large army, while the consul himself returned to north Italy to see what happened next. Meanwhile, Hannibal had to go a long way up the Rhone before he found a convenient tributary valley leading to the Alps, which he crossed in late autumn. It was getting cold,



HANNIBAL CROSSING THE RHONE

and mountain tribes delayed them with ambushes. The march to the top of the pass took nine days. It was worse still coming down on the Italian side, which is steeper. The tracks were slippery with ice and snow, and there were thousands of loaded mules and horses to be brought down, as well as elephants. The Carthaginians had to build a new track of their own, sweeping in great zigzags down the mountain side. That meant shattering masses of rock. This they did by lighting fires under them, and when they were hot, pouring water, and even wine, over them.

The fifty thousand infantry and nine thousand

cavalry with which he had entered Gaul had now shrunk to twenty thousand and six thousand. The Romans at this time could call on seven hundred thousand citizens and allies for their infantry, and seventy thousand for cavalry. Of course there were large Carthaginian armies in Spain and Africa that Hannibal could send for, but there would always be the question of how they could reach him. It had not been possible for Hannibal to bring siege engines over the Alps, so that he could not do much against the numerous Roman fortress-towns. Then there was the problem of his food supply. We can see that Hannibal's prospects were not very bright unless he could cause a serious revolt against the Romans.

After a short rest in the sunny, fertile plain, Hannibal made his way south across the great river-system of north Italy, easily evading the consul's clumsy attempts to stop him. Joined by a good many unreliable Gauls, he made a painful crossing of the Apennines in order to get away from the line of Roman barrier-forts (p. 198). It was early spring, and icy blasts lifted them clean off their feet. When that was over they floundered along the marshes of the upper Arno valley through rain and sleet. On the shore of Trasimene, a great, lonely lake in the hills, they trapped and cut to pieces a large Roman army, the consul too being killed (217 B.C.). Hannibal was now on the high road to Rome and he advanced within sixty miles of it. But the strength of the Roman fortresses and his failure to cause a revolt made him cautious. He swerved away to the east coast. There he obtained stores and fresh horses, trained his Gauls, got into touch with Carthage and otherwise prepared for a smashing victory against the Romans which should be decisive enough to cause a general revolt against them.

Meanwhile a dictator (p. 202) had been appointed: Fabius, from whose cautious methods the adjective "Fabian" is derived. He would not risk a battle with Hannibal, but followed him doggedly and cut off his supplies. By this time many Romans were

clamouring for a big attack on Hannibal and a quick end to the war. When the dictator's time was up, fresh consuls were elected, and they led a large army to finish off Hannibal. The result was a terrible disaster at Cannæ, in the south-east of Italy, where the Roman army was completely surrounded and wiped out (216 B.C.).

This victory did bring Hannibal within the next few years some of the results he expected. The Samnites and tribes of south Italy, Tarentum, Syracuse and even Capua joined him. The latter city became his headquarters for a time. But the inner ring of Rome's allies remained loyal. The Romans grimly refused to discuss peace. They got together another army, made up of the survivors of Cannæ, boys, men in prison for debt, even slaves bought from their owners. They armed them with any sort of weapon they could find anywhere. They risked ignoring Hannibal till the revolts were crushed, one after another. Though he brought his army within three miles of Rome and rode up to its gates, he could do nothing more, being unable to besiege it. He retired to south Italy and sent for his brother and the army in Spain, but they were taken by surprise and defeated in north Italy. The first that Hannibal knew of it was when his brother's head was thrown into his camp (207 B.C.). The Romans now felt strong enough to invade Africa, and Hannibal had to leave Italy to defend Carthage. The commander of the Romans was a member of a brilliant family, the Scipios, who had far greater intelligence and better education than most Romans. He completely surprised Hannibal by his rapid, clever manœuvres and thus, by a trap similar to those of Hannibal himself, ended the war (202 B.C.) by the battle of Zama, south of Carthage.

The Carthaginians had to give up Spain and all the islands of the Mediterranean which they held, all their war-elephants and all their galleys but ten. Five hundred battleships were burned in the harbour. They had to pay a million pounds at once and a heavy

sum every year for fifty years. And they had to promise on no account to make war on an ally of Rome.

Hannibal fled to the East and stirred up trouble for the Romans wherever he could, while they, flushed with victory, readily accepted every challenge. In two wars they conquered Macedon, which had supported Hannibal during his invasion of Italy. Illyria and Epirus were annexed for their support of Macedon. Another Scipio, brother of the conqueror of Zama, defeated the king of Syria, who had conquered most of Asia Minor (190 B.C.). This king had harboured Hannibal and interfered with the Greeks, whom the Romans, as the successors of the Macedonians, regarded as allies of Rome. The greatest of the Carthaginians, weary of being hounded by the Romans from one court to another, poisoned himself. The Egyptians, who had been saved from the Syrians by the Roman victory, put themselves under Rome's protection (168 B.C.). Dissatisfied with the help that the league of cities of southern Greece had given them against Macedon, the Romans collected a thousand of the leading citizens and kept them in Italy for seventeen years. When they were released they stirred up violent hatred of the Romans, and a war followed in which Corinth took a leading part. In 146 B.C. when its wealth and art treasures had been looted, Corinth was utterly blotted off the face of the earth, its people killed or enslaved.

The same year saw Carthage similarly treated. It had recovered in time from Zama and regained some of its old prosperity. This was too much for the greed and envy of certain Romans, and one of them, Marcus Cato, who had visited Carthage and who, by the way, was regarded as a model of antique Roman virtue, ended every speech he made in the Senate with the words, "Moreover, Carthage must be destroyed." Before long he had persuaded the Senate. The Numidians, western neighbours of Carthage, with sly encouragement from Rome, constantly annoyed the Carthaginians, who, by the treaty of 201 B.C. (p. 213), could not retaliate. They complained to the Romans,

who sided with the Numidians every time. At last Carthage was goaded into fighting the Numidians. Of course the Romans promptly accused the Carthaginians of violating the treaty, but promised to take no further action if the Carthaginians gave up to them three hundred children of their noblest families. No sooner was this done, than the Romans prepared to attack

Photo. Alinari.

A ROMAN TAILOR'S SHOP

The standing central figure shows the girt-up tunic as worn by all the working population of Rome.

Carthage. The city resisted for four years with wonderful determination and heroism. Women cut off their hair and made ropes of it for catapults. It was another Scipio, adopted grandson of the conqueror of Zama, who finally stormed the city. Only one-twelfth of its population was left. Fire ravaged the city for seventeen days and Scipio burst into tears as he watched.

The same Scipio had to be asked to finish another war. After the Romans had occupied what had

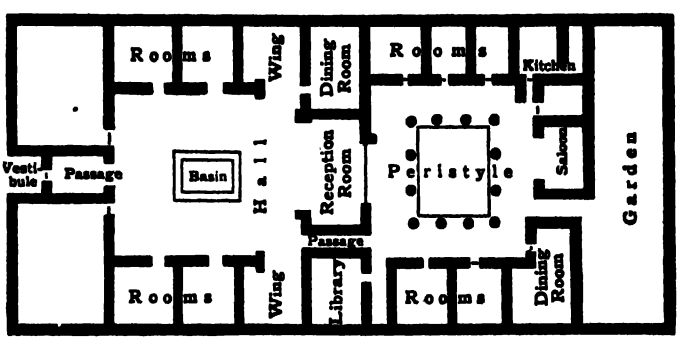
been the Carthaginian empire in Spain, they pushed on to overcome the fierce tribes of the north and west and made a very poor show there. Even a Roman historian admits that the long wars in Further Spain were "a grim and humiliating struggle." The last stand of the western Spaniards was made in Numantia, and in 133 B.C. it suffered the fate of Corinth and Carthage.

D. "Ill fares the land, to hastening woes a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

The conquests you have read about in the last section, while leaving the Romans masters, in effect, if not in name, of all the lands round the Mediterranean, produced very important effects on Rome itself and on Italy—some of them terribly bad effects. First of all the very appearance of Rome began to change. Roman officials in the East admired the handsome buildings of the Macedonian period (p. 153), and on their return encouraged public building worthy of the world's capital city. Round the Forum, in the old days simply a market square with little stalls, dignified offices for public and private business arose. The great improvements in housing (p. 154) were also reproduced in Rome. The old-fashioned Roman house consisted mainly of a large square room. There was a square hole in the roof for light and to let the smoke out, and a square tank in the floor beneath it to catch the rain water. The windows were simply small holes in the walls. Everyone ate and slept in this room, the atrium, which at the best might have one or two recesses, but hardly ever had small rooms opening off it. It contained one shrine for the Family Spirit, Lar (marked by a painting of a snake), and another, by the hearth, for the gods of the Household, the Penates. Busts or masks of famous ancestors had a position of honour.

But the house of a wealthy Roman built about 100 B.C. and after was a vast improvement on this.

The atrium, now reached through a porch and short passage, became what we should call a reception-hall and lounge. Around it there were now separate bedrooms and a study. There was also a large addition to the house, beyond the atrium. This was a pleasant courtyard surrounded by a colonnade, with flower-beds, a fountain and tables for outdoor refreshments. From this courtyard, the peristyle, other rooms could be reached, the dining-room, more bedrooms and the kitchen. Apart from the greatly improved design of the house, the water supply and



From Tucker's "Life in the Roman World of Nero and St. Paul."

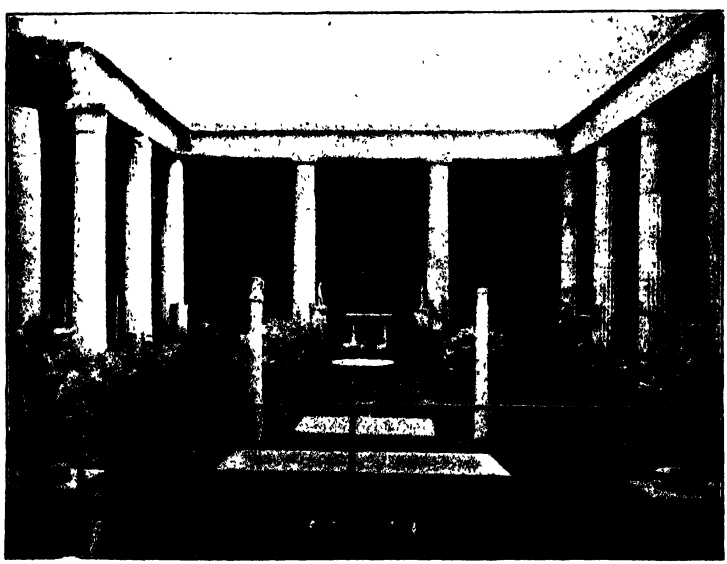
PLAN OF A LARGE ROMAN HOUSE OF LATER TIMES

sanitation were much better, hot and cold baths could be taken in comfort, and there was a system of central heating by hot air passing through hollow tiles in the floors and walls.

Such a house would contain statues, paintings, gold and silver plate, jewellery, tapestries and valuable furniture, mostly of Greek or Eastern origin or copied by Greek craftsmen. Very often they would actually be part of the plunder of some unlucky city. We hear of one Roman whose silverware weighed over four tons. Another brought back from Macedonia two hundred and fifty waggon-loads of statues and paintings. Another, who conquered just a corner of Greece, carried

off five hundred bronze and marble statues. Money, valuables of every kind, and art treasures had been accumulating in Sicily, Africa and the lands of the eastern Mediterranean for five hundred years, and Roman looters made a wonderful haul.

An establishment like this would need a staff of slaves—a door-keeper, personal servants and a kitchen staff. If there were a secretary, a book-keeper,



From Tucker's "Life in the Roman World of Nero and St. Paul."

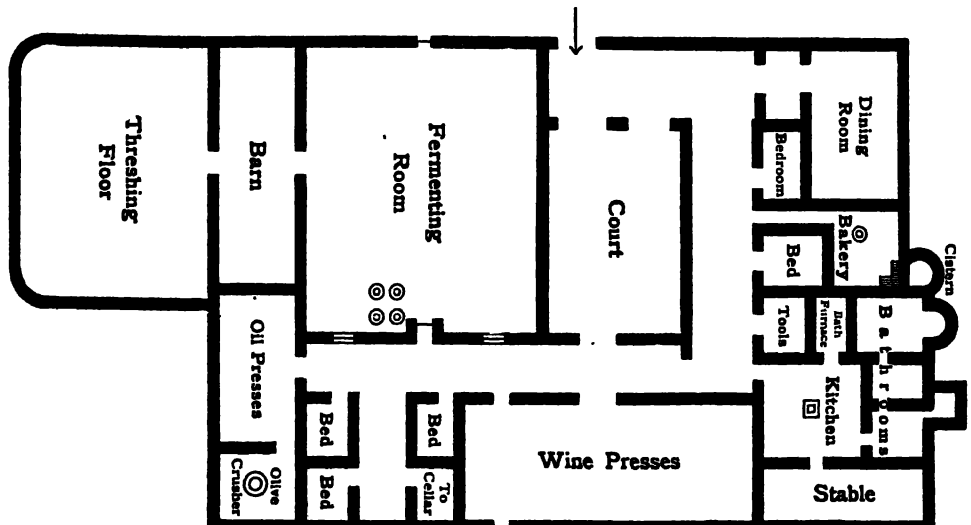
PERISTYLE OF A HOUSE IN POMPEII

a tutor, a librarian or a doctor he was pretty sure to be a Greek. In fact, Roman civilisation from this period onwards depends on the services of intelligent and highly-trained Greeks, slaves or ex-slaves. They did most of the work nowadays performed by what we call professional men.

Another change in the appearance of Rome was due to the erection of many tall blocks of flats, "jerry-

built" hovels which often collapsed and easily caught fire. Where had all the swarming inmates of these less luxurious homes come from? They were mostly unemployed who had drifted to Rome, and it was the effects of the wars which had robbed them of their livelihood. Under the old Roman and Italian system a man owned and farmed a plot of land which was his own. In the course of the war with Hannibal thousands of such farms were destroyed, or the owners had to serve in the army so long that their farms were ruined by neglect. Some had not the heart to begin again, and sold their farms for a trifle to some rich neighbour who was steadily buying up such property. A more determined man might borrow money, at heavy interest, and make a fresh start. But he was not likely to be successful. His debt was a very heavy burden. Then he could not get a good price for his produce, when similar crops were being imported much more cheaply in great quantities from Sicily and Egypt. Even his rich neighbour was cutting prices. For the system of big estates worked by chain-gangs of slaves, which was usual in the conquered provinces, was being introduced into Italy. There was no demand for his services, even as a labourer, on such slave-worked estates, especially when, after the soil was exhausted, they became cattle-ranches where only a few herdsmen were employed. There was a grim sort of justice about all this. He, as a Roman soldier, had helped to enslave the other men. Now slave-labour deprived him of independence and livelihood. Both he and the slaves, of course, were the dupes of senators and business-men.

What could our poor Italian do? He could join the army, not the old Roman army of citizen-farmers turned temporary soldiers, but a permanent professional force. The pay was poor, but there was always a chance of loot. But perhaps he had had quite enough of soldiering. So he tramped to Rome. What could he do there? If he had lived in a district which had been granted Roman citizenship, he could scrape some sort of a living without regular work. In the old days corn



From Tucker's "Life in the Roman World of Nero and St. Paul."

PLAN OF A CAMPANIAN FARMHOUSE

This was in the most prosperous and comfortable district of Italy.

had sometimes been sold very cheaply to poor citizens in emergencies. Rome had grown so rich by now that it could afford practically to give corn away. Sometimes wine and olive-oil were thus distributed. Then he could attach himself as a "client" or hanger-on of some rich man. In return for a ration of food he would have to call at the big house first thing in the morning and attend his patron wherever he went, applaud his speeches, protect him in a street-riot and help him in elections. If our Italian joined one of the political clubs in which masses of poor voters were organised, he might make a little out of bribes at elections and other shady political work. For the great magistracies now were eagerly sought, not so much for the dignity they brought in Rome itself, but as a stepping-stone to the governorship of a province. It was the regular routine for consuls, prætors, etc., to be sent, usually for a year, to govern a province as soon as their year of office in Rome was over. To most governors their period abroad was the chance of a lifetime to make a fortune quickly. One of them complained that he really had to make three fortunes, one to pay his huge election expenses, one to bribe the jury (for he was likely to be prosecuted by the provincials for extortion when he returned to Rome), and one to retire on.

Too many governors seized any excuse they could to fight a frontier war, in the hope that the Senate would award them a "triumph" for their victories. This eagerly coveted honour consisted of a procession from outside Rome to the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol, where the conqueror offered thanks. The senators and magistrates came to the city gate to greet him and headed the procession. Then came a train of wagons piled with the spoils, and models of the conquered cities, followed by the animals for sacrifice. After these trudged the prisoners of war, loaded with chains, perhaps the conquered general or prince himself, with his soldiers, and his ordinary subjects in their native costume. Close behind his victims came the hero of the day, the conqueror himself, clad in gorgeous

THE " TRIUMPH "

robes and seated in a gilded chariot drawn by four white horses. In his left hand was the ivory sceptre of victory, in his right a branch of laurel, and on his brow a laurel wreath. Behind the chair stood a slave, holding a golden crown above the general's head, and whispering to him now and then, "Remember you are but a mortal." With the chariot came the victorious soldiers, singing songs now of praise, now of rude abuse. The latter, like the slave's reminder, were intended to ward off the jealousy of the gods. As the conqueror went up to the Capitol, his chief prisoners were taken to the dungeon at its foot and strangled there.

A very expensive way of winning popularity before an election was to give a "show." There might be a play or concert, but the main item was the contest of gladiators, one pair at a time, several pairs, or a general mêlée with one or possibly no survivor. Sometimes the gladiators fought wild beasts or the beasts had a mêlée of their own. The more bloodshed, pain and death there was, the more the brutal Romans enjoyed themselves.

But if the "work-shys" in the Roman mob were satisfied with "bread and shows," there were thousands of landless men in Rome and Italy who strongly resented their hopeless poverty. They knew that senators and capitalists were growing fabulously rich. Senators were by this time not allowed to trade, but they often did so through friends and agents. Apart from this they could buy and sell land, and made great profits this way. Then there was always the prospect of a governorship in a province. Wholesale trade, and easier ways of getting rich quickly, such as banking, usury, and numerous forms of speculation were conducted by the social and political class next to the senators, known as the "knights." By this time they had no more connection with cavalry than our own knights have. For about a hundred years, say 150–50 B.C., these two classes were simply money-mad. They backed each other up in a selfish monopoly of

power which they used in Rome, in Italy and in the provinces as a short cut to wealth. They set themselves with stony obstinacy to resist all demands for greater voting power for the poorer citizens of Rome, Roman rights for Italians, or better treatment for the provinces.

Democratic leaders arose among the Romans and Italians who, either because they genuinely sympathised with the poor or as a new method of winning influence, tried to wrest power from the Senate. This produced serious riots in Rome itself, and a series of civil wars in Italy. There were terrible revolts of slaves and gladiators. There was a twenty-five years war against Mithridates, king of Pontus (south of the Black Sea), who stirred up Greece and Asia Minor to revolt against the hateful tyranny of Roman officials, tax-gatherers and usurers. We can mention only the best-known men of this dreary age. In the earlier period Tiberius Gracchus and his younger brother Gaius, as Tribunes of the Common People (p. 202), tried to reform the land laws so that big estates would have to be cut down to provide small farms for poor citizens. They both died violent deaths in the midst of their schemes, which were fiercely opposed by the senators.

Later came the utterly savage war between Marius, a popular leader, and Sulla, the champion of the Senate. Sulla had to leave Italy to deal with Mithridates, but as soon as he had checked the king of Pontus he hurried back to Italy, crushed the democrats and the rebellious Samnites (p. 199), and as dictator restored to the Senate its powers in full. On one important point the Senate had already given way. Scared by a revolt of Rome's closest allies, it had made all the free men of Central Italy Roman citizens in 89 B.C.

It will be simpler to tell the rest of the story as part of the career of the greatest and most successful of the democratic leaders.

Photo. Anderson

GAIUS JULIUS CAESAR
Wearing general's cloak.

E. GAIUS JULIUS CÆSAR

When Sulla had crushed the army of the democrats, he wrote out a long list of the "proscribed," that is of men whom he declared outlaws, who could be killed at sight by any "gangster" who thought the reward of part of the victim's property worth the trouble of killing him. Sulla put on his list the name at the head of this section. It belonged to a bold young man closely connected with the democratic leaders by marriage and sympathy. Sulla had ordered him to divorce his wife, and Cæsar had refused. Only

at the earnest request of mutual friends had Sulla pardoned him. Cæsar was eighteen years old at the time, and his friends pleaded for mercy because he was just a boy. "That boy," said Sulla, "will some day or other be the ruin of the aristocracy, for there are many Mariuses in him." After that escape Cæsar wisely went away to Asia Minor to finish his education.

When things had blown over he returned to Rome, and, setting himself to win the favour of the common people, passed through "the Course of Honours" (p. 202). He then made an agreement to divide political power in Rome with two ambitious colleagues hardly suitable for a democratic leader. One was Pompey, who had been one of Sulla's chief officers. The other was Crassus, a millionaire-speculator who wanted to make a name for himself in a different line. Their partnership worked well at first. They each wanted a good governorship for a number of years and they got it. Cæsar was given Illyria, Cisalpine Gaul (north Italy) and Transalpine Gaul (France). Crassus was made governor of Syria and Palestine and given a large army to go and fight the Parthians, a race of mounted archers, who frequently raided Syria and Asia Minor from the western end of their empire, which came on to the upper Tigris and Euphrates. As the Romans drew enormous wealth from Asia Minor, the Parthians had to be dealt with. Pompey was made governor of the whole of Spain (and Portugal), but he preferred to send two deputies out there and stay in Rome himself to see what happened.

But the three-cornered partnership did not last long. In 54 B.C. Julia, beloved daughter of Cæsar and wife of Pompey, died, and the strongest link between the two men was snapped. Next year Crassus was killed. He had been in a hurry to win a great victory over the Parthians and crossing the Euphrates, led his army, mainly heavy-armed infantry as usual, straight across the desert. His Arab guides deserted and warned the Parthians. Soon there were hordes of light

cavalry harassing the Romans, firing volleys of arrows into the massed legions from a distance, thanks to their special bows made of several plates, something like a carriage spring. Crassus himself was killed at a conference with the Parthian leaders, while his army was surrounded during a terrible retreat to Carrhæ. It was the greatest disaster since Cannæ, and as long as the Roman empire lasted, the Parthians or their successors were a thorn in its side.

Pompey and Cæsar now faced each other as rivals, and soon as enemies. For out of jealousy of Cæsar's triumphs in Gaul-across-the-Alps, Pompey grew more friendly with the Senate, which was watching Cæsar suspiciously. Only the south-eastern part of what we call France was under Roman rule when Cæsar became governor, the part we know as Provence, from the Latin "Provincia," the Province. By wonderful leadership, in eight years (58–51 B.C.) he conquered for ever a great and warlike nation. France later became the leading country in Europe because of his work. He drove back from Gaul hordes of Swiss and German invaders, and twice crossed the Channel into unknown Britain and there drove the fierce tribes before him. Our own written history begins with his account of our island, and you may have the pleasure of reading it yourselves in a year or two. All this was excellent training for his army, and as that army decided the history of Rome in the next few years, we ought to get to know something about it.

Cæsar had only four legions with him in Gaul at first, and finally eight. A legion was a complete division of the army, comprising mainly heavy infantry with a small proportion of cavalry. At this time the infantry were Italians, the cavalry and archers usually foreigners. There were supposed to be five thousand infantry in each legion, but they were hardly ever at full strength, three thousand five hundred being usual. Each legion was divided into ten cohorts and each cohort again into five centuries. So each century, instead of containing a hundred men, had usually

about seventy. Each legion had for its battle-standard a silver eagle perching with spread wings on the end of a pole. The cohorts too had their own standards with various badges and "honours" for the battles

ROMAN COHORT STANDARD BEARER

they had fought in. Lesser divisions had flags. Roman soldiers felt about these standards as British regiments feel about their "colours." In charge of each century was an important person called a centurion. He was an experienced professional soldier of long service, corresponding to sergeants with us. The centurions

were the backbone of the army. The superior officers were usually young men of good birth, who regarded a few years in the army as a necessary part of their career.

The equipment of the Roman soldier was very

ROMAN CENTURION

similar to that of the Greek (p. 118), except that it was iron, not bronze, and in cold climates shorts and scarves were worn. The helmet was less elaborate, the shield was usually oblong and larger, and the short, stabbing sword, modelled on that of Hannibal's

ROMAN SOLDIERS

The second and third figures on the right are legionaries (first class troops, with the rights of Roman citizens). The third figure has his kit arranged for marching. The other figures are auxiliaries (second class non-Italian troops). They have oval shields and no armour.

Spanish infantry, was worn on the right. The spear was heavy, its top half being metal. Spears were thrown to shake the enemy's line while approaching him, and then the sword did the rest at close quarters. When in the enemy's country, camps were very carefully fortified according to a strictly defined design, even if they were to last only a night. It was a very rare thing for the enemy to capture a Roman camp, and it was a sign of complete disaster.

When Cæsar's term of extended governorship was nearly up, he tried to get permission to put up again for the consulship while still in Gaul. This was against the rules, but he dared not come back to Rome as a private citizen, for the Senate had their plans ready to get him condemned to death as a traitor. Not only was permission refused but the veto (p. 202) of two tribunes who were on Cæsar's side was ignored. These tribunes escaped from Rome with difficulty, and their news made Cæsar come to a grave decision. The Senate, champions of law and order, could ignore the oldest laws when it suited their convenience. It had misruled Rome, Italy and the Empire long enough. It must go. Swiftly he led his legions back to north Italy. He was still in his own province there (p. 226). But then he ordered them to cross the river Rubicon, part of the official boundary of Italy (49 B.C.). That was a turning point in Roman history. The great Civil War began.

Pompey was at once made general for the Senate. He had had wide experience of fighting both in the east and the west, and expected an easy victory. But he was unpleasantly surprised to find how swiftly Cæsar was marching down Italy, how the common people everywhere welcomed him, and how even his own veterans, when they sprang to arms again, joined Cæsar. Pompey, the Senate and the government, rather hurriedly left Italy and established themselves on the opposite coast at Dyrrhachium. Cæsar came to Rome, restored order, and without cutting the throats of the aristocrats who had not been able to get away

(to their great surprise), went across to Spain to deal with Pompey's deputies. Having starved their armies into surrender and then disbanded them, he crossed to the Adriatic and attacked Dyrrhachium. He was driven off with heavy loss (the only serious defeat of his career), and as he dared not risk sailing back to Italy, since Pompey controlled the navy, there was nothing for it but to retreat into Greece. Flushed with success, Pompey and the senators hurried after him, just a little too recklessly. Near Pharsalus, in Thessaly, Cæsar swung round and crushed them (48 B.C.). Pompey fled to Egypt and was murdered as soon as he landed. The Senate's commanders and allies all over the empire were defeated one after another.

Cæsar returned to Rome in the summer of 46 B.C. He was too great a man to follow the evil custom of previous civil wars and massacre his surviving opponents. He wanted all the able men he could find, to help him to realise his vast schemes for a better world, and he was ready to forget which side they had fought on. If you think of the evils of the Senate's rule, described in the last section, you will see that Cæsar tried to deal with all the serious problems it had caused. Full or part citizenship was given to all free men in north Italy and Sicily and in other parts of the empire where it was specially deserved. The chief value of this privilege now was that it gave greater protection against harsh officials. The powers of governors in the provinces were limited, and improvements made in taxation. To reduce unemployment, Cæsar began great building schemes in Rome itself, as well as a huge aqueduct to bring in a good water supply, and a new road over the Apennines. Lakes and marshes were drained. Owners of ranches were compelled to employ a proportion of free men to look after their cattle. Trade was encouraged in various ways and wise laws made to help those in debt and to control financiers. For those who were willing to make a fresh start outside Italy, colonies were planted in France and elsewhere, each settler receiving land enough for a farm. Two

of the colonies were on the sites of Carthage and Corinth, and a canal was begun across the isthmus (p. 135). What a different attitude of mind this shows from the ignorant envy of the senators who wiped out those splendid cities!

Cæsar showed plainly what he thought of "the Roman Senate and People" who had so mismanaged things. His Senate was made up of his own supporters, and was limited to its original duty of giving advice when asked for. And having provided chances of earning an honest living, he showed he had no sympathy for the rabble of Rome by breaking up the political clubs (p. 221) and giving the corn dole only to the deserving poor. Even so there were a hundred and fifty thousand still fed this way. Cæsar was beyond all doubt one of the very greatest organisers in History. But he was also a learned man. He planned a central library for Rome which should contain all the best books in Greek and Latin. With the help of an astronomer from Alexandria, he reformed the calendar so that the number of days in the months became practically as we know them to-day.

He was idolised by the common people of Italy. In recent years we have come to realise how a nation which has suffered can worship the man who gives it a vision of a brighter future. We can understand how his friends became reckless enough to offer him a golden crown at a great festival. But that offer, though it was refused, gave Cæsar's enemies, whom he had pardoned and promoted, an excuse to lash themselves into a frenzy of republican virtue. Cassius and Brutus conspired with other senators and stabbed Cæsar to death by Pompey's statue in the Senate House on the Ides (15th) of March, 44 B.C. When the vile deed was done, they raised their dripping daggers and cried "Liberty!" All they really wanted was licence to play the old game of plunder and oppression.

Brutus and Cassius soon discovered that they were very unpopular in Rome, so they fled to Greece, where they had more influence. Cæsar's cause was taken up

by his close friend and secretary, Marcus Antonius, and Cæsar's nephew and heir, Octavianus. They pursued the conspirators and defeated them at Philippi in Macedon (42 B.C.), a town on the main road to the East, where later St. Paul first preached in Europe. After quarrelling between themselves, they agreed to share the government of the empire, Octavian taking the western half, and Antony, who now married Octavia, his colleague's sister, governing the eastern provinces. But Antony, who had previously been attracted by Queen Cleopatra, the last descendant of Alexander's cleverest general who had become king of Egypt (p. 151), now fell madly in love with her and divorced Octavia. This, and the fact that Antony was now treating proud Romans in the East as if he were an Oriental sultan dealing with slaves, gave Octavian an excuse for attacking him and Cleopatra. In 31 B.C. a great sea-fight took place off the promontory of Actium, on the west coast of Greece. Seeing Cleopatra's galley slip away, Antony hurried after her and lost the battle. Octavian pursued them to Egypt, and Antony, hearing a rumour that Cleopatra was dead, killed himself, though he saw her again before he died. The queen, having tried in vain to charm Octavian, also killed herself. When Octavian returned to Rome in 30 B.C. he was in effect, if not yet in title, the first Roman emperor.

Exercises

1. Find out (*a*) the story of Coriolanus, (*b*) how Tarquin bought the Sibylline books, (*c*) the story of the treacherous schoolmaster of Falerii.

2. What is the derivation of: republic, plebiscite, suffrage, municipal, veto, civilian, auspices?

3. Do you believe a quinquereme means "a vessel with five banks of oars"?

4. What did the Romans mean by "our sea," "the lower sea," "the upper sea," "the Ocean"?

Photo Anderson.

THE APPIAN WAY TO-DAY

Named after the magistrate who began it, the censor Appius Claudius, it was the first and most important of the great Roman roads. It ran from Rome south-east to Capua and Brindisi.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ROMAN EMPERORS

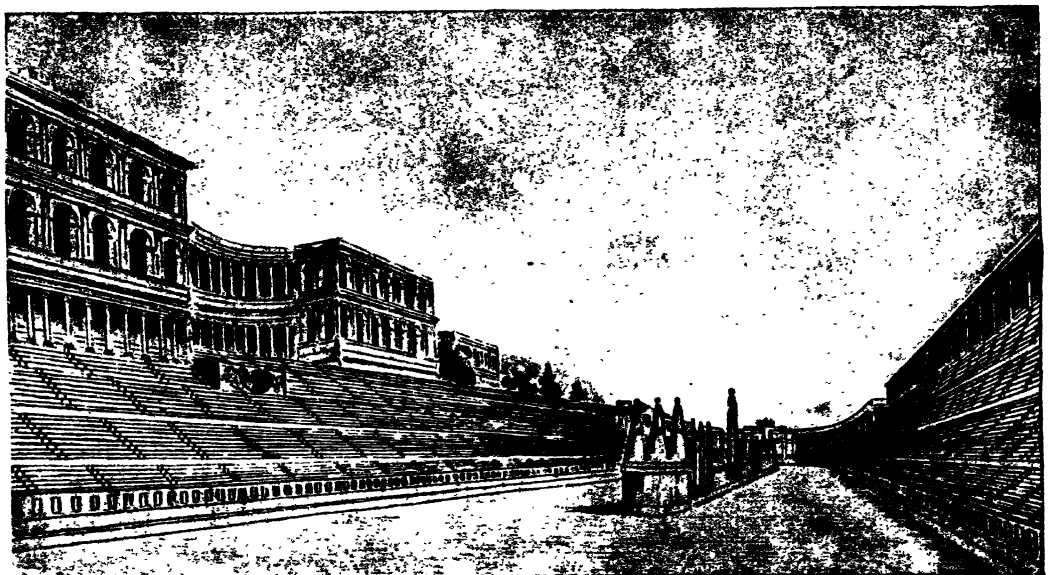
A. Rome under the Cæsars

Octavian was descended from a middle-class Italian family, and held the moderate views to be expected from such an origin. He did not altogether agree with his uncle's drastic changes. It seemed wrong to him to have men from the provinces sitting in the Senate, and for officers of humble birth, and ex-slaves, to be given important government posts, however clever they might be. He was a much more cautious man than Cæsar, and preferred to pretend that he was being allowed to hold several magistracies for a period of emergency, at the end of which the Roman Senate and People would be restored to their full authority.

Of course this never did happen. There was a Senate and there were consuls for centuries, but they were appointed by the emperors as a compliment and had no real power. One emperor made his horse a consul! The real power always rested with the man whom the army hailed as "Imperator," a title they had long used whenever their general won a great victory. Before long this power was so utterly and terribly beyond control and dispute, that what had recently been the proudest aristocracy in the world cringed like slaves before the frown of the man whom chance had clothed in the royal purple. A curt note from the emperor was enough to make a person even of high position kill himself promptly and without complaint, lest his family should suffer too. There was not much point in keeping the soldiers waiting who brought the dreaded message.

But at first Augustus (as he was called after 27 B.C.) made a show of sharing the rule of Rome and the empire with the Senate. And he took care to keep the rabble of Rome in a good temper, for, next to the army, the emperor's position depended on them. The Senate was allowed to govern the older and more settled provinces, while Augustus took charge of those on the long frontier. By far the biggest problem that the emperors had to face was how to bring that frontier up to mountains and rivers that could easily be defended. On the other side of that boundary were millions of tribesmen of many races, who grew more and more restless. In the end their terrific pressure broke the barriers and they swept over the empire like a mighty reservoir that has burst the dams.

But during most of the reign of Augustus, which lasted till A.D. 14 (notice the change from B.C. to A.D.), there was peace and prosperity throughout the empire, long overdue and sadly needed. The governors of the provinces were paid a salary, so that they should have no excuse for extortion. If they ruled well, their term was extended for a number of years, or they were promoted to a better province. After a careful survey,



From Tucker's "Life in the Roman World of Nero and St. Paul."

THE CIRCUS MAXIMUS

The three cones mark the turning point. The emperor's chair and a wing of the palace on the slope of the Palatine hill can be seen on the left.

the taxation and expenses of each province were fixed. These arrangements were based on those of the kingdom of Egypt, which ended with the death of Cleopatra, when it became a province under direct Roman rule.

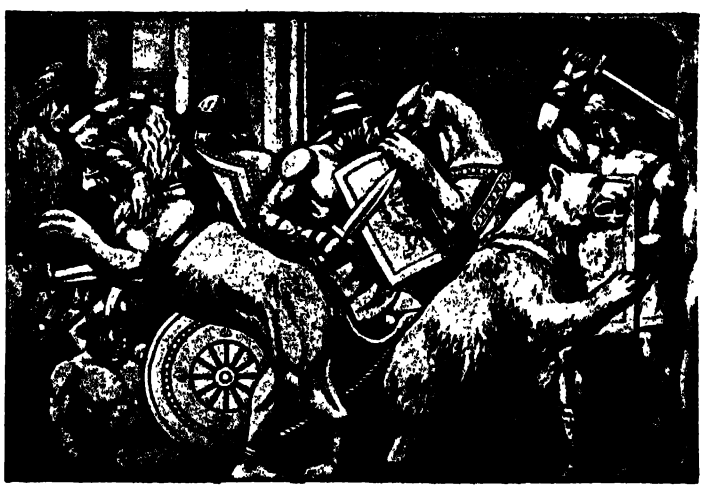
Augustus encouraged the worship of the old Roman deities, but the Greek "mysteries" (p. 167), and the Egyptian rites of Isis and Osiris, appealing to fanatical emotion, spread rapidly among the very mixed population of Rome. He also tried in vain to

A CHARIOT RACE IN THE CIRCUS MAXIMUS

restore the simple habits and family life which Roman writers declared were the basis of Rome's greatness. But every class eagerly indulged in all the luxury and pleasure it could afford. The rabble drew its doles of corn again and was entertained by shows that grew more and more elaborate. In the Great Racecourse, before crowds of 150,000, four chariots (Red, White, Blue and Green), each drawn by four horses, would race seven times round the sixteen hundred yards track. If any of them hit the end of the low wall that ran down the centre, while taking the turn too sharply,

that simply provided an extra thrill for the spectators, especially for those who had "backed" the other teams.

On the other side of the Palatine Hill, the high-class residential district at this period, loomed the great oval mass of what we call the Colosseum. It will hold about seventy thousand spectators, and the arena space is eighty-eight yards in length and fifty-two in breadth.

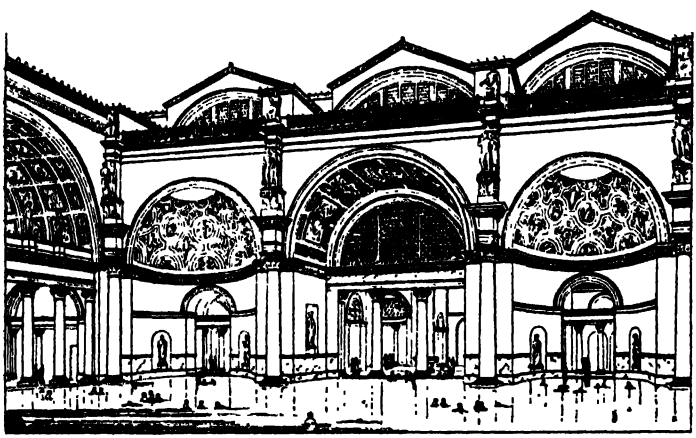


A "HUNTING"

Gladiators versus a lion, a panther, and a bear.

This was where the gladiators fought, a favourite contest being between one in full armour with sword and shield, versus one with just a net and a trident. The winner, when he had his opponent at his mercy, usually looked up to where the emperor and the Vestal Virgins sat. Hardly ever would he receive from them the sign to spare his foe. High and low alike, the Romans had a very poor sense of sportsmanship. They took a horrible pleasure in pain, blood and death. The struggles of gladiators with wild beasts,

which were known as "Huntings," and the fights between beasts alone, were so popular, that the numbers of the wild animals in the Mediterranean lands were greatly and permanently reduced, and some species were wiped out altogether. Governors in the provinces were constantly being pestered to keep up the supply of beasts, especially panthers. Sometimes the arena was flooded, and slave crews took part in a sham sea-fight, with quite genuine slaughter and drownings.

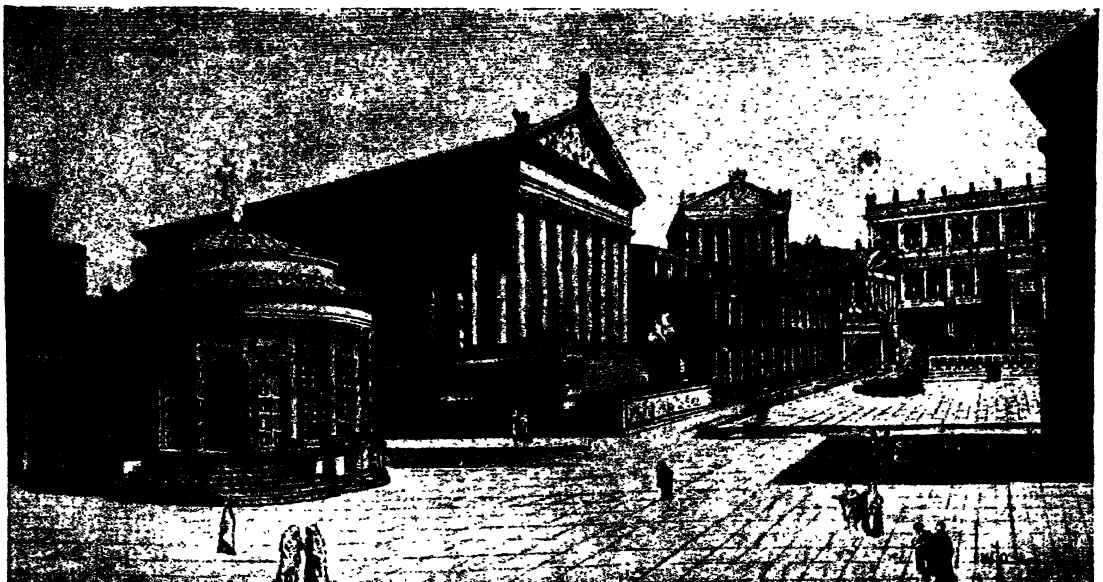


From "A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method," by Sir Banister Fletcher, 9th edition (Batsford).

SWIMMING POOL IN THE BATHS OF CARACALLA

Another way of passing a day pleasantly, especially under the later emperors, was to visit one of the magnificent public baths. Here, free of charge, the pampered Romans could enjoy a hot bath, "showers," a large swimming-pool and a hot-air room. After massage, or exercises in the gymnasium, they could retire to the library or listen to a tenth-rate poet bawling his long and tedious works in the recitation-hall. Every popular place in Rome seems to have been infested by reciters.

The Romans did not produce many real poets,



From Tucker's "Life in the Roman World of Nero and St. Paul."

PART OF THE ROMAN FORUM IN THE TIME OF THE EARLY EMPERORS

The temple of Vesta is on the left, the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol in the background.

for they were not a thoughtful or imaginative race. We need only mention three here—Catullus, who lived about the time of Cæsar and who shows a tenderness and a gift of melody unusual among the Romans—and the leading poets of the court of Augustus, Virgil and Horace. Virgil, considered Rome's greatest poet,

From Tucker's "Life in the Roman World of Nero and St. Paul."

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE FORUM

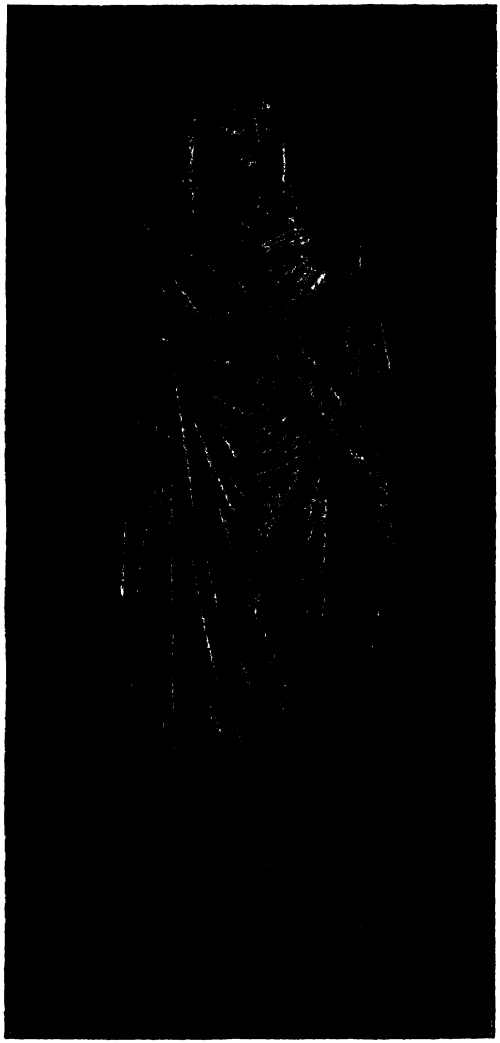
From the far side of the previous picture. The platform from which the speeches were made is on the left, the staircase and ramparts of the Capitol in the background.

preferred to write of country life, but in the "Æneid," *i.e.* the story of Æneas, he tells a legend of Rome's origin, how the Trojan chief, after the fall of Troy, came at last to the Latin coast, and after fierce fighting with the native Italians, married the king's daughter. There are long descriptions of fighting in the Æneid, which the Romans no doubt enjoyed, but here and

there, in a sad phrase, Virgil reveals a quite unRoman pity for the futile slaughter of young men, and for all the undeserved suffering which bewildered humanity patiently endures. Horace took life much less seriously. His best-known poems are short lyrics in a highly polished style. Most Roman poets imitated Greek rhythms, just as Roman playwrights were content to copy Greek plays.

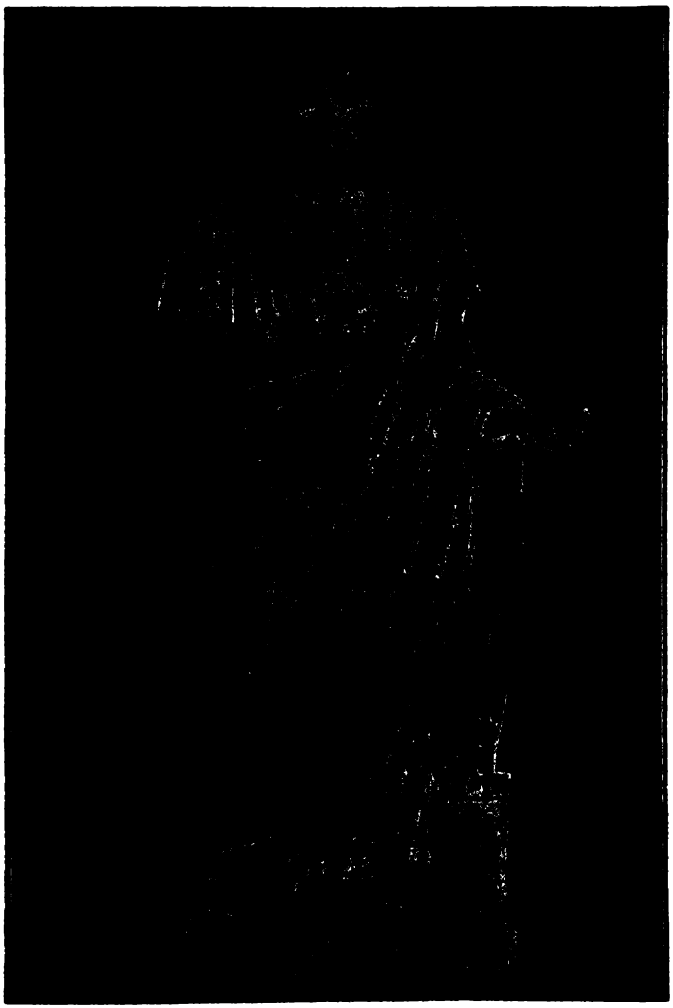
Meanwhile the appearance of Rome became steadily more magnificent, till it excelled Alexandria or any other city of the ancient world. Its temples, squares, colonnades and statues grew more and more numerous; baths, theatres, racecourses and government buildings were added by one emperor after another. On the Palatine Hill the houses of the rich and fashionable grew larger, and their grounds more extensive; and the emperors built themselves palaces of marble there which were fitting homes for the masters of the world. In these homes very splendid dinner-parties were given. Most of the guests would arrive in closed litters carried on the shoulders of four or more burly slaves. Although in public a well-to-do Roman always wore a white toga (similar to the himation, p. 163), on these occasions coloured robes were allowed, and the ladies, who, especially if married, moved about with great freedom, wore a good deal of jewellery and "make-up."

At dinner the guests on couches reclined on their elbows round three sides of the tables, one side being kept free for service. There was no cutlery but spoons, so that table manners showed themselves mainly in the delicate use of one's fingers. The air was heavy with the scents of perfumes and flowers, and as wine was freely drunk, there was doubtless a good deal of noisy laughter and loud talk as the evening wore on. The food was varied and costly, but not as well-cooked as it can be nowadays. After the meal there would be entertainment by jugglers, acrobats, dancing-girls, jesters or musicians, or the guests would gamble at dice.



A ROMAN LADY

Her costume is similar to that of the Athenian lady on p. 163.



A ROMAN GENTLEMAN

He is wearing the tunic and the toga.

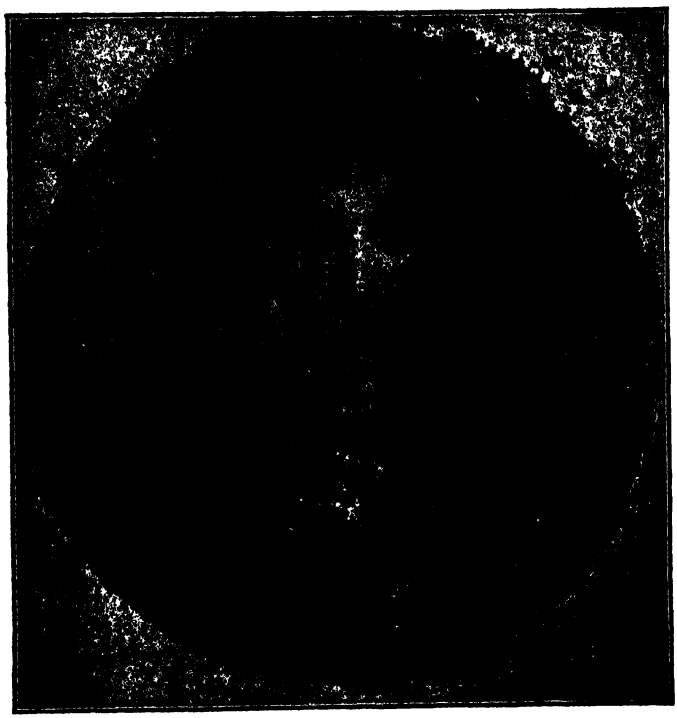
Even more luxurious perhaps than the town-houses of this age were the villas or country residences. We have mentioned these previously (p. 189), but by this time they were far more numerous. It was quite a common thing for even a moderately wealthy Roman to own half a dozen of them, and building and selling them was a gentlemanly way of making money.

Photo. Alinari.

GARDEN OF A VILLA ON LAKE MAGGIORE

Then, as now, the romantic beauty of Italy was fully appreciated, and there were as a rule wonderful views from the villa, whether it was on a hill in central Italy, on the coast of Campania, or by the lovely lakes of the north. The general design of the villa was like that of the town-house, and it was just as expensively decorated with mosaics and wall-paintings. But as there was usually more space available, all sorts of pleasant extensions were possible, so that sea or mountain air, winter sunshine or summer shade could

be comfortably enjoyed in courtyards, terraces or glazed galleries. The gardens were what we call "formal," *i.e.* they consisted of straight avenues with flowering shrubs and clipped trees, and neat flower-



LADY WITH WRITING TABLETS
A Roman wall-painting.

beds gay with crocus, narcissus and wallflower in spring, roses and violets in summer. There were statues, fountains and cascades, and a large pool for fish breeding. One of the chief attractions of the villa for the Roman was that he could get really fresh fish to eat. The estate was bounded by woods in which

THE ATRIUM OF A LARGE ROMAN HOUSE

Notice the shrine of the Lar on the left and the peristyle at the back.

deer and boar were hunted after being driven into nets. An astonishing amount of money and trouble must have been spent on these luxurious homes. One writer proudly tells us about his two villas on Lake Como, one on the water level and one up on the hillside, perhaps so that he could enjoy the sunsets over the Alps. Horace sneers at the extravagant people who find the coast of Campania too crowded, so that they run a causeway right out into the sea and build a villa on an artificial island.

B. The First Christians

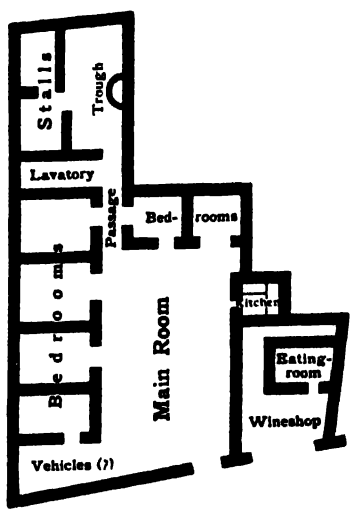
And so to an upper-class Roman the world must have seemed very satisfactorily arranged. But during the reigns of the first two emperors, in Judæa (Palestine), a poor, remote and so, to Roman ideas, unimportant part of their empire, an awe-inspiring Voice had condemned all they were proud of and praised all they despised. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful. . . . Blessed are the peace-makers. . . . Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake. . . . Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth. . . . Be not anxious what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet what ye shall put on." This is not the place to tell the story of the Jew, Jesus the Christ, and how that wonderful life was on earth ended with lingering death on the cross, the usual fate then of low-class criminals. But we are bound to notice the effects of His teaching on the empire whose success mocked all He stood for.

Thanks to the preaching of the disciples, the Word spread quickly through Syria. At Tarsus, in the south-east corner of Asia Minor, near north Syria, lived a very energetic man named Paul (or Saul). He was a Roman citizen, and a Jew, who had prospered at his business as a tent manufacturer and was greatly interested in the different religions to be met with in a

city so situated. When he first noticed the Christians, he was annoyed and yet fascinated by them. He had them put in prison and yet he thought a good deal about their preaching. Till one day as he was on the high road to Damascus, for he went round denouncing Christians, he had a vision of Christ rebuking him. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" That blinding vision settled all his doubts. After that Paul devoted his life and tremendous energy to spreading the new faith and organising the Christians in assemblies which were really the first churches. But he was not satisfied with repeating the teachings of Jesus. He added his own ideas of what Christians ought to believe about the nature of Jesus and of God, and how they ought to worship. So that Christianity, as we know it, is a mixture of the teaching of Jesus and of St. Paul. At this time Greek was understood throughout the eastern part of the empire and by all educated Romans. Because of this and the great highways of the empire, the apostle was able to visit and preach in great cities such as Jerusalem, Antioch, Athens, Corinth and Ephesus, and to argue with Roman officials. One of these arrested him for causing a riot in Jerusalem, and Paul, exercising his rights as a Roman citizen, asked to be tried in Rome. Perhaps you would like to find out for yourselves what happened to him there.

Rome had always been tolerant of eastern religions, and at first no objections were raised against "this new sect of the Jews," though they kept very much to themselves, detested the shows of the Colosseum and prophesied the early destruction of Rome for its wickedness. But what did get them into trouble before long was their absolute refusal to take part in the simple religious ceremony by which everyone was expected to recognise the emperor as superhuman. When the emperor Nero was blamed for the great fire of Rome (A.D. 64), he thought it was a good idea to say that it was the Christians who had started it, to justify their prophecy. Having turned the rage of the mob against them, he had them put in pitch

jackets, tied to posts and set on fire to illuminate the palace gardens at night. That was the first of a series of persecutions that took place at intervals during the next two hundred and fifty years. The more openly the emperors were looked on as gods on earth, the more they resented the "treason" of the Christians in refusing to worship them. Some of the Romans, who



From Tucker's "Life in the Roman World of Nero and St. Paul."

PLAN OF INN AT POMPEII

watched the "traitors" torn to pieces in the arena by lions, or tormented in other ways, felt that there must be great consolation in a religion which enabled women and children, as well as men, to face horrible deaths so steadfastly. They tried to find out more about it. Many slaves and poor people found great comfort in the promises of Him who said, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Now and then a noble matron would be touched by the sufferings of the martyrs, and

perhaps through her a family of influence would be converted. In the latter part of this period, when the persecutions grew worse, the Christians sought refuge in the Catacombs, underground galleries cut in the soft rock outside Rome, where they buried their dead and held their prayer meetings, forbidden by law.

C. "All Roads lead to Rome"

We cannot describe here the reigns of the various emperors from the death of Augustus in A.D. 14 to the time when Italy was conquered by German and Gothic tribesmen some four hundred and fifty years later. Very few of them were fitted for their position. Most of them died violent deaths. Some were dangerous lunatics, which is not altogether surprising. The temptations and the responsibility of such a position would make it difficult for a man to remain quite sane. The first emperors could claim some sort of connection, through marriage, with Cæsar and Augustus. Nero was the last of these. After him, the most popular and successful generals of the army fought for the imperial purple or bribed the legions to hail them "Imperator." Often the Prætorian Cohort, the emperor's regiment of guards stationed in Rome, decided who was to succeed. We need not study the crimes and follies of the many crazy and wicked emperors, or the virtues of the very few fine men who ever wore the purple. It is more useful to know that during the first two hundred years of the emperors' rule (say, till the death of the philosopher-emperor, Marcus Aurelius, in A.D. 180), Roman rule, whatever went on in Rome itself, brought peace and the chance to earn some sort of a living to millions of provincials. Some atonement was made for the mischief done in the later days of the republic, and especially in the West, there was a rise in the level of civilisation, or at any rate of comfort.

Let us first get some idea of the extent of the Roman empire at the end of the reign of Hadrian

(A.D. 138), a wise emperor who spent fifteen years inspecting the provinces. He gave up certain areas which he thought could not safely be held. To begin with our own country in the far north-west, the province of Britain included all England and parts of Wales. Crossing to the Continent, we find the lower Rhine and the Danube the northern boundaries in Europe. This includes within the empire the countries we call France and Belgium (with a strip of south Holland and west Germany), Spain, Switzerland, Italy, of course, Austria, western Hungary, Yugo-Slavia, Bulgaria and Greece, with all the Mediterranean islands. Crossing to Asia, we find all Turkey and part of Armenia, limited by the upper reaches of the Euphrates, within the empire. Southward the Arabian desert provided a natural land frontier to the provinces of Syria and Judæa. In north Africa, the desert again provided a boundary, while Egypt was held as far as the First Cataract.

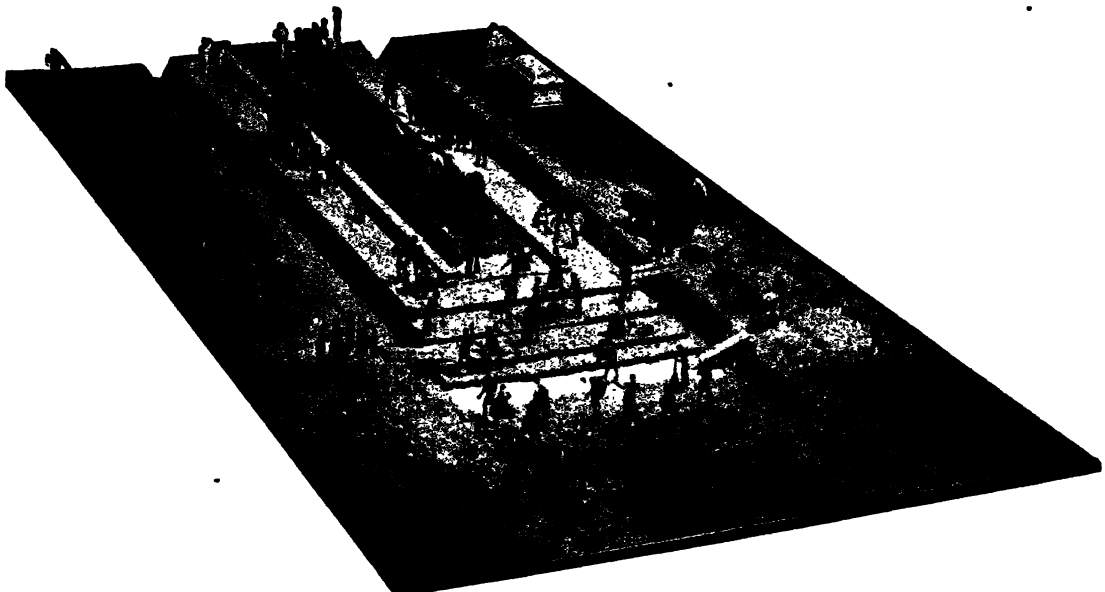
At intervals along the frontier there were forts, and where it was easy for an enemy to burst through, a long wall was built with frequent watch-towers between the forts. One of the most important of these closed the gap between the lower Rhine and the Danube. Another was the wall between the Solway Firth and the Tyne estuary, begun by Hadrian to keep back the Picts of Scotland. Small towns grew up round these forts, as the soldiers stayed there permanently and had families. By this time the army was much larger, and Italians formed a small minority of it. Soldiers were enlisted from every part of the empire now and sent wherever required. So you will understand why the problem of keeping up these expensive forts and large armies was the emperor's chief worry. If ever there should be a general attack of the fighting tribes along any considerable stretch of the frontier, the thin line of "eagles" would not hold them back for long.

It would have been quite impossible to hold such an empire without good roads. The construction of these was the finest work the Romans did for civilisa-

tion. Their phrase for building a road suggests a solid causeway, and if you will study the front half of the model you will see why. When the surveyors (working on the left) had decided the exact measurements of a stretch of road, its limits were marked out with the plough and a thick layer of soil was removed in baskets. The surface was then rammed hard and a layer of cement laid down. On this foundation alternate layers of thick square stones and concrete were spread and pressed together with rollers. Finally down the centre of this causeway the track for wheeled traffic was made, out of irregular blocks of very hard stone. This track, which had a curved surface, was separated from the pedestrians' side-walks by solid kerbs. The causeway was carefully drained, and you can just see one of the drainage holes near the top end of the model.

On the section of the road which is finished you can see some of the normal traffic. On the far side-walk some soldiers, with a centurion on the kerb, are approaching a mile-post. On the other side slaves are carrying a covered litter. In the centre a pack-mule is being led. Behind him a young man is rapidly approaching in a light two-horsed chariot. Proceeding in the opposite direction are a two-wheeled covered wagon and a four-wheeled open carriage. None of these vehicles had springs. On the extreme right of the model a farmer's cart is shown. It is drawn by oxen, and the body is like a great basket. The driver walked by the side and his dog showed the oxen the way. In the top right-hand corner is the tomb of some important citizen and a pointed monument next to it. At intervals of about twelve miles along the roads there were relay stations, where the emperor's couriers changed horses, and there was an official hostel at the end of each day's stage. It was possible on government service to cover a hundred miles in a day.

In all the more settled parts of the provinces there arose buildings similar to, if smaller than, those



BUILDING A ROMAN ROAD

Photo. by courtesy of U.S. Bureau of Public Roads.

in Rome—houses, squares, colonnades, baths, race-courses, theatres, aqueducts and finally, churches. The richer and more ambitious natives adopted the speech, costume and ways of the Romans and became Citizens. Many of the poorer ones became Romanised through joining the army. It was a great achievement to give so large a part of Europe a higher standard of comfort, a single official language and code of laws, good main roads, freedom from war and, at last, Christianity. For in the reign of Constantine (A.D. 306–337), Christianity was first officially tolerated and then encouraged.

D. The Huns and the Goths

We must bear in mind the good work which the Roman system had performed in those two hundred years, as we read this last section of the story of the Ancient World. For we now have to read the gloomy story of the greatest breakdown in History. This is often referred to as the "Fall of Rome," the result of the defeat of "the Romans" by "the barbarians." But that is only a crude way of putting it. When we talk of "the Romans," say after A.D. 300, we must remember that most of the population of the empire, most of the army, and a good many of the emperors were not Italian. And if the "Fall of Rome" means that a Gothic chieftain became king of Italy, which happened in A.D. 495, this fact becomes less dramatic when we find out that Rome had ceased to be the capital of the empire and that some of the chief officials of the empire were then "barbarians," that is, they were born on the other side of the frontier. But we had better begin the story at the beginning.

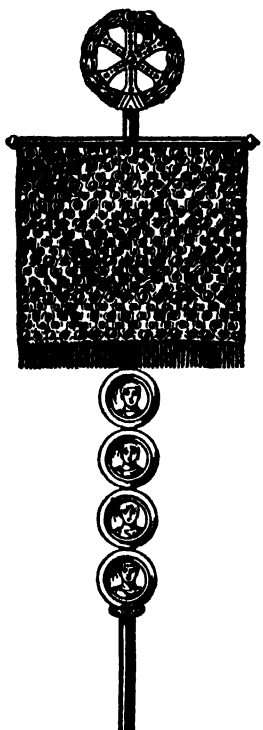
We previously fixed, for convenience, on the date A.D. 180 as the end of two centuries of peace and some prosperity. After that time, in spite of occasional improvements, there was a slow but steady decline. Different parts of the army would elect

their own emperor, which led to anarchy. Occasionally there was a strong and clever emperor. But he needed so many assistants and officials that his expenses were enormous. This meant very heavy taxation. Small farmers were crushed by this burden and became serfs of great landowners, not much better off than their slaves. So that when the barbarian tribes broke through the frontier and invaded the empire, many "Romans" felt no inclination to fight against them to protect harsh landlords and officials.

It is time we found out who these barbarians were. Several times in this book the phrase "the known world" has been used. That was because most of our story has concerned the lands round the Mediterranean, and we have ignored the great populations of northern Europe because we know very little about them before they invaded the Roman empire. We have also said nothing about the high degree of civilisation which had been reached in India, and even more so, in China, because they hardly affected our European civilisation in its first stages. Now we are compelled to take notice of the Chinese, and the Huns of central Asia whom they caused to drift westwards, and the German and Slav tribes who had to retire before the Huns.

The Chinese built up a strong empire during the same period as the Romans. They too had to face the problem of protecting themselves against hordes of uncivilised tribes. Not content with building a great barrier-wall, hundreds of miles long, they sent out strong expeditions to punish the Huns, the raiding tribes of central Asia. These Mongol (p. 12) hordes then decided to try their luck in the West. Perhaps central Asia was becoming too dry to produce abundant grass. Like other raiding tribes we heard of earlier on, they were wandering herdsmen, ever needing fresh grasslands for their cattle and horses. Their women and young children travelled in wagons drawn by several pairs of oxen. The men and boys rode ponies and hardly ever dismounted. They were dangerous

whether they fought at a distance with arrows and spears, or close at hand with swords. When they found good grass they would settle down for a time and live in large tents of horsehair stretched over dome-shaped frames. When they had to find fresh pastures they would ride great distances, dismounting only to sleep, eating now and then a mouthful of cheese or a strip of raw meat. We know that in 375 A.D. they first crossed the Volga. In time they swarmed over the Russian rivers that flow into the Black Sea. The first Goths who came across them in these western steppes (see map, p. 249), would be astonished to see their black tents covering the plains right to the horizon. Their wonder soon changed to terror when the Huns attacked them. These Mongols were short, thick-set men with broad shoulders and curved legs. Their heads were big and ugly, with small, slanting eyes, very flat noses and huge mouths. Their voices were shrill and savage. In peace their ways were kindly, if rough. But in the excitement of battle, a mad lust for blood and destruction possessed them. At first the men of the West wondered if they were apes or fiends.



A CHRISTIAN ROMAN STANDARD

Before we go on to the retreat of the Goths, we must notice what changes were taking place in the Roman empire. We have already heard of the emperor Constantine under whom the Roman empire began officially to adopt Christianity, so that instead of an eagle at the head of the battle-standard, there now

appeared the Greek letters for CHR set in a circle. It was he also who began another change of tremendous importance. Thinking that Rome was too full of pagan temples and memories, and that the eastern part of the empire had become more important, or needed more protection, he selected the old Greek city of Byzantium (p. 117), on the entrance to the Black Sea, as the new capital of the empire. He greatly enlarged it with magnificent buildings and encouraged people to come and live in it (A.D. 330). The new capital, soon called after him Constantinople ("the city of Constantine"), was a great success. Rome and Italy declined in importance. And though there was no intention of splitting the empire, for convenience the western half had its own governor and in time its own emperor. This division must have weakened Italy and the western empire at the very time when fierce attacks were to be made on it.

This same period saw Christianity triumphant, for in A.D. 392 pagan worship was entirely forbidden, and the old temples were closed. The Christian Church was already strongly organised, rich and powerful, and we begin to hear of bishops. We also hear of Christians fiercely quarrelling among themselves, even to bloodshed, as to what to believe and how to worship. The simple teaching of the Master about the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of Man was neglected. The mysteries of the Trinity became much more important than the Sermon on the Mount.

The onset of the Huns caused great stirrings among all the tribes of central and northern Europe, apart from the Goths. They had been restless for a considerable time before. Perhaps the same causes which made central Asia drier had made central Europe colder. We have evidence that Germany was terribly cold in winter in that age. So that even without the pressure of the Huns, German tribes would have been trying to push their way westwards

and southwards. The terror inspired by the Mongol hordes turned slow migrations into panic flights. In A.D. 376 some of the Goths received permission from the Roman authorities to cross the mile-wide, swollen Danube and take shelter behind the frontier in Thrace. The Goths and the Romans had been neighbours for

German Archæological Institute, Rome.

NORTHERN TRIBESMEN ATTACKING A ROMAN FRONTIER FORT
From Trajan's Column.

a long time and because of that the Goths were half-civilised. But soon more Goths crossed the Danube without permission, successfully defying the emperor's authority. It became plain to all the "barbarians" that they need no longer respect the power of the Romans in the west. We need not follow in detail the bewildering movements of Goths and German tribes between A.D. 400 and 500. Goths conquered and settled in Greece, Italy and Spain. The Vandals,

whose name became a by-word for savage destruction, conquered north Africa. The Burgundians took south-east France, the Franks the rest. Angles and Saxons from north-west Germany descended on Britain from the east, Picts from the north. This confusion became worse as a great "tidal wave" of Huns swept right across Europe in 450 A.D. under the dreaded Attila, "the Scourge of God." He was checked in France at Châlons and slowly retired to his capital beyond the Danube, and in time the Huns settled down on the great plains of Hungary. Rome, once the haughty mistress of the world, was sacked by Goths in 410, had to bribe Attila to leave north Italy in 435, was again sacked by Vandals in 455. In 476 a German chief entered Rome and deposed the last of the western emperors, a boy. Italy in 495 became a Gothic kingdom, acknowledging in theory only the authority of the emperor at Constantinople.

Although the eastern empire lasted for about a thousand years after the break-up of the west (Constantinople itself being captured by Turks in 1453), we need say little more about it here. For it was Roman in name only. It was ruled by Greek emperors and officials, and had little to do with the western world, being fully occupied in fighting first the new Persian empire which had succeeded the Parthians, then the Arabs stirred up by Mohammed, and finally the Turks.

As for western Europe, remember that the Roman system never disappeared entirely. If we think only of the conquests and lootings just described, it seems as if everything Roman must have been wiped out. But that is not so. No doubt, in the first flush of proud conquest, there were orgies of slaughter and destruction. But the new leaders were not simply ferocious savages. As we have noted, many were already half-civilised, and Christian. Though they became undisputed masters of the western provinces, kings, princes and nobles, proud of new titles, they could appreciate what the Romans had achieved,

TIME DIAGRAM FOR

A.D. 500

A.D. 450

A.D. 400

A.D. 350

A.D. 300

A.D. 250

A.D. 200

A.D. 150

A.D. 100

A.D. 50

B.C. 50

B.C. 100

B.C. 150

B.C. 200

B.C. 250

B.C. 300

Western Europe and north Africa overrun by German tribes

Roman civilisation spreads through western Europe and north Africa

Conquest of Britain

Civil War

Gaul conquered by Caesar 58-51

Destruction of Numantia 133

Destruction of Carthage 146

1st. War against Carthage 264-241

THE WEST

ITALY

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Gothic Kingdom of Italy 495

Italy overrun by Goths, Huns and Vandals

The later emperors rule as monarchs

Rome under first emperors

Civil War

Discontent in Rome and Italy

3rd. War against Carthage 218-202

The eastern part of the empire survives

Goths first cross the Danube 376

The empire becomes Christian

Constantinople capital of the empire 330

I. H. S.

Spread of Christianity

The life of Christ

Civil War

Roman victories in Asia Minor and Syria

Destruction of Corinth 146

Roman victories in Macedon, Illyria, Epirus, and western Asia Minor

A.D. 500

A.D. 450

A.D. 400

A.D. 350

A.D. 300

A.D. 250

A.D. 200

A.D. 150

A.D. 100

A.D. 50

B.C. 50

B.C. 100

B.C. 150

B.C. 200

B.C. 250

B.C. 300

THE EAST

Many Roman officials of lesser rank kept their posts. Roman law was still recognised. In Italy, Spain and France, Latin remained the basis of language. Rome became the headquarters of Christianity in the west, and Popes claimed a power over the new nations which was in some ways like that of the Roman emperors.

The story of the Ancient World is now told. For the new kingdoms of the west slowly grew into Europe as we know it. Hellas had inherited the science and arts of Babylon and Egypt, and enriched them with the spirit of freedom. They were passed on to us by Rome, together with the Faith that spread from Palestine. On these old, deep foundations the western world is built.

Exercises

1. What is the derivation of: empire, July, August, Kaiser, Czar, apostle, pagan, palace?

2. Would you rather have seen a play at Athens or a show at Rome?

3. What do the endings -chester and -eter in English place-names and cær at the beginning of Welsh place-names denote? Make a list of twelve names ending with -chester, six with -eter, and six beginning cær.

4. Find out the Roman camp, road, town-wall, and house nearest to your home.

5. Copy out a Roman inscription and find out what it means.

6. Find out the story of the monk who stopped the gladiatorial games, of the emperor who preferred to grow cabbages, of the emperor who had a pet

TIME DIAGRAM FOR THE ANCIENT WORLD

A.D.
600
2200
2300
2400
2500
2600
2700
2800
2900
3000
B. C.

Sumerian Ziggurats

Egyptian Pyramids

hen called "Rome." Who "fiddled while Rome burned"?

7. From what parts of the New Testament do we learn of the adventures and opinions of St. Paul?

BEWARE OF THE DOG
Mosaic from Pompeii.

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