

The Story of Mankind

by Hendrik van Loon

THE STORY OF MANKIND BY HENDRIK VAN LOON, PH.D. Professor of the Social Sciences in Antioch College. Author of The Fall of the Dutch Republic, The Rise of the Dutch Kingdom, The Golden Book of the Dutch Navigators, A Short Story of Discovery, Ancient Man.

To JIMMIE "What is the use of a book without pictures?" said Alice.

FOREWORD

For Hansje and Willem:

WHEN I was twelve or thirteen years old, an uncle of mine who gave me my love for books and pictures promised to take me upon a memorable expedition. I was to go with him to the top of the tower of Old Saint Lawrence in Rotterdam.

And so, one fine day, a sexton with a key as large as that of Saint Peter opened a mysterious door. "Ring the bell," he said, "when you come back and want to get out," and with a great grinding of rusty old hinges he separated us from the noise of the busy street and locked us into a world of new and strange experiences.

For the first time in my life I was confronted by the phenomenon of audible silence. When we had climbed the first flight of stairs, I added another discovery to my limited knowledge of natural phenomena--that of tangible darkness. A match showed us where the upward road continued. We went to the next floor and then to the next and the next until I had lost count and then there came still another floor, and suddenly we had plenty of light. This floor was on an even height with the roof of the church, and it was used as a storeroom. Covered with many inches of dust, there lay the abandoned symbols of a venerable faith which had been discarded by the good people of the city many years ago. That which had meant life and death to our ancestors was here reduced to junk and rub-bish. The industrious rat had built his nest among the carved images and the ever watchful spider had opened up shop between the outspread arms of a kindly saint.

The next floor showed us from where we had derived our light. Enormous open windows with heavy iron bars made the high and barren room the roosting place of hundreds of pigeons. The wind blew through the iron bars and the air was filled with a weird and pleasing music. It was the noise of the town below us, but a noise which had been purified and cleansed by the distance. The rumbling of heavy carts and the clinking of horses' hoofs, the winding of cranes and pulleys, the hissing sound of the patient steam which had been set to do the work of man in a thousand different ways--they had all been blended into a softly rustling whisper which provided a beautiful background for the trembling cooing of the pigeons.

Here the stairs came to an end and the ladders began. And after the first ladder (a slippery old thing which made one feel his way with a cautious foot) there was a new and even greater wonder, the town-clock. I saw the heart of time. I could hear the heavy pulsebeats of the rapid seconds--one--two--three-- up to sixty. Then a sudden quivering noise when all the wheels seemed to stop and another minute had been chopped off eternity. Without pause it began again--one--two--three--until at last after a warning rumble and the scraping of many wheels a thunderous voice, high above us, told the world that it was the hour of noon.

On the next floor were the bells. The nice little bells and their terrible sisters. In the centre the big bell, which made me turn stiff with fright when I heard it in the middle of the night telling a story of fire or flood. In solitary grandeur it seemed to reflect upon those six hundred years during which it had shared the joys and the sorrows of the good people of Rotterdam. Around it, neatly arranged like the blue jars in an old-fashioned apothecary shop, hung the little fellows, who twice each week played a merry tune for the benefit of the country-folk who had come to market to buy and sell and hear what the big world had been doing. But in a corner--all alone and shunned by the others--a big black bell, silent and stern, the bell of death.

Then darkness once more and other ladders, steeper and even more dangerous than those we had climbed before, and suddenly the fresh air of the wide heavens. We had reached the highest gallery. Above us the sky. Below us the city-- a little toy-town, where busy ants were hastily crawling hither and thither, each one intent upon his or her particular business, and beyond the jumble of stones, the wide greenness of the open country.

It was my first glimpse of the big world.

Since then, whenever I have had the opportunity, I have gone to the top of the tower and enjoyed myself. It was hard work, but it repaid in full the mere physical exertion of climbing a few stairs.

Besides, I knew what my reward would be. I would see the land and the sky, and I would listen to the stories of my kind friend the watchman, who lived in a small shack, built in a sheltered corner of the gallery. He looked after the clock and was a father to the bells, and he warned of fires, but he enjoyed many free hours and then he smoked a pipe and thought his own peaceful thoughts. He had gone to school almost fifty years before and he had rarely read a book, but he had lived on the top of his tower for so many years that he had absorbed the wisdom of that wide world which surrounded him on all sides.

History he knew well, for it was a living thing with him. "There," he would say, pointing to a bend of the river, "there, my boy, do you see those trees? That is where the Prince of Orange cut the dikes to drown the land and save Leyden." Or he would tell me the tale of the old Meuse, until the broad river ceased to be a convenient harbour and became a wonderful highroad, carrying the ships of De Ruyter and Tromp upon that famous last voyage, when they gave their lives that the sea might be free to all.

Then there were the little villages, clustering around the protecting church which once, many years ago, had been the home of their Patron Saints. In the distance we could see the leaning tower of Delft. Within sight of its high arches, William the Silent had been murdered and there Grotius had learned to construe his first Latin sentences. And still further away, the long low body of the church of Gouda, the early home of the man whose wit had proved mightier than the armies of many an emperor, the charity-boy whom the world came to know as Erasmus.

Finally the silver line of the endless sea and as a contrast, immediately below us, the patchwork of roofs and chimneys and houses and gardens and hospitals and schools and railways, which we called our home. But the tower showed us the old home in a new light. The confused commotion of the streets and the market-place, of the factories and the workshop, became the well-ordered expression of human energy and purpose. Best of all, the wide view of the glorious past, which surrounded us on all sides, gave us new courage to face the problems of the future when we had gone back to our daily tasks.

History is the mighty Tower of Experience, which Time has built amidst the endless fields of bygone ages. It is no easy task to reach the top of this ancient structure and get the benefit of the full view. There is no elevator, but young feet are strong and it can be done.

Here I give you the key that will open the door.

When you return, you too will understand the reason for my enthusiasm.

HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON.

CONTENTS

- * FOREWORD
- * THE STORY OF MANKIND
- * THE SETTING OF THE STAGE
- * OUR EARLIEST ANCESTORS
- * PREHISTORIC MAN
- * HIEROGLYPHICS
- * THE NILE VALLEY
- * THE STORY OF EGYPT
- * MESOPOTAMIA
- * THE SUMERIANS
- * MOSES
- * THE PHOENICIANS
- * THE INDO-EUROPEANS
- * THE AEGEAN SEA
- * THE GREEKS
- * THE GREEK CITIES
- * GREEK SELF-GOVERNMENT
- * GREEK LIFE
- * THE GREEK THEATRE
- * THE PERSIAN WARS
- * ATHENS vs. SPARTA
- * ALEXANDER THE GREAT
- * A SUMMARY
- * ROME AND CARTHAGE
- * THE RISE OF ROME
- * THE ROMAN EMPIRE
- * JOSHUA OF NAZARETH
- * THE FALL OF ROME
- * RISE OF THE CHURCH
- * MOHAMMED
- * CHARLEMAGNE
- * THE NORSEMEN
- * FEUDALISM
- * CHIVALRY
- * POPE vs. EMPEROR
- * THE CRUSADES
- * THE MEDIAEVAL CITY
- * MEDIAEVAL SELF-GOVERNMENT
- * THE MEDIAEVAL WORLD
- * MEDIAEVAL TRADE
- * THE RENAISSANCE
- * THE AGE OF EXPRESSION
- * THE GREAT DISCOVERIES
- * BUDDHA AND CONFUCIUS
- * THE REFORMATION

- * RELIGIOUS WARFARE
- * THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION
- * THE BALANCE OF POWER
- * THE RISE OF RUSSIA
- * RUSSIA vs. SWEDEN
- * THE RISE OF PRUSSIA
- * THE MERCANTILE SYSTEM
- * THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
- * THE FRENCH REVOLUTION
- * NAPOLEON
- * THE HOLY ALLIANCE
- * THE GREAT REACTION
- * NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE
- * THE AGE OF THE ENGINE
- * THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION
- * EMANCIPATION
- * THE AGE OF SCIENCE
- * ART
- * COLONIAL EXPANSION AND WAR
- * A NEW WORLD
- * AS IT EVER SHALL BE

1. THE SETTING OF THE STAGE
2. OUR EARLIEST ANCESTORS
3. PREHISTORIC MAN BEGINS TO MAKE THINGS FOR HIMSELF
4. THE EGYPTIANS INVENT THE ART OF WRITING AND THE RECORD OF HISTORY BEGINS
5. THE BEGINNING OF CIVILISATION IN THE VALLEY OF THE NILE
6. THE RISE AND FALL OF EGYPT
7. MESOPOTAMIA, THE SECOND CENTRE OF EASTERN CIVILISATION
8. THE SUMERIAN CLAY WRITERS, WHOSE CLAY TABLETS TELL US THE STORY OF ASSYRIA AND BABYLONIA, THE GREAT SEMITIC MELTING-POT
9. THE STORY OF MOSES, THE LEADER OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE
10. THE PHOENICIANS, WHO GAVE US OUR ALPHABET
11. THE INDO-EUROPEAN PERSIANS CONQUER THE SEMITIC AND THE EGYPTIAN WORLD
12. THE PEOPLE OF THE AEGEAN SEA CARRIED THE CIVILISATION OF OLD ASIA INTO THE WILDERNESS OF EUROPE
13. MEANWHILE THE INDO-EUROPEAN TRIBE OF THE HELLENES WAS TAKING POSSESSION OF GREECE
14. THE GREEK CITIES THAT WERE REALLY STATES
15. THE GREEKS WERE THE FIRST PEOPLE TO TRY THE DIFFICULT EXPERIMENT OF SELF-GOVERNMENT
16. HOW THE GREEKS LIVED
17. THE ORIGINS OF THE THEATRE, THE FIRST FORM OF PUBLIC AMUSEMENT
18. HOW THE GREEKS DEFENDED EUROPE AGAINST AN ASIATIC INVASION AND DROVE THE PERSIANS BACK ACROSS THE AEGEAN SEA
19. HOW ATHENS AND SPARTA FOUGHT A LONG AND DISASTROUS WAR FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF GREECE
20. ALEXANDER THE MACEDONIAN ESTABLISHES A GREEK WORLD EMPIRE, AND WHAT BECAME OF THIS HIGH AMBITION
21. A SHORT SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS 1 TO 20
22. THE SEMITIC COLONY OF CARTHAGE ON THE NORTHERN COAST OF AFRICA AND THE INDO-EUROPEAN CITY OF ROME ON THE WEST
COAST OF ITALY FOUGHT EACH OTHER FOR THE POSSESSION OF THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND CARTHAGE WAS DESTROYED
23. HOW ROME HAPPENED

24. HOW THE REPUBLIC OF ROME, AFTER CENTURIES OF UNREST AND REVOLUTION, BECAME AN EMPIRE
25. THE STORY OF JOSHUA OF NAZARETH, WHOM THE GREEKS CALLED JESUS
26. THE TWILIGHT OF ROME
27. HOW ROME BECAME THE CENTRE OF THE CHRISTIAN WORLD
28. AHMED, THE CAMEL DRIVER, WHO BECAME THE PROPHET OF THE ARABIAN DESERT, AND WHOSE FOLLOWERS ALMOST CONQUERED THE ENTIRE KNOWN WORLD FOR THE GREATER GLORY OF ALLAH, THE "ONLY TRUE GOD"
29. HOW CHARLEMAGNE, THE KING OF THE FRANKS, CAME TO BEAR THE TITLE OF EMPEROR AND TRIED TO REVIVE THE OLD IDEAL OF WORLD-EMPIRE
30. WHY THE PEOPLE OF THE TENTH CENTURY PRAYED THE LORD TO PROTECT THEM FROM THE FURY OF THE NORSEMEN
31. HOW CENTRAL EUROPE, ATTACKED FROM THREE SIDES, BECAME AN ARMED CAMP AND WHY EUROPE WOULD HAVE PERISHED WITHOUT THOSE PROFESSIONAL SOLDIERS AND ADMINISTRATORS WHO WERE PART OF THE FEUDAL SYSTEM
32. CHIVALRY
33. THE STRANGE DOUBLE LOYALTY OF THE PEOPLE OF THE MIDDLE AGES, AND HOW IT LED TO ENDLESS QUARRELS BETWEEN THE POPES AND THE HOLY ROMAN EMPERORS
34. BUT ALL THESE DIFFERENT QUARRELS WERE FORGOTTEN WHEN THE TURKS TOOK THE HOLY LAND, DESECRATED THE HOLY PLACES AND INTERFERED SERIOUSLY WITH THE TRADE FROM EAST TO WEST. EUROPE WENT CRUSADING
35. WHY THE PEOPLE OF THE MIDDLE AGES SAID THAT CITY AIR IS FREE AIR
36. HOW THE PEOPLE OF THE CITIES ASSERTED THEIR RIGHT TO BE HEARD IN THE ROYAL COUNCILS OF THEIR COUNTRY
37. WHAT THE PEOPLE OF THE MIDDLE AGES THOUGHT OF THE WORLD IN WHICH THEY HAPPENED TO LIVE
38. HOW THE CRUSADES ONCE MORE MADE THE MEDITERRANEAN A BUSY CENTRE OF TRADE AND HOW THE CITIES OF THE ITALIAN PENINSULA BECAME THE GREAT DISTRIBUTING CENTRE FOR THE COMMERCE WITH ASIA AND AFRICA
39. PEOPLE ONCE MORE DARED TO BE HAPPY JUST BECAUSE THEY WERE ALIVE. THEY TRIED TO SAVE THE REMAINS OF THE OLDER AND MORE AGREEABLE CIVILISATION OF ROME AND GREECE AND THEY WERE SO PROUD OF THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS THAT THEY SPOKE OF A RENAISSANCE OR RE-BIRTH OF CIVILISATION
40. THE PEOPLE BEGAN TO FEEL THE NEED OF GIVING EXPRESSION TO THEIR NEWLY DISCOVERED JOY OF LIVING. THEY EXPRESSED THEIR HAPPINESS IN POETRY AND IN SCULPTURE AND IN ARCHITECTURE AND PAINTING, AND IN THE BOOKS THEY PRINTED
41. BUT NOW THAT PEOPLE HAD BROKEN THROUGH THE BONDS OF THEIR NARROW MEDIEVAL LIMITATIONS, THEY HAD TO HAVE MORE ROOM FOR THEIR WANDERINGS. THE EUROPEAN WORLD HAD GROWN TOO SMALL FOR THEIR AMBITIONS. IT WAS THE TIME OF THE GREAT VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY
42. CONCERNING BUDDHA AND CONFUCIUS
43. THE PROGRESS OF THE HUMAN RACE IS BEST COMPARED TO A GIGANTIC PENDULUM WHICH FOREVER SWINGS FORWARD AND BACKWARD. THE RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE AND THE ARTISTIC AND LITERARY ENTHUSIASM OF THE

RENAISSANCE WERE FOLLOWED BY THE ARTISTIC AND LITERARY INDIFFERENCE AND THE RELIGIOUS ENTHUSIASM OF THE REFORMATION

44. THE AGE OF THE GREAT RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSIES

45. HOW THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS AND THE LESS DIVINE BUT MORE REASONABLE RIGHT OF PARLIAMENT ENDED DISASTROUSLY FOR KING CHARLES II

46. IN FRANCE, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS CONTINUED WITH GREATER POMP AND SPLENDOR THAN EVER BEFORE AND THE AMBITION OF THE RULER WAS ONLY TEMPERED BY THE NEWLY INVENTED LAW OF THE BALANCE OF POWER

47. THE STORY OF THE MYSTERIOUS MUSCOVITE EMPIRE WHICH SUDDENLY BURST UPON THE GRAND POLITICAL STAGE OF EUROPE

48. RUSSIA AND SWEDEN FOUGHT MANY WARS TO DECIDE WHO SHALL BE THE LEADING POWER OF NORTHEASTERN EUROPE

49. THE EXTRAORDINARY RISE OF A LITTLE STATE IN A DREARY PART OF NORTHERN GERMANY, CALLED PRUSSIA

50. HOW THE NEWLY FOUNDED NATIONAL OR DYNASTIC STATES OF EUROPE TRIED TO MAKE THEMSELVES RICH AND WHAT WAS MEANT BY THE MERCANTILE SYSTEM

51. AT THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY EUROPE HEARD STRANGE REPORTS OF SOMETHING WHICH HAD HAPPENED IN THE WILDERNESS OF THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT. THE DESCENDANTS OF THE MEN WHO HAD PUNISHED KING CHARLES FOR HIS INSISTENCE UPON HIS DIVINE RIGHTS ADDED A NEW CHAPTER TO THE OLD STORY OF THE STRUGGLE FOR SELF- GOVERNMENT

52. THE GREAT FRENCH REVOLUTION PROCLAIMS THE PRINCIPLES OF LIBERTY, FRATERNITY AND EQUALITY UNTO ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE EARTH

53. NAPOLEON

54. AS SOON AS NAPOLEON HAD BEEN SENT TO ST. HELENA, THE RULERS WHO SO OFTEN HAD BEEN DEFEATED BY THE HATED CORSICAN MET AT VIENNA AND TRIED TO UNDO THE MANY CHANCES WHICH HAD BEEN BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

55. THEY TRIED TO ASSURE THE WORLD AN ERA OF UNDISTURBED PEACE BY SUPPRESSING ALL NEW IDEAS. THEY MADE THE POLICE-SPY THE HIGHEST FUNCTIONARY IN THE STATE AND SOON THE PRISONS OF ALL COUNTRIES WERE FILLED WITH THOSE WHO CLAIMED THAT PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT TO GOVERN THEMSELVES AS THEY SEE FIT

56. THE LOVE OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, HOWEVER, WAS TOO STRONG TO BE DESTROYED IN THIS WAY. THE SOUTH AMERICANS WERE THE FIRST TO REBEL AGAINST THE REACTIONARY MEASURES OF THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA. GREECE AND BELGIUM AND SPAIN AND A LARGE NUMBER OF OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN CONTINENT FOLLOWED SUIT AND THE NINETEENTH CENTURY WAS FILLED WITH THE RUMOR OF MANY WARS OF INDEPENDENCE

57. BUT WHILE THE PEOPLE OF EUROPE WERE FIGHTING FOR THEIR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, THE WORLD IN WHICH THEY LIVED HAD BEEN ENTIRELY CHANGED BY A SERIES OF INVENTIONS, WHICH HAD MADE THE CLUMSY OLD STEAM-ENGINE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY THE MOST FAITHFUL AND EFFICIENT STAVE OF MAN

58. THE NEW ENGINES WERE VERY EXPENSIVE AND ONLY PEOPLE OF WEALTH COULD AFFORD THEM. THE OLD CARPENTER OR SHOEMAKER WHO HAD BEEN HIS OWN MASTER IN HIS LITTLE WORKSHOP WAS OBLIGED TO HIRE

HIMSELF OUT TO THE OWNERS OF THE BIG MECHANICAL TOOLS, AND WHILE HE MADE MORE MONEY THAN BEFORE, HE LOST HIS FORMER INDEPENDENCE AND HE DID NOT LIKE THAT

59. THE GENERAL INTRODUCTION OF MACHINERY DID NOT BRING ABOUT THE ERA OF HAPPINESS AND PROSPERITY WHICH HAD BEEN PREDICTED BY THE GENERATION WHICH SAW THE STAGE COACH REPLACED BY THE RAILROAD. SEVERAL REMEDIES WERE SUGGESTED, BUT NONE OF THESE QUITE SOLVED THE PROBLEM

60. BUT THE WORLD HAD UNDERGONE ANOTHER CHANGE WHICH WAS OF GREATER IMPORTANCE THAN EITHER THE POLITICAL OR THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTIONS. AFTER GENERATIONS OF OPPRESSION AND PERSECUTION, THE SCIENTIST HAD AT LAST GAINED LIBERTY OF ACTION AND HE WAS NOW TRYING TO DISCOVER THE FUNDAMENTAL LAWS WHICH GOVERN THE UNIVERSE

61. A CHAPTER OF ART

62. THE LAST FIFTY YEARS, INCLUDING SEVERAL EXPLANATIONS AND A FEW APOLOGIES

63. THE GREAT WAR, WHICH WAS REALLY THE STRUGGLE FOR A NEW AND BETTER WORLD

64. ANIMATED CHRONOLOGY

65. CONCERNING THE PICTURES

66. AN HISTORICAL READING LIST FOR CHILDREN

67. INDEX

THE STORY OF MANKIND

HIGH Up in the North in the land called Svithjod, there stands a rock. It is a hundred miles high and a hundred miles wide. Once every thousand years a little bird comes to this rock to sharpen its beak.

When the rock has thus been worn away, then a single day of eternity will have gone by.

THE SETTING OF THE STAGE

WE live under the shadow of a gigantic question mark.

Who are we?

Where do we come from?

Whither are we bound?

Slowly, but with persistent courage, we have been pushing this question mark further and further towards that distant line, beyond the horizon, where we hope to find our answer.

We have not gone very far.

We still know very little but we have reached the point where (with a fair degree of accuracy) we can guess at many things.

In this chapter I shall tell you how (according to our best belief) the stage was set for the first appearance of man.

If we represent the time during which it has been possible for animal life to exist upon our planet by a line of this length, then the tiny line just below indicates the age during which man (or a creature more or less resembling man) has lived upon this earth.

Man was the last to come but the first to use his brain for the purpose of conquering the forces of nature. That is the reason why we are going to study him, rather than cats or dogs or horses or any of the other animals, who, all in their own way, have a very interesting historical development behind them.

In the beginning, the planet upon which we live was (as far as we now know) a large ball of flaming matter, a tiny cloud of smoke in the endless ocean of space. Gradually, in the course of millions of years, the surface burned itself out, and was covered with a thin layer of rocks. Upon these lifeless rocks the rain descended in endless torrents, wearing out the hard granite and carrying the dust to the valleys that lay hidden between the high cliffs of the steaming earth.

Finally the hour came when the sun broke through the clouds and saw how this little planet was covered with a few small puddles which were to develop into the mighty oceans of the eastern and western hemispheres.

Then one day the great wonder happened. What had been dead, gave birth to life.

The first living cell floated upon the waters of the sea.

For millions of years it drifted aimlessly with the currents. But during all that time it was developing certain habits that it might survive more easily upon the inhospitable earth. Some of these cells were happiest in the dark depths of the lakes and the pools. They took root in the slimy sediments which had been carried down from the tops of the hills and they became plants. Others preferred to move about and they grew strange jointed legs, like scorpions and began to crawl along the bottom of the sea amidst the plants and the pale green things that looked like jelly-fishes. Still others (covered with scales) depended upon a swimming motion to go from place to place in their search for food, and gradually they populated the ocean with myriads of fishes.

Meanwhile the plants had increased in number and they had to search for new dwelling places. There was no more room for them at the bottom of the sea. Reluctantly they left the water and made a new home in the marshes and on the mud-banks that lay at the foot of the mountains. Twice a day the tides of the ocean covered them with their brine. For the rest of the time, the plants made the best of their uncomfortable situation and tried to survive in the thin air which surrounded the surface of the planet. After centuries of training, they learned how to live as comfortably in the air as they had done in the water. They increased in size and became shrubs and trees and at last they learned how to grow lovely flowers which attracted the attention of the busy big bumble-bees and the birds who carried the seeds far and wide until the whole earth had become covered with green pastures, or lay dark under the shadow of the big trees. But some of the fishes too had begun to leave the sea, and they had learned how to breathe with lungs as well as with gills. We call such creatures amphibious, which means that they are able to live with equal ease on the land and in the water. The first frog who crosses your path can tell you all about the pleasures of the double existence of the amphibian.

Once outside of the water, these animals gradually adapted themselves more and more to life on land. Some became reptiles (creatures who crawl like lizards) and they shared the silence of the forests with the insects. That they might move faster through the soft soil, they improved upon their legs and their size increased until the world was populated with gigantic forms (which the hand-books of biology list under the names of Ichthyosaurus and Megalosaurus and Brontosaurus) who grew to be thirty to forty feet long and who could have played with elephants as a full grown cat plays with her kittens.

Some of the members of this reptilian family began to live in the tops of the trees, which were then often more than a hundred feet high. They no longer needed their legs for the purpose of walking, but it was necessary for them to move quickly from branch to branch. And so they changed a part of their skin into a sort of parachute, which stretched between the sides of their bodies and the small toes of their fore-feet, and gradually they covered this skinny parachute with feathers and made their tails into a steering gear and flew from tree to tree and developed into true birds.

Then a strange thing happened. All the gigantic reptiles died within a short time. We do not know the reason. Perhaps it was due to a sudden change in climate. Perhaps they had grown so large that they could neither swim nor walk nor crawl, and they starved to death within sight but not within reach of the big ferns and trees. Whatever the cause, the million year old world-empire of the big reptiles was over.

The world now began to be occupied by very different creatures. They were the descendants of the reptiles but they were quite unlike these because they fed their young from the "mammas" or the breasts of the mother. Wherefore modern science calls these animals "mammals." They had shed the scales of the fish. They did not adopt the feathers of the bird, but they covered their bodies with hair. The mammals however developed other habits which gave their race a great advantage over the other animals. The female of the species carried the eggs of the young inside her body until they were hatched and while all other living beings, up to that time, had left their children exposed to the dangers of cold and heat, and the attacks of wild beasts, the mammals kept their young with them for a long time and sheltered them while they were still too weak to fight their enemies. In this way the young mammals were given a much better chance to survive, because they learned many things from their mothers, as you will know if you have ever watched a cat teaching her kittens to take care of themselves and how to wash their faces and how to catch mice.

But of these mammals I need not tell you much for you know them well. They surround you on all sides. They are your daily companions in the streets and in your home, and you can see your less familiar cousins behind the bars of the zoological garden.

And now we come to the parting of the ways when man suddenly leaves the endless procession of dumbly living and dying creatures and begins to use his reason to shape the destiny of his race.

One mammal in particular seemed to surpass all others in its ability to find food and shelter. It had learned to use its fore-feet for the purpose of holding its prey, and by dint of practice it had developed a hand-like claw. After innumerable attempts it had learned how to balance the whole of the body upon the hind legs. (This is a difficult act, which every child has to learn anew although the human race has been doing it for over a million years.)

This creature, half ape and half monkey but superior to both, became the most successful hunter and could make a living in every clime. For greater safety, it usually moved about in groups. It learned how to make strange grunts to warn its young of approaching danger and after many hundreds of thousands of years it began to use these throaty noises for the purpose of talking.

This creature, though you may hardly believe it, was your first “man-like” ancestor.

OUR EARLIEST ANCESTORS

WE know very little about the first “true” men. We have never seen their pictures. In the deepest layer of clay of an ancient soil we have sometimes found pieces of their bones. These lay buried amidst the broken skeletons of other animals that have long since disappeared from the face of the earth. Anthropologists (learned scientists who devote their lives to the study of man as a member of the animal kingdom) have taken these bones and they have been able to reconstruct our earliest ancestors with a fair degree of accuracy.

The great-great-grandfather of the human race was a very ugly and unattractive mammal. He was quite small, much smaller than the people of today. The heat of the sun and the biting wind of the cold winter had coloured his skin a dark brown. His head and most of his body, his arms and legs too, were covered with long, coarse hair. He had very thin but strong fingers which made his hands look like those of a monkey. His forehead was low and his jaw was like the jaw of a wild animal which uses its teeth both as fork and knife. He wore no clothes. He had seen no fire except the flames of the rumbling volcanoes which filled the earth with their smoke and their lava.

He lived in the damp blackness of vast forests, as the pygmies of Africa do to this very day. When he felt the pangs of hunger he ate raw leaves and the roots of plants or he took the eggs away from an angry bird and fed them to his own young. Once in a while, after a long and patient chase, he would catch a sparrow or a small wild dog or perhaps a rabbit. These he would eat raw for he had never discovered that food tasted better when it was cooked.

During the hours of day, this primitive human being prowled about looking for things to eat.

When night descended upon the earth, he hid his wife and his children in a hollow tree or behind some heavy boulders, for he was surrounded on all sides by ferocious animals and when it was dark these animals began to prowl about, looking for something to eat for their mates and their own young, and they liked the taste of human beings. It was a world where you must either eat or be eaten, and life was very unhappy because it was full of fear and misery.

In summer, man was exposed to the scorching rays of the sun, and during the winter his children would freeze to death in his arms. When such a creature hurt itself, (and hunting animals are forever breaking their bones or spraining their ankles) he had no one to take care of him and he must die a horrible death.

Like many of the animals who fill the Zoo with their strange noises, early man liked to jabber. That is to say, he endlessly repeated the same unintelligible gibberish because it pleased him to hear the sound of his voice. In due time he learned that he could use this guttural noise to warn his fellow beings whenever danger threatened and he gave certain little shrieks which came to mean “there is a tiger!” or “here come five elephants.” Then the others grunted something back at him and their growl meant, “I see them,” or “let us run away and hide.” And this was probably the origin of all language.

But, as I have said before, of these beginnings we know so very little. Early man had no tools and he built himself no houses. He lived and died and left no trace of his existence except a few collar-bones and a few pieces of his skull. These tell us that many thousands of years ago the world was inhabited by certain mammals who were quite different from all the other animals—who had probably developed from another unknown ape-like animal which had learned to walk on its

hind-legs and use its fore-paws as hands--and who were most probably connected with the creatures who happen to be our own immediate ancestors.

It is little enough we know and the rest is darkness.

PREHISTORIC MAN

PREHISTORIC MAN BEGINS TO MAKE THINGS FOR HIMSELF.

EARLY man did not know what time meant. He kept no records of birthdays or wedding anniversaries or the hour of death. He had no idea of days or weeks or even years. But in a general way he kept track of the seasons for he had noticed that the cold winter was invariably followed by the mild spring--that spring grew into the hot summer when fruits ripened and the wild ears of corn were ready to be eaten and that summer ended when sudden gusts of wind swept the leaves from the trees and a number of animals were getting ready for the long hibernal sleep.

But now, something unusual and rather frightening had happened. Something was the matter with the weather. The warm days of summer had come very late. The fruits had not ripened. The tops of the mountains which used to be covered with grass now lay deeply hidden underneath a heavy burden of snow.

Then, one morning, a number of wild people, different from the other creatures who lived in that neighbourhood, came wandering down from the region of the high peaks. They looked lean and appeared to be starving. They uttered sounds which no one could understand. They seemed to say that they were hungry. There was not food enough for both the old inhabitants and the newcomers. When they tried to stay more than a few days there was a terrible battle with claw-like hands and feet and whole families were killed. The others fled back to their mountain slopes and died in the next blizzard.

But the people in the forest were greatly frightened. All the time the days grew shorter and the nights grew colder than they ought to have been.

Finally, in a gap between two high hills, there appeared a tiny speck of greenish ice. Rapidly it increased in size. A gigantic glacier came sliding downhill. Huge stones were being pushed into the valley. With the noise of a dozen thunderstorms torrents of ice and mud and blocks of granite suddenly tumbled among the people of the forest and killed them while they slept. Century old trees were crushed into kindling wood. And then it began to snow.

It snowed for months and months. All the plants died and the animals fled in search of the southern sun. Man hoisted his young upon his back and followed them. But he could not travel as fast as the wilder creatures and he was forced to choose between quick thinking or quick dying. He seems to have preferred the former for he has managed to survive the terrible glacial periods which upon four different occasions threatened to kill every human being on the face of the earth.

In the first place it was necessary that man clothe himself lest he freeze to death. He learned how to dig holes and cover them with branches and leaves and in these traps he caught bears and hyenas, which he then killed with heavy stones and whose skins he used as coats for himself and his family.

Next came the housing problem. This was simple. Many animals were in the habit of sleeping in dark caves. Man now followed their example, drove the animals out of their warm homes and claimed them for his own.

Even so, the climate was too severe for most people and the old and the young died at a terrible rate. Then a genius bethought himself of the use of fire. Once, while out hunting, he had been caught in a forest-fire. He remembered that he had been almost roasted to death by the flames. Thus far fire had been an enemy. Now it became a friend. A dead tree was dragged into the cave and lighted by means of smouldering branches from a burning wood. This turned the cave into a cozy little room.

And then one evening a dead chicken fell into the fire. It was not rescued until it had been well roasted. Man discovered that meat tasted better when cooked and he then and there discarded one of the old habits which he had shared with the other animals and began to prepare his food.

In this way thousands of years passed. Only the people with the cleverest brains survived. They had to struggle day and night against cold and hunger. They were forced to invent tools. They learned how to sharpen stones into axes and how to make hammers. They were obliged to put up large stores of food for the endless days of the winter and they found that clay could be made into bowls and jars and hardened in the rays of the sun. And so the glacial period, which had threatened to destroy the human race, became its greatest teacher because it forced man to use his brain.

HIEROGLYPHICS

THE EGYPTIANS INVENT THE ART OF WRITING AND THE RECORD OF HISTORY BEGINS

THESE earliest ancestors of ours who lived in the great European wilderness were rapidly learning many new things. It is safe to say that in due course of time they would have given up the ways of savages and would have developed a civilisation of their own. But suddenly there came an end to their isolation. They were discovered.

A traveller from an unknown southland who had dared to cross the sea and the high mountain passes had found his way to the wild people of the European continent. He came from Africa. His home was in Egypt.

The valley of the Nile had developed a high stage of civilisation thousands of years before the people of the west had dreamed of the possibilities of a fork or a wheel or a house. And we shall therefore leave our great-great-grandfathers in their caves, while we visit the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean, where stood the earliest school of the human race.

The Egyptians have taught us many things. They were excellent farmers. They knew all about irrigation. They built temples which were afterwards copied by the Greeks and which served as the earliest models for the churches in which we worship nowadays. They had invented a calendar which proved such a useful instrument for the purpose of measuring time that it has survived with a few changes until today. But most important of all, the Egyptians had learned how to preserve speech for the benefit of future generations. They had invented the art of writing.

We are so accustomed to newspapers and books and magazines that we take it for granted that the world has always been able to read and write. As a matter of fact, writing, the most important of all inventions, is quite new. Without written documents we would be like cats and dogs, who can only teach their kittens and their puppies a few simple things and who, because they cannot write, possess no way in which they can make use of the experience of those generations of cats and dogs that have gone before.

In the first century before our era, when the Romans came to Egypt, they found the valley full of strange little pictures which seemed to have something to do with the history of the country. But the Romans were not interested in "anything foreign" and did not inquire into the origin of these queer figures which covered the walls of the temples and the walls of the palaces and endless reams of flat sheets made out of the papyrus reed. The last of the Egyptian priests who had understood the holy art of making such pictures had died several years before. Egypt deprived of its independence had become a store-house filled with important historical documents which no one could decipher and which were of no earthly use to either man or beast.

Seventeen centuries went by and Egypt remained a land of mystery. But in the year 1798 a French general by the name of Bonaparte happened to visit eastern Africa to prepare for an attack upon the British Indian Colonies. He did not get beyond the Nile, and his campaign was a failure. But, quite accidentally, the famous French expedition solved the problem of the ancient Egyptian picture-language.

One day a young French officer, much bored by the dreary life of his little fortress on the Rosetta river (a mouth of the Nile) decided to spend a few idle hours rummaging among the ruins of the Nile Delta. And behold! he found a stone which greatly puzzled him. Like everything else in Egypt it was covered with little figures. But this particular slab of black basalt was different from anything that had ever been discovered. It carried three inscriptions. One of these was in Greek. The Greek language was known. "All that is necessary," so he reasoned, "is to compare the Greek text with the Egyptian figures, and they will at once tell their secrets."

The plan sounded simple enough but it took more than twenty years to solve the riddle. In the year 1802 a French professor by the name of Champollion began to compare the Greek and the Egyptian texts of the famous Rosetta stone. In the year 1823 he announced that he had discovered the meaning of fourteen little figures. A short time later he died from overwork, but the main principles of Egyptian writing had become known. Today the story of the valley of the Nile is better known to us than the story of the Mississippi River. We possess a written record which covers four thousand years of chronicled history.

As the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics (the word means "sacred writing") have played such a very great role in history, (a few of them in modified form have even found their way into our own alphabet,) you ought to know something about the ingenious system which was used fifty centuries ago to preserve the spoken word for the benefit of the coming generations.

Of course, you know what a sign language is. Every Indian story of our western plains has a chapter devoted to strange messages written in the form of little pictures which tell how many buffaloes were killed and how many hunters there were in a certain party. As a rule it is not difficult to understand the meaning of such messages.

Ancient Egyptian, however, was not a sign language. The clever people of the Nile had passed beyond that stage long before. Their pictures meant a great deal more than the object which they represented, as I shall try to explain to you now.

Suppose that you were Champollion, and that you were examining a stack of papyrus sheets, all covered with hieroglyphics. Suddenly you came across a picture of a man with a saw. "Very well," you would say, "that means of course that a farmer went out to cut down a tree." Then you take another papyrus. It tells the story of a queen who had died at the age of eighty-two. In the midst of a sentence appears the picture of the man with the saw. Queens of eighty-two do not handle saws. The picture therefore must mean something else. But what?

That is the riddle which the Frenchman finally solved. He discovered that the Egyptians were the first to use what we now call "phonetic writing" --a system of characters which reproduce the

“sound” (or phone) of the spoken word and which make it possible for us to translate all our spoken words into a written form, with the help of only a few dots and dashes and pothooks.

Let us return for a moment to the little fellow with the saw. The word “saw” either means a certain tool which you will find in a carpenter’s shop, or it means the past tense of the verb “to see.”

This is what had happened to the word during the course of centuries. First of all it had meant only the particular tool which it represented. Then that meaning had been lost and it had become the past participle of a verb. After several hundred years, the Egyptians lost sight of both these meanings and the picture {illust.} came to stand for a single letter, the letter S. A short sentence will show you what I mean. Here is a modern English sentence as it would have been written in hieroglyphics. {illust.}

The {illust.} either means one of these two round objects in your head, which allow you to see or it means “I,” the person who is talking.

A {illust.} is either an insect which gathers honey, or it represents the verb “to be” which means to exist. Again, it may be the first part of a verb like “be-come” or “be-have.” In this particular instance it is followed by {illust.} which means a “leaf” or “leave” or “lieve” (the sound of all three words is the same).

The “eye” you know all about.

Finally you get the picture of a {illust.}. It is a giraffe. It is part of the old sign-language out of which the hieroglyphics developed.

You can now read that sentence without much difficulty.

“I believe I saw a giraffe.”

Having invented this system the Egyptians developed it during thousands of years until they could write anything they wanted, and they used these “canned words” to send messages to friends, to keep business accounts and to keep a record of the history of their country, that future generations might benefit by the mistakes of the past.

THE NILE VALLEY

THE BEGINNING OF CIVILISATION IN THE VALLEY OF THE NILE

THE history of man is the record of a hungry creature in search of food. Wherever food was plentiful, thither man has travelled to make his home.

The fame of the Valley of the Nile must have spread at an early date. From the interior of Africa and from the desert of Arabia and from the western part of Asia people had flocked to Egypt to claim their share of the rich farms. Together these invaders had formed a new race which called itself “Remi” or “the Men” just as we sometimes call America “God’s own country.” They had good reason to be grateful to a Fate which had carried them to this narrow strip of land. In the summer of each year the Nile turned the valley into a shallow lake and when the waters receded all the grainfields and the pastures were covered with several inches of the most fertile clay.

In Egypt a kindly river did the work of a million men and made it possible to feed the teeming population of the first large cities of which we have any record. It is true that all the arable land was not in the valley. But a complicated system of small canals and well-sweeps carried water from the river-level to the top of the highest banks and an even more intricate system of irrigation trenches spread it throughout the land.

While man of the prehistoric age had been obliged to spend sixteen hours out of every twenty-four gathering food for himself and the members of his tribe, the Egyptian peasant or the inhabitant of the Egyptian city found himself possessed of a certain leisure. He used this spare time to make himself many things that were merely ornamental and not in the least bit useful.

More than that. One day he discovered that his brain was capable of thinking all kinds of thoughts which had nothing to do with the problems of eating and sleeping and finding a home for the children. The Egyptian began to speculate upon many strange problems that confronted him. Where did the stars come from? Who made the noise of the thunder which frightened him so terribly? Who made the River Nile rise with such regularity that it was possible to base the calendar upon the appearance and the disappearance of the annual floods? Who was he, himself, a strange little creature surrounded on all sides by death and sickness and yet happy and full of laughter?

He asked these many questions and certain people obligingly stepped forward to answer these inquiries to the best of their ability. The Egyptians called them "priests" and they became the guardians of his thoughts and gained great respect in the community. They were highly learned men who were entrusted with the sacred task of keeping the written records. They understood that it is not good for man to think only of his immediate advantage in this world and they drew his attention to the days of the future when his soul would dwell beyond the mountains of the west and must give an account of his deeds to Osiris, the mighty God who was the Ruler of the Living and the Dead and who judged the acts of men according to their merits. Indeed, the priests made so much of that future day in the realm of Isis and Osiris that the Egyptians began to regard life merely as a short preparation for the Hereafter and turned the teeming valley of the Nile into a land devoted to the Dead.

In a strange way, the Egyptians had come to believe that no soul could enter the realm of Osiris without the possession of the body which had been its place of residence in this world. Therefore as soon as a man was dead his relatives took his corpse and had it embalmed. For weeks it was soaked in a solution of natron and then it was filled with pitch. The Persian word for pitch was "Mumiai" and the embalmed body was called a "Mummy." It was wrapped in yards and yards of specially prepared linen and it was placed in a specially prepared coffin ready to be removed to its final home. But an Egyptian grave was a real home where the body was surrounded by pieces of furniture and musical instruments (to while away the dreary hours of waiting) and by little statues of cooks and bakers and barbers (that the occupant of this dark home might be decently provided with food and need not go about unshaven).

Originally these graves had been dug into the rocks of the western mountains but as the Egyptians moved northward they were obliged to build their cemeteries in the desert. The desert however is full of wild animals and equally wild robbers and they broke into the graves and disturbed the mummy or stole the jewelry that had been buried with the body. To prevent such unholy desecration the Egyptians used to build small mounds of stones on top of the graves. These little mounds gradually grew in size, because the rich people built higher mounds than the poor and there was a good deal of competition to see who could make the highest hill of stones. The record was made by King Khufu, whom the Greeks called Cheops and who lived thirty centuries before our era. His mound, which the Greeks called a pyramid (because the Egyptian word for high was pir-em-us) was over five hundred feet high.

It covered more than thirteen acres of desert which is three times as much space as that occupied by the church of St. Peter, the largest edifice of the Christian world.

During twenty years, over a hundred thousand men were busy carrying the necessary stones from the other side of the river—ferrying them across the Nile (how they ever managed to do this, we do not understand), dragging them in many instances a long distance across the desert and finally hoisting them into their correct position. But so well did the King's architects and engineers perform their task that the narrow passage-way which leads to the royal tomb in the heart of the stone monster has never yet been pushed out of shape by the weight of those thousands of tons of stone which press upon it from all sides.

THE STORY OF EGYPT

THE RISE AND FALL OF EGYPT

THE river Nile was a kind friend but occasionally it was a hard taskmaster. It taught the people who lived along its banks the noble art of "team-work." They depended upon each other to build their irrigation trenches and keep their dikes in repair. In this way they learned how to get along with their neighbours and their mutual-benefit-association quite easily developed into an organised state.

Then one man grew more powerful than most of his neighbours and he became the leader of the community and their commander-in-chief when the envious neighbours of western Asia invaded the prosperous valley. In due course of time he became their King and ruled all the land from the Mediterranean to the mountains of the west.

But these political adventures of the old Pharaohs (the word meant "the Man who lived in the Big House") rarely interested the patient and toiling peasant of the grain fields. Provided he was not obliged to pay more taxes to his King than he thought just, he accepted the rule of Pharaoh as he accepted the rule of Mighty Osiris.

It was different however when a foreign invader came and robbed him of his possessions. After twenty centuries of independent life, a savage Arab tribe of shepherds, called the Hyksos, attacked Egypt and for five hundred years they were the masters of the valley of the Nile. They were highly un-popular and great hate was also felt for the Hebrews who came to the land of Goshen to find a shelter after their long wandering through the desert and who helped the foreign usurper by acting as his tax-gatherers and his civil servants.

But shortly after the year 1700 B.C. the people of Thebes began a revolution and after a long struggle the Hyksos were driven out of the country and Egypt was free once more.

A thousand years later, when Assyria conquered all of western Asia, Egypt became part of the empire of Sardanapalus. In the seventh century B.C. it became once more an independent state which obeyed the rule of a king who lived in the city of Sais in the Delta of the Nile. But in the year 525 B.C., Cambyses, the king of the Persians, took possession of Egypt and in the fourth century B.C., when Persia was conquered by Alexander the Great, Egypt too became a Macedonian province. It regained a semblance of independence when one of Alexander's generals set himself up as king of a new Egyptian state and founded the dynasty of the Ptolemies, who resided in the newly built city of Alexandria.

Finally, in the year 89 B.C., the Romans came. The last Egyptian queen, Cleopatra, tried her best to save the country. Her beauty and charm were more dangerous to the Roman generals than half a dozen Egyptian army corps. Twice she was successful in her attacks upon the hearts of her

Roman conquerors. But in the year 30 B.C., Augustus, the nephew and heir of Caesar, landed in Alexandria. He did not share his late uncle's admiration for the lovely princess. He destroyed her armies, but spared her life that he might make her march in his triumph as part of the spoils of war. When Cleopatra heard of this plan, she killed herself by taking poison. And Egypt became a Roman province.

MESOPOTAMIA

MESOPOTAMIA--THE SECOND CENTRE OF EASTERN CIVILISATION

I AM going to take you to the top of the highest pyramid and I am going to ask that you imagine yourself possessed of the eyes of a hawk. Way, way off, in the distance, far beyond the yellow sands of the desert, you will see something green and shimmering. It is a valley situated between two rivers. It is the Paradise of the Old Testament. It is the land of mystery and wonder which the Greeks called Mesopotamia-- the "country between the rivers."

The names of the two rivers are the Euphrates (which the Babylonians called the Purattu) and the Tigris (which was known as the Diklat). They begin their course amidst the snows of the mountains of Armenia where Noah's Ark found a resting place and slowly they flow through the southern plain until they reach the muddy banks of the Persian gulf. They perform a very useful service. They turn the arid regions of western Asia into a fertile garden.

The valley of the Nile had attracted people because it had offered them food upon fairly easy terms. The "land between the rivers" was popular for the same reason. It was a country full of promise and both the inhabitants of the northern mountains and the tribes which roamed through the southern deserts tried to claim this territory as their own and most exclusive possession. The constant rivalry between the mountaineers and the desert-nomads led to endless warfare. Only the strongest and the bravest could hope to survive and that will explain why Mesopotamia became the home of a very strong race of men who were capable of creating a civilisation which was in every respect as important as that of Egypt.

THE SUMERIANS

THE SUMERIAN NAIL WRITERS, WHOSE CLAY TABLETS TELL US THE STORY OF ASSYRIA AND BABYLONIA, THE GREAT SEMITIC MELTING-POT

THE fifteenth century was an age of great discoveries. Columbus tried to find a way to the island of Kathay and stumbled upon a new and unsuspected continent. An Austrian bishop equipped an expedition which was to travel eastward and find the home of the Grand Duke of Muscovy, a voyage which led to complete failure, for Moscow was not visited by western men until a generation later. Meanwhile a certain Venetian by the name of Barbero had explored the ruins of western Asia and had brought back reports of a most curious language which he had found carved in the rocks of the temples of Shiraz and engraved upon endless pieces of baked clay.

But Europe was busy with many other things and it was not until the end of the eighteenth century that the first "cuneiform inscriptions" (so-called because the letters were wedge-shaped and wedge is called "Cuneus" in Latin) were brought to Europe by a Danish surveyor, named Niebuhr. Then it took thirty years before a patient German school-master by the name of Grotefend had deciphered the first four letters, the D, the A, the R and the SH, the name of the Persian King Darius. And another twenty years had to go by until a British officer, Henry

Rawlinson, who found the famous inscription of Behistun, gave us a workable key to the nail-writing of western Asia.

Compared to the problem of deciphering these nail-writings, the job of Champollion had been an easy one. The Egyptians used pictures. But the Sumerians, the earliest inhabitants of Mesopotamia, who had hit upon the idea of scratching their words in tablets of clay, had discarded pictures entirely and had evolved a system of V-shaped figures which showed little connection with the pictures out of which they had been developed. A few examples will show you what I mean. In the beginning a star, when drawn with a nail into a brick looked as follows: {illust.} This sign however was too cumbersome and after a short while when the meaning of “heaven” was added to that of star the picture was simplified in this way {illust.} which made it even more of a puzzle. In the same way an ox changed from {illust} into {illust.} and a fish changed from {illust.} into {illust.} The sun was originally a plain circle {illust.} and became {illust.} If we were using the Sumerian script today we would make an {illust.} look like {illust.}. This system of writing down our ideas looks rather complicated but for more than thirty centuries it was used by the Sumerians and the Babylonians and the Assyrians and the Persians and all the different races which forced their way into the fertile valley.

The story of Mesopotamia is one of endless warfare and conquest. First the Sumerians came from the North. They were a white People who had lived in the mountains. They had been accustomed to worship their Gods on the tops of hills. After they had entered the plain they constructed artificial little hills on top of which they built their altars. They did not know how to build stairs and they therefore surrounded their towers with sloping galleries. Our engineers have borrowed this idea, as you may see in our big railroad stations where ascending galleries lead from one floor to another. We may have borrowed other ideas from the Sumerians but we do not know it. The Sumerians were entirely absorbed by those races that entered the fertile valley at a later date. Their towers however still stand amidst the ruins of Mesopotamia. The Jews saw them when they went into exile in the land of Babylon and they called them towers of Babel, or towers of Babel.

In the fortieth century before our era, the Sumerians had entered Mesopotamia. They were soon afterwards overpowered by the Akkadians, one of the many tribes from the desert of Arabia who speak a common dialect and who are known as the “Semites,” because in the olden days people believed them to be the direct descendants of Shem, one of the three sons of Noah. A thousand years later, the Akkadians were forced to submit to the rule of the Amorites, another Semitic desert tribe whose great King Hammurabi built himself a magnificent palace in the holy city of Babylon and who gave his people a set of laws which made the Babylonian state the best administered empire of the ancient world. Next the Hittites, whom you will also meet in the Old Testament, overran the Fertile Valley and destroyed whatever they could not carry away. They in turn were vanquished by the followers of the great desert God, Ashur, who called themselves Assyrians and who made the city of Nineveh the center of a vast and terrible empire which conquered all of western Asia and Egypt and gathered taxes from countless subject races until the end of the seventh century before the birth of Christ when the Chaldeans, also a Semitic tribe, re-established Babylon and made that city the most important capital of that day. Nebuchadnezzar, the best known of their Kings, encouraged the study of science, and our modern knowledge of astronomy and mathematics is all based upon certain first principles which were discovered by the Chaldeans. In the year 538 B.C. a crude tribe of Persian shepherds invaded this old land and overthrew the empire of the Chaldeans. Two hundred years later, they in turn were overthrown by Alexander the Great, who turned the Fertile Valley, the old melting-pot of so many Semitic races, into a Greek province. Next came the Romans and after the Romans, the Turks, and Mesopotamia, the second centre of the world’s civilisation, became a vast wilderness where huge mounds of earth told a story of ancient glory.

MOSES

THE STORY OF MOSES, THE LEADER OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE

SOME time during the twentieth century before our era, a small and unimportant tribe of Semitic shepherds had left its old home, which was situated in the land of Ur on the mouth of the Euphrates, and had tried to find new pastures within the domain of the Kings of Babylonia. They had been driven away by the royal soldiers and they had moved westward looking for a little piece of unoccupied territory where they might set up their tents.

This tribe of shepherds was known as the Hebrews or, as we call them, the Jews. They had wandered far and wide, and after many years of dreary peregrinations they had been given shelter in Egypt. For more than five centuries they had dwelt among the Egyptians and when their adopted country had been overrun by the Hyksos marauders (as I told you in the story of Egypt) they had managed to make themselves useful to the foreign invader and had been left in the undisturbed possession of their grazing fields. But after a long war of independence the Egyptians had driven the Hyksos out of the valley of the Nile and then the Jews had come upon evil times for they had been degraded to the rank of common slaves and they had been forced to work on the royal roads and on the Pyramids. And as the frontiers were guarded by the Egyptian soldiers it had been impossible for the Jews to escape.

After many years of suffering they were saved from their miserable fate by a young Jew, called Moses, who for a long time had dwelt in the desert and there had learned to appreciate the simple virtues of his earliest ancestors, who had kept away from cities and city-life and had refused to let themselves be corrupted by the ease and the luxury of a foreign civilisation.

Moses decided to bring his people back to a love of the ways of the patriarchs. He succeeded in evading the Egyptian troops that were sent after him and led his fellow tribesmen into the heart of the plain at the foot of Mount Sinai. During his long and lonely life in the desert, he had learned to revere the strength of the great God of the Thunder and the Storm, who ruled the high heavens and upon whom the shepherds depended for life and light and breath. This God, one of the many divinities who were widely worshipped in western Asia, was called Jehovah, and through the teaching of Moses, he became the sole Master of the Hebrew race.

One day, Moses disappeared from the camp of the Jews. It was whispered that he had gone away carrying two tablets of rough-hewn stone. That afternoon, the top of the mountain was lost to sight. The darkness of a terrible storm hid it from the eye of man. But when Moses returned, behold! there stood engraved upon the tablets the words which Jehovah had spoken unto the people of Israel amidst the crash of his thunder and the blinding flashes of his lightning. And from that moment, Jehovah was recognised by all the Jews as the Highest Master of their Fate, the only True God, who had taught them how to live holy lives when he bade them to follow the wise lessons of his Ten Commandments.

They followed Moses when he bade them continue their journey through the desert. They obeyed him when he told them what to eat and drink and what to avoid that they might keep well in the hot climate. And finally after many years of wandering they came to a land which seemed pleasant and prosperous. It was called Palestine, which means the country of the "Pilistu" the Philistines, a small tribe of Cretans who had settled along the coast after they had been driven away from their own island. Unfortunately, the mainland, Palestine, was already inhabited by another Semitic race, called the Canaanites. But the Jews forced their way into the valleys and built themselves cities and constructed a mighty temple in a town which they named Jerusalem, the Home of Peace. As for Moses, he was no longer the leader of his people. He had been allowed to see the mountain ridges of Palestine from afar. Then he had closed his tired eyes for all time. He had worked faithfully and hard to please Jehovah. Not only had he guided his brethren out of

foreign slavery into the free and independent life of a new home but he had also made the Jews the first of all nations to worship a single God.

THE PHOENICIANS

THE PHOENICIANS WHO GAVE US OUR ALPHABET

THE Phoenicians, who were the neighbours of the Jews, were a Semitic tribe which at a very early age had settled along the shores of the Mediterranean. They had built themselves two well-fortified towns, Tyre and Sidon, and within a short time they had gained a monopoly of the trade of the western seas. Their ships went regularly to Greece and Italy and Spain and they even ventured beyond the straits of Gibraltar to visit the Scilly islands where they could buy tin. Wherever they went, they built themselves small trading stations, which they called colonies. Many of these were the origin of modern cities, such as Cadiz and Marseilles.

They bought and sold whatever promised to bring them a good profit. They were not troubled by a conscience. If we are to believe all their neighbours they did not know what the words honesty or integrity meant. They regarded a well-filled treasure chest the highest ideal of all good citizens. Indeed they were very unpleasant people and did not have a single friend. Nevertheless they have rendered all coming generations one service of the greatest possible value. They gave us our alphabet.

The Phoenicians had been familiar with the art of writing, invented by the Sumerians. But they regarded these pothooks as a clumsy waste of time. They were practical business men and could not spend hours engraving two or three letters. They set to work and invented a new system of writing which was greatly superior to the old one. They borrowed a few pictures from the Egyptians and they simplified a number of the wedge-shaped figures of the Sumerians. They sacrificed the pretty looks of the older system for the advantage of speed and they reduced the thousands of different images to a short and handy alphabet of twenty-two letters.

In due course of time, this alphabet travelled across the Aegean Sea and entered Greece. The Greeks added a few letters of their own and carried the improved system to Italy. The Romans modified the figures somewhat and in turn taught them to the wild barbarians of western Europe. Those wild barbarians were our own ancestors, and that is the reason why this book is written in characters that are of Phoenician origin and not in the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians or in the nail-script of the Sumerians.

THE INDO-EUROPEANS

THE INDO-EUROPEAN PERSIANS CONQUER THE SEMITIC AND THE EGYPTIAN WORLD

THE world of Egypt and Babylon and Assyria and Phoenicia had existed almost thirty centuries and the venerable races of the Fertile Valley were getting old and tired. Their doom was sealed when a new and more energetic race appeared upon the horizon. We call this race the Indo-European race, because it conquered not only Europe but also made itself the ruling class in the country which is now known as British India.

These Indo-Europeans were white men like the Semites but they spoke a different language which is regarded as the common ancestor of all European tongues with the exception of Hungarian and Finnish and the Basque dialects of Northern Spain.

When we first hear of them, they had been living along the shores of the Caspian Sea for many centuries. But one day they had packed their tents and they had wandered forth in search of a new home. Some of them had moved into the mountains of Central Asia and for many centuries they had lived among the peaks which surround the plateau of Iran and that is why we call them Aryans. Others had followed the setting sun and they had taken possession of the plains of Europe as I shall tell you when I give you the story of Greece and Rome.

For the moment we must follow the Aryans. Under the leadership of Zarathustra (or Zoroaster) who was their great teacher many of them had left their mountain homes to follow the swiftly flowing Indus river on its way to the sea.

Others had preferred to stay among the hills of western Asia and there they had founded the half-independent communities of the Medes and the Persians, two peoples whose names we have copied from the old Greek history-books. In the seventh century before the birth of Christ, the Medes had established a kingdom of their own called Media, but this perished when Cyrus, the chief of a clan known as the Anshan, made himself king of all the Persian tribes and started upon a career of conquest which soon made him and his children the undisputed masters of the whole of western Asia and of Egypt.

Indeed, with such energy did these Indo-European Persians push their triumphant campaigns in the west that they soon found themselves in serious difficulties with certain other Indo-European tribes which centuries before had moved into Europe and had taken possession of the Greek peninsula and the islands of the Aegean Sea.

These difficulties led to the three famous wars between Greece and Persia during which King Darius and King Xerxes of Persia invaded the northern part of the peninsula. They ravaged the lands of the Greeks and tried very hard to get a foothold upon the European continent.

But in this they did not succeed. The navy of Athens proved unconquerable. By cutting off the lines of supplies of the Persian armies, the Greek sailors invariably forced the Asiatic rulers to return to their base.

It was the first encounter between Asia, the ancient teacher, and Europe, the young and eager pupil. A great many of the other chapters of this book will tell you how the struggle between east and west has continued until this very day.

THE AEGEAN SEA

THE PEOPLE OF THE AEGEAN SEA CARRIED THE CIVILISATION OF OLD ASIA INTO THE WILDERNESS OF EUROPE

WHEN Heinrich Schliemann was a little boy his father told him the story of Troy. He liked that story

better than anything else he had ever heard and he made up his mind, that as soon as he was big enough to leave home, he would travel to Greece and "find Troy." That he was the son of a poor country parson in a Mecklenburg village did not bother him. He knew that he would need money but he decided to gather a fortune first and do the digging afterwards. As a matter of fact, he managed to get a large fortune within a very short time, and as soon as he had enough money to equip an expedition, he went to the northwest corner of Asia Minor, where he supposed that Troy had been situated.

In that particular nook of old Asia Minor, stood a high mound covered with grainfields. According to tradition it had been the home of Priamus the king of Troy. Schliemann, whose enthusiasm was somewhat greater than his knowledge, wasted no time in preliminary explorations. At once he began to dig. And he dug with such zeal and such speed that his trench went straight through the heart of the city for which he was looking and carried him to the ruins of another buried town which was at least a thousand years older than the Troy of which Homer had written. Then something very interesting occurred. If Schliemann had found a few polished stone hammers and perhaps a few pieces of crude pottery, no one would have been surprised. Instead of discovering such objects, which people had generally associated with the prehistoric men who had lived in these regions before the coming of the Greeks, Schliemann found beautiful statuettes and very costly jewelry and ornamented vases of a pattern that was unknown to the Greeks. He ventured the suggestion that fully ten centuries before the great Trojan war, the coast of the AEgean had been inhabited by a mysterious race of men who in many ways had been the superiors of the wild Greek tribes who had invaded their country and had destroyed their civilisation or absorbed it until it had lost all trace of originality. And this proved to be the case. In the late seventies of the last century, Schliemann visited the ruins of Mycenae, ruins which were so old that Roman guide-books marvelled at their antiquity. There again, beneath the flat slabs of stone of a small round enclosure, Schliemann stumbled upon a wonderful treasure-trove, which had been left behind by those mysterious people who had covered the Greek coast with their cities and who had built walls, so big and so heavy and so strong, that the Greeks called them the work of the Titans, those god-like giants who in very olden days had used to play ball with mountain peaks.

A very careful study of these many relics has done away with some of the romantic features of the story. The makers of these early works of art and the builders of these strong fortresses were no sorcerers, but simple sailors and traders. They had lived in Crete, and on the many small islands of the AEgean Sea. They had been hardy mariners and they had turned the AEgean into a center of commerce for the exchange of goods between the highly civilised east and the slowly developing wilderness of the European mainland.

For more than a thousand years they had maintained an island empire which had developed a very high form of art. Indeed their most important city, Cnossus, on the northern coast of Crete, had been entirely modern in its insistence upon hygiene and comfort. The palace had been properly drained and the houses had been provided with stoves and the Cnossians had been the first people to make a daily use of the hitherto unknown bathtub. The palace of their King had been famous for its winding staircases and its large banqueting hall. The cellars underneath this palace, where the wine and the grain and the olive-oil were stored, had been so vast and had so greatly impressed the first Greek visitors, that they had given rise to the story of the "labyrinth," the name which we give to a structure with so many complicated passages that it is almost impossible to find our way out, once the front door has closed upon our frightened selves.

But what finally became of this great AEgean Empire and what caused its sudden downfall, that I can not tell.

The Cretans were familiar with the art of writing, but no one has yet been able to decipher their inscriptions. Their history therefore is unknown to us. We have to reconstruct the record of their adventures from the ruins which the AEgeans have left behind. These ruins make it clear that the AEgean world was suddenly conquered by a less civilised race which had recently come from the plains of northern Europe. Unless we are very much mistaken, the savages who were responsible for the destruction of the Cretan and the AEgean civilisation were none other than certain tribes of wandering shepherds who had just taken possession of the rocky peninsula between the Adriatic and the AEgean seas and who are known to us as Greeks.

THE GREEKS

MEANWHILE THE INDO-EUROPEAN TRIBE OF THE HELLENES WAS TAKING POSSESSION OF GREECE

THE Pyramids were a thousand years old and were beginning to show the first signs of decay, and Hammurabi, the wise king of Babylon, had been dead and buried several centuries, when a small tribe of shepherds left their homes along the banks of the River Danube and wandered southward in search of fresh pastures. They called themselves Hellenes, after Hellen, the son of Deucalion and Pyrrha. According to the old myths these were the only two human beings who had escaped the great flood, which countless years before had destroyed all the people of the world, when they had grown so wicked that they disgusted Zeus, the mighty God, who lived on Mount Olympus.

Of these early Hellenes we know nothing. Thucydides, the historian of the fall of Athens, describing his earliest ancestors, said that they “did not amount to very much,” and this was probably true. They were very ill-mannered. They lived like pigs and threw the bodies of their enemies to the wild dogs who guarded their sheep. They had very little respect for other people’s rights, and they killed the natives of the Greek peninsula (who were called the Pelasgians) and stole their farms and took their cattle and made their wives and daughters slaves and wrote endless songs praising the courage of the clan of the Achaeans, who had led the Hellenic advance-guard into the mountains of Thessaly and the Peloponnesus.

But here and there, on the tops of high rocks, they saw the castles of the Aegeans and those they did not attack for they feared the metal swords and the spears of the Aegean soldiers and knew that they could not hope to defeat them with their clumsy stone axes.

For many centuries they continued to wander from valley to valley and from mountain side to mountain side. Then the whole of the land had been occupied and the migration had come to an end.

That moment was the beginning of Greek civilisation. The Greek farmer, living within sight of the Aegean colonies, was finally driven by curiosity to visit his haughty neighbours. He discovered that he could learn many useful things from the men who dwelt behind the high stone walls of Mycenae, and Tiryns.

He was a clever pupil. Within a short time he mastered the art of handling those strange iron weapons which the Aegeans had brought from Babylon and from Thebes. He came to understand the mysteries of navigation. He began to build little boats for his own use.

And when he had learned everything the Aegeans could teach him he turned upon his teachers and drove them back to their islands. Soon afterwards he ventured forth upon the sea and conquered all the cities of the Aegean. Finally in the fifteenth century before our era he plundered and ravaged Cnossus and ten centuries after their first appearance upon the scene the Hellenes were the undisputed rulers of Greece, of the Aegean and of the coastal regions of Asia Minor. Troy, the last great commercial stronghold of the older civilisation, was destroyed in the eleventh century B.C. European history was to begin in all seriousness.

THE GREEK CITIES

THE GREEK CITIES THAT WERE REALLY STATES

WE modern people love the sound of the word “big.” We pride ourselves upon the fact that we belong to the “biggest” country in the world and possess the “biggest” navy and grow the “biggest” oranges and potatoes, and we love to live in cities of “millions” of inhabitants and when we are dead we are buried in the “biggest cemetery of the whole state.”

A citizen of ancient Greece, could he have heard us talk, would not have known what we meant. "Moderation in all things" was the ideal of his life and mere bulk did not impress him at all. And this love of moderation was not merely a hollow phrase used upon special occasions: it influenced the life of the Greeks from the day of their birth to the hour of their death. It was part of their literature and it made them build small but perfect temples. It found expression in the clothes which the men wore and in the rings and the bracelets of their wives. It followed the crowds that went to the theatre and made them hoot down any playwright who dared to sin against the iron law of good taste or good sense.

The Greeks even insisted upon this quality in their politicians and in their most popular athletes. When a powerful runner came to Sparta and boasted that he could stand longer on one foot than any other man in Hellas the people drove him from the city because he prided himself upon an accomplishment at which he could be beaten by any common goose. "That is all very well," you will say, "and no doubt it is a great virtue to care so much for moderation and perfection, but why should the Greeks have been the only people to develop this quality in olden times?" For an answer I shall point to the way in which the Greeks lived.

The people of Egypt or Mesopotamia had been the "subjects" of a mysterious Supreme Ruler who lived miles and miles away in a dark palace and who was rarely seen by the masses of the population. The Greeks on the other hand, were "free citizens" of a hundred independent little "cities" the largest of which counted fewer inhabitants than a large modern village. When a peasant who lived in Ur said that he was a Babylonian he meant that he was one of millions of other people who paid tribute to the king who at that particular moment happened to be master of western Asia. But when a Greek said proudly that he was an Athenian or a Theban he spoke of a small town, which was both his home and his country and which recognised no master but the will of the people in the market-place.

To the Greek, his fatherland was the place where he was born; where he had spent his earliest years playing hide and seek amidst the forbidden rocks of the Acropolis; where he had grown into manhood with a thousand other boys and girls, whose nicknames were as familiar to him as those of your own schoolmates. His Fatherland was the holy soil where his father and mother lay buried. It was the small house within the high city-walls where his wife and children lived in safety. It was a complete world which covered no more than four or five acres of rocky land. Don't you see how these surroundings must have influenced a man in everything he did and said and thought? The people of Babylon and Assyria and Egypt had been part of a vast mob. They had been lost in the multitude. The Greek on the other hand had never lost touch with his immediate surroundings. He never ceased to be part of a little town where everybody knew every one else. He felt that his intelligent neighbours were watching him. Whatever he did, whether he wrote plays or made statues out of marble or composed songs, he remembered that his efforts were going to be judged by all the free-born citizens of his home-town who knew about such things. This knowledge forced him to strive after perfection, and perfection, as he had been taught from childhood, was not possible without moderation.

In this hard school, the Greeks learned to excel in many things. They created new forms of government and new forms of literature and new ideals in art which we have never been able to surpass. They performed these miracles in little villages that covered less ground than four or five modern city blocks.

And look, what finally happened!

In the fourth century before our era, Alexander of Macedonia conquered the world. As soon as he had done with fighting, Alexander decided that he must bestow the benefits of the true Greek genius upon all mankind. He took it away from the little cities and the little villages and tried to make it blossom and bear fruit amidst the vast royal residences of his newly acquired

Empire. But the Greeks, removed from the familiar sight of their own temples, removed from the well-known sounds and smells of their own crooked streets, at once lost the cheerful joy and the marvellous sense of moderation which had inspired the work of their hands and brains while they laboured for the glory of their old city-states. They became cheap artisans, content with second-rate work. The day the little city-states of old Hellas lost their independence and were forced to become part of a big nation, the old Greek spirit died. And it has been dead ever since.

GREEK SELF-GOVERNMENT

THE GREEKS WERE THE FIRST PEOPLE TO TRY THE DIFFICULT EXPERIMENT OF SELF-GOVERNMENT

IN the beginning, all the Greeks had been equally rich and equally poor. Every man had owned a certain number of cows and sheep. His mud-hut had been his castle. He had been free to come and go as he wished. Whenever it was necessary to discuss matters of public importance, all the citizens had gathered in the market-place. One of the older men of the village was elected chairman and it was his duty to see that everybody had a chance to express his views. In case of war, a particularly energetic and self-confident villager was chosen commander-in-chief, but the same people who had voluntarily given this man the right to be their leader, claimed an equal right to deprive him of his job, once the danger had been averted.

But gradually the village had grown into a city. Some people had worked hard and others had been lazy. A few had been unlucky and still others had been just plain dishonest in dealing with their neighbours and had gathered wealth. As a result, the city no longer consisted of a number of men who were equally well-off. On the contrary it was inhabited by a small class of very rich people and a large class of very poor ones.

There had been another change. The old commander-in-chief who had been willingly recognised as “headman” or “King” because he knew how to lead his men to victory, had disappeared from the scene. His place had been taken by the nobles—a class of rich people who during the course of time had got hold of an undue share of the farms and estates.

These nobles enjoyed many advantages over the common crowd of freemen. They were able to buy the best weapons which were to be found on the market of the eastern Mediterranean. They had much spare time in which they could practise the art of fighting. They lived in strongly built houses and they could hire soldiers to fight for them. They were constantly quarrelling among each other to decide who should rule the city. The victorious nobleman then assumed a sort of Kingship over all his neighbours and governed the town until he in turn was killed or driven away by still another ambitious nobleman.

Such a King, by the grace of his soldiers, was called a “Tyrant” and during the seventh and sixth centuries before our era every Greek city was for a time ruled by such Tyrants, many of whom, by the way, happened to be exceedingly capa-

ble men. But in the long run, this state of affairs became unbearable. Then attempts were made to bring about reforms and out of these reforms grew the first democratic government of which the world has a record.

It was early in the seventh century that the people of Athens decided to do some housecleaning and give the large number of freemen once more a voice in the government as they were supposed to have had in the days of their Achaean ancestors. They asked a man by the name of Draco to provide them with a set of laws that would protect the poor against the aggressions of the rich.

Draco set to work. Unfortunately he was a professional lawyer and very much out of touch with ordinary life. In his eyes a crime was a crime and when he had finished his code, the people of Athens discovered that these Draconian laws were so severe that they could not possibly be put into effect. There would not have been rope enough to hang all the criminals under their new system of jurisprudence which made the stealing of an apple a capital offence.

The Athenians looked about for a more humane reformer. At last they found some one who could do that sort of thing better than anybody else. His name was Solon. He belonged to a noble family and he had travelled all over the world and had studied the forms of government of many other countries. After a careful study of the subject, Solon gave Athens a set of laws which bore testimony to that wonderful principle of moderation which was part of the Greek character. He tried to improve the condition of the peasant without however destroying the prosperity of the nobles who were (or rather who could be) of such great service to the state as soldiers. To protect the poorer classes against abuse on the part of the judges (who were always elected from the class of the nobles because they received no salary) Solon made a provision whereby a citizen with a grievance had the right to state his case before a jury of thirty of his fellow Athenians.

Most important of all, Solon forced the average freeman to take a direct and personal interest in the affairs of the city. No longer could he stay at home and say "oh, I am too busy today" or "it is raining and I had better stay indoors." He was expected to do his share; to be at the meeting of the town council; and carry part of the responsibility for the safety and the prosperity of the state.

This government by the "demos," the people, was often far from successful. There was too much idle talk. There were too many hateful and spiteful scenes between rivals for official honor. But it taught the Greek people to be independent and to rely upon themselves for their salvation and that was a very good thing.

GREEK LIFE

HOW THE GREEKS LIVED

BUT how, you will ask, did the ancient Greeks have time to look after their families and their business if they were forever running to the market-place to discuss affairs of state? In this chapter I shall tell you.

In all matters of government, the Greek democracy recognised only one class of citizens--the freemen. Every Greek city was composed of a small number of free born citizens, a large number of slaves and a sprinkling of foreigners.

At rare intervals (usually during a war, when men were needed for the army) the Greeks showed themselves willing to confer the rights of citizenship upon the "barbarians" as they called the foreigners. But this was an exception. Citizenship was a matter of birth. You were an Athenian because your father and your grandfather had been Athenians before you. But however great your merits as a trader or a soldier, if you were born of non-Athenian parents, you remained a "foreigner" until the end of time.

The Greek city, therefore, whenever it was not ruled by a king or a tyrant, was run by and for the freemen, and this would not have been possible without a large army of slaves who outnumbered the free citizens at the rate of six or five to one and who performed those tasks to which we modern people must devote most of our time and energy if we wish to provide for our families and pay the rent of our apartments. The slaves did all the cooking and baking and

candlestick making of the entire city. They were the tailors and the carpenters and the jewelers and the school-teachers and the bookkeepers and they tended the store and looked after the factory while the master went to the public meeting to discuss questions of war and peace or visited the theatre to see the latest play of AEschylus or hear a discussion of the revolutionary ideas of Euripides, who had dared to express certain doubts upon the omnipotence of the great god Zeus.

Indeed, ancient Athens resembled a modern club. All the freeborn citizens were hereditary members and all the slaves were hereditary servants, and waited upon the needs of their masters, and it was very pleasant to be a member of the organisation.

But when we talk about slaves, we do not mean the sort of people about whom you have read in the pages of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It is true that the position of those slaves who tilled the fields was a very unpleasant one, but the average freeman who had come down in the world and who had been obliged to hire himself out as a farm hand led just as miserable a life. In the cities, furthermore, many of the slaves were more prosperous than the poorer classes of the freemen. For the Greeks, who loved moderation in all things, did not like to treat their slaves after the fashion which afterward was so common in Rome, where a slave had as few rights as an engine in a modern factory and could be thrown to the wild animals upon the smallest pretext.

The Greeks accepted slavery as a necessary institution, without which no city could possibly become the home of a truly civilised people.

The slaves also took care of those tasks which nowadays are performed by the business men and the professional men. As for those household duties which take up so much of the time of your mother and which worry your father when he comes home from his office, the Greeks, who understood the value of leisure, had reduced such duties to the smallest possible minimum by living amidst surroundings of extreme simplicity.

To begin with, their homes were very plain. Even the rich nobles spent their lives in a sort of adobe barn, which lacked all the comforts which a modern workman expects as his natural right. A Greek home consisted of four walls and a roof. There was a door which led into the street but there were no windows. The kitchen, the living rooms and the sleeping quarters were built around an open courtyard in which there was a small fountain, or a statue and a few plants to make it look bright. Within this courtyard the family lived when it did not rain or when it was not too cold. In one corner of the yard the cook (who was a slave) prepared the meal and in another corner, the teacher (who was also a slave) taught the children the alpha beta gamma and the tables of multiplication and in still another corner the lady of the house, who rarely left her domain (since it was not considered good form for a married woman to be seen on the street too often) was repairing her husband's coat with her seamstresses (who were slaves,) and in the little office, right off the door, the master was inspecting the accounts which the overseer of his farm (who was a slave) had just brought to him.

When dinner was ready the family came together but the meal was a very simple one and did not take much time. The Greeks seem to have regarded eating as an unavoidable evil and not a pastime, which kills many dreary hours and eventually kills many dreary people. They lived on bread and on wine, with a little meat and some green vegetables. They drank water only when nothing else was available because they did not think it very healthy. They loved to call on each other for dinner, but our idea of a festive meal, where everybody is supposed to eat much more than is good for him, would have disgusted them. They came together at the table for the purpose of a good talk and a good glass of wine and water, but as they were moderate people they despised those who drank too much.

The same simplicity which prevailed in the dining room also dominated their choice of clothes. They liked to be clean and well groomed, to have their hair and beards neatly cut, to feel their

bodies strong with the exercise and the swimming of the gymnasium, but they never followed the Asiatic fashion which prescribed loud colours and strange patterns. They wore a long white coat and they managed to look as smart as a modern Italian officer in his long blue cape.

They loved to see their wives wear ornaments but they thought it very vulgar to display their wealth (or their wives) in public and whenever the women left their home they were as inconspicuous as possible.

In short, the story of Greek life is a story not only of moderation but also of simplicity. "Things," chairs and tables and books and houses and carriages, are apt to take up a great deal of their owner's time. In the end they invariably make him their slave and his hours are spent looking after their wants, keeping them polished and brushed and painted. The Greeks, before everything else, wanted to be "free," both in mind and in body. That they might maintain their liberty, and be truly free in spirit, they reduced their daily needs to the lowest possible point.

THE GREEK THEATRE

THE ORIGINS OF THE THEATRE, THE FIRST FORM OF PUBLIC AMUSEMENT

AT a very early stage of their history the Greeks had begun to collect the poems, which had been written in honor of their brave ancestors who had driven the Pelasgians out of Hellas and had destroyed the power of Troy. These poems were recited in public and everybody came to listen to them. But the theatre, the form of entertainment which has become almost a necessary part of our own lives, did not grow out of these recited heroic tales. It had such a curious origin that I must tell you something about it in a separate chapter

The Greeks had always been fond of parades. Every year they held solemn processions in honor of Dionysos the God of the wine. As everybody in Greece drank wine (the Greeks thought water only useful for the purpose of swimming and sailing) this particular Divinity was as popular as a God of the Soda-Fountain would be in our own land.

And because the Wine-God was supposed to live in the vineyards, amidst a merry mob of Satyrs (strange creatures who were half man and half goat), the crowd that joined the procession used to wear goat-skins and to hee-haw like real billy-goats. The Greek word for goat is "tragos" and the Greek word for singer is "oidos." The singer who meh-mehed like a goat therefore was called a "tragos-oidos" or goat singer, and it is this strange name which developed into the modern word "Tragedy," which means in the theatrical sense a piece with an unhappy ending, just as Comedy (which really means the singing of something "comos" or gay) is the name given to a play which ends happily.

But how, you will ask, did this noisy chorus of masqueraders, stamping around like wild goats, ever develop into the noble tragedies which have filled the theatres of the world for almost two thousand years?

The connecting link between the goat-singer and Hamlet is really very simple as I shall show you in a moment.

The singing chorus was very amusing in the beginning and attracted large crowds of spectators who stood along the side of the road and laughed. But soon this business of tree-hawing grew tiresome and the Greeks thought dullness an evil only comparable to ugliness or sickness. They asked for something more entertaining. Then an inventive young poet from the village of Icaria in Attica hit upon a new idea which proved a tremendous success. He made one of the members of

the goat-chorus step forward and engage in conversation with the leader of the musicians who marched at the head of the parade playing upon their pipes of Pan. This individual was allowed to step out of line. He waved his arms and gesticulated while he spoke (that is to say he “acted” while the others merely stood by and sang) and he asked a lot of questions, which the bandmaster answered according to the roll of papyrus upon which the poet had written down these answers before the show began.

This rough and ready conversation--the dialogue--which told the story of Dionysos or one of the other Gods, became at once popular with the crowd. Henceforth every Dionysian procession had an “acted scene” and very soon the “acting” was considered more important than the procession and the meh-mehing.

AEschylus, the most successful of all “tragedians” who wrote no less than eighty plays during his long life (from 526 to 455) made a bold step forward when he introduced two “actors” instead of one. A generation later Sophocles increased the number of actors to three. When Euripides began to write his terrible tragedies in the middle of the fifth century, B.C., he was allowed as many actors as he liked and when Aristophanes wrote those famous comedies in which he poked fun at everybody and everything, including the Gods of Mount Olympus, the chorus had been reduced to the role of mere bystanders who were lined up behind the principal performers and who sang “this is a terrible world” while the hero in the foreground committed a crime against the will of the Gods.

This new form of dramatic entertainment demanded a proper setting, and soon every Greek city owned a theatre, cut out of the rock of a nearby hill. The spectators sat upon wooden benches and faced a wide circle (our present orchestra where you pay three dollars and thirty cents for a seat). Upon this half-circle, which was the stage, the actors and the chorus took their stand. Behind them there was a tent where they made up with large clay masks which hid their faces and which showed the spectators whether the actors were supposed to be happy and smiling or unhappy and weeping. The Greek word for tent is “skene” and that is the reason why we talk of the “scenery” of the stage.

When once the tragedy had become part of Greek life, the people took it very seriously and never went to the theatre to give their minds a vacation. A new play became as important an event as an election and a successful playwright was received with greater honors than those bestowed upon a general who had just returned from a famous victory.

THE PERSIAN WARS

HOW THE GREEKS DEFENDED EUROPE AGAINST ASIATIC INVASION AND DROVE THE PERSIANS BACK ACROSS THE AEGEAN SEA

THE Greeks had learned the art of trading from the AEgeans who had been the pupils of the Phoenicians. They had founded colonies after the Phoenician pattern. They had even improved upon the Phoenician methods by a more general use of money in dealing with foreign customers. In the sixth century before our era they had established themselves firmly along the coast of Asia Minor and they were taking away trade from the Phoenicians at a fast rate. This the Phoenicians of course did not like but they were not strong enough to risk a war with their Greek competitors. They sat and waited nor did they wait in vain.

In a former chapter, I have told you how a humble tribe of Persian shepherds had suddenly gone upon the warpath and had conquered the greater part of western Asia. The Persians were too civilised to plunder their new subjects. They contented themselves with a yearly tribute. When they reached the coast of Asia Minor they insisted that the Greek colonies of Lydia recognize

the Persian Kings as their over- Lords and pay them a stipulated tax. The Greek colonies objected. The Persians insisted. Then the Greek colonies appealed to the home-country and the stage was set for a quarrel.

For if the truth be told, the Persian Kings regarded the Greek city-states as very dangerous political institutions and bad examples for all other people who were supposed to be the patient slaves of the mighty Persian Kings.

Of course, the Greeks enjoyed a certain degree of safety because their country lay hidden beyond the deep waters of the Aegean. But here their old enemies, the Phoenicians, stepped forward with offers of help and advice to the Persians. If the Persian King would provide the soldiers, the Phoenicians would guarantee to deliver the necessary ships to carry them to Europe. It was the year 492 before the birth of Christ, and Asia made ready to destroy the rising power of Europe.

As a final warning the King of Persia sent messengers to the Greeks asking for "earth and water" as a token of their submission. The Greeks promptly threw the messengers into the nearest well where they would find both "earth and water" in large abundance and thereafter of course peace was impossible.

But the Gods of High Olympus watched over their children and when the Phoenician fleet carrying the Persian troops was near Mount Athos, the Storm-God blew his cheeks until he almost burst the veins of his brow, and the fleet was destroyed by a terrible hurricane and the Persians were all drowned.

Two years later they returned. This time they sailed straight across the Aegean Sea and landed near the village of Marathon. As soon as the Athenians heard this they sent their army of ten thousand men to guard the hills that surrounded the Marathonian plain. At the same time they despatched a fast runner to Sparta to ask for help. But Sparta was envious of the fame of Athens and refused to come to her assistance. The other Greek cities followed her example with the exception of tiny Plataea which sent a thousand men. On the twelfth of September of the year 490, Miltiades, the Athenian commander, threw this little army against the hordes of the Persians. The Greeks broke through the Persian barrage of arrows and their spears caused terrible havoc among the disorganised Asiatic troops who had never been called upon to resist such an enemy.

That night the people of Athens watched the sky grow red with the flames of burning ships. Anxiously they waited for news. At last a little cloud of dust appeared upon the road that led to the North. It was Pheidippides, the runner. He stumbled and gasped for his end was near. Only a few days before had he returned from his errand to Sparta. He had hastened to join Miltiades. That morning he had taken part in the attack and later he had volunteered to carry the news of victory to his beloved city. The people saw him fall and they rushed forward to support him. "We have won," he whispered and then he died, a glorious death which made him envied of all men.

As for the Persians, they tried, after this defeat, to land near Athens but they found the coast guarded and disappeared, and once more the land of Hellas was at peace.

Eight years they waited and during this time the Greeks were not idle. They knew that a final attack was to be expected but they did not agree upon the best way to avert the danger. Some people wanted to increase the army. Others said that a strong fleet was necessary for success. The two parties led by Aristides (for the army) and Themistocles (the leader of the bigger-navy men) fought each other bitterly and nothing was done until Aristides was exiled. Then Themistocles had his chance and he built all the ships he could and turned the Piraeus into a strong naval base.

In the year 481 B.C. a tremendous Persian army appeared in Thessaly, a province of northern Greece. In this hour of danger, Sparta, the great military city of Greece, was elected commander-in-chief. But the Spartans cared little what happened to northern Greece provided their own country was not invaded. They neglected to fortify the passes that led into Greece.

A small detachment of Spartans under Leonidas had been told to guard the narrow road between the high mountains and the sea which connected Thessaly with the southern provinces. Leonidas obeyed his orders. He fought and held the pass with unequalled bravery. But a traitor by the name of Ephialtes who knew the little byways of Malis guided a regiment of Persians through the hills and made it possible for them to attack Leonidas in the rear. Near the Warm Wells--the Thermopylae --a terrible battle was fought.

When night came Leonidas and his faithful soldiers lay dead under the corpses of their enemies.

But the pass had been lost and the greater part of Greece fell into the hands of the Persians. They marched upon Athens, threw the garrison from the rocks of the Acropolis and burned the city. The people fled to the Island of Salamis. All seemed lost. But on the 20th of September of the year 480 Themistocles forced the Persian fleet to give battle within the narrow straits which separated the Island of Salamis from the mainland and within a few hours he destroyed three quarters of the Persian ships.

In this way the victory of Thermopylae came to naught. Xerxes was forced to retire. The next year, so he decreed, would bring a final decision. He took his troops to Thessaly and there he waited for spring.

But this time the Spartans understood the seriousness of the hour. They left the safe shelter of the wall which they had built across the isthmus of Corinth and under the leadership of Pausanias they marched against Mardonius the Persian general. The united Greeks (some one hundred thousand men from a dozen different cities) attacked the three hundred thousand men of the enemy near Plataea. Once more the heavy Greek infantry broke through the Persian barrage of arrows. The Persians were defeated, as they had been at Marathon, and this time they left for good. By a strange coincidence, the same day that the Greek armies won their victory near Plataea, the Athenian ships destroyed the enemy's fleet near Cape Mycale in Asia Minor.

Thus did the first encounter between Asia and Europe end. Athens had covered herself with glory and Sparta had fought bravely and well. If these two cities had been able to come to an agreement, if they had been willing to forget their little jealousies, they might have become the leaders of a strong and united Hellas.

But alas, they allowed the hour of victory and enthusiasm to slip by, and the same opportunity never returned.

ATHENS vs. SPARTA

HOW ATHENS AND SPARTA FOUGHT A LONG AND DISASTROUS WAR FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF GREECE

ATHENS and Sparta were both Greek cities and their people spoke a common language. In every other respect they were different. Athens rose high from the plain. It was a city exposed to the fresh breezes from the sea, willing to look at the world with the eyes of a happy child. Sparta, on the other hand, was built at the bottom of a deep valley, and used the surrounding mountains as a barrier against foreign thought. Athens was a city of busy trade. Sparta was an armed camp where people were soldiers for the sake of being soldiers. The people of Athens loved to sit in the sun and discuss poetry or listen to the wise words of a philosopher. The Spartans, on the

other hand, never wrote a single line that was considered literature, but they knew how to fight, they liked to fight, and they sacrificed all human emotions to their ideal of military preparedness.

No wonder that these sombre Spartans viewed the success of Athens with malicious hate. The energy which the defence of the common home had developed in Athens was now used for purposes of a more peaceful nature. The Acropolis was rebuilt and was made into a marble shrine to the Goddess Athena. Pericles, the leader of the Athenian democracy, sent far and wide to find famous sculptors and painters and scientists to make the city more beautiful and the young Athenians more worthy of their home. At the same time he kept a watchful eye on Sparta and built high walls which connected Athens with the sea and made her the strongest fortress of that day.

An insignificant quarrel between two little Greek cities led to the final conflict. For thirty years the war between Athens and Sparta continued. It ended in a terrible disaster for Athens.

During the third year of the war the plague had entered the city. More than half of the people and Pericles, the great leader, had been killed. The plague was followed by a period of bad and untrustworthy leadership. A brilliant young fellow by the name of Alcibiades had gained the favor of the popular assembly. He suggested a raid upon the Spartan colony of Syracuse in Sicily. An expedition was equipped and everything was ready. But Alcibiades got mixed up in a street brawl and was forced to flee. The general who succeeded him was a bungler. First he lost his ships and then he lost his army, and the few surviving Athenians were thrown into the stone-quarries of Syracuse, where they died from hunger and thirst.

The expedition had killed all the young men of Athens. The city was doomed. After a long siege the town surrendered in April of the year 404. The high walls were demolished. The navy was taken away by the Spartans. Athens ceased to exist as the center of the great colonial empire which it had conquered during the days of its prosperity. But that wonderful desire to learn and to know and to investigate which had distinguished her free citizens during the days of greatness and prosperity did not perish with the walls and the ships. It continued to live. It became even more brilliant.

Athens no longer shaped the destinies of the land of Greece. But now, as the home of the first great university the city began to influence the minds of intelligent people far beyond the narrow frontiers of Hellas.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

ALEXANDER THE MACEDONIAN ESTABLISHES A GREEK WORLD-EMPIRE, AND WHAT BECAME OF THIS HIGH AMBITION

WHEN the Achaeans had left their homes along the banks of the Danube to look for pastures new, they had spent some time among the mountains of Macedonia. Ever since, the Greeks had maintained certain more or less formal relations with the people of this northern country. The Macedonians from their side had kept themselves well informed about conditions in Greece.

Now it happened, just when Sparta and Athens had finished their disastrous war for the leadership of Hellas, that Macedonia was ruled by an extraordinarily clever man by the name of Philip. He admired the Greek spirit in letters and art but he despised the Greek lack of self-control in political affairs. It irritated him to see a perfectly good people waste its men and money upon fruitless quarrels. So he settled the difficulty by making himself the master of all Greece and then he asked his new subjects to join him on a voyage which he meant to pay to Persia in return for the visit which Xerxes had paid the Greeks one hundred and fifty years before.

Unfortunately Philip was murdered before he could start upon this well-prepared expedition. The task of avenging the destruction of Athens was left to Philip's son Alexander, the beloved pupil of Aristotle, wisest of all Greek teachers.

Alexander bade farewell to Europe in the spring of the year 334 B.C. Seven years later he reached India. In the meantime he had destroyed Phoenicia, the old rival of the Greek merchants. He had conquered Egypt and had been worshipped by the people of the Nile valley as the son and heir of the Pharaohs. He had defeated the last Persian king—he had overthrown the Persian empire he had given orders to rebuild Babylon—he had led his troops into the heart of the Himalayan mountains and had made the entire world a Macedonian province and dependency. Then he stopped and announced even more ambitious plans.

The newly formed Empire must be brought under the influence of the Greek mind. The people must be taught the Greek language—they must live in cities built after a Greek model. The Alexandrian soldier now turned school-master. The military camps of yesterday became the peaceful centres of the newly imported Greek civilisation. Higher and higher did the flood of Greek manners and Greek customs rise, when suddenly Alexander was stricken with a fever and died in the old palace of King Hammurabi of Babylon in the year 323.

Then the waters receded. But they left behind the fertile clay of a higher civilisation and Alexander, with all his childish ambitions and his silly vanities, had performed a most valuable service. His Empire did not long survive him. A number of ambitious generals divided the territory among themselves. But they too remained faithful to the dream of a great world brotherhood of Greek and Asiatic ideas and knowledge.

They maintained their independence until the Romans added western Asia and Egypt to their other domains. The strange inheritance of this Hellenistic civilisation (part Greek, part Persian, part Egyptian and Babylonian) fell to the Roman conquerors. During the following centuries, it got such a firm hold upon the Roman world, that we feel its influence in our own lives this very day.

A SUMMARY

A SHORT SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS 1 to 20

THUS far, from the top of our high tower we have been looking eastward. But from this time on, the history of Egypt and Mesopotamia is going to grow less interesting and I must take you to study the western landscape.

Before we do this, let us stop a moment and make clear to ourselves what we have seen.

First of all I showed you prehistoric man—a creature very simple in his habits and very unattractive in his manners. I told you how he was the most defenceless of the many animals that roamed through the early wilderness of the five continents, but being possessed of a larger and better brain, he managed to hold his own.

Then came the glaciers and the many centuries of cold weather, and life on this planet became so difficult that man was obliged to think three times as hard as ever before if he wished to survive. Since, however, that “wish to survive” was (and is) the mainspring which keeps every living being going full tilt to the last gasp of its breath, the brain of glacial man was set to work in all earnestness. Not only did these hardy people manage to exist through the long cold spells which killed many ferocious animals, but when the earth became warm and comfortable once

more, prehistoric man had learned a number of things which gave him such great advantages over his less intelligent neighbors that the danger of extinction (a very serious one during the first half million years of man's residence upon this planet) became a very remote one.

I told you how these earliest ancestors of ours were slowly plodding along when suddenly (and for reasons that are not well understood) the people who lived in the valley of the Nile rushed ahead and almost over night, created the first centre of civilisation.

Then I showed you Mesopotamia, "the land between the rivers," which was the second great school of the human race. And I made you a map of the little island bridges of the AEgean Sea, which carried the knowledge and the science of the old east to the young west, where lived the Greeks.

Next I told you of an Indo-European tribe, called the Hellenes, who thousands of years before had left the heart of Asia and who had in the eleventh century before our era pushed their way into the rocky peninsula of Greece and who, since then, have been known to us as the Greeks. And I told you the story of the little Greek cities that were really states, where the civilisation of old Egypt and Asia was transfigured (that is a big word, but you can "figure out" what it means) into something quite new, something that was much nobler and finer than anything that had gone before.

When you look at the map you will see how by this time civilisation has described a semi-circle. It begins in Egypt, and by way of Mesopotamia and the AEgean Islands it moves westward until it reaches the European continent. The first four thousand years, Egyptians and Babylonians and Phoenicians and a large number of Semitic tribes (please remember that the Jews were but one of a large number of Semitic peoples) have carried the torch that was to illuminate the world. They now hand it over to the Indo-European Greeks, who become the teachers of another Indo-European tribe, called the Romans. But meanwhile the Semites have pushed westward along the northern coast of Africa and have made themselves the rulers of the western half of the Mediterranean just when the eastern half has become a Greek (or Indo-European) possession.

This, as you shall see in a moment, leads to a terrible conflict between the two rival races, and out of their struggle arises the victorious Roman Empire, which is to take this Egyptian-Mesopotamian-Greek civilisation to the furthestmost corners of the European continent, where it serves as the foundation upon which our modern society is based.

I know all this sounds very complicated, but if you get hold of these few principles, the rest of our history will become a great deal simpler. The maps will make clear what the words fail to tell. And after this short intermission, we go back to our story and give you an account of the famous war between Carthage and Rome.

ROME AND CARTHAGE

THE SEMITIC COLONY OF CARTHAGE ON THE NORTHERN COAST OF AFRICA AND THE INDO-EUROPEAN CITY OF ROME ON THE WEST COAST OF ITALY FOUGHT EACH OTHER FOR THE POSSESSION OF THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND CARTHAGE WAS DESTROYED

THE little Phoenician trading post of Kart-hadshat stood on a low hill which overlooked the African Sea, a stretch of water ninety miles wide which separates Africa from Europe. It was an ideal spot for a commercial centre. Almost too ideal. It grew too fast and became too rich. When in the sixth century before our era, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon destroyed Tyre, Carthage broke off all further relations with the Mother Country and became an independent state--the great western advance-post of the Semitic races.

Unfortunately the city had inherited many of the traits which for a thousand years had been characteristic of the Phoenicians. It was a vast business-house, protected by a strong navy, indifferent to most of the finer aspects of life. The city and the surrounding country and the distant colonies were all ruled by a small but exceedingly powerful group of rich men. The Greek word for rich is "ploutos" and the Greeks called such a government by "rich men" a "Plutocracy." Carthage was a plutocracy and the real power of the state lay in the hands of a dozen big ship-owners and mine-owners and merchants who met in the back room of an office and regarded their common Fatherland as a business enterprise which ought to yield them a decent profit. They were however wide awake and full of energy and worked very hard.

As the years went by the influence of Carthage upon her neighbours increased until the greater part of the African coast, Spain and certain regions of France were Carthaginian possessions, and paid tribute, taxes and dividends to the mighty city on the African Sea.

Of course, such a "plutocracy" was forever at the mercy of the crowd. As long as there was plenty of work and wages were high, the majority of the citizens were quite contented, allowed their "betters" to rule them and asked no embarrassing questions. But when no ships left the harbor, when no ore was brought to the smelting-ovens, when dockworkers and stevedores were thrown out of employment, then there were grumblings and there was a demand that the popular assembly be called together as in the olden days when Carthage had been a self-governing republic.

To prevent such an occurrence the plutocracy was obliged to keep the business of the town going at full speed. They had managed to do this very successfully for almost five hundred years when they were greatly disturbed by certain rumors which reached them from the western coast of Italy. It was said that a little village on the banks of the Tiber had suddenly risen to great power and was making itself the acknowledged leader of all the Latin tribes who inhabited central Italy. It was also said that this village, which by the way was called Rome, intended to build ships and go after the commerce of Sicily and the southern coast of France.

Carthage could not possibly tolerate such competition. The young rival must be destroyed lest the Carthaginian rulers lose their prestige as the absolute rulers of the western Mediterranean. The rumors were duly investigated and in a general way these were the facts that came to light.

The west coast of Italy had long been neglected by civilisation. Whereas in Greece all the good harbours faced eastward and enjoyed a full view of the busy islands of the Aegean, the west coast of Italy contemplated nothing more exciting than the desolate waves of the Mediterranean. The country was poor. It was therefore rarely visited by foreign merchants and the natives were allowed to live in undisturbed possession of their hills and their marshy plains.

The first serious invasion of this land came from the north. At an unknown date certain Indo-European tribes had managed to find their way through the passes of the Alps and had pushed southward until they had filled the heel and the toe of the famous Italian boot with their villages and their flocks. Of these early conquerors we know nothing. No Homer sang their glory. Their own accounts of the foundation of Rome (written eight hundred years later when the little city had become the centre of an Empire) are fairy stories and do not belong in a history. Romulus and Remus jumping across each other's walls (I always forget who jumped across whose wall) make entertaining reading, but the foundation of the City of Rome was a much more prosaic affair. Rome began as a thousand American cities have done, by being a convenient place for barter and horse-trading. It lay in the heart of the plains of central Italy. The Tiber provided direct access to the sea. The land-road from north to south found here a convenient ford which could be used all the year around. And seven little hills along the banks of the river offered the inhabitants a safe shelter against their enemies who lived in the mountains and those who lived beyond the horizon of the nearby sea.

The mountaineers were called the Sabines. They were a rough crowd with an unholy desire for easy plunder. But they were very backward. They used stone axes and wooden shields and were no match for the Romans with their steel swords. The sea-people on the other hand were dangerous foes. They were called the Etruscans and they were (and still are) one of the great mysteries of history. Nobody knew (or knows) whence they came; who they were; what had driven them away from their original homes. We have found the remains of their cities and their cemeteries and their waterworks all along the Italian coast. We are familiar with their inscriptions. But as no one has ever been able to decipher the Etruscan alphabet, these written messages are, so far, merely annoying and not at all useful.

Our best guess is that the Etruscans came originally from Asia Minor and that a great war or a pestilence in that country had forced them to go away and seek a new home elsewhere. Whatever the reason for their coming, the Etruscans played a great role in history. They carried the pollen of the ancient civilisation from the east to the west and they taught the Romans who, as we know, came from the north, the first principles of architecture and street-building and fighting and art and cookery and medicine and astronomy.

But just as the Greeks had not loved their AEgean teachers, in this same way did the Romans hate their Etruscan masters. They got rid of them as soon as they could and the opportunity offered itself when Greek merchants discovered the commercial possibilities of Italy and when the first Greek vessels reached Rome. The Greeks came to trade, but they stayed to instruct. They found the tribes who inhabited the Roman country-side (and who were called the Latins) quite willing to learn such things as might be of practical use. At once they understood the great benefit that could be derived from a written alphabet and they copied that of the Greeks. They also understood the commercial advantages of a well-regulated system of coins and measures and weights. Eventually the Romans swallowed Greek civilisation hook, line and sinker.

They even welcomed the Gods of the Greeks to their country. Zeus was taken to Rome where he became known as Jupiter and the other divinities followed him. The Roman Gods however never were quite like their cheerful cousins who had accompanied the Greeks on their road through life and through history. The Roman Gods were State Functionaries. Each one managed his own department with great prudence and a deep sense of justice, but in turn he was exact in demanding the obedience of his worshippers. This obedience the Romans rendered with scrupulous care. But they never established the cordial personal relations and that charming friendship which had existed between the old Hellenes and the mighty residents of the high Olympian peak.

The Romans did not imitate the Greek form of government, but being of the same Indo-European stock as the people of Hellas, the early history of Rome resembles that of Athens and the other Greek cities. They did not find it difficult to get rid of their kings, the descendants of the ancient tribal chieftains. But once the kings had been driven from the city, the Romans were forced to bridle the power of the nobles, and it took many centuries before they managed to establish a system which gave every free citizen of Rome a chance to take a personal interest in the affairs of his town.

Thereafter the Romans enjoyed one great advantage over the Greeks. They managed the affairs of their country without making too many speeches. They were less imaginative than the Greeks and they preferred an ounce of action to a pound of words. They understood the tendency of the multitude (the "plebe," as the assemblage of free citizens was called) only too well to waste valuable time upon mere talk. They therefore placed the actual business of running the city into the hands of two "consuls" who were assisted by a council of Elders, called the Senate (because the word "senex" means an old man). As a matter of custom and practical advantage the senators were elected from the nobility. But their power had been strictly defined.

Rome at one time had passed through the same sort of struggle between the poor and the rich which had forced Athens to adopt the laws of Draco and Solon. In Rome this conflict had occurred in the fifth century B. C. As a result the freemen had obtained a written code of laws which protected them against the despotism of the aristocratic judges by the institution of the "Tribune." These Tribunes were city-magistrates, elected by the freemen. They had the right to protect any citizen against those actions of the government officials which were thought to be unjust. A consul had the right to condemn a man to death, but if the case had not been absolutely proved the Tribune could interfere and save the poor fellow's life.

But when I use the word Rome, I seem to refer to a little city of a few thousand inhabitants. And the real strength of Rome lay in the country districts outside her walls. And it was in the government of these outlying provinces that Rome at an early age showed her wonderful gift as a colonising power.

In very early times Rome had been the only strongly fortified city in central Italy, but it had always offered a hospitable refuge to other Latin tribes who happened to be in danger of attack. The Latin neighbours had recognised the advantages of a close union with such a powerful friend and they had tried to find a basis for some sort of defensive and offensive alliance. Other nations, Egyptians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, even Greeks, would have insisted upon a treaty of submission on the part of the "barbarians." The Romans did nothing of the sort. They gave the "outsider" a chance to become partners in a common "res publica" --or common-wealth.

"You want to join us," they said. "Very well, go ahead and join. We shall treat you as if you were full-fledged citizens of Rome. In return for this privilege we expect you to fight for our city, the mother of us all, whenever it shall be necessary."

The "outsider" appreciated this generosity and he showed his gratitude by his unswerving loyalty.

Whenever a Greek city had been attacked, the foreign residents had moved out as quickly as they could. Why defend something which meant nothing to them but a temporary boarding house in which they were tolerated as long as they paid their bills? But when the enemy was before the gates of Rome, all the Latins rushed to her defence. It was their Mother who was in danger. It was their true "home" even if they lived a hundred miles away and had never seen the walls of the sacred Hills.

No defeat and no disaster could change this sentiment. In the beginning of the fourth century B.C. the wild Gauls forced their way into Italy. They had defeated the Roman army near the River Allia and had marched upon the city. They had taken Rome and then they expected that the people would come and sue for peace. They waited, but nothing happened. After a short time the Gauls found themselves surrounded by a hostile population which made it impossible for them to obtain supplies. After seven months, hunger forced them to withdraw. The policy of Rome to treat the "foreigner" on equal terms had proved a great success and Rome stood stronger than ever before.

This short account of the early history of Rome shows you the enormous difference between the Roman ideal of a healthy state, and that of the ancient world which was embodied in the town of Carthage. The Romans counted upon the cheerful and hearty co-operation between a number of "equal citizens." The Carthaginians, following the example of Egypt and western Asia, insisted upon the unreasoning (and therefore unwilling) obedience of "Subjects" and when these failed they hired professional soldiers to do their fighting for them.

You will now understand why Carthage was bound to fear such a clever and powerful enemy and why the plutocracy of Carthage was only too willing to pick a quarrel that they might destroy the dangerous rival before it was too late.

But the Carthaginians, being good business men, knew that it never pays to rush matters. They proposed to the Romans that their respective cities draw two circles on the map and that each town claim one of these circles as her own "sphere of influence" and promise to keep out of the other fellow's circle. The agreement was promptly made and was broken just as promptly when both sides thought it wise to send their armies to Sicily where a rich soil and a bad government invited foreign interference.

The war which followed (the so-called first Punic War) lasted twenty-four years. It was fought out on the high seas and in the beginning it seemed that the experienced Carthaginian navy would defeat the newly created Roman fleet. Following their ancient tactics, the Carthaginian ships would either ram the enemy vessels or by a bold attack from the side they would break their oars and would then kill the sailors of the helpless vessel with their arrows and with fire balls. But Roman engineers invented a new craft which carried a boarding bridge across which the Roman infantrymen stormed the hostile ship. Then there was a sudden end to Carthaginian victories. At the battle of Mylae their fleet was badly defeated. Carthage was obliged to sue for peace, and Sicily became part of the Roman domains.

Twenty-three years later new trouble arose. Rome (in quest of copper) had taken the island of Sardinia. Carthage (in quest of silver) thereupon occupied all of southern Spain. This made Carthage a direct neighbour of the Romans. The latter did not like this at all and they ordered their troops to cross the Pyrenees and watch the Carthaginian army of occupation.

The stage was set for the second outbreak between the two rivals. Once more a Greek colony was the pretext for a war. The Carthaginians were besieging Saguntum on the east coast of Spain. The Saguntians appealed to Rome and Rome, as usual, was willing to help. The Senate promised the help of the Latin armies, but the preparation for this expedition took some time, and meanwhile Saguntum had been taken and had been destroyed. This had been done in direct opposition to the will of Rome. The Senate decided upon war. One Roman army was to cross the African sea and make a landing on Carthaginian soil. A second division was to keep the Carthaginian armies occupied in Spain to prevent them from rushing to the aid of the home town. It was an excellent plan and everybody expected a great victory. But the Gods had decided otherwise.

It was the fall of the year 218 before the birth of Christ and the Roman army which was to attack the Carthaginians in Spain had left Italy. People were eagerly waiting for news of an easy and complete victory when a terrible rumour began to spread through the plain of the Po. Wild mountaineers, their lips trembling with fear, told of hundreds of thousands of brown men accompanied by strange beasts "each one as big as a house," who had suddenly emerged from the clouds of snow which surrounded the old Graian pass through which Hercules, thousands of years before, had driven the oxen of Geryon on his way from Spain to Greece. Soon an endless stream of bedraggled refugees appeared before the gates of Rome, with more complete details. Hannibal, the son of Hamilcar, with fifty thousand soldiers, nine thousand horsemen and thirty-seven fighting elephants, had crossed the Pyrenees. He had defeated the Roman army of Scipio on the banks of the Rhone and he had guided his army safely across the mountain passes of the Alps although it was October and the roads were thickly covered with snow and ice. Then he had joined forces with the Gauls and together they had defeated a second Roman army just before they crossed the Trebia and laid siege to Placentia, the northern terminus of the road which connected Rome with the province of the Alpine districts.

The Senate, surprised but calm and energetic as usual, hushed up the news of these many defeats and sent two fresh armies to stop the invader. Hannibal managed to surprise these troops on a narrow road along the shores of the Trasimene Lake and there he killed all the Roman officers and most of their men. This time there was a panic among the people of Rome, but the Senate kept its nerve. A third army was organised and the command was given to Quintus Fabius Maximus with full power to act "as was necessary to save the state."

Fabius knew that he must be very careful lest all be lost. His raw and untrained men, the last available soldiers, were no match for Hannibal's veterans. He refused to accept battle but forever he followed Hannibal, destroyed everything eatable, destroyed the roads, attacked small detachments and generally weakened the morale of the Carthaginian troops by a most distressing and annoying form of guerilla warfare.

Such methods however did not satisfy the fearsome crowds who had found safety behind the walls of Rome. They wanted "action." Something must be done and must be done quickly. A popular hero by the name of Varro, the sort of man who went about the city telling everybody how much better he could do things than slow old Fabius, the "Delayer," was made commander-in-chief by popular acclamation. At the battle of Cannae (216) he suffered the most terrible defeat of Roman history. More than seventy thousand men were killed. Hannibal was master of all Italy.

He marched from one end of the peninsula to the other, proclaiming himself the "deliverer from the yoke of Rome" and asking the different provinces to join him in warfare upon the mother city. Then once more the wisdom of Rome bore noble fruit. With the exceptions of Capua and Syracuse, all Roman cities remained loyal. Hannibal, the deliverer, found himself opposed by the people whose friend he pretended to be. He was far away from home and did not like the situation. He sent messengers to Carthage to ask for fresh supplies and new men. Alas, Carthage could not send him either.

The Romans with their boarding-bridges, were the masters of the sea. Hannibal must help himself as best he could. He continued to defeat the Roman armies that were sent out against him, but his own numbers were decreasing rapidly and the Italian peasants held aloof from this self-appointed "deliverer."

After many years of uninterrupted victories, Hannibal found himself besieged in the country which he had just conquered. For a moment, the luck seemed to turn. Hasdrubal, his brother, had defeated the Roman armies in Spain. He had crossed the Alps to come to Hannibal's assistance. He sent messengers to the south to tell of his arrival and ask the other army to meet him in the plain of the Tiber. Unfortunately the messengers fell into the hands of the Romans and Hannibal waited in vain for further news until his brother's head, neatly packed in a basket, came rolling into his camp and told him of the fate of the last of the Carthaginian troops.

With Hasdrubal out of the way, young Publius Scipio easily reconquered Spain and four years later the Romans were ready for a final attack upon Carthage. Hannibal was called back. He crossed the African Sea and tried to organise the defences of his home-city. In the year 202 at the battle of Zama, the Carthaginians were defeated. Hannibal fled to Tyre. From there he went to Asia Minor to stir up the Syrians and the Macedonians against Rome. He accomplished very little but his activities among these Asiatic powers gave the Romans an excuse to carry their warfare into the territory of the east and annex the greater part of the Aegean world.

Driven from one city to another, a fugitive without a home, Hannibal at last knew that the end of his ambitious dream had come. His beloved city of Carthage had been ruined by the war. She had been forced to sign a terrible peace. Her navy had been sunk. She had been forbidden to make war without Roman permission. She had been condemned to pay the Romans millions of dollars for endless years to come. Life offered no hope of a better future. In the year 190 B.C. Hannibal took poison and killed himself.

Forty years later, the Romans forced their last war upon Carthage. Three long years the inhabitants of the old Phoenician colony held out against the power of the new republic. Hunger forced them to surrender. The few men and women who had survived the siege were sold as slaves. The city was set on fire. For two whole weeks the store-houses and the palaces and the great arsenal burned. Then a terrible curse was pronounced upon the blackened ruins and the Roman legions returned to Italy to enjoy their victory.

For the next thousand years, the Mediterranean remained a European sea. But as soon as the Roman Empire had been destroyed, Asia made another attempt to dominate this great inland sea, as you will learn when I tell you about Mohammed.

THE RISE OF ROME

HOW ROME HAPPENED

THE Roman Empire was an accident. No one planned it. It “happened.” No famous general or statesman or cut-throat ever got up and said “Friends, Romans, Citizens, we must found an Empire. Follow me and together we shall conquer all the land from the Gates of Hercules to Mount Taurus.”

Rome produced famous generals and equally distinguished statesmen and cut-throats, and Roman armies fought all over the world. But the Roman empire-making was done without a preconceived plan. The average Roman was a very matter-of-fact citizen. He disliked theories about government. When someone began to recite “eastward the course of Roman Empire, etc., etc.,” he hastily left the forum. He just continued to take more and more land because circumstances forced him to do so. He was not driven by ambition or by greed. Both by nature and inclination he was a farmer and wanted to stay at home. But when he was attacked he was obliged to defend himself and when the enemy happened to cross the sea to ask for aid in a distant country then the patient Roman marched many dreary miles to defeat this dangerous foe and when this had been accomplished, he stayed behind to administer{sic} his newly conquered provinces lest they fall into the hands of wandering Barbarians and become themselves a menace to Roman safety. It sounds rather complicated and yet to the contemporaries it was so very simple, as you shall see in a moment.

In the year 203 B.C. Scipio had crossed the African Sea and had carried the war into Africa. Carthage had called Hannibal back. Badly supported by his mercenaries, Hannibal had been defeated near Zama. The Romans had asked for his surrender and Hannibal had fled to get aid from the kings of Macedonia and Syria, as I told you in my last chapter.

The rulers of these two countries (remnants of the Empire of Alexander the Great) just then were contemplating an expedition against Egypt. They hoped to divide the rich Nile valley between themselves. The king of Egypt had heard of this and he had asked Rome to come to his support. The stage was set for a number of highly interesting plots and counter-plots. But the Romans, with their lack of imagination, rang the curtain down before the play had been fairly started. Their legions completely defeated the heavy Greek phalanx which was still used by the Macedonians as their battle formation. That happened in the year 197 B.C. at the battle in the plains of Cynoscephalae, or “Dogs’ Heads,” in central Thessaly.

The Romans then marched southward to Attica and informed the Greeks that they had come to “deliver the Hellenes from the Macedonian yoke.” The Greeks, having learned nothing in their years of semi-slavery, used their new freedom in a most unfortunate way. All the little city-states once more began to quarrel with each other as they had done in the good old days. The Romans, who had little understanding and less love for these silly bickerings of a race which they rather despised, showed great forbearance. But tiring of these endless dissensions they lost patience, invaded Greece, burned down Corinth (to “encourage the other Greeks”) and sent a Roman governor to Athens to rule this turbulent province. In this way, Macedonia and Greece became buffer states which protected Rome’s eastern frontier.

Meanwhile right across the Hellespont lay the Kingdom of Syria, and Antiochus III, who ruled that vast land, had shown great eagerness when his distinguished guest, General Hannibal, explained to him how easy it would be to invade Italy and sack the city of Rome.

Lucius Scipio, a brother of Scipio the African fighter who had defeated Hannibal and his Carthaginians at Zama, was sent to Asia Minor. He destroyed the armies of the Syrian king near Magnesia (in the year 190 B.C.) Shortly afterwards, Antiochus was lynched by his own people. Asia Minor became a Roman protectorate and the small City-Republic of Rome was mistress of most of the lands which bordered upon the Mediterranean.

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

HOW THE REPUBLIC OF ROME AFTER CENTURIES OF UNREST AND REVOLUTION BECAME AN EMPIRE

WHEN the Roman armies returned from these many victorious campaigns, they were received with great jubilation. Alas and alack! this sudden glory did not make the country any happier. On the contrary. The endless campaigns had ruined the farmers who had been obliged to do the hard work of Empire making. It had placed too much power in the hands of the successful generals (and their private friends) who had used the war as an excuse for wholesale robbery.

The old Roman Republic had been proud of the simplicity which had characterised the lives of her famous men. The new Republic felt ashamed of the shabby coats and the high principles which had been fashionable in the days of its grandfathers. It became a land of rich people ruled by rich people for the benefit of rich people. As such it was doomed to disastrous failure, as I shall now tell you.

Within less than a century and a half. Rome had become the mistress of practically all the land around the Mediterranean. In those early days of history a prisoner of war lost his freedom and became a slave. The Roman regarded war as a very serious business and he showed no mercy to a conquered foe. After the fall of Carthage, the Carthaginian women and children were sold into bondage together with their own slaves. And a like fate awaited the obstinate inhabitants of Greece and Macedonia and Spain and Syria when they dared to revolt against the Roman power.

Two thousand years ago a slave was merely a piece of machinery. Nowadays a rich man invests his money in factories. The rich people of Rome (senators, generals and war-profiters) invested theirs in land and in slaves. The land they bought or took in the newly-acquired provinces. The slaves they bought in open market wherever they happened to be cheapest. During most of the third and second centuries before Christ there was a plentiful supply, and as a result the landowners worked their slaves until they dropped dead in their tracks, when they bought new ones at the nearest bargain-counter of Corinthian or Carthaginian captives.

And now behold the fate of the freeborn farmer!

He had done his duty toward Rome and he had fought her battles without complaint. But when he came home after ten, fifteen or twenty years, his lands were covered with weeds and his family had been ruined. But he was a strong man and willing to begin life anew. He sowed and planted and waited for the harvest. He carried his grain to the market together with his cattle and his poultry, to find that the large landowners who worked their estates with slaves could underbid him all along the line. For a couple of years he tried to hold his own. Then he gave up in despair. He left the country and he went to the nearest city. In the city he was as hungry as he had been before on the land. But he shared his misery with thousands of other disinherited beings. They crouched together in filthy hovels in the suburbs of the large cities. They were apt to get sick and die from terrible epidemics. They were all profoundly discontented. They had

fought for their country and this was their reward. They were always willing to listen to those plausible spell-binders who gather around a public grievance like so many hungry vultures, and soon they became a grave menace to the safety of the state.

But the class of the newly-rich shrugged its shoulders. "We have our army and our policemen," they argued, "they will keep the mob in order." And they hid themselves behind the high walls of their pleasant villas and cultivated their gardens and read the poems of a certain Homer which a Greek slave had just translated into very pleasing Latin hexameters.

In a few families however the old tradition of unselfish service to the Commonwealth continued. Cornelia, the daughter of Scipio Africanus, had been married to a Roman by the name of Gracchus. She had two sons, Tiberius and Gaius. When the boys grew up they entered politics and tried to bring about certain much-needed reforms. A census had shown that most of the land of the Italian peninsula was owned by two thousand noble families. Tiberius Gracchus, having been elected a Tribune, tried to help the freemen. He revived two ancient laws which restricted the number of acres which a single owner might possess. In this way he hoped to revive the valuable old class of small and independent freeholders. The newly-rich called him a robber and an enemy of the state. There were street riots. A party of thugs was hired to kill the popular Tribune. Tiberius Gracchus was attacked when he entered the assembly and was beaten to death. Ten years later his brother Gaius tried the experiment of reforming a nation against the expressed wishes of a strong privileged class. He passed a "poor law" which was meant to help the destitute farmers. Eventually it made the greater part of the Roman citizens into professional beggars.

He established colonies of destitute people in distant parts of the empire, but these settlements failed to attract the right sort of people. Before Gaius Gracchus could do more harm he too was murdered and his followers were either killed or exiled. The first two reformers had been gentlemen. The two who came after were of a very different stamp. They were professional soldiers. One was called Marius. The name of the other was Sulla. Both enjoyed a large personal following.

Sulla was the leader of the landowners. Marius, the victor in a great battle at the foot of the Alps when the Teutons and the Cimbri had been annihilated, was the popular hero of the disinherited freemen.

Now it happened in the year 88 B.C. that the Senate of Rome was greatly disturbed by rumours that came from Asia. Mithridates, king of a country along the shores of the Black Sea, and a Greek on his mother's side, had seen the possibility of establishing a second Alexandrian Empire. He began his campaign for world-domination with the murder of all Roman citizens who happened to be in Asia Minor, men, women and children. Such an act, of course, meant war. The Senate equipped an army to march against the King of Pontus and punish him for his crime. But who was to be commander-in-chief? "Sulla," said the Senate, "because he is Consul." "Marius," said the mob, "because he has been Consul five times and because he is the champion of our rights."

Possession is nine points of the law. Sulla happened to be in actual command of the army. He went west to defeat Mithridates and Marius fled to Africa. There he waited until he heard that Sulla had crossed into Asia. He then returned to Italy, gathered a motley crew of malcontents, marched on Rome and entered the city with his professional highwaymen, spent five days and five nights, slaughtering the enemies of the Senatorial party, got himself elected Consul and promptly died from the excitement of the last fortnight.

There followed four years of disorder. Then Sulla, having defeated Mithridates, announced that he was ready to return to Rome and settle a few old scores of his own. He was as good as his word. For weeks his soldiers were busy executing those of their fellow citizens who were suspected of democratic sympathies. One day they got hold of a young fellow who had been often

seen in the company of Marius. They were going to hang him when some one interfered. "The boy is too young," he said, and they let him go. His name was Julius Caesar. You shall meet him again on the next page.

As for Sulla, he became "Dictator," which meant sole and supreme ruler of all the Roman possessions. He ruled Rome for four years, and he died quietly in his bed, having spent the last year of his life tenderly raising his cabbages, as was the custom of so many Romans who had spent a lifetime killing their fellow-men.

But conditions did not grow better. On the contrary, they grew worse. Another general, Gnaeus Pompeius, or Pompey, a close friend of Sulla, went east to renew the war against the ever troublesome Mithridates. He drove that energetic potentate into the mountains where Mithridates took poison and killed himself, well knowing what fate awaited him as a Roman captive. Next he re-established the authority of Rome over Syria, destroyed Jerusalem, roamed through western Asia, trying to revive the myth of Alexander the Great, and at last (in the year 62) returned to Rome with a dozen ship-loads of defeated Kings and Princes and Generals, all of whom were forced to march in the triumphal procession of this enormously popular Roman who presented his city with the sum of forty million dollars in plunder.

It was necessary that the government of Rome be placed in the hands of a strong man. Only a few months before, the town had almost fallen into the hands of a good-for-nothing young aristocrat by the name of Catiline, who had gambled away his money and hoped to reimburse himself for his losses by a little plundering. Cicero, a public-spirited lawyer, had discovered the plot, had warned the Senate, and had forced Catiline to flee. But there were other young men with similar ambitions and it was no time for idle talk.

Pompey organised a triumvirate which was to take charge of affairs. He became the leader of this Vigilante Committee. Gaius Julius Caesar, who had made a reputation for himself as governor of Spain, was the second in command. The third was an indifferent sort of person by the name of Crassus. He had been elected because he was incredibly rich, having been a successful contractor of war supplies. He soon went upon an expedition against the Parthians and was killed.

As for Caesar, who was by far the ablest of the three, he decided that he needed a little more military glory to become a popular hero. He crossed the Alps and conquered that part of the world which is now called France. Then he hammered a solid wooden bridge across the Rhine and invaded the land of the wild Teutons. Finally he took ship and visited England. Heaven knows where he might have ended if he had not been forced to return to Italy. Pompey, so he was informed, had been appointed dictator for life. This of course meant that Caesar was to be placed on the list of the "retired officers," and the idea did not appeal to him. He remembered that he had begun life as a follower of Marius. He decided to teach the Senators and their "dictator" another lesson. He crossed the Rubicon River which separated the province of Cis-alpine Gaul from Italy. Everywhere he was received as the "friend of the people." Without difficulty Caesar entered Rome and Pompey fled to Greece Caesar followed him and defeated his followers near Pharsalus. Pompey sailed across the Mediterranean and escaped to Egypt. When he landed he was murdered by order of young king Ptolemy. A few days later Caesar arrived. He found himself caught in a trap. Both the Egyptians and the Roman garrison which had remained faithful to Pompey, attacked his camp.

Fortune was with Caesar. He succeeded in setting fire to the Egyptian fleet. Incidentally the sparks of the burning vessels fell on the roof of the famous library of Alexandria (which was just off the water front,) and destroyed it. Next he attacked the Egyptian army, drove the soldiers into the Nile, drowned Ptolemy, and established a new government under Cleopatra, the sister of the late king. Just then word reached him that Pharnaces, the son and heir of Mithridates, had gone on the war-path. Caesar marched northward, defeated Pharnaces in a war which lasted five days, sent word of his victory to Rome in the famous sentence "veni, vidi,

vici," which is Latin for "I came, I saw, I conquered," and returned to Egypt where he fell desperately in love with Cleopatra, who followed him to Rome when he returned to take charge of the government, in the year 46. He marched at the head of not less than four different victory-parades, having won four different campaigns.

Then Caesar appeared in the Senate to report upon his adventures, and the grateful Senate made him "dictator" for ten years. It was a fatal step.

The new dictator made serious attempts to reform the Roman state. He made it possible for freemen to become members of the Senate. He conferred the rights of citizenship upon distant communities as had been done in the early days of Roman history. He permitted "foreigners" to exercise influence upon the government. He reformed the administration of the distant provinces which certain aristocratic families had come to regard as their private possessions. In short he did many things for the good of the majority of the people but which made him thoroughly unpopular with the most powerful men in the state. Half a hundred young aristocrats formed a plot "to save the Republic." On the Ides of March (the fifteenth of March according to that new calendar which Caesar had brought with him from Egypt) Caesar was murdered when he entered the Senate. Once more Rome was without a master.

There were two men who tried to continue the tradition of Caesar's glory. One was Antony, his former secretary. The other was Octavian, Caesar's grand-nephew and heir to his estate. Octavian remained in Rome, but Antony went to Egypt to be near Cleopatra with whom he too had fallen in love, as seems to have been the habit of Roman generals.

A war broke out between the two. In the battle of Actium, Octavian defeated Antony. Antony killed himself and Cleopatra was left alone to face the enemy. She tried very hard to make Octavian her third Roman conquest. When she saw that she could make no impression upon this very proud aristocrat, she killed herself, and Egypt became a Roman province.

As for Octavian, he was a very wise young man and he did not repeat the mistake of his famous uncle. He knew how people will shy at words. He was very modest in his demands when he returned to Rome. He did not want to be a "dictator." He would be entirely satisfied with the title of "the Honourable." But when the Senate, a few years later, addressed him as Augustus--the Illustrious--he did not object and a few years later the man in the street called him Caesar, or Kaiser, while the soldiers, accustomed to regard Octavian as their Commander-in-chief referred to him as the Chief, the Emperor or Emperor. The Republic had become an Empire, but the average Roman was hardly aware of the fact.

In 14 A.D. his position as the Absolute Ruler of the Roman people had become so well established that he was made an object of that divine worship which hitherto had been reserved for the Gods. And his successors were true "Emperors"--the absolute rulers of the greatest empire the world had ever seen.

If the truth be told, the average citizen was sick and tired of anarchy and disorder. He did not care who ruled him provided the new master gave him a chance to live quietly and without the noise of eternal street riots. Octavian assured his subjects forty years of peace. He had no desire to extend the frontiers of his domains, In the year 9 A.D. he had contemplated an invasion of the northwestern wilderness which was inhabited by the Teutons. But Varrus, his general, had been killed with all his men in the Teutoburg Woods, and after that the Romans made no further attempts to civilise these wild people.

They concentrated their efforts upon the gigantic problem of internal reform. But it was too late to do much good. Two centuries of revolution and foreign war had repeatedly killed the best men among the younger generations. It had ruined the class of the free farmers. It had introduced slave labor, against which no freeman could hope to compete. It had turned the cities

into beehives inhabited by pauperized and unhealthy mobs of runaway peasants. It had created a large bureaucracy--petty officials who were underpaid and who were forced to take graft in order to buy bread and clothing for their families. Worst of all, it had accustomed people to violence, to blood-shed, to a barbarous pleasure in the pain and suffering of others.

Outwardly, the Roman state during the first century of our era was a magnificent political structure, so large that Alexander's empire became one of its minor provinces. Underneath this glory there lived millions upon millions of poor and tired human beings, toiling like ants who have built a nest underneath a heavy stone. They worked for the benefit of some one else. They shared their food with the animals of the fields. They lived in stables. They died without hope.

It was the seven hundred and fifty-third year since the founding of Rome. Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus Augustus was living in the palace of the Palatine Hill, busily engaged upon the task of ruling his empire.

In a little village of distant Syria, Mary, the wife of Joseph the Carpenter, was tending her little boy, born in a stable of Bethlehem.

This is a strange world.

Before long, the palace and the stable were to meet in open combat.

And the stable was to emerge victorious.

JOSHUA OF NAZARETH

THE STORY OF JOSHUA OF NAZARETH, WHOM THE GREEKS CALLED JESUS

IN the autumn of the year of the city 783 (which would be 62 A.D., in our way of counting time) AEsculapius Cultellus, a Roman physician, wrote to his nephew who was with the army in Syria as follows:

My dear Nephew,

A few days ago I was called in to prescribe for a sick man named Paul. He appeared to be a Roman citizen of Jewish parentage, well educated and of agreeable manners. I had been told that he was here in connection with a law-suit, an appeal from one of our provincial courts, Caesarea or some such place in the eastern Mediterranean. He had been described to me as a "wild and violent" fellow who had been making speeches against the People and against the Law. I found him very intelligent and of great honesty.

A friend of mine who used to be with the army in Asia Minor tells me that he heard something about him in Ephesus where he was preaching sermons about a strange new God. I asked my patient if this were true and whether he had told the people to rebel against the will of our beloved Emperor. Paul answered me that the Kingdom of which he had spoken was not of this world and he added many strange utterances which I did not understand, but which were probably due to his fever.

His personality made a great impression upon me and I was sorry to hear that he was killed on the Ostian Road a few days ago. Therefore I am writing this letter to you. When next you visit Jerusalem, I want you to find out something about my friend Paul and the strange Jewish prophet, who seems to have been his teacher. Our slaves are getting much excited about this so-called

Messiah, and a few of them, who openly talked of the new kingdom (whatever that means) have been crucified. I would like to know the truth about all these rumours and I am
Your devoted Uncle, AESCULAPIUS CULTELLUS.

Six weeks later, Gladius Ensa, the nephew, a captain of the VII Gallic Infantry, answered as follows:

My dear Uncle,

I received your letter and I have obeyed your instructions.

Two weeks ago our brigade was sent to Jerusalem. There have been several revolutions during the last century and there is not much left of the old city. We have been here now for a month and to-morrow we shall continue our march to Petra, where there has been trouble with some of the Arab tribes. I shall use this evening to answer your questions, but pray do not expect a detailed report.

I have talked with most of the older men in this city but few have been able to give me any definite information. A few days ago a pedler came to the camp. I bought some of his olives and I asked him whether he had ever heard of the famous Messiah who was killed when he was young. He said that he remembered it very clearly, because his father had taken him to Golgotha (a hill just outside the city) to see the execution, and to show him what became of the enemies of the laws of the people of Judaea. He gave me the address of one Joseph, who had been a personal friend of the Messiah and told me that I had better go and see him if I wanted to know more.

This morning I went to call on Joseph. He was quite an old man. He had been a fisherman on one of the fresh-water lakes. His memory was clear, and from him at last I got a fairly definite account of what had happened during the troublesome days before I was born.

Tiberius, our great and glorious emperor, was on the throne, and an officer of the name of Pontius Pilatus was governor of Judaea and Samaria. Joseph knew little about this Pilatus. He seemed to have been an honest enough official who left a decent reputation as procurator of the province. In the year 755 or 756 (Joseph had forgotten when) Pilatus was called to Jerusalem on account of a riot. A certain young man (the son of a carpenter of Nazareth) was said to be planning a revolution against the Roman government. Strangely enough our own intelligence officers, who are usually well informed, appear to have heard nothing about it, and when they investigated the matter they reported that the carpenter was an excellent citizen and that there was no reason to proceed against him. But the old-fashioned leaders of the Jewish faith, according to Joseph, were much upset. They greatly disliked his popularity with the masses of the poorer Hebrews. The "Nazarene" (so they told Pilatus) had publicly claimed that a Greek or a Roman or even a Philistine, who tried to live a decent and honourable life, was quite as good as a Jew who spent his days studying the ancient laws of Moses. Pilatus does not seem to have been impressed by this argument, but when the crowds around the temple threatened to lynch Jesus, and kill all his followers, he decided to take the carpenter into custody to save his life.

He does not appear to have understood the real nature of the quarrel. Whenever he asked the Jewish priests to explain their grievances, they shouted "heresy" and "treason" and got terribly excited. Finally, so Joseph told me, Pilatus sent for Joshua (that was the name of the Nazarene, but the Greeks who live in this part of the world always refer to him as Jesus) to examine him personally. He talked to him for several hours. He asked him about the "dangerous doctrines" which he was said to have preached on the shores of the sea of Galilee. But Jesus answered that he never referred to politics. He was not so much interested in the bodies of men

as in Man's soul. He wanted all people to regard their neighbours as their brothers and to love one single God, who was the father of all living beings.

Pilatus, who seems to have been well versed in the doctrines of the Stoics and the other Greek philosophers, does not appear to have discovered anything seditious in the talk of Jesus. According to my informant he made another attempt to save the life of the kindly prophet. He kept putting the execution off. Meanwhile the Jewish people, lashed into fury by their priests, got frantic with rage. There had been many riots in Jerusalem before this and there were only a few Roman soldiers within calling distance. Reports were being sent to the Roman authorities in Caesarea that Pilatus had "fallen a victim to the teachings of the Nazarene." Petitions were being circulated all through the city to have Pilatus recalled, because he was an enemy of the Emperor. You know that our governors have strict instructions to avoid an open break with their foreign subjects. To save the country from civil war, Pilatus finally sacrificed his prisoner, Joshua, who behaved with great dignity and who forgave all those who hated him. He was crucified amidst the howls and the laughter of the Jerusalem mob.

That is what Joseph told me, with tears running down his old cheeks. I gave him a gold piece when I left him, but he refused it and asked me to hand it to one poorer than himself. I also asked him a few questions about your friend Paul. He had known him slightly. He seems to have been a tent maker who gave up his profession that he might preach the words of a loving and forgiving God, who was so very different from that Jehovah of whom the Jewish priests are telling us all the time. Afterwards, Paul appears to have travelled much in Asia Minor and in Greece, telling the slaves that they were all children of one loving Father and that happiness awaits all, both rich and poor, who have tried to live honest lives and have done good to those who were suffering and miserable.

I hope that I have answered your questions to your satisfaction. The whole story seems very harmless to me as far as the safety of the state is concerned. But then, we Romans never have been able to understand the people of this province. I am sorry that they have killed your friend Paul. I wish that I were at home again, and I am, as ever,
dutiful nephew, Your
GLADIUS ENSA.

THE FALL OF ROME

THE TWILIGHT OF ROME

THE text-books of ancient History give the date 476 as the year in which Rome fell, because in that year the last emperor was driven off his throne. But Rome, which was not built in a day, took a long time falling. The process was so slow and so gradual that most Romans did not realise how their old world was coming to an end. They complained about the unrest of the times—they grumbled about the high prices of food and about the low wages of the workmen—they cursed the profiteers who had a monopoly of the grain and the wool and the gold coin. Occasionally they rebelled against an unusually rapacious governor. But the majority of the people during the first four centuries of our era ate and drank (whatever their purse allowed them to buy) and hated or loved (according to their nature) and went to the theatre (whenever there was a free show of fighting gladiators) or starved in the slums of the big cities, utterly ignorant of the fact that their empire had outlived its usefulness and was doomed to perish.

How could they realise the threatened danger? Rome made a fine showing of outward glory. Well-paved roads connected the different provinces, the imperial police were active and showed little tenderness for highwaymen. The frontier was closely guarded against the savage tribes who seemed to be occupying the waste lands of northern Europe. The whole world was paying tribute to the

mighty city of Rome, and a score of able men were working day and night to undo the mistakes of the past and bring about a return to the happier conditions of the early Republic.

But the underlying causes of the decay of the State, of which I have told you in a former chapter, had not been removed and reform therefore was impossible.

Rome was, first and last and all the time, a city-state as Athens and Corinth had been city-states in ancient Hellas. It had been able to dominate the Italian peninsula. But Rome as the ruler of the entire civilised world was a political impossibility and could not endure. Her young men were killed in her endless wars. Her farmers were ruined by long military service and by taxation. They either became professional beggars or hired themselves out to rich landowners who gave them board and lodging in exchange for their services and made them "serfs," those unfortunate human beings who are neither slaves nor freemen, but who have become part of the soil upon which they work, like so many cows, and the trees.

The Empire, the State, had become everything. The common citizen had dwindled down to less than nothing. As for the slaves, they had heard the words that were spoken by Paul. They had accepted the message of the humble carpenter of Nazareth. They did not rebel against their masters. On the contrary, they had been taught to be meek and they obeyed their superiors. But they had lost all interest in the affairs of this world which had proved such a miserable place of abode. They were willing to fight the good fight that they might enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. But they were not willing to engage in warfare for the benefit of an ambitious emperor who aspired to glory by way of a foreign campaign in the land of the Parthians or the Numidians or the Scots.

And so conditions grew worse as the centuries went by. The first Emperors had continued the tradition of "leadership" which had given the old tribal chieftains such a hold upon their subjects. But the Emperors of the second and third centuries were Barrack-Emperors, professional soldiers, who existed by the grace of their body-guards, the so-called Praetorians. They succeeded each other with terrifying rapidity, murdering their way into the palace and being murdered out of it as soon as their successors had become rich enough to bribe the guards into a new rebellion.

Meanwhile the barbarians were hammering at the gates of the northern frontier. As there were no longer any native Roman armies to stop their progress, foreign mercenaries had to be hired to fight the invader. As the foreign soldier happened to be of the same blood as his supposed enemy, he was apt to be quite lenient when he engaged in battle. Finally, by way of experiment, a few tribes were allowed to settle within the confines of the Empire. Others followed. Soon these tribes complained bitterly of the greedy Roman tax-gatherers, who took away their last penny. When they got no redress they marched to Rome and loudly demanded that they be heard.

This made Rome very uncomfortable as an Imperial residence. Constantine (who ruled from 323 to 337) looked for a new capital. He chose Byzantium, the gate-way for the commerce between Europe and Asia. The city was renamed Constantinople, and the court moved eastward. When Constantine died, his two sons, for the sake of a more efficient administration, divided the Empire between them. The elder lived in Rome and ruled in the west. The younger stayed in Constantinople and was master of the east.

Then came the fourth century and the terrible visitation of the Huns, those mysterious Asiatic horsemen who for more than two centuries maintained themselves in Northern Europe and continued their career of bloodshed until they were defeated near Chalons-sur-Marne in France in the year 451. As soon as the Huns had reached the Danube they had begun to press hard upon the Goths. The Goths, in order to save themselves, were thereupon obliged to invade Rome. The Emperor Valens tried to stop them, but was killed near Adrianople in the year 378. Twenty-two years later, under their king, Alaric, these same West Goths marched westward and attacked Rome. They did not plunder, and destroyed only a few palaces. Next came the Vandals, and showed less respect for

the venerable traditions of the city. Then the Burgundians. Then the East Goths. Then the Alemanni. Then the Franks. There was no end to the invasions. Rome at last was at the mercy of every ambitious highway robber who could gather a few followers.

In the year 402 the Emperor fled to Ravenna, which was a sea-port and strongly fortified, and there, in the year 475, Odoacer, commander of a regiment of the German mercenaries, who wanted the farms of Italy to be divided among themselves, gently but effectively pushed Romulus Augustulus, the last of the emperors who ruled the western division, from his throne, and proclaimed himself Patriarch or ruler of Rome. The eastern Emperor, who was very busy with his own affairs, recognised him, and for ten years Odoacer ruled what was left of the western provinces.

A few years later, Theodoric, King of the East Goths, invaded the newly formed Patriciat, took Ravenna, murdered Odoacer at his own dinner table, and established a Gothic Kingdom amidst the ruins of the western part of the Empire. This Patriciate state did not last long. In the sixth century a motley crowd of Longobards and Saxons and Slavs and Avars invaded Italy, destroyed the Gothic kingdom, and established a new state of which Pavia became the capital.

Then at last the imperial city sank into a state of utter neglect and despair. The ancient palaces had been plundered time and again. The schools had been burned down. The teachers had been starved to death. The rich people had been thrown out of their villas which were now inhabited by evil-smelling and hairy barbarians. The roads had fallen into decay. The old bridges were gone and commerce had come to a standstill. Civilisation--the product of thousands of years of patient labor on the part of Egyptians and Babylonians and Greeks and Romans, which had lifted man high above the most daring dreams of his earliest ancestors, threatened to perish from the western continent.

It is true that in the far east, Constantinople continued to be the centre of an Empire for another thousand years. But it hardly counted as a part of the European continent. Its interests lay in the east. It began to forget its western origin. Gradually the Roman language was given up for the Greek. The Roman alphabet was discarded and Roman law was written in Greek characters and explained by Greek judges. The Emperor became an Asiatic despot, worshipped as the god-like kings of Thebes had been worshipped in the valley of the Nile, three thousand years before. When missionaries of the Byzantine church looked for fresh fields of activity, they went eastward and carried the civilisation of Byzantium into the vast wilderness of Russia.

As for the west, it was left to the mercies of the Barbarians. For twelve generations, murder, war, arson, plundering were the order of the day. One thing--and one thing alone--saved Europe from complete destruction, from a return to the days of cave-men and the hyena.

This was the church--the flock of humble men and women who for many centuries had confessed themselves the followers of Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth, who had been killed that the mighty Roman Empire might be saved the trouble of a street-riot in a little city somewhere along the Syrian frontier.

RISE OF THE CHURCH

HOW ROME BECAME THE CENTRE OF THE CHRISTIAN WORLD

THE average intelligent Roman who lived under the Empire had taken very little interest in the gods of his fathers. A few times a year he went to the temple, but merely as a matter of custom. He looked on patiently when the people celebrated a religious festival with a solemn procession. But he regarded the worship of Jupiter and Minerva and Neptune as something rather childish, a

survival from the crude days of the early republic and not a fit subject of study for a man who had mastered the works of the Stoics and the Epicureans and the other great philosophers of Athens.

This attitude made the Roman a very tolerant man. The government insisted that all people, Romans, foreigners, Greeks, Babylonians, Jews, should pay a certain outward respect to the image of the Emperor which was supposed to stand in every temple, just as a picture of the President of the United States is apt to hang in an American Post Office. But this was a formality without any deeper meaning. Generally speaking everybody could honour, revere and adore whatever gods he pleased, and as a result, Rome was filled with all sorts of queer little temples and synagogues, dedicated to the worship of Egyptian and African and Asiatic divinities.

When the first disciples of Jesus reached Rome and began to preach their new doctrine of a universal brotherhood of man, nobody objected. The man in the street stopped and listened. Rome, the capital of the world, had always been full of wandering preachers, each proclaiming his own "mystery." Most of the self-appointed priests appealed to the senses--promised golden rewards and endless pleasure to the followers of their own particular god. Soon the crowd in the street noticed that the so-called Christians (the followers of the Christ or "anointed") spoke a very different language. They did not appear to be impressed by great riches or a noble position. They extolled the beauties of poverty and humility and meekness. These were not exactly the virtues which had made Rome the mistress of the world. It was rather interesting to listen to a "mystery" which told people in the hey-day of their glory that their worldly success could not possibly bring them lasting happiness.

Besides, the preachers of the Christian mystery told dreadful stories of the fate that awaited those who refused to listen to the words of the true God. It was never wise to take chances. Of course the old Roman gods still existed, but were they strong enough to protect their friends against the powers of this new deity who had been brought to Europe from distant Asia? People began to have doubts. They returned to listen to further explanations of the new creed. After a while they began to meet the men and women who preached the words of Jesus. They found them very different from the average Roman priests. They were all dreadfully poor. They were kind to slaves and to animals. They did not try to gain riches, but gave away whatever they had. The example of their unselfish lives forced many Romans to forsake the old religion. They joined the small communities of Christians who met in the back rooms of private houses or somewhere in an open field, and the temples were deserted.

This went on year after year and the number of Christians continued to increase. Presbyters or priests (the original Greek meant "elder") were elected to guard the interests of the small churches. A bishop was made the head of all the communities within a single province. Peter, who had followed Paul to Rome, was the first Bishop of Rome. In due time his successors (who were addressed as Father or Papa) came to be known as Popes.

The church became a powerful institution within the Empire. The Christian doctrines appealed to those who despaired of this world. They also attracted many strong men who found it impossible to make a career under the Imperial government, but who could exercise their gifts of leadership among the humble followers of the Nazarene teacher. At last the state was obliged to take notice. The Roman Empire (I have said this before) was tolerant through indifference. It allowed everybody to seek salvation after his or her own fashion. But it insisted that the different sects keep the peace among themselves and obey the wise rule of "live and let live."

The Christian communities however, refused to practice any sort of tolerance. They publicly declared that their God, and their God alone, was the true ruler of Heaven and Earth, and that all other gods were imposters. This seemed unfair to the other sects and the police discouraged such utterances. The Christians persisted.

Soon there were further difficulties. The Christians refused to go through the formalities of paying homage to the emperor. They refused to appear when they were called upon to join the army. The Roman magistrates threatened to punish them. The Christians answered that this miserable world was only the ante-room to a very pleasant Heaven and that they were more than willing to suffer death for their principles. The Romans, puzzled by such conduct, sometimes killed the offenders, but more often they did not. There was a certain amount of lynching during the earliest years of the church, but this was the work of that part of the mob which accused their meek Christian neighbours of every conceivable crime, (such as slaughtering and eating babies, bringing about sickness and pestilence, betraying the country in times of danger) because it was a harmless sport and devoid of danger, as the Christians refused to fight back.

Meanwhile, Rome continued to be invaded by the Barbarians and when her armies failed, Christian missionaries went forth to preach their gospel of peace to the wild Teutons. They were strong men without fear of death. They spoke a language which left no doubt as to the future of unrepentant sinners. The Teutons were deeply impressed. They still had a deep respect for the wisdom of the ancient city of Rome. Those men were Romans. They probably spoke the truth. Soon the Christian missionary became a power in the savage regions of the Teutons and the Franks. Half a dozen missionaries were as valuable as a whole regiment of soldiers. The Emperors began to understand that the Christian might be of great use to them. In some of the provinces they were given equal rights with those who remained faithful to the old gods. The great change however came during the last half of the fourth century.

Constantine, sometimes (Heaven knows why) called Constantine the Great, was emperor. He was a terrible ruffian, but people of tender qualities could hardly hope to survive in that hard-fighting age. During a long and checkered career, Constantine had experienced many ups and downs. Once, when almost defeated by his enemies, he thought that he would try the power of this new Asiatic deity of whom everybody was talking. He promised that he too would become a Christian if he were successful in the coming battle. He won the victory and thereafter he was convinced of the power of the Christian God and allowed himself to be baptised.

From that moment on, the Christian church was officially recognised and this greatly strengthened the position of the new faith.

But the Christians still formed a very small minority of all the people, (not more than five or six percent,) and in order to win, they were forced to refuse all compromise. The old gods must be destroyed. For a short spell the emperor Julian, a lover of Greek wisdom, managed to save the pagan Gods from further destruction. But Julian died of his wounds during a campaign in Persia and his successor Jovian re-established the church in all its glory. One after the other the doors of the ancient temples were then closed. Then came the emperor Justinian (who built the church of Saint Sophia in Constantinople), who discontinued the school of philosophy at Athens which had been founded by Plato.

That was the end of the old Greek world, in which man had been allowed to think his own thoughts and dream his own dreams according to his desires. The somewhat vague rules of conduct of the philosophers had proved a poor compass by which to steer the ship of life after a deluge of savagery and ignorance had swept away the established order of things. There was need of something more positive and more definite. This the Church provided.

During an age when nothing was certain, the church stood like a rock and never receded from those principles which it held to be true and sacred. This steadfast courage gained the admiration of the multitudes and carried the church of Rome safely through the difficulties which destroyed the Roman state.

There was however, a certain element of luck in the final success of the Christian faith. After the disappearance of Theodoric's Roman-Gothic kingdom, in the fifth century, Italy was

comparatively free from foreign invasion. The Lombards and Saxons and Slavs who succeeded the Goths were weak and backward tribes. Under those circumstances it was possible for the bishops of Rome to maintain the independence of their city. Soon the remnants of the empire, scattered throughout the peninsula, recognised the Dukes of Rome (or bishops) as their political and spiritual rulers.

The stage was set for the appearance of a strong man. He came in the year 590 and his name was Gregory. He belonged to the ruling classes of ancient Rome, and he had been "prefect" or mayor of the city. Then he had become a monk and a bishop and finally, and much against his will, (for he wanted to be a missionary and preach Christianity to the heathen of England,) he had been dragged to the Church of Saint Peter to be made Pope. He ruled only fourteen years but when he died the Christian world of western Europe had officially recognised the bishops of Rome, the Popes, as the head of the entire church.

This power, however, did not extend to the east. In Constantinople the Emperors continued the old custom which had recognised the successors of Augustus and Tiberius both as head of the government and as High Priest of the Established Religion. In the year 1453 the eastern Roman Empire was conquered by the Turks. Constantinople was taken, and Constantine Paleologue, the last Roman Emperor, was killed on the steps of the Church of the Holy Sophia.

A few years before, Zoe, the daughter of his brother Thomas, had married Ivan III of Russia. In this way did the grand-dukes of Moscow fall heir to the traditions of Constantinople. The double-eagle of old Byzantium (reminiscent of the days when Rome had been divided into an eastern and a western part) became the coat of arms of modern Russia. The Tsar who had been merely the first of the Russian nobles, assumed the aloofness and the dignity of a Roman emperor before whom all subjects, both high and low, were inconsiderable slaves.

The court was refashioned after the oriental pattern which the eastern Emperors had imported from Asia and from Egypt and which (so they flattered themselves) resembled the court of Alexander the Great. This strange inheritance which the dying Byzantine Empire bequeathed to an unsuspecting world continued to live with great vigour for six more centuries, amidst the vast plains of Russia. The last man to wear the crown with the double eagle of Constantinople, Tsar Nicholas, was murdered only the other day, so to speak. His body was thrown into a well. His son and his daughters were all killed. All his ancient rights and prerogatives were abolished, and the church was reduced to the position which it had held in Rome before the days of Constantine.

The eastern church however fared very differently, as we shall see in the next chapter when the whole Christian world is going to be threatened with destruction by the rival creed of an Arab camel-driver.

MOHAMMED

AHMED, THE CAMEL-DRIVER, WHO BECAME THE PROPHET OF THE ARABIAN DESERT AND WHOSE FOLLOWERS ALMOST CONQUERED THE ENTIRE KNOWN WORLD FOR THE GREATER GLORY OF ALLAH, THE ONLY TRUE GOD

SINCE the days of Carthage and Hannibal we have said nothing of the Semitic people. You will remember how they filled all the chapters devoted to the story of the Ancient World. The Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Phoenicians, the Jews, the Arameans, the Chaldeans, all of them Semites, had been the rulers of western Asia for thirty or forty centuries. They had been conquered by the Indo-European Persians who had come from the east and by the Indo-European Greeks who had come from the west. A hundred years after the death of Alexander the Great, Carthage, a colony of Semitic Phoenicians, had fought the Indo-European Romans for the mastery of the Mediterranean. Carthage had been defeated and destroyed and for eight hundred years the

Romans had been masters of the world. In the seventh century, however, another Semitic tribe appeared upon the scene and challenged the power of the west. They were the Arabs, peaceful shepherds who had roamed through the desert since the beginning of time without showing any signs of imperial ambitions.

Then they listened to Mohammed, mounted their horses and in less than a century they had pushed to the heart of Europe and proclaimed the glories of Allah, "the only God," and Mohammed, "the prophet of the only God," to the frightened peasants of France.

The story of Ahmed, the son of Abdallah and Aminah (usually known as Mohammed, or "he who will be praised," ; reads like a chapter in the "Thousand and One Nights." He was a camel-driver, born in Mecca. He seems to have been an epileptic and he suffered from spells of unconsciousness when he dreamed strange dreams and heard the voice of the angel Gabriel, whose words were afterwards written down in a book called the Koran. His work as a caravan leader carried him all over Arabia and he was constantly falling in with Jewish merchants and with Christian traders, and he came to see that the worship of a single God was a very excellent thing. His own people, the Arabs, still revered queer stones and trunks of trees as their ancestors had done, tens of thousands of years before. In Mecca, their holy city, stood a little square building, the Kaaba, full of idols and strange odds and ends of Hoo-doo worship.

Mohammed decided to be the Moses of the Arab people. He could not well be a prophet and a camel-driver at the same time. So he made himself independent by marrying his employer, the rich widow Chadija. Then he told his neighbours in Mecca that he was the long-expected prophet sent by Allah to save the world. The neighbours laughed most heartily and when Mohammed continued to annoy them with his speeches they decided to kill him. They regarded him as a lunatic and a public bore who deserved no mercy. Mohammed heard of the plot and in the dark of night he fled to Medina together with Abu Bekr, his trusted pupil. This happened in the year 622. It is the most important date in Mohammedan history and is known as the Hegira--the year of the Great Flight.

In Medina, Mohammed, who was a stranger, found it easier to proclaim himself a prophet than in his home city, where every one had known him as a simple camel-driver. Soon he was surrounded by an increasing number of followers, or Moslems, who accepted the Islam, "the submission to the will of God," which Mohammed praised as the highest of all virtues. For seven years he preached to the people of Medina. Then he believed himself strong enough to begin a campaign against his former neighbours who had dared to sneer at him and his Holy Mission in his old camel-driving days. At the head of an army of Medinese he marched across the desert. His followers took Mecca without great difficulty, and having slaughtered a number of the inhabitants, they found it quite easy to convince the others that Mohammed was really a great prophet.

From that time on until the year of his death, Mohammed was fortunate in everything he undertook.

There are two reasons for the success of Islam. In the first place, the creed which Mohammed taught to his followers was very simple. The disciples were told that they must love Allah, the Ruler of the World, the Merciful and Compassionate. They must honour and obey their parents. They were warned against dishonesty in dealing with their neighbours and were admonished to be humble and charitable, to the poor and to the sick. Finally they were ordered to abstain from strong drink and to be very frugal in what they ate. That was all. There were no priests, who acted as shepherds of their flocks and asked that they be supported at the common expense. The Mohammedan churches or mosques were merely large stone halls without benches or pictures, where the faithful could gather (if they felt so inclined) to read and discuss chapters from the Koran, the Holy Book. But the average Mohammedan carried his religion with him and never felt himself hemmed in by the restrictions and regulations of an established church. Five times a day he turned his face towards Mecca, the Holy City, and said a simple prayer. For the rest of the

time he let Allah rule the world as he saw fit and accepted whatever fate brought him with patient resignation.

Of course such an attitude towards life did not encourage the Faithful to go forth and invent electrical machinery or bother about railroads and steamship lines. But it gave every Mohammedan a certain amount of contentment. It bade him be at peace with himself and with the world in which he lived and that was a very good thing.

The second reason which explains the success of the Moslems in their warfare upon the Christians, had to do with the conduct of those Mohammedan soldiers who went forth to do battle for the true faith. The Prophet promised that those who fell, facing the enemy, would go directly to Heaven. This made sudden death in the field preferable to a long but dreary existence upon this earth. It gave the Mohammedans an enormous advantage over the Crusaders who were in constant dread of a dark hereafter, and who stuck to the good things of this world as long as they possibly could. Incidentally it explains why even to-day Moslem soldiers will charge into the fire of European machine guns quite indifferent to the fate that awaits them and why they are such dangerous and persistent enemies.

Having put his religious house in order, Mohammed now began to enjoy his power as the undisputed ruler of a large number of Arab tribes. But success has been the undoing of a large number of men who were great in the days of adversity. He tried to gain the good will of the rich people by a number of regulations which could appeal to those of wealth. He allowed the Faithful to have four wives. As one wife was a costly investment in those olden days when brides were bought directly from the parents, four wives became a positive luxury except to those who possessed camels and dromedaries and date orchards beyond the dreams of avarice. A religion which at first had been meant for the hardy hunters of the high skied desert was gradually transformed to suit the needs of the smug merchants who lived in the bazaars of the cities. It was a regrettable change from the original program and it did very little good to the cause of Mohammedanism. As for the prophet himself, he went on preaching the truth of Allah and proclaiming new rules of conduct until he died, quite suddenly, of a fever on June the seventh of the year 632.

His successor as Caliph (or leader) of the Moslems was his father-in-law, Abu-Bekr, who had shared the early dangers of the prophet's life. Two years later, Abu-Bekr died and Omar ibn Al-Khattab followed him. In less than ten years he conquered Egypt, Persia, Phoenicia, Syria and Palestine and made Damascus the capital of the first Mohammedan world empire.

Omar was succeeded by Ali, the husband of Mohammed's daughter, Fatima, but a quarrel broke out upon a point of Moslem doctrine and Ali was murdered. After his death, the caliphate was made hereditary and the leaders of the faithful who had begun their career as the spiritual head of a religious sect became the rulers of a vast empire. They built a new city on the shores of the Euphrates, near the ruins of Babylon and called it Bagdad, and organising the Arab horsemen into regiments of cavalry, they set forth to bring the happiness of their Moslem faith to all unbelievers. In the year 700 A.D. a Mohammedan general by the name of Tarik crossed the old gates of Hercules and reached the high rock on the European side which he called the Gibel-al-tarik, the Hill of Tarik or Gibraltar.

Eleven years later in the battle of Xeres de la Frontera, he defeated the king of the Visigoths and then the Moslem army moved northward and following the route of Hannibal, they crossed the passes of the Pyrenees. They defeated the Duke of Aquitania, who tried to halt them near Bordeaux, and marched upon Paris. But in the year 732 (one hundred years after the death of the prophet,) they were beaten in a battle between Tours and Poitiers. On that day, Charles Martel (Charles with the Hammer) the Frankish chieftain, saved Europe from a Mohammedan conquest. He drove the Moslems out of France, but they maintained themselves in Spain where Abd-ar-Rahman founded the Caliphate of Cordova, which became the greatest centre of science and art of mediaeval Europe.

This Moorish kingdom, so-called because the people came from Mauretania in Morocco, lasted seven centuries. It was only after the capture of Granada, the last Moslem stronghold, in the year 1492, that Columbus received the royal grant which allowed him to go upon a voyage of discovery. The Mohammedans soon regained their strength in the new conquests which they made in Asia and Africa and to-day there are as many followers of Mohammed as there are of Christ.

CHARLEMAGNE

HOW CHARLEMAGNE, THE KING OF THE FRANKS, CAME TO BEAR THE TITLE OF EMPEROR AND TRIED TO REVIVE THE OLD IDEAL OF WORLD-EMPIRE

THE battle of Poitiers had saved Europe from the Mohammedans. But the enemy within--the hopeless disorder which had followed the disappearance of the Roman police officer--that enemy remained. It is true that the new converts of the Christian faith in Northern Europe felt a deep respect for the mighty Bishop of Rome. But that poor bishop did not feel any too safe when he looked toward the distant mountains. Heaven knew what fresh hordes of barbarians were ready to cross the Alps and begin a new attack on Rome. It was necessary--very necessary--for the spiritual head of the world to find an ally with a strong sword and a powerful fist who was willing to defend His Holiness in case of danger.

And so the Popes, who were not only very holy but also very practical, cast about for a friend, and presently they made overtures to the most promising of the Germanic tribes who had occupied north-western Europe after the fall of Rome. They were called the Franks. One of their earliest kings, called Merovech, had helped the Romans in the battle of the Catalaunian fields in the year 451 when they defeated the Huns. His descendants, the Merovingians, had continued to take little bits of imperial territory until the year 486 when king Clovis (the old French word for "Louis") felt himself strong enough to beat the Romans in the open. But his descendants were weak men who left the affairs of state to their Prime minister, the "Major Domus" or Master of the Palace.

Pepin the Short, the son of the famous Charles Martel, who succeeded his father as Master of the Palace, hardly knew how to handle the situation. His royal master was a devout theologian, without any interest in politics. Pepin asked the Pope for advice. The Pope who was a practical person answered that the "power in the state belonged to him who was actually possessed of it." Pepin took the hint. He persuaded Childeric, the last of the Merovingians to become a monk and then made himself king with the approval of the other Germanic chieftains. But this did not satisfy the shrewd Pepin. He wanted to be something more than a barbarian chieftain. He staged an elaborate ceremony at which Boniface, the great missionary of the European northwest, anointed him and made him a "King by the grace of God." It was easy to slip those words, "Dei gratia," into the coronation service. It took almost fifteen hundred years to get them out again.

Pepin was sincerely grateful for this kindness on the part of the church. He made two expeditions to Italy to defend the Pope against his enemies. He took Ravenna and several other cities away from the Longobards and presented them to His Holiness, who incorporated these new domains into the so-called Papal State, which remained an independent country until half a century ago.

After Pepin's death, the relations between Rome and Aix-la-Chapelle or Nymwegen or Ingelheim, (the Frankish Kings did not have one official residence, but travelled from place to place with all their ministers and court officers,) became more and more cordial. Finally the Pope and the King took a step which was to influence the history of Europe in a most profound way.

Charles, commonly known as Carolus Magnus or Charlemagne, succeeded Pepin in the year 768. He had conquered the land of the Saxons in eastern Germany and had built towns and monasteries all over the greater part of northern Europe. At the request of certain enemies of Abd-ar-Rahman, he had invaded Spain to fight the Moors. But in the Pyrenees he had been attacked by the wild Basques and had been forced to retire. It was upon this occasion that Roland, the great Margrave of Breton, showed what a Frankish chieftain of those early days meant when he promised to be faithful to his King, and gave his life and that of his trusted followers to safeguard the retreat of the royal army.

During the last ten years of the eighth century, however, Charles was obliged to devote himself exclusively to affairs of the South. The Pope, Leo III, had been attacked by a band of Roman rowdies and had been left for dead in the street. Some kind people had bandaged his wounds and had helped him to escape to the camp of Charles, where he asked for help. An army of Franks soon restored quiet and carried Leo back to the Lateran Palace which ever since the days of Constantine, had been the home of the Pope. That was in December of the year 799. On Christmas day of the next year, Charlemagne, who was staying in Rome, attended the service in the ancient church of St. Peter. When he arose from prayer, the Pope placed a crown upon his head, called him Emperor of the Romans and hailed him once more with the title of "Augustus" which had not been heard for hundreds of years.

Once more Northern Europe was part of a Roman Empire, but the dignity was held by a German chieftain who could read just a little and never learned to write. But he could fight and for a short while there was order and even the rival emperor in Constantinople sent a letter of approval to his "dear Brother."

Unfortunately this splendid old man died in the year 814. His sons and his grandsons at once began to fight for the largest share of the imperial inheritance. Twice the Carolingian lands were divided, by the treaties of Verdun in the year 843 and by the treaty of Mersen-on-the-Meuse in the year 870. The latter treaty divided the entire Frankish Kingdom into two parts. Charles the Bold received the western half. It contained the old Roman province called Gaul where the language of the people had become thoroughly romanized. The Franks soon learned to speak this language and this accounts for the strange fact that a purely Germanic land like France should speak a Latin tongue.

The other grandson got the eastern part, the land which the Romans had called Germania. Those inhospitable regions had never been part of the old Empire. Augustus had tried to conquer this "far east," but his legions had been annihilated in the Teutoburg Wood in the year 9 and the people had never been influenced by the higher Roman civilisation. They spoke the popular Germanic tongue. The Teuton word for "people" was "thiot." The Christian missionaries therefore called the German language the "lingua theotisca" or the "lingua teutisca," the "popular dialect" and this word "teutisca" was changed into "Deutsch" which accounts for the name "Deutschland."

As for the famous Imperial Crown, it very soon slipped off the heads of the Carolingian successors and rolled back onto the Italian plain, where it became a sort of plaything of a number of little potentates who stole the crown from each other amidst much bloodshed and wore it (with or without the permission of the Pope) until it was the turn of some more ambitious neighbour. The Pope, once more sorely beset by his enemies, sent north for help. He did not appeal to the ruler of the west-Frankish kingdom, this time. His messengers crossed the Alps and addressed themselves to Otto, a Saxon Prince who was recognised as the greatest chieftain of the different Germanic tribes.

Otto, who shared his people's affection for the blue skies and the gay and beautiful people of the Italian peninsula, hastened to the rescue. In return for his services, the Pope, Leo VIII,

made Otto "Emperor," and the eastern half of Charles' old kingdom was henceforth known as the "Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation."

This strange political creation managed to live to the ripe old age of eight hundred and thirty-nine years. In the year 1801, (during the presidency of Thomas Jefferson,) it was most unceremoniously relegated to the historical scrapheap. The brutal fellow who destroyed the old Germanic Empire was the son of a Corsican notary-public who had made a brilliant career in the service of the French Republic. He was ruler of Europe by the grace of his famous Guard Regiments, but he desired to be something more. He sent to Rome for the Pope and the Pope came and stood by while General Napoleon placed the imperial crown upon his own head and proclaimed himself heir to the tradition of Charlemagne. For history is like life. The more things change, the more they remain the same.

THE NORSEMEN

WHY THE PEOPLE OF THE TENTH CENTURY PRAYED THE LORD TO PROTECT THEM FROM THE FURY OF THE NORSEMEN

IN the third and fourth centuries, the Germanic tribes of central Europe had broken through the defences of the Empire that they might plunder Rome and live on the fat of the land. In the eighth century it became the turn of the Germans to be the "plundered-ones." They did not like this at all, even if their enemies were their first cousins, the Norsemen, who lived in Denmark and Sweden and Norway.

What forced these hardy sailors to turn pirate we do not know, but once they had discovered the advantages and pleasures of a buccaneering career there was no one who could stop them. They would suddenly descend upon a peaceful Frankish or Frisian village, situated on the mouth of a river. They would kill all the men and steal all the women. Then they would sail away in their fast-sailing ships and when the soldiers of the king or emperor arrived upon the scene, the robbers were gone and nothing remained but a few smouldering ruins.

During the days of disorder which followed the death of Charlemagne, the Northmen developed great activity. Their fleets made raids upon every country and their sailors established small independent kingdoms along the coast of Holland and France and England and Germany, and they even found their way into Italy. The Northmen were very intelligent. They soon learned to speak the language of their subjects and gave up the uncivilised ways of the early Vikings (or Sea-Kings who had been very picturesque but also very unwashed and terribly cruel.

Early in the tenth century a Viking by the name of Rollo had repeatedly attacked the coast of France. The king of France, too weak to resist these northern robbers, tried to bribe them into "being good." He offered them the province of Normandy, if they would promise to stop bothering the rest of his domains. Rollo accepted this bargain and became "Duke of Normandy."

But the passion of conquest was strong in the blood of his children. Across the channel, only a few hours away from the European mainland, they could see the white cliffs and the green fields of England. Poor England had passed through difficult days. For two hundred years it had been a Roman colony. After the Romans left, it had been conquered by the Angles and the Saxons, two German tribes from Schleswig. Next the Danes had taken the greater part of the country and had established the kingdom of Cnut. The Danes had been driven away and now (it was early in the eleventh century) another Saxon king, Edward the Confessor, was on the throne. But Edward was not expected to live long and he had no children. The circumstances favoured the ambitious dukes of Normandy.

In 1066 Edward died. Immediately William of Normandy crossed the channel, defeated and killed Harold of Wessex (who had taken the crown) at the battle of Hastings, and proclaimed himself king of England.

In another chapter I have told you how in the year 800 a German chieftain had become a Roman Emperor. Now in the year 1066 the grandson of a Norse pirate was recognised as King of England.

Why should we ever read fairy stories, when the truth of history is so much more interesting and entertaining?

FEUDALISM

HOW CENTRAL EUROPE, ATTACKED FROM THREE SIDES, BECAME AN ARMED CAMP AND WHY EUROPE WOULD HAVE PERISHED WITHOUT THOSE PROFESSIONAL SOLDIERS AND ADMINISTRATORS WHO WERE PART OF THE FEUDAL SYSTEM

THE following, then, is the state of Europe in the year one thousand, when most people were so unhappy that they welcomed the prophecy foretelling the approaching end of the world and rushed to the monasteries, that the Day of Judgement might find them engaged upon devout duties.

At an unknown date, the Germanic tribes had left their old home in Asia and had moved westward into Europe. By sheer pressure of numbers they had forced their way into the Roman Empire. They had destroyed the great western empire, but the eastern part, being off the main route of the great migrations, had managed to survive and feebly continued the traditions of Rome's ancient glory.

During the days of disorder which had followed, (the true "dark ages" of history, the sixth and seventh centuries of our era,) the German tribes had been persuaded to accept the Christian religion and had recognised the Bishop of Rome as the Pope or spiritual head of the world. In the ninth century, the organising genius of Charlemagne had revived the Roman Empire and had united the greater part of western Europe into a single state. During the tenth century this empire had gone to pieces. The western part had become a separate kingdom, France. The eastern half was known as the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation, and the rulers of this federation of states then pretended that they were the direct heirs of Caesar and Augustus.

Unfortunately the power of the kings of France did not stretch beyond the moat of their royal residence, while the Holy Roman Emperor was openly defied by his powerful subjects whenever it suited their fancy or their profit.

To increase the misery of the masses of the people, the triangle of western Europe (look at page 128, please) was for ever exposed to attacks from three sides. On the south lived the ever dangerous Mohammedans. The western coast was ravaged by the Northmen. The eastern frontier (defenceless except for the short stretch of the Carpathian mountains) was at the mercy of hordes of Huns, Hungarians, Slavs and Tartars.

The peace of Rome was a thing of the remote past, a dream of the "Good Old Days" that were gone for ever. It was a question of "fight or die," and quite naturally people preferred to fight. Forced by circumstances, Europe became an armed camp and there was a demand for strong leadership. Both King and Emperor were far away. The frontiersmen (and most of Europe in the year 1000 was "frontier") must help themselves. They willingly submitted to the representatives of the king who were sent to administer the outlying districts, PROVIDED THEY COULD PROTECT THEM AGAINST THEIR ENEMIES.

Soon central Europe was dotted with small principalities, each one ruled by a duke or a count or a baron or a bishop, as the case might be, and organised as a fighting unit. These dukes and counts and barons had sworn to be faithful to the king who had given them their "feudum" (hence our word "feudal,") in return for their loyal services and a certain amount of taxes. But travel in those days was slow and the means of communication were exceedingly poor. The royal or imperial administrators therefore enjoyed great independence, and within the boundaries of their own province they assumed most of the rights which in truth belonged to the king.

But you would make a mistake if you supposed that the people of the eleventh century objected to this form of government. They supported Feudalism because it was a very practical and necessary institution. Their Lord and Master usually lived in a big stone house erected on the top of a steep rock or built between deep moats, but within sight of his subjects. In case of danger the subjects found shelter behind the walls of the baronial stronghold. That is why they tried to live as near the castle as possible and it accounts for the many European cities which began their career around a feudal fortress.

But the knight of the early middle ages was much more than a professional soldier. He was the civil servant of that day. He was the judge of his community and he was the chief of police. He caught the highwaymen and protected the wandering pedlars who were the merchants of the eleventh century. He looked after the dikes so that the countryside should not be flooded (just as the first noblemen had done in the valley of the Nile four thousand years before). He encouraged the Troubadours who wandered from place to place telling the stories of the ancient heroes who had fought in the great wars of the migrations. Besides, he protected the churches and the monasteries within his territory, and although he could neither read nor write, (it was considered unmanly to know such things,) he employed a number of priests who kept his accounts and who registered the marriages and the births and the deaths which occurred within the baronial or ducal domains.

In the fifteenth century the kings once more became strong enough to exercise those powers which belonged to them because they were "anointed of God." Then the feudal knights lost their former independence. Reduced to the rank of country squires, they no longer filled a need and soon they became a nuisance. But Europe would have perished without the "feudal system" of the dark ages. There were many bad knights as there are many bad people to-day. But generally speaking, the rough-fisted barons of the twelfth and thirteenth century were hard-working administrators who rendered a most useful service to the cause of progress. During that era the noble torch of learning and art which had illuminated the world of the Egyptians and the Greeks and the Romans was burning very low. Without the knights and their good friends, the monks, civilisation would have been extinguished entirely, and the human race would have been forced to begin once more where the cave-man had left off.

CHIVALRY

CHIVALRY

IT was quite natural that the professional fighting-men of the Middle Ages should try to establish some sort of organisation for their mutual benefit and protection. Out of this need for close organisation, Knighthood or Chivalry was born.

We know very little about the origins of Knighthood. But as the system developed, it gave the world something which it needed very badly—a definite rule of conduct which softened the barbarous customs of that day and made life more livable than it had been during the five hundred years of the Dark Ages. It was not an easy task to civilise the rough frontiersmen who had spent most of their time fighting Mohammedans and Huns and Norsemen. Often they were guilty

of backsliding, and having vowed all sorts of oaths about mercy and charity in the morning, they would murder all their prisoners before evening. But progress is ever the result of slow and ceaseless labour, and finally the most unscrupulous of knights was forced to obey the rules of his "class" or suffer the consequences.

These rules were different in the various parts of Europe, but they all made much of "service" and "loyalty to duty." The Middle Ages regarded service as something very noble and beautiful. It was no disgrace to be a servant, provided you were a good servant and did not slacken on the job. As for loyalty, at a time when life depended upon the faithful performance of many unpleasant duties, it was the chief virtue of the fighting man.

A young knight therefore was asked to swear that he would be faithful as a servant to God and as a servant to his King. Furthermore, he promised to be generous to those whose need was greater than his own. He pledged his word that he would be humble in his personal behaviour and would never boast of his own accomplishments and that he would be a friend of all those who suffered, (with the exception of the Mohammedans, whom he was expected to kill on sight).

Around these vows, which were merely the Ten Commandments expressed in terms which the people of the Middle Ages could understand, there developed a complicated system of manners and outward behaviour. The knights tried to model their own lives after the example of those heroes of Arthur's Round Table and Charlemagne's court of whom the Troubadours had told them and of whom you may read in many delightful books which are enumerated at the end of this volume. They hoped that they might prove as brave as Lancelot and as faithful as Roland. They carried themselves with dignity and they spoke careful and gracious words that they might be known as True Knights, however humble the cut of their coat or the size of their purse.

In this way the order of Knighthood became a school of those good manners which are the oil of the social machinery. Chivalry came to mean courtesy and the feudal castle showed the rest of the world what clothes to wear, how to eat, how to ask a lady for a dance and the thousand and one little things of every-day behaviour which help to make life interesting and agreeable.

Like all human institutions, Knighthood was doomed to perish as soon as it had outlived its usefulness.

The crusades, about which one of the next chapters tells, were followed by a great revival of trade. Cities grew overnight. The townspeople became rich, hired good school teachers and soon were the equals of the knights. The invention of gun-powder deprived the heavily armed "Chevalier" of his former advantage and the use of mercenaries made it impossible to conduct a battle with the delicate niceties of a chess tournament. The knight became superfluous. Soon he became a ridiculous figure, with his devotion to ideals that had no longer any practical value. It was said that the noble Don Quixote de la Mancha had been the last of the true knights. After his death, his trusted sword and his armour were sold to pay his debts.

But somehow or other that sword seems to have fallen into the hands of a number of men. Washington carried it during the hopeless days of Valley Forge. It was the only defence of Gordon, when he had refused to desert the people who had been entrusted to his care, and stayed to meet his death in the besieged fortress of Khartoum.

And I am not quite sure but that it proved of invaluable strength in winning the Great War.

POPE vs. EMPEROR

THE STRANGE DOUBLE LOYALTY OF THE PEOPLE OF THE MIDDLE AGES AND HOW IT LED TO ENDLESS QUARRELS BETWEEN THE POPES AND THE HOLY ROMAN EMPERORS

IT is very difficult to understand the people of by-gone ages. Your own grandfather, whom you see every day, is a mysterious being who lives in a different world of ideas and clothes and manners. I am now telling you the story of some of your grandfathers who are twenty-five generations removed, and I do not expect you to catch the meaning of what I write without re-reading this chapter a number of times.

The average man of the Middle Ages lived a very simple and uneventful life. Even if he was a free citizen, able to come and go at will, he rarely left his own neighbourhood. There were no printed books and only a few manuscripts. Here and there, a small band of industrious monks taught reading and writing and some arithmetic. But science and history and geography lay buried beneath the ruins of Greece and Rome.

Whatever people knew about the past they had learned by listening to stories and legends. Such information, which goes from father to son, is often slightly incorrect in details, but it will preserve the main facts of history with astonishing accuracy. After more than two thousand years, the mothers of India still frighten their naughty children by telling them that “ Iskander will get them,” and Iskander is none other than Alexander the Great, who visited India in the year 330 before the birth of Christ, but whose story has lived through all these ages.

The people of the early Middle Ages never saw a textbook of Roman history. They were ignorant of many things which every school-boy to-day knows before he has entered the third grade. But the Roman Empire, which is merely a name to you, was to them something very much alive. They felt it. They willingly recognised the Pope as their spiritual leader because he lived in Rome and represented the idea of the Roman super-power. And they were profoundly grateful when Charlemagne, and afterwards Otto the Great, revived the idea of a world-empire and created the Holy Roman Empire, that the world might again be as it always had been.

But the fact that there were two different heirs to the Roman tradition placed the faithful burghers of the Middle Ages in a difficult position. The theory behind the mediaeval political system was both sound and simple. While the worldly master (the emperor) looked after the physical well-being of his subjects, the spiritual master (the Pope) guarded their souls.

In practice, however, the system worked very badly. The Emperor invariably tried to interfere with the affairs of the church and the Pope retaliated and told the Emperor how he should rule his domains. Then they told each other to mind their own business in very unceremonious language and the inevitable end was war.

Under those circumstances, what were the people to do, A good Christian obeyed both the Pope and his King. But the Pope and the Emperor were enemies. Which side should a dutiful subject and an equally dutiful Christian take?

It was never easy to give the correct answer. When the Emperor happened to be a man of energy and was sufficiently well provided with money to organise an army, he was very apt to cross the Alps and march on Rome, besiege the Pope in his own palace if need be, and force His Holiness to obey the imperial instructions or suffer the consequences.

But more frequently the Pope was the stronger. Then the Emperor or the King together with all his subjects was excommunicated. This meant that all churches were closed, that no one could be baptised, that no dying man could be given absolution-- in short, that half of the functions of mediaeval government came to an end.

More than that, the people were absolved from their oath of loyalty to their sovereign and were urged to rebel against their master. But if they followed this advice of the distant Pope and were caught, they were hanged by their near-by Lege Lord and that too was very unpleasant.

Indeed, the poor fellows were in a difficult position and none fared worse than those who lived during the latter half of the eleventh century, when the Emperor Henry IV of Germany and Pope Gregory VII fought a two-round battle which decided nothing and upset the peace of Europe for almost fifty years.

In the middle of the eleventh century there had been a strong movement for reform in the church. The election of the Popes, thus far, had been a most irregular affair. It was to the advantage of the Holy Roman Emperors to have a well-disposed priest elected to the Holy See. They frequently came to Rome at the time of election and used their influence for the benefit of one of their friends.

In the year 1059 this had been changed. By a decree of Pope Nicholas II the principal priests and deacons of the churches in and around Rome were organised into the so-called College of Cardinals, and this gathering of prominent churchmen (the word "Cardinal" meant principal) was given the exclusive power of electing the future Popes.

In the year 1073 the College of Cardinals elected a priest by the name of Hildebrand, the son of very simple parents in Tuscany, as Pope, and he took the name of Gregory VII. His energy was unbounded. His belief in the supreme powers of his Holy Office was built upon a granite rock of conviction and courage. In the mind of Gregory, the Pope was not only the absolute head of the Christian church, but also the highest Court of Appeal in all worldly matters. The Pope who had elevated simple German princes to the dignity of Emperor could depose them at will. He could veto any law passed by duke or king or emperor, but whosoever should question a papal decree, let him beware, for the punishment would be swift and merciless.

Gregory sent ambassadors to all the European courts to inform the potentates of Europe of his new laws and asked them to take due notice of their contents. William the Conqueror promised to be good, but Henry IV, who since the age of six had been fighting with his subjects, had no intention of submitting to the Papal will. He called together a college of German bishops, accused Gregory of every crime under the sun and then had him deposed by the council of Worms.

The Pope answered with excommunication and a demand that the German princes rid themselves of their unworthy ruler. The German princes, only too happy to be rid of Henry, asked the Pope to come to Augsburg and help them elect a new Emperor.

Gregory left Rome and travelled northward. Henry, who was no fool, appreciated the danger of his position. At all costs he must make peace with the Pope, and he must do it at once. In the midst of winter he crossed the Alps and hastened to Canossa where the Pope had stopped for a short rest. Three long days, from the 25th to the 28th of January of the year 1077, Henry, dressed as a penitent pilgrim (but with a warm sweater underneath his monkish garb), waited outside the gates of the castle of Canossa. Then he was allowed to enter and was pardoned for his sins. But the repentance did not last long. As soon as Henry had returned to Germany, he behaved exactly as before. Again he was excommunicated. For the second time a council of German bishops deposed Gregory, but this time, when Henry crossed the Alps he was at the head of a large army, besieged Rome and forced Gregory to retire to Salerno, where he died in exile. This first violent outbreak decided nothing. As soon as Henry was back in Germany, the struggle between Pope and Emperor was continued.

The Hohenstaufen family which got hold of the Imperial German Throne shortly afterwards, were even more independent than their predecessors. Gregory had claimed that the Popes were superior to all kings because they (the Popes) at the Day of Judgement would be responsible for the

behaviour of all the sheep of their flock, and in the eyes of God, a king was one of that faithful herd.

Frederick of Hohenstaufen, commonly known as Barbarossa or Red Beard, set up the counter-claim that the Empire had been bestowed upon his predecessor "by God himself" and as the Empire included Italy and Rome, he began a campaign which was to add these "lost provinces" to the northern country. Barbarossa was accidentally drowned in Asia Minor during the second Crusade, but his son Frederick II, a brilliant young man who in his youth had been exposed to the civilisation of the Mohammedans of Sicily, continued the war. The Popes accused him of heresy. It is true that Frederick seems to have felt a deep and serious contempt for the rough Christian world of the North, for the boorish German Knights and the intriguing Italian priests. But he held his tongue, went on a Crusade and took Jerusalem from the infidel and was duly crowned as King of the Holy City. Even this act did not placate the Popes. They deposed Frederick and gave his Italian possessions to Charles of Anjou, the brother of that King Louis of France who became famous as Saint Louis. This led to more warfare. Conrad V, the son of Conrad IV, and the last of the Hohenstaufens, tried to regain the kingdom, and was defeated and decapitated at Naples. But twenty years later, the French who had made themselves thoroughly unpopular in Sicily were all murdered during the so-called Sicilian Vespers, and so it went.

The quarrel between the Popes and the Emperors was never settled, but after a while the two enemies learned to leave each other alone.

In the year 1278, Rudolph of Hapsburg was elected Emperor. He did not take the trouble to go to Rome to be crowned. The Popes did not object and in turn they kept away from Germany. This meant peace but two entire centuries which might have been used for the purpose of internal organisation had been wasted in useless warfare.

It is an ill wind however that bloweth no good to some one. The little cities of Italy, by a process of careful balancing, had managed to increase their power and their independence at the expense of both Emperors and Popes. When the rush for the Holy Land began, they were able to handle the transportation problem of the thousands of eager pilgrims who were clamoring for passage, and at the end of the Crusades they had built themselves such strong defences of brick and of gold that they could defy Pope and Emperor with equal indifference.

Church and State fought each other and a third party--the mediaeval city--ran away with the spoils.

THE CRUSADES

BUT ALL THESE DIFFERENT QUARRELS WERE FORGOTTEN WHEN THE TURKS TOOK THE HOLY LAND, DESECRATED THE HOLY PLACES AND INTERFERED SERIOUSLY WITH THE TRADE FROM EAST TO WEST. EUROPE WENT CRUSADING

DURING three centuries there had been peace between Christians and Moslems except in Spain and in the eastern Roman Empire, the two states defending the gateways of Europe. The Mohammedans having conquered Syria in the seventh century were in possession of the Holy Land. But they regarded Jesus as a great prophet (though not quite as great as Mohammed), and they did not interfere with the pilgrims who wished to pray in the church which Saint Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine, had built on the spot of the Holy Grave. But early in the eleventh century, a Tartar tribe from the wilds of Asia, called the Seljuks or Turks, became masters of the Mohammedan state in western Asia and then the period of tolerance came to an end. The Turks took all of Asia Minor away from the eastern Roman Emperors and they made an end to the trade between east and west.

Alexis, the Emperor, who rarely saw anything of his Christian neighbours of the west, appealed for help and pointed to the danger which threatened Europe should the Turks take Constantinople.

The Italian cities which had established colonies along the coast of Asia Minor and Palestine, in fear for their possessions, reported terrible stories of Turkish atrocities and Christian suffering. All Europe got excited.

Pope Urban II, a Frenchman from Reims, who had been educated at the same famous cloister of Cluny which had trained Gregory VII, thought that the time had come for action. The general state of Europe was far from satisfactory. The primitive agricultural methods of that day (unchanged since Roman times) caused a constant scarcity of food. There was unemployment and hunger and these are apt to lead to discontent and riots. Western Asia in older days had fed millions. It was an excellent field for the purpose of immigration.

Therefore at the council of Clermont in France in the year 1095 the Pope arose, described the terrible horrors which the infidels had inflicted upon the Holy Land, gave a glowing description of this country which ever since the days of Moses had been overflowing with milk and honey, and exhorted the knights of France and the people of Europe in general to leave wife and child and deliver Palestine from the Turks.

A wave of religious hysteria swept across the continent. All reason stopped. Men would drop their hammer and saw, walk out of their shop and take the nearest road to the east to go and kill Turks. Children would leave their homes to "go to Palestine" and bring the terrible Turks to their knees by the mere appeal of their youthful zeal and Christian piety. Fully ninety percent of those enthusiasts never got within sight of the Holy Land. They had no money. They were forced to beg or steal to keep alive. They became a danger to the safety of the highroads and they were killed by the angry country people.

The first Crusade, a wild mob of honest Christians, defaulting bankrupts, penniless noblemen and fugitives from justice, following the lead of half-crazy Peter the Hermit and Walter- without-a-Cent, began their campaign against the Infidels by murdering all the Jews whom they met by the way. They got as far as Hungary and then they were all killed.

This experience taught the Church a lesson. Enthusiasm alone would not set the Holy Land free. Organisation was as necessary as good-will and courage. A year was spent in training and equipping an army of 200,000 men. They were placed under command of Godfrey of Bouillon, Robert, duke of Normandy, Robert, count of Flanders, and a number of other noblemen, all experienced in the art of war.

In the year 1096 this second crusade started upon its long voyage. At Constantinople the knights did homage to the Emperor. (For as I have told you, traditions die hard, and a Roman Emperor, however poor and powerless, was still held in great respect). Then they crossed into Asia, killed all the Moslems who fell into their hands, stormed Jerusalem, massacred the Mohammedan population, and marched to the Holy Sepulchre to give praise and thanks amidst tears of piety and gratitude. But soon the Turks were strengthened by the arrival of fresh troops. Then they retook Jerusalem and in turn killed the faithful followers of the Cross.

During the next two centuries, seven other crusades took place. Gradually the Crusaders learned the technique of the trip. The land voyage was too tedious and too dangerous. They preferred to cross the Alps and go to Genoa or Venice where they took ship for the east. The Genoese and the Venetians made this trans-Mediterranean passenger service a very profitable business. They charged exorbitant rates, and when the Crusaders (most of whom had very little money) could not pay the price, these Italian "profiteers" kindly allowed them to "work their way across." In return for a fare from Venice to Acre, the Crusader undertook to do a stated amount of fighting for the owners of his vessel. In this way Venice greatly increased her territory along the coast

of the Adriatic and in Greece, where Athens became a Venetian colony, and in the islands of Cyprus and Crete and Rhodes.

All this, however, helped little in settling the question of the Holy Land. After the first enthusiasm had worn off, a short crusading trip became part of the liberal education of every well-bred young man, and there never was any lack of candidates for service in Palestine. But the old zeal was gone. The Crusaders, who had begun their warfare with deep hatred for the Mohammedans and great love for the Christian people of the eastern Roman Empire and Armenia, suffered a complete change of heart. They came to despise the Greeks of Byzantium, who cheated them and frequently betrayed the cause of the Cross, and the Armenians and all the other Levantine races, and they began to appreciate the virtues of their enemies who proved to be generous and fair opponents.

Of course, it would never do to say this openly. But when the Crusader returned home, he was likely to imitate the manners which he had learned from his heathenish foe, compared to whom the average western knight was still a good deal of a country bumpkin. He also brought with him several new food-stuffs, such as peaches and spinach which he planted in his garden and grew for his own benefit. He gave up the barbarous custom of wearing a load of heavy armour and appeared in the flowing robes of silk or cotton which were the traditional habit of the followers of the Prophet and were originally worn by the Turks. Indeed the Crusades, which had begun as a punitive expedition against the Heathen, became a course of general instruction in civilisation for millions of young Europeans.

From a military and political point of view the Crusades were a failure. Jerusalem and a number of cities were taken and lost. A dozen little kingdoms were established in Syria and Palestine and Asia Minor, but they were re-conquered by the Turks and after the year 1244 (when Jerusalem became definitely Turkish) the status of the Holy Land was the same as it had been before 1095.

But Europe had undergone a great change. The people of the west had been allowed a glimpse of the light and the sunshine and the beauty of the east. Their dreary castles no longer satisfied them. They wanted a broader life. Neither Church nor State could give this to them.

They found it in the cities.

THE MEDIAEVAL CITY

WHY THE PEOPLE OF THE MIDDLE AGES SAID THAT "CITY AIR IS FREE AIR"

THE early part of the Middle Ages had been an era of pioneering and of settlement. A new people, who thus far had lived outside the wild range of forest, mountains and marshes which protected the north-eastern frontier of the Roman Empire, had forced its way into the plains of western Europe and had taken possession of most of the land. They were restless, as all pioneers have been since the beginning of time. They liked to be "on the go." They cut down the forests and they cut each other's throats with equal energy. Few of them wanted to live in cities. They insisted upon being "free," they loved to feel the fresh air of the hillsides fill their lungs while they drove their herds across the wind-swept pastures. When they no longer liked their old homes, they pulled up stakes and went away in search of fresh adventures.

The weaker ones died. The hardy fighters and the courageous women who had followed their men into the wilderness survived. In this way they developed a strong race of men. They cared little for the graces of life. They were too busy to play the fiddle or write pieces of poetry. They had little love for discussions. The priest, "the learned man" of the village (and before the middle of the thirteenth century, a layman who could read and write was regarded as a "sissy")

was supposed to settle all questions which had no direct practical value. Meanwhile the German chieftain, the Frankish Baron, the Northman Duke (or whatever their names and titles) occupied their share of the territory which once had been part of the great Roman Empire and among the ruins of past glory, they built a world of their own which pleased them mightily and which they considered quite perfect.

They managed the affairs of their castle and the surrounding country to the best of their ability. They were as faithful to the commandments of the Church as any weak mortal could hope to be. They were sufficiently loyal to their king or emperor to keep on good terms with those distant but always dangerous potentates. In short, they tried to do right and to be fair to their neighbours without being exactly unfair to their own interests.

It was not an ideal world in which they found themselves. The greater part of the people were serfs or "villains," farm-hands who were as much a part of the soil upon which they lived as the cows and sheep whose stables they shared. Their fate was not particularly happy nor was it particularly unhappy. But what was one to do? The good Lord who ruled the world of the Middle Ages had undoubtedly ordered everything for the best. If He, in his wisdom, had decided that there must be both knights and serfs, it was not the duty of these faithful sons of the church to question the arrangement. The serfs therefore did not complain but when they were too hard driven, they would die off like cattle which are not fed and stabled in the right way, and then something would be hastily done to better their condition. But if the progress of the world had been left to the serf and his feudal master, we would still be living after the fashion of the twelfth century, saying "abracadabra" when we tried to stop a tooth-ache, and feeling a deep contempt and hatred for the dentist who offered to help us with his "science," which most likely was of Mohammedan or heathenish origin and therefore both wicked and useless.

When you grow up you will discover that many people do not believe in "progress" and they will prove to you by the terrible deeds of some of our own contemporaries that "the world does not change." But I hope that you will not pay much attention to such talk. You see, it took our ancestors almost a million years to learn how to walk on their hind legs. Other centuries had to go by before their animal-like grunts developed into an understandable language. Writing--the art of preserving our ideas for the benefit of future generations, without which no progress is possible was invented only four thousand years ago. The idea of turning the forces of nature into the obedient servants of man was quite new in the days of your own grandfather. It seems to me, therefore, that we are making progress at an unheard-of rate of speed. Perhaps we have paid a little too much attention to the mere physical comforts of life. That will change in due course of time and we shall then attack the problems which are not related to health and to wages and plumbing and machinery in general.

But please do not be too sentimental about the "good old days." Many people who only see the beautiful churches and the great works of art which the Middle Ages have left behind grow quite eloquent when they compare our own ugly civilisation with its hurry and its noise and the evil smells of backfiring motor trucks with the cities of a thousand years ago. But these mediaeval churches were invariably surrounded by miserable hovels compared to which a modern tenement house stands forth as a luxurious palace. It is true that the noble Lancelot and the equally noble Parsifal, the pure young hero who went in search of the Holy Grail, were not bothered by the odor of gasoline. But there were other smells of the barnyard variety--odors of decaying refuse which had been thrown into the street--of pig-sties surrounding the Bishop's palace-- of unwashed people who had inherited their coats and hats from their grandfathers and who had never learned the blessing of soap. I do not want to paint too unpleasant a picture. But when you read in the ancient chronicles that the King of France, looking out of the windows of his palace, fainted at the stench caused by the pigs rooting in the streets of Paris, when an ancient manuscript recounts a few details of an epidemic of the plague or of small-pox, then you begin to understand that "progress" is something more than a catchword used by modern advertising men.

No, the progress of the last six hundred years would not have been possible without the existence of cities. I shall, therefore, have to make this chapter a little longer than many of the others. It is too important to be reduced to three or four pages, devoted to mere political events.

The ancient world of Egypt and Babylonia and Assyria had been a world of cities. Greece had been a country of City-States. The history of Phoenicia was the history of two cities called Sidon and Tyre. The Roman Empire was the "hinterland" of a single town. Writing, art, science, astronomy, architecture, literature, the theatre--the list is endless--have all been products of the city.

For almost four thousand years the wooden bee-hive which we call a town had been the workshop of the world. Then came the great migrations. The Roman Empire was destroyed. The cities were burned down and Europe once more became a land of pastures and little agricultural villages. During the Dark Ages the fields of civilisation had lain fallow.

The Crusades had prepared the soil for a new crop. It was time for the harvest, but the fruit was plucked by the burghers of the free cities.

I have told you the story of the castles and the monasteries, with their heavy stone enclosures--the homes of the knights and the monks, who guarded men's bodies and their souls. You have seen how a few artisans (butchers and bakers and an occasional candle-stick maker) came to live near the castle to tend to the wants of their masters and to find protection in case of danger. Sometimes the feudal lord allowed these people to surround their houses with a stockade. But they were dependent for their living upon the good-will of the mighty Seigneur of the castle. When he went about they knelt before him and kissed his hand.

Then came the Crusades and many things changed. The migrations had driven people from the north-east to the west. The Crusades made millions of people travel from the west to the highly civilised regions of the south-east. They discovered that the world was not bounded by the four walls of their little settlement. They came to appreciate better clothes, more comfortable houses, new dishes, products of the mysterious Orient. After their return to their old homes, they insisted that they be supplied with those articles. The peddler with his pack upon his back--the only merchant of the Dark Ages--added these goods to his old merchandise, bought a cart, hired a few ex-crusaders to protect him against the crime wave which followed this great international war, and went forth to do business upon a more modern and larger scale. His career was not an easy one. Every time he entered the domains of another Lord he had to pay tolls and taxes. But the business was profitable all the same and the peddler continued to make his rounds.

Soon certain energetic merchants discovered that the goods which they had always imported from afar could be made at home. They turned part of their homes into a workshop. {sic} They ceased to be merchants and became manufacturers. They sold their products not only to the lord of the castle and to the abbot in his monastery, but they exported them to nearby towns. The lord and the abbot paid them with products of their farms, eggs and wines, and with honey, which in those early days was used as sugar. But the citizens of distant towns were obliged to pay in cash and the manufacturer and the merchant began to own little pieces of gold, which entirely changed their position in the society of the early Middle Ages.

It is difficult for you to imagine a world without money. In a modern city one cannot possibly live without money. All day long you carry a pocket full of small discs of metal to "pay your way." You need a nickel for the street-car, a dollar for a dinner, three cents for an evening paper. But many people of the early Middle Ages never saw a piece of coined money from the time they were born to the day of their death. The gold and silver of Greece and Rome lay buried

beneath the ruins of their cities. The world of the migrations, which had succeeded the Empire, was an agricultural world. Every farmer raised enough grain and enough sheep and enough cows for his own use.

The mediaeval knight was a country squire and was rarely forced to pay for materials in money. His estates produced everything that he and his family ate and drank and wore on their backs. The bricks for his house were made along the banks of the nearest river. Wood for the rafters of the hall was cut from the baronial forest. The few articles that had to come from abroad were paid for in goods--in honey--in eggs --in fagots.

But the Crusades upset the routine of the old agricultural life in a very drastic fashion. Suppose that the Duke of Hildesheim was going to the Holy Land. He must travel thousands of miles and he must pay his passage and his hotel-bills. At home he could pay with products of his farm. But he could not well take a hundred dozen eggs and a cart-load of hams with him to satisfy the greed of the shipping agent of Venice or the inn-keeper of the Brenner Pass. These gentlemen insisted upon cash. His Lordship therefore was obliged to take a small quantity of gold with him upon his voyage. Where could he find this gold? He could borrow it from the Lombards, the descendants of the old Longobards, who had turned professional money-lenders, who seated behind their exchange-table (commonly known as "banco" or bank) were glad to let his Grace have a few hundred gold pieces in exchange for a mortgage upon his estates, that they might be repaid in case His Lordship should die at the hands of the Turks.

That was dangerous business for the borrower. In the end, the Lombards invariably owned the estates and the Knight became a bankrupt, who hired himself out as a fighting man to a more powerful and more careful neighbour.

His Grace could also go to that part of the town where the Jews were forced to live. There he could borrow money at a rate of fifty or sixty percent. interest. That, too, was bad business. But was there a way out? Some of the people of the little city which surrounded the castle were said to have money. They had known the young lord all his life. His father and their fathers had been good friends. They would not be unreasonable in their demands. Very well. His Lordship's clerk, a monk who could write and keep accounts, sent a note to the best known merchants and asked for a small loan. The townspeople met in the work-room of the jeweller who made chalices for the nearby churches and discussed this demand. They could not well refuse. It would serve no purpose to ask for "interest." In the first place, it was against the religious principles of most people to take interest and in the second place, it would never be paid except in agricultural products and of these the people had enough and to spare.

"But," suggested the tailor who spent his days quietly sitting upon his table and who was somewhat of a philosopher, "suppose that we ask some favour in return for our money. We are all fond of fishing. But his Lordship won't let us fish in his brook. Suppose that we let him have a hundred ducats and that he give us in return a written guarantee allowing us to fish all we want in all of his rivers. Then he gets the hundred which he needs, but we get the fish and it will be good business all around."

The day his Lordship accepted this proposition (it seemed such an easy way of getting a hundred gold pieces) he signed the death-warrant of his own power. His clerk drew up the agreement. His Lordship made his mark (for he could not sign his name) and departed for the East. Two years later he came back, dead broke. The townspeople were fishing in the castle pond. The sight of this silent row of anglers annoyed his Lordship. He told his equerry to go and chase the crowd away. They went, but that night a delegation of merchants visited the castle. They were very polite. They congratulated his Lordship upon his safe return. They were sorry his Lordship had been annoyed by the fishermen, but as his Lordship might perhaps remember he had given them permission to do so himself, and the tailor produced the Charter which had been kept in the safe of the jeweller ever since the master had gone to the Holy Land.

His Lordship was much annoyed. But once more he was in dire need of some money. In Italy he had signed his name to certain documents which were now in the possession of Salvestro dei Medici, the well-known banker. These documents were "promissory notes" and they were due two months from date. Their total amount came to three hundred and forty pounds, Flemish gold. Under these circumstances, the noble knight could not well show the rage which filled his heart and his proud soul. Instead, he suggested another little loan. The merchants retired to discuss the matter.

After three days they came back and said "yes." They were only too happy to be able to help their master in his difficulties, but in return for the 345 golden pounds would he give them another written promise (another charter) that they, the townspeople, might establish a council of their own to be elected by all the merchants and free citizens of the city, said council to manage civic affairs without interference from the side of the castle?

His Lordship was confoundedly angry. But again, he needed the money. He said yes, and signed the charter. Next week, he repented. He called his soldiers and went to the house of the jeweller and asked for the documents which his crafty subjects had cajoled out of him under the pressure of circumstances. He took them away and burned them. The townspeople stood by and said nothing. But when next his Lordship needed money to pay for the dowry of his daughter, he was unable to get a single penny. After that little affair at the jeweller's his credit was not considered good. He was forced to eat humble-pie and offer to make certain reparations. Before his Lordship got the first installment of the stipulated sum, the townspeople were once more in possession of all their old charters and a brand new one which permitted them to build a "city-hall" and a strong tower where all the charters might be kept protected against fire and theft, which really meant protected against future violence on the part of the Lord and his armed followers.

This, in a very general way, is what happened during the centuries which followed the Crusades. It was a slow process, this gradual shifting of power from the castle to the city. There was some fighting. A few tailors and jewellers were killed and a few castles went up in smoke. But such occurrences were not common. Almost imperceptibly the towns grew richer and the feudal lords grew poorer. To maintain themselves they were for ever forced to exchange charters of civic liberty in return for ready cash. The cities grew. They offered an asylum to run-away serfs who gained their liberty after they had lived a number of years behind the city walls. They came to be the home of the more energetic elements of the surrounding country districts. They were proud of their new importance and expressed their power in the churches and public buildings which they erected around the old market place, where centuries before the barter of eggs and sheep and honey and salt had taken place. They wanted their children to have a better chance in life than they had enjoyed themselves. They hired monks to come to their city and be school teachers. When they heard of a man who could paint pictures upon boards of wood, they offered him a pension if he would come and cover the walls of their chapels and their town hall with scenes from the Holy Scriptures.

Meanwhile his Lordship, in the dreary and drafty halls of his castle, saw all this up-start splendour and regretted the day when first he had signed away a single one of his sovereign rights and prerogatives. But he was helpless. The townspeople with their well-filled strong-boxes snapped their fingers at him. They were free men, fully prepared to hold what they had gained by the sweat of their brow and after a struggle which had lasted for more than ten generations.

MEDIAEVAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

HOW THE PEOPLE OF THE CITIES ASSERTED THEIR RIGHT TO BE HEARD IN THE ROYAL COUNCILS OF THEIR COUNTRY

As long as people were "nomads," wandering tribes of shepherds, all men had been equal and had been responsible for the welfare and safety of the entire community.

But after they had settled down and some had become rich and others had grown poor, the government was apt to fall into the hands of those who were not obliged to work for their living and who could devote themselves to politics.

I have told you how this had happened in Egypt and in Mesopotamia and in Greece and in Rome. It occurred among the Germanic population of western Europe as soon as order had been restored. The western European world was ruled in the first place by an emperor who was elected by the seven or eight most important kings of the vast Roman Empire of the German nation and who enjoyed a great deal of imaginary and very little actual power. It was ruled by a number of kings who sat upon shaky thrones. The every-day government was in the hands of thousands of feudal princelets. Their subjects were peasants or serfs. There were few cities. There was hardly any middle class. But during the thirteenth century (after an absence of almost a thousand years) the middle class--the merchant class--once more appeared upon the historical stage and its rise in power, as we saw in the last chapter, had meant a decrease in the influence of the castle folk.

Thus far, the king, in ruling his domains, had only paid attention to the wishes of his noblemen and his bishops. But the new world of trade and commerce which grew out of the Crusades forced him to recognise the middle class or suffer from an ever-increasing emptiness of his exchequer. Their majesties (if they had followed their hidden wishes) would have as lief consulted their cows and their pigs as the good burghers of their cities. But they could not help themselves. They swallowed the bitter pill because it was gilded, but not without a struggle.

In England, during the absence of Richard the Lion Hearted (who had gone to the Holy Land, but who was spending the greater part of his crusading voyage in an Austrian jail) the government of the country had been placed in the hands of John, a brother of Richard, who was his inferior in the art of war, but his equal as a bad administrator. John had begun his career as a regent by losing Normandy and the greater part of the French possessions. Next, he had managed to get into a quarrel with Pope Innocent III, the famous enemy of the Hohenstaufens. The Pope had excommunicated John (as Gregory VII had excommunicated the Emperor Henry IV two centuries before). In the year 1213 John had been obliged to make an ignominious peace just as Henry IV had been obliged to do in the year 1077.

Undismayed by his lack of success, John continued to abuse his royal power until his disgruntled vassals made a prisoner of their anointed ruler and forced him to promise that he would be good and would never again interfere with the ancient rights of his subjects. All this happened on a little island in the Thames, near the village of Runnymede, on the 15th of June of the year 1215. The document to which John signed his name was called the Big Charter--the Magna Carta. It contained very little that was new. It re-stated in short and direct sentences the ancient duties of the king and enumerated the privileges of his vassals. It paid little attention to the rights (if any) of the vast majority of the people, the peasants, but it offered certain securities to the rising class of the merchants. It was a charter of great importance because it defined the powers of the king with more precision than had ever been done before. But it was still a purely mediaeval document. It did not refer to common human beings, unless they happened to be the property of the vassal, which must be safe-guarded against royal tyranny just as the Baronial woods and cows were protected against an excess of zeal on the part of the royal foresters.

A few years later, however, we begin to hear a very different note in the councils of His Majesty.

John, who was bad, both by birth and inclination, solemnly had promised to obey the great charter and then had broken every one of its many stipulations. Fortunately, he soon died and was succeeded by his son Henry III, who was forced to recognise the charter anew. Meanwhile, Uncle Richard, the Crusader, had cost the country a great deal of money and the king was obliged to ask for a few loans that he might pay his obligations to the Jewish money-lenders. The large land-owners and the bishops who acted as councillors to the king could not provide him with the necessary gold and silver. The king then gave orders that a few representatives of the cities be called upon to attend the sessions of his Great Council. They made their first appearance in the year 1265. They were supposed to act only as financial experts who were not supposed to take a part in the general discussion of matters of state, but to give advice exclusively upon the question of taxation.

Gradually, however, these representatives of the "commons" were consulted upon many of the problems and the meeting of noblemen, bishops and city delegates developed into a regular Parliament, a place "ou l'on parloit," which means in English where people talked, before important affairs of state were decided upon.

But the institution of such a general advisory-board with certain executive powers was not an English invention, as seems to be the general belief, and government by a "king and his parliament" was by no means restricted to the British Isles. You will find it in every part of Europe. In some countries, like France, the rapid increase of the Royal power after the Middle Ages reduced the influence of the "parliament" to nothing. In the year 1302 representatives of the cities had been admitted to the meeting of the French Parliament, but five centuries had to pass before this "Parliament" was strong enough to assert the rights of the middle class, the so-called Third Estate, and break the power of the king. Then they made up for lost time and during the French Revolution, abolished the king, the clergy and the nobles and made the representatives of the common people the rulers of the land. In Spain the "cortes" (the king's council) had been opened to the commoners as early as the first half of the twelfth century. In the German Empire, a number of important cities had obtained the rank of "imperial cities" whose representatives must be heard in the imperial diet.

In Sweden, representatives of the people attended the sessions of the Riksdag at the first meeting of the year 1359. In Denmark the Danehof, the ancient national assembly, was re-established in 1314, and, although the nobles often regained control of the country at the expense of the king and the people, the representatives of the cities were never completely deprived of their power.

In the Scandinavian country, the story of representative government is particularly interesting. In Iceland, the "Althing," the assembly of all free landowners, who managed the affairs of the island, began to hold regular meetings in the ninth century and continued to do so for more than a thousand years.

In Switzerland, the freemen of the different cantons defended their assemblies against the attempts of a number of feudal neighbours with great success.

Finally, in the Low Countries, in Holland, the councils of the different duchies and counties were attended by representatives of the third estate as early as the thirteenth century.

In the sixteenth century a number of these small provinces rebelled against their king, abjured his majesty in a solemn meeting of the "Estates General," removed the clergy from the discussions, broke the power of the nobles and assumed full executive authority over the newly-established Republic of the United Seven Netherlands. For two centuries, the representatives of the town-councils ruled the country without a king, without bishops and without noblemen. The city had become supreme and the good burghers had become the rulers of the land.

THE MEDIAEVAL WORLD

WHAT THE PEOPLE OF THE MIDDLE AGES THOUGHT OF THE WORLD IN WHICH THEY HAPPENED TO LIVE

DATES are a very useful invention. We could not do without them but unless we are very careful, they will play tricks with us. They are apt to make history too precise. For example, when I talk of the point-of-view of mediaeval man, I do not mean that on the 31st of December of the year 476, suddenly all the people of Europe said, "Ah, now the Roman Empire has come to an end and we are living in the Middle Ages. How interesting!"

You could have found men at the Frankish court of Charlemagne who were Romans in their habits, in their manners, in their out-look upon life. On the other hand, when you grow up you will discover that some of the people in this world have never passed beyond the stage of the cave-man. All times and all ages overlap, and the ideas of succeeding generations play tag with each other. But it is possible to study the minds of a good many true representatives of the Middle Ages and then give you an idea of the average man's attitude toward life and the many difficult problems of living.

First of all, remember that the people of the Middle Ages never thought of themselves as free-born citizens, who could come and go at will and shape their fate according to their ability or energy or luck. On the contrary, they all considered themselves part of the general scheme of things, which included emperors and serfs, popes and heretics, heroes and swashbucklers, rich men, poor men, beggar men and thieves. They accepted this divine ordinance and asked no questions. In this, of course, they differed radically from modern people who accept nothing and who are forever trying to improve their own financial and political situation.

To the man and woman of the thirteenth century, the world hereafter--a Heaven of wonderful delights and a Hell of brimstone and suffering--meant something more than empty words or vague theological phrases. It was an actual fact and the mediaeval burghers and knights spent the greater part of their time preparing for it. We modern people regard a noble death after a well-spent life with the quiet calm of the ancient Greeks and Romans. After three score years of work and effort, we go to sleep with the feeling that all will be well.

But during the Middle Ages, the King of Terrors with his grinning skull and his rattling bones was man's steady companion. He woke his victims up with terrible tunes on his scratchy fiddle he sat down with them at dinner--he smiled at them from behind trees and shrubs when they took a girl out for a walk. If you had heard nothing but hair-raising yarns about cemeteries and coffins and fearful diseases when you were very young, instead of listening to the fairy stories of Anderson and Grimm, you, too, would have lived all your days in a dread of the final hour and the gruesome day of Judgment. That is exactly what happened to the children of the Middle Ages. They moved in a world of devils and spooks and only a few occasional angels. Sometimes, their fear of the future filled their souls with humility and piety, but often it influenced them the other way and made them cruel and sentimental. They would first of all murder all the women and children of a captured city and then they would devoutly march to a holy spot and with their hands gory with the blood of innocent victims, they would pray that a merciful heaven forgive them their sins. Yea, they would do more than pray, they would weep bitter tears and would confess themselves the most wicked of sinners. But the next day, they would once more butcher a camp of Saracen enemies without a spark of mercy in their hearts.

Of course, the Crusaders were Knights and obeyed a somewhat different code of manners from the common men. But in such respects the common man was just the same as his master. He, too, resembled a shy horse, easily frightened by a shadow or a silly piece of paper, capable of

excellent and faithful service but liable to run away and do terrible damage when his feverish imagination saw a ghost.

In judging these good people, however, it is wise to remember the terrible disadvantages under which they lived. They were really barbarians who posed as civilised people. Charlemagne and Otto the Great were called "Roman Emperors," but they had as little resemblance to a real Roman Emperor (say Augustus or Marcus Aurelius) as "King" Wumba Wumba of the upper Congo has to the highly educated rulers of Sweden or Denmark. They were savages who lived amidst glorious ruins but who did not share the benefits of the civilisation which their fathers and grandfathers had destroyed. They knew nothing. They were ignorant of almost every fact which a boy of twelve knows to-day. They were obliged to go to one single book for all their information. That was the Bible. But those parts of the Bible which have influenced the history of the human race for the better are those chapters of the New Testament which teach us the great moral lessons of love, charity and forgiveness. As a handbook of astronomy, zoology, botany, geometry and all the other sciences, the venerable book is not entirely reliable. In the twelfth century, a second book was added to the mediaeval library, the great encyclopaedia of useful knowledge, compiled by Aristotle, the Greek philosopher of the fourth century before Christ. Why the Christian church should have been willing to accord such high honors to the teacher of Alexander the Great, whereas they condemned all other Greek philosophers on account of their heathenish doctrines, I really do not know. But next to the Bible, Aristotle was recognized as the only reliable teacher whose works could be safely placed into the hands of true Christians.

His works had reached Europe in a somewhat roundabout way. They had gone from Greece to Alexandria. They had then been translated from the Greek into the Arabic language by the Mohammedans who conquered Egypt in the seventh century. They had followed the Moslem armies into Spain and the philosophy of the great Stagirite (Aristotle was a native of Stagira in Macedonia) was taught in the Moorish universities of Cordova. The Arabic text was then translated into Latin by the Christian students who had crossed the Pyrenees to get a liberal education and this much travelled version of the famous books was at last taught at the different schools of northwestern Europe. It was not very clear, but that made it all the more interesting.

With the help of the Bible and Aristotle, the most brilliant men of the Middle Ages now set to work to explain all things between Heaven and Earth in their relation to the expressed will of God. These brilliant men, the so-called Scholasts or Schoolmen, were really very intelligent, but they had obtained their information exclusively from books, and never from actual observation. If they wanted to lecture on the sturgeon or on caterpillars, they read the Old and New Testaments and Aristotle, and told their students everything these good books had to say upon the subject of caterpillars and sturgeons. They did not go out to the nearest river to catch a sturgeon. They did not leave their libraries and repair to the backyard to catch a few caterpillars and look at these animals and study them in their native haunts. Even such famous scholars as Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas did not inquire whether the sturgeons in the land of Palestine and the caterpillars of Macedonia might not have been different from the sturgeons and the caterpillars of western Europe.

When occasionally an exceptionally curious person like Roger Bacon appeared in the council of the learned and began to experiment with magnifying glasses and funny little telescopes and actually dragged the sturgeon and the caterpillar into the lecturing room and proved that they were different from the creatures described by the Old Testament and by Aristotle, the Schoolmen shook their dignified heads. Bacon was going too far. When he dared to suggest that an hour of actual observation was worth more than ten years with Aristotle and that the works of that famous Greek might as well have remained untranslated for all the good they had ever done, the scholasts went to the police and said, "This man is a danger to the safety of the state. He wants us to study Greek that we may read Aristotle in the original. Why should he not be contented with our Latin-Arabic translation which has satisfied our faithful people for so many

hundred years? Why is he so curious about the insides of fishes and the insides of insects? He is probably a wicked magician trying to upset the established order of things by his Black Magic." And so well did they plead their cause that the frightened guardians of the peace forbade Bacon to write a single word for more than ten years. When he resumed his studies he had learned a lesson. He wrote his books in a queer cipher which made it impossible for his contemporaries to read them, a trick which became common as the Church became more desperate in its attempts to prevent people from asking questions which would lead to doubts and infidelity.

This, however, was not done out of any wicked desire to keep people ignorant. The feeling which prompted the heretic hunters of that day was really a very kindly one. They firmly believed--nay, they knew--that this life was but the preparation for our real existence in the next world. They felt convinced that too much knowledge made people uncomfortable, filled their minds with dangerous opinions and led to doubt and hence to perdition. A mediaeval Schoolman who saw one of his pupils stray away from the revealed authority of the Bible and Aristotle, that he might study things for himself, felt as uncomfortable as a loving mother who sees her young child approach a hot stove. She knows that he will burn his little fingers if he is allowed to touch it and she tries to keep him back, if necessary she will use force. But she really loves the child and if he will only obey her, she will be as good to him as she possibly can be. In the same way the mediaeval guardians of people's souls, while they were strict in all matters pertaining to the Faith, slaved day and night to render the greatest possible service to the members of their flock. They held out a helping hand whenever they could and the society of that day shows the influence of thousands of good men and pious women who tried to make the fate of the average mortal as bearable as possible.

A serf was a serf and his position would never change. But the Good Lord of the Middle Ages who allowed the serf to remain a slave all his life had bestowed an immortal soul upon this humble creature and therefore he must be protected in his rights, that he might live and die as a good Christian. When he grew too old or too weak to work he must be taken care of by the feudal master for whom he had worked. The serf, therefore, who led a monotonous and dreary life, was never haunted by fear of to-morrow. He knew that he was "safe" -- that he could not be thrown out of employment, that he would always have a roof over his head (a leaky roof, perhaps, but roof all the same), and that he would always have something to eat.

This feeling of "stability" and of "safety" was found in all classes of society. In the towns the merchants and the artisans established guilds which assured every member of a steady income. It did not encourage the ambitious to do better than their neighbours. Too often the guilds gave protection to the "slacker" who managed to "get by." But they established a general feeling of content and assurance among the labouring classes which no longer exists in our day of general competition. The Middle Ages were familiar with the dangers of what we modern people call "corners," when a single rich man gets hold of all the available grain or soap or pickled herring, and then forces the world to buy from him at his own price. The authorities, therefore, discouraged wholesale trading and regulated the price at which merchants were allowed to sell their goods.

The Middle Ages disliked competition. Why compete and fill the world with hurry and rivalry and a multitude of pushing men, when the Day of Judgement was near at hand, when riches would count for nothing and when the good serf would enter the golden gates of Heaven while the bad knight was sent to do penance in the deepest pit of Inferno?

In short, the people of the Middle Ages were asked to surrender part of their liberty of thought and action, that they might enjoy greater safety from poverty of the body and poverty of the soul.

And with a very few exceptions, they did not object. They firmly believed that they were mere visitors upon this planet-- that they were here to be prepared for a greater and more important

life. Deliberately they turned their backs upon a world which was filled with suffering and wickedness and injustice. They pulled down the blinds that the rays of the sun might not distract their attention from that chapter in the Apocalypse which told them of that heavenly light which was to illumine their happiness in all eternity. They tried to close their eyes to most of the joys of the world in which they lived that they might enjoy those which awaited them in the near future. They accepted life as a necessary evil and welcomed death as the beginning of a glorious day.

The Greeks and the Romans had never bothered about the future but had tried to establish their Paradise right here upon this earth. They had succeeded in making life extremely pleasant for those of their fellow men who did not happen to be slaves. Then came the other extreme of the Middle Ages, when man built himself a Paradise beyond the highest clouds and turned this world into a vale of tears for high and low, for rich and poor, for the intelligent and the dumb. It was time for the pendulum to swing back in the other direction, as I shall tell you in my next chapter.

MEDIAEVAL TRADE

HOW THE CRUSADES ONCE MORE MADE THE MEDITERRANEAN A BUSY CENTRE OF TRADE AND HOW THE CITIES OF THE ITALIAN PENINSULA BECAME THE GREAT DISTRIBUTING CENTRE FOR THE COMMERCE WITH ASIA AND AFRICA

THERE were three good reasons why the Italian cities should have been the first to regain a position of great importance during the late Middle Ages. The Italian peninsula had been settled by Rome at a very early date. There had been more roads and more towns and more schools than anywhere else in Europe.

The barbarians had burned as lustily in Italy as elsewhere, but there had been so much to destroy that more had been able to survive. In the second place, the Pope lived in Italy and as the head of a vast political machine, which owned land and serfs and buildings and forests and rivers and conducted courts of law, he was in constant receipt of a great deal of money. The Papal authorities had to be paid in gold and silver as did the merchants and ship-owners of Venice and Genoa. The cows and the eggs and the horses and all the other agricultural products of the north and the west must be changed into actual cash before the debt could be paid in the distant city of Rome.

This made Italy the one country where there was a comparative abundance of gold and silver. Finally, during the Crusades, the Italian cities had become the point of embarkation for the Crusaders and had profited to an almost unbelievable extent.

And after the Crusades had come to an end, these same Italian cities remained the distributing centres for those Oriental goods upon which the people of Europe had come to depend during the time they had spent in the near east.

Of these towns, few were as famous as Venice. Venice was a republic built upon a mud bank. Thither people from the mainland had fled during the invasions of the barbarians in the fourth century. Surrounded on all sides by the sea they had engaged in the business of salt-making. Salt had been very scarce during the Middle Ages, and the price had been high. For hundreds of years Venice had enjoyed a monopoly of this indispensable table commodity (I say indispensable, because people, like sheep, fall ill unless they get a certain amount of salt in their food). The people had used this monopoly to increase the power of their city. At times they had even dared to defy the power of the Popes. The town had grown rich and had begun to build ships, which engaged in trade with the Orient. During the Crusades, these ships were used to carry passengers to the Holy Land, and when the passengers could not pay for their tickets in cash,

they were obliged to help the Venetians who were for ever increasing their colonies in the Aegean Sea, in Asia Minor and in Egypt.

By the end of the fourteenth century, the population had grown to two hundred thousand, which made Venice the biggest city of the Middle Ages. The people were without influence upon the government which was the private affair of a small number of rich merchant families. They elected a senate and a Doge (or Duke), but the actual rulers of the city were the members of the famous Council of Ten,—who maintained themselves with the help of a highly organised system of secret service men and professional murderers, who kept watch upon all citizens and quietly removed those who might be dangerous to the safety of their high-handed and unscrupulous Committee of Public Safety.

The other extreme of government, a democracy of very turbulent habits, was to be found in Florence. This city controlled the main road from northern Europe to Rome and used the money which it had derived from this fortunate economic position to engage in manufacturing. The Florentines tried to follow the example of Athens. Noblemen, priests and members of the guilds all took part in the discussions of civic affairs. This led to great civic upheaval. People were forever being divided into political parties and these parties fought each other with intense bitterness and exiled their enemies and confiscated their possessions as soon as they had gained a victory in the council. After several centuries of this rule by organised mobs, the inevitable happened. A powerful family made itself master of the city and governed the town and the surrounding country after the fashion of the old Greek “tyrants.” They were called the Medici. The earliest Medici had been physicians (medicus is Latin for physician, hence their name), but later they had turned banker. Their banks and their pawnshops were to be found in all the more important centres of trade. Even today our American pawn-shops display the three golden balls which were part of the coat of arms of the mighty house of the Medici, who became rulers of Florence and married their daughters to the kings of France and were buried in graves worthy of a Roman Caesar.

Then there was Genoa, the great rival of Venice, where the merchants specialised in trade with Tunis in Africa and the grain depots of the Black Sea. Then there were more than two hundred other cities, some large and some small, each a perfect commercial unit, all of them fighting their neighbours and rivals with the undying hatred of neighbours who are depriving each other of their profits.

Once the products of the Orient and Africa had been brought to these distributing centres, they must be prepared for the voyage to the west and the north.

Genoa carried her goods by water to Marseilles, from where they were reshipped to the cities along the Rhone, which in turn served as the market places of northern and western France.

Venice used the land route to northern Europe. This ancient road led across the Brenner pass, the old gateway for the barbarians who had invaded Italy. Past Innsbruck, the merchandise was carried to Basel. From there it drifted down the Rhine to the North Sea and England, or it was taken to Augsburg where the Fugger family (who were both bankers and manufacturers and who prospered greatly by “shaving” the coins with which they paid their workmen), looked after the further distribution to Nuremberg and Leipzig and the cities of the Baltic and to Wisby (on the Island of Gotland) which looked after the needs of the Northern Baltic and dealt directly with the Republic of Novgorod, the old commercial centre of Russia which was destroyed by Ivan the Terrible in the middle of the sixteenth century.

The little cities on the coast of north-western Europe had an interesting story of their own. The mediaeval world ate a great deal of fish. There were many fast days and then people were not permitted to eat meat. For those who lived away from the coast and from the rivers, this meant a diet of eggs or nothing at all. But early in the thirteenth century a Dutch fisherman had

discovered a way of curing herring, so that it could be transported to distant points. The herring fisheries of the North Sea then became of great importance. But some time during the thirteenth century, this useful little fish (for reasons of its own) moved from the North Sea to the Baltic and the cities of that inland sea began to make money. All the world now sailed to the Baltic to catch herring and as that fish could only be caught during a few months each year (the rest of the time it spends in deep water, raising large families of little herrings) the ships would have been idle during the rest of the time unless they had found another occupation. They were then used to carry the wheat of northern and central Russia to southern and western Europe. On the return voyage they brought spices and silks and carpets and Oriental rugs from Venice and Genoa to Bruges and Hamburg and Bremen.

Out of such simple beginnings there developed an important system of international trade which reached from the manufacturing cities of Bruges and Ghent (where the almighty guilds fought pitched battles with the kings of France and England and established a labour tyranny which completely ruined both the employers and the workmen) to the Republic of Novgorod in northern Russia, which was a mighty city until Tsar Ivan, who distrusted all merchants, took the town and killed sixty thousand people in less than a month's time and reduced the survivors to beggary.

That they might protect themselves against pirates and excessive tolls and annoying legislation, the merchants of the north founded a protective league which was called the "Hansa." The Hansa, which had its headquarters in Lubeck, was a voluntary association of more than one hundred cities. The association maintained a navy of its own which patrolled the seas and fought and defeated the Kings of England and Denmark when they dared to interfere with the rights and the privileges of the mighty Hanseatic merchants.

I wish that I had more space to tell you some of the wonderful stories of this strange commerce which was carried on across the high mountains and across the deep seas amidst such dangers that every voyage became a glorious adventure. But it would take several volumes and it cannot be done here.

Besides, I hope that I have told you enough about the Middle Ages to make you curious to read more in the excellent books of which I shall give you a list at the end of this volume.

The Middle Ages, as I have tried to show you, had been a period of very slow progress. The people who were in power believed that "progress" was a very undesirable invention of the Evil One and ought to be discouraged, and as they happened to occupy the seats of the mighty, it was easy to enforce their will upon the patient serfs and the illiterate knights. Here and there a few brave souls sometimes ventured forth into the forbidden region of science, but they fared badly and were considered lucky when they escaped with their lives and a jail sentence of twenty years.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the flood of international commerce swept over western Europe as the Nile had swept across the valley of ancient Egypt. It left behind a fertile sediment of prosperity. Prosperity meant leisure hours and these leisure hours gave both men and women a chance to buy manuscripts and take an interest in literature and art and music.

Then once more was the world filled with that divine curiosity which has elevated man from the ranks of those other mammals who are his distant cousins but who have remained dumb, and the cities, of whose growth and development I have told you in my last chapter, offered a safe shelter to these brave pioneers who dared to leave the very narrow domain of the established order of things.

They set to work. They opened the windows of their cloistered and studious cells. A flood of sunlight entered the dusty rooms and showed them the cobwebs which had gathered during the long period of semi-darkness.

They began to clean house. Next they cleaned their gardens.

Then they went out into the open fields, outside the crumbling town walls, and said, "This is a good world. We are glad that we live in it."

At that moment, the Middle Ages came to an end and a new world began.

THE RENAISSANCE

PEOPLE ONCE MORE DARED TO BE HAPPY JUST BECAUSE THEY WERE ALIVE. THEY TRIED TO SAVE THE REMAINS OF THE OLDER AND MORE AGREEABLE CIVILISATION OF ROME AND GREECE AND THEY WERE SO PROUD OF THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS THAT THEY SPOKE OF A RENAISSANCE OR RE-BIRTH OF CIVILISATION

THE Renaissance was not a political or religious movement. It was a state of mind.

The men of the Renaissance continued to be the obedient sons of the mother church. They were subjects of kings and emperors and dukes and murmured not.

But their outlook upon life was changed. They began to wear different clothes--to speak a different language--to live different lives in different houses.

They no longer concentrated all their thoughts and their efforts upon the blessed existence that awaited them in Heaven. They tried to establish their Paradise upon this planet, and, truth to tell, they succeeded in a remarkable degree.

I have quite often warned you against the danger that lies in historical dates. People take them too literally. They think of the Middle Ages as a period of darkness and ignorance. "Click," says the clock, and the Renaissance begins and cities and palaces are flooded with the bright sunlight of an eager intellectual curiosity.

As a matter of fact, it is quite impossible to draw such sharp lines. The thirteenth century belonged most decidedly to the Middle Ages. All historians agree upon that. But was it a time of darkness and stagnation merely? By no means. People were tremendously alive. Great states were being founded. Large centres of commerce were being developed. High above the turretted towers of the castle and the peaked roof of the town-hall, rose the slender spire of the newly built Gothic cathedral. Everywhere the world was in motion. The high and mighty gentlemen of the city-hall, who had just become conscious of their own strength (by way of their recently acquired riches) were struggling for more power with their feudal masters. The members of the guilds who had just become aware of the important fact that "numbers count" were fighting the high and mighty gentlemen of the city-hall. The king and his shrewd advisers went fishing in these troubled waters and caught many a shining bass of profit which they proceeded to cook and eat before the noses of the surprised and disappointed councillors and guild brethren.

To enliven the scenery during the long hours of evening when the badly lighted streets did not invite further political and economic dispute, the Troubadours and Minnesingers told their stories and sang their songs of romance and adventure and heroism and loyalty to all fair women. Meanwhile youth, impatient of the slowness of progress, flocked to the universities, and thereby hangs a story.

The Middle Ages were "internationally minded." That sounds difficult, but wait until I explain it to you. We modern people are "nationally minded." We are Americans or Englishmen or Frenchmen or Italians and speak English or French or Italian and go to English and French and

Italian universities, unless we want to specialise in some particular branch of learning which is only taught elsewhere, and then we learn another language and go to Munich or Madrid or Moscow. But the people of the thirteenth or fourteenth century rarely talked of themselves as Englishmen or Frenchmen or Italians. They said, "I am a citizen of Sheffield or Bordeaux or Genoa." Because they all belonged to one and the same church they felt a certain bond of brotherhood. And as all educated men could speak Latin, they possessed an international language which removed the stupid language barriers which have grown up in modern Europe and which place the small nations at such an enormous disadvantage. Just as an example, take the case of Erasmus, the great preacher of tolerance and laughter, who wrote his books in the sixteenth century. He was the native of a small Dutch village. He wrote in Latin and all the world was his audience. If he were alive to-day, he would write in Dutch. Then only five or six million people would be able to read him. To be understood by the rest of Europe and America, his publishers would be obliged to translate his books into twenty different languages. That would cost a lot of money and most likely the publishers would never take the trouble or the risk.

Six hundred years ago that could not happen. The greater part of the people were still very ignorant and could not read or write at all. But those who had mastered the difficult art of handling the goose-quill belonged to an international republic of letters which spread across the entire continent and which knew of no boundaries and respected no limitations of language or nationality. The universities were the strongholds of this republic. Unlike modern fortifications, they did not follow the frontier. They were to be found wherever a teacher and a few pupils happened to find themselves together. There again the Middle Ages and the Renaissance differed from our own time. Nowadays, when a new university is built, the process (almost invariably) is as follows: Some rich man wants to do something for the community in which he lives or a particular religious sect wants to build a school to keep its faithful children under decent supervision, or a state needs doctors and lawyers and teachers. The university begins as a large sum of money which is deposited in a bank. This money is then used to construct buildings and laboratories and dormitories. Finally professional teachers are hired, entrance examinations are held and the university is on the way.

But in the Middle Ages things were done differently. A wise man said to himself, "I have discovered a great truth. I must impart my knowledge to others." And he began to preach his wisdom wherever and whenever he could get a few people to listen to him, like a modern soap-box orator. If he was an interesting speaker, the crowd came and stayed. If he was dull, they shrugged their shoulders and continued their way.

By and by certain young men began to come regularly to hear the words of wisdom of this great teacher. They brought copybooks with them and a little bottle of ink and a goose quill and wrote down what seemed to be important. One day it rained. The teacher and his pupils retired to an empty basement or the room of the "Professor." The learned man sat in his chair and the boys sat on the floor. That was the beginning of the University, the "universitas," a corporation of professors and students during the Middle Ages, when the "teacher" counted for everything and the building in which he taught counted for very little.

As an example, let me tell you of something that happened in the ninth century. In the town of Salerno near Naples there were a number of excellent physicians. They attracted people desirous of learning the medical profession and for almost a thousand years (until 1817) there was a university of Salerno which taught the wisdom of Hippocrates, the great Greek doctor who had practiced his art in ancient Hellas in the fifth century before the birth of Christ.

Then there was Abelard, the young priest from Brittany, who early in the twelfth century began to lecture on theology and logic in Paris. Thousands of eager young men flocked to the French city to hear him. Other priests who disagreed with him stepped forward to explain their point of view. Paris was soon filled with a clamouring multitude of Englishmen and Germans and Italians and students from Sweden and Hungary and around the old cathedral which stood on a little island

in the Seine there grew the famous University of Paris. In Bologna in Italy, a monk by the name of Gratian had compiled a text-book for those whose business it was to know the laws of the church. Young priests and many laymen then came from all over Europe to hear Gratian explain his ideas. To protect themselves against the landlords and the innkeepers and the boarding-house ladies of the city, they formed a corporation (or University) and behold the beginning of the university of Bologna.

Next there was a quarrel in the University of Paris. We do not know what caused it, but a number of disgruntled teachers together with their pupils crossed the channel and found a hospitable home in a little village on the Thames called Oxford, and in this way the famous University of Oxford came into being. In the same way, in the year 1222, there had been a split in the University of Bologna. The discontented teachers (again followed by their pupils) had moved to Padua and their proud city thenceforward boasted of a university of its own. And so it went from Valladolid in Spain to Cracow in distant Poland and from Poitiers in France to Rostock in Germany.

It is quite true that much of the teaching done by these early professors would sound absurd to our ears, trained to listen to logarithms and geometrical theorems. The point however, which I want to make is this--the Middle Ages and especially the thirteenth century were not a time when the world stood entirely still. Among the younger generation, there was life, there was enthusiasm, and there was a restless if somewhat bashful asking of questions. And out of this turmoil grew the Renaissance.

But just before the curtain went down upon the last scene of the Mediaeval world, a solitary figure crossed the stage, of whom you ought to know more than his mere name. This man was called Dante. He was the son of a Florentine lawyer who belonged to the Alighieri family and he saw the light of day in the year 1265. He grew up in the city of his ancestors while Giotto was painting his stories of the life of St. Francis of Assisi upon the walls of the Church of the Holy Cross, but often when he went to school, his frightened eyes would see the puddles of blood which told of the terrible and endless warfare that raged forever between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, the followers of the Pope and the adherents of the Emperors.

When he grew up, he became a Guelph, because his father had been one before him, just as an American boy might become a Democrat or a Republican, simply because his father had happened to be a Democrat or a Republican. But after a few years, Dante saw that Italy, unless united under a single head, threatened to perish as a victim of the disordered jealousies of a thousand little cities. Then he became a Ghibelline.

He looked for help beyond the Alps. He hoped that a mighty emperor might come and re-establish unity and order. Alas! he hoped in vain. The Ghibellines were driven out of Florence in the year 1302. From that time on until the day of his death amidst the dreary ruins of Ravenna, in the year 1321, Dante was a homeless wanderer, eating the bread of charity at the table of rich patrons whose names would have sunk into the deepest pit of oblivion but for this single fact, that they had been kind to a poet in his misery. During the many years of exile, Dante felt compelled to justify himself and his actions when he had been a political leader in his home-town, and when he had spent his days walking along the banks of the Arno that he might catch a glimpse of the lovely Beatrice Portinari, who died the wife of another man, a dozen years before the Ghibelline disaster.

He had failed in the ambitions of his career. He had faithfully served the town of his birth and before a corrupt court he had been accused of stealing the public funds and had been condemned to be burned alive should he venture back within the realm of the city of Florence. To clear himself before his own conscience and before his contemporaries, Dante then created an Imaginary World and with great detail he described the circumstances which had led to his defeat and

depicted the hopeless condition of greed and lust and hatred which had turned his fair and beloved Italy into a battlefield for the pitiless mercenaries of wicked and selfish tyrants.

He tells us how on the Thursday before Easter of the year 1300 he had lost his way in a dense forest and how he found his path barred by a leopard and a lion and a wolf. He gave himself up for lost when a white figure appeared amidst the trees. It was Virgil, the Roman poet and philosopher, sent upon his errand of mercy by the Blessed Virgin and by Beatrice, who from high Heaven watched over the fate of her true lover. Virgil then takes Dante through Purgatory and through Hell. Deeper and deeper the path leads them until they reach the lowest pit where Lucifer himself stands frozen into the eternal ice surrounded by the most terrible of sinners, traitors and liars and those who have achieved fame and success by lies and by deceit. But before the two wanderers have reached this terrible spot, Dante has met all those who in some way or other have played a role in the history of his beloved city. Emperors and Popes, dashing knights and whining usurers, they are all there, doomed to eternal punishment or awaiting the day of deliverance, when they shall leave Purgatory for Heaven.

It is a curious story. It is a handbook of everything the people of the thirteenth century did and felt and feared and prayed for. Through it all moves the figure of the lonely Florentine exile, forever followed by the shadow of his own despair.

And behold! when the gates of death were closing upon the sad poet of the Middle Ages, the portals of life swung open to the child who was to be the first of the men of the Renaissance. That was Francesco Petrarca, the son of the notary public of the little town of Arezzo.

Francesco's father had belonged to the same political party as Dante. He too had been exiled and thus it happened that Petrarca (or Petrarch, as we call him) was born away from Florence. At the age of fifteen he was sent to Montpellier in France that he might become a lawyer like his father. But the boy did not want to be a jurist. He hated the law. He wanted to be a scholar and a poet--and because he wanted to be a scholar and a poet beyond everything else, he became one, as people of a strong will are apt to do. He made long voyages, copying manuscripts in Flanders and in the cloisters along the Rhine and in Paris and Liege and finally in Rome. Then he went to live in a lonely valley of the wild mountains of Vaucluse, and there he studied and wrote and soon he had become so famous for his verse and for his learning that both the University of Paris and the king of Naples invited him to come and teach their students and subjects. On the way to his new job, he was obliged to pass through Rome. The people had heard of his fame as an editor of half-forgotten Roman authors. They decided to honour him and in the ancient forum of the Imperial City, Petrarch was crowned with the laurel wreath of the Poet.

From that moment on, his life was an endless career of honour and appreciation. He wrote the things which people wanted most to hear. They were tired of theological disputations. Poor Dante could wander through hell as much as he wanted. But Petrarch wrote of love and of nature and the sun and never mentioned those gloomy things which seemed to have been the stock in trade of the last generation. And when Petrarch came to a city, all the people flocked out to meet him and he was received like a conquering hero. If he happened to bring his young friend Boccaccio, the story teller, with him, so much the better. They were both men of their time, full of curiosity, willing to read everything once, digging in forgotten and musty libraries that they might find still another manuscript of Virgil or Ovid or Lucrece or any of the other old Latin poets. They were good Christians. Of course they were! Everyone was. But no need of going around with a long face and wearing a dirty coat just because some day or other you were going to die. Life was good. People were meant to be happy. You desired proof of this? Very well. Take a spade and dig into the soil. What did you find? Beautiful old statues. Beautiful old vases. Ruins of ancient buildings. All these things were made by the people of the greatest empire that ever existed. They ruled all the world for a thousand years. They were strong and rich and handsome (just look at that bust of the Emperor Augustus!). Of course, they were not Christians and they would never

be able to enter Heaven. At best they would spend their days in purgatory, where Dante had just paid them a visit.

But who cared? To have lived in a world like that of ancient Rome was heaven enough for any mortal being. And anyway, we live but once. Let us be happy and cheerful for the mere joy of existence.

Such, in short, was the spirit that had begun to fill the narrow and crooked streets of the many little Italian cities.

You know what we mean by the "bicycle craze" or the "automobile craze." Some one invents a bicycle. People who for hundreds of thousands of years have moved slowly and painfully from one place to another go "crazy" over the prospect of rolling rapidly and easily over hill and dale. Then a clever mechanic makes the first automobile. No longer is it necessary to pedal and pedal and pedal. You just sit and let little drops of gasoline do the work for you. Then everybody wants an automobile. Everybody talks about Rolls-Royces and Flivvers and carburetors and mileage and oil. Explorers penetrate into the hearts of unknown countries that they may find new supplies of gas. Forests arise in Sumatra and in the Congo to supply us with rubber. Rubber and oil become so valuable that people fight wars for their possession. The whole world is "automobile mad" and little children can say "car" before they learn to whisper "papa" and "mamma."

In the fourteenth century, the Italian people went crazy about the newly discovered beauties of the buried world of Rome. Soon their enthusiasm was shared by all the people of western Europe. The finding of an unknown manuscript became the excuse for a civic holiday. The man who wrote a grammar became as popular as the fellow who nowadays invents a new spark-plug. The humanist, the scholar who devoted his time and his energies to a study of "homo" or mankind (instead of wasting his hours upon fruitless theological investigations), that man was regarded with greater honour and a deeper respect than was ever bestowed upon a hero who had just conquered all the Cannibal Islands.

In the midst of this intellectual upheaval, an event occurred which greatly favoured the study of the ancient philosophers and authors. The Turks were renewing their attacks upon Europe. Constantinople, capital of the last remnant of the original Roman Empire, was hard pressed. In the year 1393 the Emperor, Manuel Paleologue, sent Emmanuel Chrysoloras to western Europe to explain the desperate state of old Byzantium and to ask for aid. This aid never came. The Roman Catholic world was more than willing to see the Greek Catholic world go to the punishment that awaited such wicked heretics. But however indifferent western Europe might be to the fate of the Byzantines, they were greatly interested in the ancient Greeks whose colonists had founded the city on the Bosphorus ten centuries after the Trojan war. They wanted to learn Greek that they might read Aristotle and Homer and Plato. They wanted to learn it very badly, but they had no books and no grammars and no teachers. The magistrates of Florence heard of the visit of Chrysoloras. The people of their city were "crazy to learn Greek." Would he please come and teach them? He would, and behold! the first professor of Greek teaching alpha, beta, gamma to hundreds of eager young men, begging their way to the city of the Arno, living in stables and in dingy attics that they might learn how to decline the verb <gr paidenw paideneis paidenei> and enter into the companionship of Sophocles and Homer.

Meanwhile in the universities, the old schoolmen, teaching their ancient theology and their antiquated logic; explaining the hidden mysteries of the old Testament and discussing the strange science of their Greek-Arabic-Spanish-Latin edition of Aristotle, looked on in dismay and horror. Next, they turned angry. This thing was going too far. The young men were deserting the lecture halls of the established universities to go and listen to some wild-eyed "humanist" with his newfangled notions about a "reborn civilization."

They went to the authorities. They complained. But one cannot force an unwilling horse to drink and one cannot make unwilling ears listen to something which does not really interest them. The schoolmen were losing ground rapidly. Here and there they scored a short victory. They combined forces with those fanatics who hated to see other people enjoy a happiness which was foreign to their own souls. In Florence, the centre of the Great Rebirth, a terrible fight was fought between the old order and the new. A Dominican monk, sour of face and bitter in his hatred of beauty, was the leader of the mediaeval rear-guard. He fought a valiant battle. Day after day he thundered his warnings of God's holy wrath through the wide halls of Santa Maria del Fiore. "Repent," he cried, "repent of your godlessness, of your joy in things that are not holy!" He began to hear voices and to see flaming swords that flashed through the sky. He preached to the little children that they might not fall into the errors of these ways which were leading their fathers to perdition. He organised companies of boy-scouts, devoted to the service of the great God whose prophet he claimed to be. In a sudden moment of frenzy, the frightened people promised to do penance for their wicked love of beauty and pleasure. They carried their books and their statues and their paintings to the market place and celebrated a wild "carnival of the vanities" with holy singing and most unholy dancing, while Savonarola applied his torch to the accumulated treasures.

But when the ashes cooled down, the people began to realise what they had lost. This terrible fanatic had made them destroy that which they had come to love above all things. They turned against him, Savonarola was thrown into jail. He was tortured. But he refused to repent for anything he had done. He was an honest man. He had tried to live a holy life. He had willingly destroyed those who deliberately refused to share his own point of view. It had been his duty to eradicate evil wherever he found it. A love of heathenish books and heathenish beauty in the eyes of this faithful son of the Church, had been an evil. But he stood alone. He had fought the battle of a time that was dead and gone. The Pope in Rome never moved a finger to save him. On the contrary, he approved of his "faithful Florentines" when they dragged Savonarola to the gallows, hanged him and burned his body amidst the cheerful howling and yelling of the mob.

It was a sad ending, but quite inevitable. Savonarola would have been a great man in the eleventh century. In the fifteenth century he was merely the leader of a lost cause. For better or worse, the Middle Ages had come to an end when the Pope had turned humanist and when the Vatican became the most important museum of Roman and Greek antiquities.

THE AGE OF EXPRESSION

THE PEOPLE BEGAN TO FEEL THE NEED OF GIVING EXPRESSION TO THEIR NEWLY DISCOVERED JOY OF LIVING. THEY EXPRESSED THEIR HAPPINESS IN POETRY AND IN SCULPTURE AND IN ARCHITECTURE AND IN PAINTING AND IN THE BOOKS THEY PRINTED

IN the year 1471 there died a pious old man who had spent seventy-two of his ninety-one years behind the sheltering walls of the cloister of Mount St. Agnes near the good town of Zwolle, the old Dutch Hanseatic city on the river Ysel. He was known as Brother Thomas and because he had been born in the village of Kempen, he was called Thomas a Kempis. At the age of twelve he had been sent to Deventer, where Gerhard Groot, a brilliant graduate of the universities of Paris, Cologne and Prague, and famous as a wandering preacher, had founded the Society of the Brothers of the Common Life. The good brothers were humble laymen who tried to live the simple life of the early Apostles of Christ while working at their regular jobs as carpenters and house-painters and stone masons. They maintained an excellent school, that deserving boys of poor parents might be taught the wisdom of the Fathers of the church. At this school, little Thomas had learned how to conjugate Latin verbs and how to copy manuscripts. Then he had taken his vows, had put his little bundle of books upon his back, had wandered to Zwolle and with a sigh of relief he had closed the door upon a turbulent world which did not attract him.

Thomas lived in an age of turmoil, pestilence and sudden death. In central Europe, in Bohemia, the devoted disciples of Johannus Huss, the friend and follower of John Wycliffe, the English reformer, were avenging with a terrible warfare the death of their beloved leader who had been burned at the stake by order of that same Council of Constance, which had promised him a safe-conduct if he would come to Switzerland and explain his doctrines to the Pope, the Emperor, twenty-three cardinals, thirty-three archbishops and bishops, one hundred and fifty abbots and more than a hundred princes and dukes who had gathered together to reform their church.

In the west, France had been fighting for a hundred years that she might drive the English from her territories and just then was saved from utter defeat by the fortunate appearance of Joan of Arc. And no sooner had this struggle come to an end than France and Burgundy were at each other's throats, engaged upon a struggle of life and death for the supremacy of western Europe.

In the south, a Pope at Rome was calling the curses of Heaven down upon a second Pope who resided at Avignon, in southern France, and who retaliated in kind. In the far east the Turks were destroying the last remnants of the Roman Empire and the Russians had started upon a final crusade to crush the power of their Tartar masters.

But of all this, Brother Thomas in his quiet cell never heard. He had his manuscripts and his own thoughts and he was contented. He poured his love of God into a little volume. He called it the Imitation of Christ. It has since been translated into more languages than any other book save the Bible. It has been read by quite as many people as ever studied the Holy Scriptures. It has influenced the lives of countless millions. And it was the work of a man whose highest ideal of existence was expressed in the simple wish that "he might quietly spend his days sitting in a little corner with a little book."

Good Brother Thomas represented the purest ideals of the Middle Ages. Surrounded on all sides by the forces of the victorious Renaissance, with the humanists loudly proclaiming the coming of modern times, the Middle Ages gathered strength for a last sally. Monasteries were reformed. Monks gave up the habits of riches and vice. Simple, straightforward and honest men, by the example of their blameless and devout lives, tried to bring the people back to the ways of righteousness and humble resignation to the will of God. But all to no avail. The new world rushed past these good people. The days of quiet meditation were gone. The great era of "expression" had begun.

Here and now let me say that I am sorry that I must use so many "big words." I wish that I could write this history in words of one syllable. But it cannot be done. You cannot write a text-book of geometry without reference to a hypotenuse and triangles and a rectangular parallelopiped. You simply have to learn what those words mean or do without mathematics. In history (and in all life) you will eventually be obliged to learn the meaning of many strange words of Latin and Greek origin. Why not do it now?

When I say that the Renaissance was an era of expression, I mean this: People were no longer contented to be the audience and sit still while the emperor and the pope told them what to do and what to think. They wanted to be actors upon the stage of life. They insisted upon giving "expression" to their own individual ideas. If a man happened to be interested in statesmanship like the Florentine historian, Niccolo Macchiavelli, then he "expressed" himself in his books which revealed his own idea of a successful state and an efficient ruler. If on the other hand he had a liking for painting, he "expressed" his love for beautiful lines and lovely colours in the pictures which have made the names of Giotto, Fra Angelico, Rafael and a thousand others household words wherever people have learned to care for those things which express a true and lasting beauty.

If this love for colour and line happened to be combined with an interest in mechanics and hydraulics, the result was a Leonardo da Vinci, who painted his pictures, experimented with his balloons and flying machines, drained the marshes of the Lombardian plains and “expressed” his joy and interest in all things between Heaven and Earth in prose, in painting, in sculpture and in curiously conceived engines. When a man of gigantic strength, like Michael Angelo, found the brush and the palette too soft for his strong hands, he turned to sculpture and to architecture, and hacked the most terrific creatures out of heavy blocks of marble and drew the plans for the church of St. Peter, the most concrete “expression” of the glories of the triumphant church. And so it went.

All Italy (and very soon all of Europe) was filled with men and women who lived that they might add their mite to the sum total of our accumulated treasures of knowledge and beauty and wisdom. In Germany, in the city of Mainz, Johann zum Gansefleisch, commonly known as Johann Gutenberg, had just invented a new method of copying books. He had studied the old woodcuts and had perfected a system by which individual letters of soft lead could be placed in such a way that they formed words and whole pages. It is true, he soon lost all his money in a law-suit which had to do with the original invention of the press. He died in poverty, but the “expression” of his particular inventive genius lived after him.

Soon Aldus in Venice and Etienne in Paris and Plantin in Antwerp and Froben in Basel were flooding the world with carefully edited editions of the classics printed in the Gothic letters of the Gutenberg Bible, or printed in the Italian type which we use in this book, or printed in Greek letters, or in Hebrew.

Then the whole world became the eager audience of those who had something to say. The day when learning had been a monopoly of a privileged few came to an end. And the last excuse for ignorance was removed from this world, when Elzevier of Haarlem began to print his cheap and popular editions. Then Aristotle and Plato, Virgil and Horace and Pliny, all the goodly company of the ancient authors and philosophers and scientists, offered to become man’s faithful friend in exchange for a few paltry pennies. Humanism had made all men free and equal before the printed word.

THE GREAT DISCOVERIES

BUT NOW THAT PEOPLE HAD BROKEN THROUGH THE BONDS OF THEIR NARROW MEDIAEVAL LIMITATIONS, THEY HAD TO HAVE MORE ROOM FOR THEIR WANDERINGS. THE EUROPEAN WORLD HAD GROWN TOO SMALL FOR THEIR AMBITIONS. IT WAS THE TIME OF THE GREAT VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY

THE Crusades had been a lesson in the liberal art of travelling. But very few people had ever ventured beyond the well-known beaten track which led from Venice to Jaffe. In the thirteenth century the Polo brothers, merchants of Venice, had wandered across the great Mongolian desert and after climbing mountains as high as the moon, they had found their way to the court of the great Khan of Cathay, the mighty emperor of China. The son of one of the Polos, by the name of Marco, had written a book about their adventures, which covered a period of more than twenty years. The astonished world had gaped at his descriptions of the golden towers of the strange island of Zipangu, which was his Italian way of spelling Japan. Many people had wanted to go east, that they might find this gold-land and grow rich. But the trip was too far and too dangerous and so they stayed at home.

Of course, there was always the possibility of making the voyage by sea. But the sea was very unpopular in the Middle Ages and for many very good reasons. In the first place, ships were very small. The vessels on which Magellan made his famous trip around the world, which lasted many years, were not as large as a modern ferryboat. They carried from twenty to fifty men, who lived

in dingy quarters (too low to allow any of them to stand up straight) and the sailors were obliged to eat poorly cooked food as the kitchen arrangements were very bad and no fire could be made whenever the weather was the least bit rough. The mediaeval world knew how to pickle herring and how to dry fish. But there were no canned goods and fresh vegetables were never seen on the bill of fare as soon as the coast had been left behind. Water was carried in small barrels. It soon became stale and then tasted of rotten wood and iron rust and was full of slimy growing things. As the people of the Middle Ages knew nothing about microbes (Roger Bacon, the learned monk of the thirteenth century seems to have suspected their existence, but he wisely kept his discovery to himself) they often drank unclean water and sometimes the whole crew died of typhoid fever. Indeed the mortality on board the ships of the earliest navigators was terrible. Of the two hundred sailors who in the year 1519 left Seville to accompany Magellan on his famous voyage around the world, only eighteen returned. As late as the seventeenth century when there was a brisk trade between western Europe and the Indies, a mortality of 40 percent was nothing unusual for a trip from Amsterdam to Batavia and back. The greater part of these victims died of scurvy, a disease which is caused by lack of fresh vegetables and which affects the gums and poisons the blood until the patient dies of sheer exhaustion.

Under those circumstances you will understand that the sea did not attract the best elements of the population. Famous discoverers like Magellan and Columbus and Vasco da Gama travelled at the head of crews that were almost entirely composed of ex-jailbirds, future murderers and pickpockets out of a Job.

These navigators certainly deserve our admiration for the courage and the pluck with which they accomplished their hopeless tasks in the face of difficulties of which the people of our own comfortable world can have no conception. Their ships were leaky. The rigging was clumsy. Since the middle of the thirteenth century they had possessed some sort of a compass (which had come to Europe from China by way of Arabia and the Crusades) but they had very bad and incorrect maps. They set their course by God and by guess. If luck was with them they returned after one or two or three years. In the other case, their bleached bones remained behind on some lonely beach. But they were true pioneers. They gambled with luck. Life to them was a glorious adventure. And all the suffering, the thirst and the hunger and the pain were forgotten when their eyes beheld the dim outlines of a new coast or the placid waters of an ocean that had lain forgotten since the beginning of time.

Again I wish that I could make this book a thousand pages long. The subject of the early discoveries is so fascinating. But history, to give you a true idea of past times, should be like those etchings which Rembrandt used to make. It should cast a vivid light on certain important causes, on those which are best and greatest. All the rest should be left in the shadow or should be indicated by a few lines. And in this chapter I can only give you a short list of the most important discoveries.

Keep in mind that all during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the navigators were trying to accomplish just ONE THING—they wanted to find a comfortable and safe road to the empire of Cathay (China), to the island of Zipangu (Japan) and to those mysterious islands, where grew the spices which the mediaeval world had come to like since the days of the Crusades, and which people needed in those days before the introduction of cold storage, when meat and fish spoiled very quickly and could only be eaten after a liberal sprinkling of pepper or nutmeg.

The Venetians and the Genoese had been the great navigators of the Mediterranean, but the honour for exploring the coast of the Atlantic goes to the Portuguese. Spain and Portugal were full of that patriotic energy which their age-old struggle against the Moorish invaders had developed. Such energy, once it exists, can easily be forced into new channels. In the thirteenth century, King Alphonso III had conquered the kingdom of Algarve in the southwestern corner of the Spanish peninsula and had added it to his dominions. In the next century, the Portuguese had turned the tables on the Mohammedans, had crossed the straits of Gibraltar and had taken possession of

Ceuta, opposite the Arabic city of Ta'Rifa (a word which in Arabic means "inventory" and which by way of the Spanish language has come down to us as "tariff,") and Tangiers, which became the capital of an African addition to Algarve.

They were ready to begin their career as explorers.

In the year 1415, Prince Henry, known as Henry the Navigator, the son of John I of Portugal and Philippa, the daughter of John of Gaunt (about whom you can read in Richard II, a play by William Shakespeare) began to make preparations for the systematic exploration of northwestern Africa. Before this, that hot and sandy coast had been visited by the Phoenicians and by the Norsemen, who remembered it as the home of the hairy "wild man" whom we have come to know as the gorilla. One after another, Prince Henry and his captains discovered the Canary Islands--re-discovered the island of Madeira which a century before had been visited by a Genoese ship, carefully charted the Azores which had been vaguely known to both the Portuguese and the Spaniards, and caught a glimpse of the mouth of the Senegal River on the west coast of Africa, which they supposed to be the western mouth of the Nile. At last, by the middle of the Fifteenth Century, they saw Cape Verde, or the Green Cape, and the Cape Verde Islands, which lie almost halfway between the coast of Africa and Brazil.

But Henry did not restrict himself in his investigations to the waters of the Ocean. He was Grand Master of the Order of Christ. This was a Portuguese continuation of the crusading order of the Templars which had been abolished by Pope Clement V in the year 1312 at the request of King Philip the Fair of France, who had improved the occasion by burning his own Templars at the stake and stealing all their possessions. Prince Henry used the revenues of the domains of his religious order to equip several expeditions which explored the hinterland of the Sahara and of the coast of Guinea.

But he was still very much a son of the Middle Ages and spent a great deal of time and wasted a lot of money upon a search for the mysterious "Prester John," the mythical Christian Priest who was said to be the Emperor of a vast empire "situated somewhere in the east." The story of this strange potentate had first been told in Europe in the middle of the twelfth century. For three hundred years people had tried to find "Prester John" and his descendants Henry took part in the search. Thirty years after his death, the riddle was solved.

In the year 1486 Bartholomew Diaz, trying to find the land of Prester John by sea, had reached the southernmost point of Africa. At first he called it the Storm Cape, on account of the strong winds which had prevented him from continuing his voyage toward the east, but the Lisbon pilots who understood the importance of this discovery in their quest for the India water route, changed the name into that of the Cape of Good Hope.

One year later, Pedro de Covilham, provided with letters of credit on the house of Medici, started upon a similar mission by land. He crossed the Mediterranean and after leaving Egypt, he travelled southward. He reached Aden, and from there, travelling through the waters of the Persian Gulf which few white men had seen since the days of Alexander the Great, eighteen centuries before, he visited Goa and Calicut on the coast of India where he got a great deal of news about the island of the Moon (Madagascar) which was supposed to lie halfway between Africa and India. Then he returned, paid a secret visit to Mecca and to Medina, crossed the Red Sea once more and in the year 1490 he discovered the realm of Prester John, who was no one less than the Black Negus (or King) of Abyssinia, whose ancestors had adopted Christianity in the fourth century, seven hundred years before the Christian missionaries had found their way to Scandinavia.

These many voyages had convinced the Portuguese geographers and cartographers that while the voyage to the Indies by an eastern sea-route was possible, it was by no means easy. Then there

arose a great debate. Some people wanted to continue the explorations east of the Cape of Good Hope. Others said, "No, we must sail west across the Atlantic and then we shall reach Cathay."

Let us state right here that most intelligent people of that day were firmly convinced that the earth was not as flat as a pancake but was round. The Ptolemean system of the universe, invented and duly described by Claudius Ptolemy, the great Egyptian geographer, who had lived in the second century of our era, which had served the simple needs of the men of the Middle Ages, had long been discarded by the scientists of the Renaissance. They had accepted the doctrine of the Polish mathematician, Nicolaus Copernicus, whose studies had convinced him that the earth was one of a number of round planets which turned around the sun, a discovery which he did not venture to publish for thirty-six years (it was printed in 1548, the year of his death) from fear of the Holy Inquisition, a Papal court which had been established in the thirteenth century when the heresies of the Albigenses and the Waldenses in France and in Italy (very mild heresies of devoutly pious people who did not believe in private property and preferred to live in Christ-like poverty) had for a moment threatened the absolute power of the bishops of Rome. But the belief in the roundness of the earth was common among the nautical experts and, as I said, they were now debating the respective advantages of the eastern and the western routes.

Among the advocates of the western route was a Genoese mariner by the name of Cristoforo Colombo. He was the son of a wool merchant. He seems to have been a student at the University of Pavia where he specialised in mathematics and geometry. Then he took up his father's trade but soon we find him in Chios in the eastern Mediterranean travelling on business. Thereafter we hear of voyages to England but whether he went north in search of wool or as the captain of a ship we do not know. In February of the year 1477, Colombo (if we are to believe his own words) visited Iceland, but very likely he only got as far as the Faroe Islands which are cold enough in February to be mistaken for Iceland by any one. Here Colombo met the descendants of those brave Norsemen who in the tenth century had settled in Greenland and who had visited America in the eleventh century, when Leif's vessel had been blown to the coast of Vineland, or Labrador.

What had become of those far western colonies no one knew. The American colony of Thorfinn Karlsefne, the husband of the widow of Leif's brother Thorstein, founded in the year 1003, had been discontinued three years later on account of the hostility of the Esquimaux. As for Greenland, not a word had been heard from the settlers since the year 1440. Very likely the Greenlanders had all died of the Black Death, which had just killed half the people of Norway. However that might be, the tradition of a "vast land in the distant west" still survived among the people of the Faroe and Iceland, and Colombo must have heard of it. He gathered further information among the fishermen of the northern Scottish islands and then went to Portugal where he married the daughter of one of the captains who had served under Prince Henry the Navigator.

From that moment on (the year 1478) he devoted himself to the quest of the western route to the Indies. He sent his plans for such a voyage to the courts of Portugal and Spain. The Portuguese, who felt certain that they possessed a monopoly of the eastern route, would not listen to his plans. In Spain, Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, whose marriage in 1469 had made Spain into a single kingdom, were busy driving the Moors from their last stronghold, Granada. They had no money for risky expeditions. They needed every peseta for their soldiers.

Few people were ever forced to fight as desperately for their ideas as this brave Italian. But the story of Colombo (or Colon or Columbus, as we call him,) is too well known to bear repeating. The Moors surrendered Granada on the second of January of the year 1492. In the month of April of the same year, Columbus signed a contract with the King and Queen of Spain. On Friday, the 3rd of August, he left Palos with three little ships and a crew of 88 men, many of whom were criminals who had been offered indemnity of punishment if they joined the expedition. At two o'clock in the morning of Friday, the 12th of October, Columbus discovered land. On the fourth of January of the year 1493, Columbus waved farewell to the 44 men of the little fortress of La Navidad (none of whom was ever again seen alive) and returned homeward. By the middle of

February he reached the Azores where the Portuguese threatened to throw him into gaol. On the fifteenth of March, 1493, the admiral reached Palos and together with his Indians (for he was convinced that he had discovered some outlying islands of the Indies and called the natives red Indians) he hastened to Barcelona to tell his faithful patrons that he had been successful and that the road to the gold and the silver of Cathay and Zipangu was at the disposal of their most Catholic Majesties.

Alas, Columbus never knew the truth. Towards the end of his life, on his fourth voyage, when he had touched the mainland of South America, he may have suspected that all was not well with his discovery. But he died in the firm belief that there was no solid continent between Europe and Asia and that he had found the direct route to China.

Meanwhile, the Portuguese, sticking to their eastern route, had been more fortunate. In the year 1498, Vasco da Gama had been able to reach the coast of Malabar and return safely to Lisbon with a cargo of spice. In the year 1502 he had repeated the visit. But along the western route, the work of exploration had been most disappointing. In 1497 and 1498 John and Sebastian Cabot had tried to find a passage to Japan but they had seen nothing but the snowbound coasts and the rocks of Newfoundland, which had first been sighted by the Northmen, five centuries before. Amerigo Vespucci, a Florentine who became the Pilot Major of Spain, and who gave his name to our continent, had explored the coast of Brazil, but had found not a trace of the Indies.

In the year 1513, seven years after the death of Columbus, the truth at last began to dawn upon the geographers of Europe. Vasco Nunez de Balboa had crossed the Isthmus of Panama, had climbed the famous peak in Darien, and had looked down upon a vast expanse of water which seemed to suggest the existence of another ocean.

Finally in the year 1519 a fleet of five small Spanish ships under command of the Portuguese navigator, Ferdinand de Magellan, sailed westward (and not eastward since that route, was absolutely in the hands of the Portuguese who allowed no competition) in search of the Spice Islands. Magellan crossed the Atlantic between Africa and Brazil and sailed southward. He reached a narrow channel between the southernmost point of Patagonia, the "land of the people with the big feet," and the Fire Island (so named on account of a fire, the only sign of the existence of natives, which the sailors watched one night). For almost five weeks the ships of Magellan were at the mercy of the terrible storms and blizzards which swept through the straits. A mutiny broke out among the sailors. Magellan suppressed it with terrible severity and sent two of his men on shore where they were left to repent of their sins at leisure. At last the storms quieted down, the channel broadened, and Magellan entered a new ocean. Its waves were quiet and placid. He called it the Peaceful Sea, the Mare Pacifico. Then he continued in a western direction. He sailed for ninety-eight days without seeing land. His people almost perished from hunger and thirst and ate the rats that infested the ships, and when these were all gone they chewed pieces of sail to still their gnawing hunger.

In March of the year 1521 they saw land. Magellan called it the land of the Ladrones (which means robbers) because the natives stole everything they could lay hands on. Then further westward to the Spice Islands!

Again land was sighted. A group of lonely islands. Magellan called them the Philippines, after Philip, the son of his master Charles V, the Philip II of unpleasant historical memory. At first Magellan was well received, but when he used the guns of his ships to make Christian converts he was killed by the aborigines, together with a number of his captains and sailors. The survivors burned one of the three remaining ships and continued their voyage. They found the Moluccas, the famous Spice Islands; they sighted Borneo and reached Tidore. There, one of the two ships, too leaky to be of further use, remained behind with her crew. The "Vittoria," under Sebastian del Cano, crossed the Indian Ocean, missed seeing the northern coast of Australia (which was not

discovered until the first half of the seventeenth century when ships of the Dutch East India Company explored this flat and inhospitable land), and after great hardships reached Spain.

This was the most notable of all voyages. It had taken three years. It had been accomplished at a great cost both of men and money. But it had established the fact that the earth was round and that the new lands discovered by Columbus were not a part of the Indies but a separate continent. From that time on, Spain and Portugal devoted all their energies to the development of their Indian and American trade. To prevent an armed conflict between the rivals, Pope Alexander VI (the only avowed heathen who was ever elected to this most holy office) had obligingly divided the world into two equal parts by a line of demarcation which followed the 50th degree of longitude west of Greenwich, the so-called division of Tordesillas of 1494. The Portuguese were to establish their colonies to the east of this line, the Spaniards were to have theirs to the west. This accounts for the fact that the entire American continent with the exception of Brazil became Spanish and that all of the Indies and most of Africa became Portuguese until the English and the Dutch colonists (who had no respect for Papal decisions) took these possessions away in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

When news of the discovery of Columbus reached the Rialto of Venice, the Wall street of the Middle Ages, there was a terrible panic. Stocks and bonds went down 40 and 50 percent. After a short while, when it appeared that Columbus had failed to find the road to Cathay, the Venetian merchants recovered from their fright. But the voyages of da Gama and Magellan proved the practical possibilities of an eastern water- route to the Indies. Then the rulers of Genoa and Venice, the two great commercial centres of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, began to be sorry that they had refused to listen to Columbus. But it was too late. Their Mediterranean became an inland sea. The overland trade to the Indies and China dwindled to insignificant proportions. The old days of Italian glory were gone. The Atlantic became the new centre of commerce and therefore the centre of civilisation. It has remained so ever since.

See how strangely civilisation has progressed since those early days, fifty centuries before, when the inhabitants of the Valley of the Nile began to keep a written record of history, From the river Nile, it went to Mesopotamia, the land between the rivers. Then came the turn of Crete and Greece and Rome. An inland sea became the centre of trade and the cities along the Mediterranean were the home of art and science and philosophy and learning. In the sixteenth century it moved westward once more and made the countries that border upon the Atlantic become the masters of the earth.

There are those who say that the world war and the suicide of the great European nations has greatly diminished the importance of the Atlantic Ocean. They expect to see civilisation cross the American continent and find a new home in the Pacific. But I doubt this.

The westward trip was accompanied by a steady increase in the size of ships and a broadening of the knowledge of the navigators. The flat-bottomed vessels of the Nile and the Euphrates were replaced by the sailing vessels of the Phoenicians, the Aegeans, the Greeks, the Carthaginians and the Romans. These in turn were discarded for the square rigged vessels of the Portuguese and the Spaniards. And the latter were driven from the ocean by the full-rigged craft of the English and the Dutch.

At present, however, civilisation no longer depends upon ships. Aircraft has taken and will continue to take the place of the sailing vessel and the steamer. The next centre of civilisation will depend upon the development of aircraft and water power. And the sea once more shall be the undisturbed home of the little fishes, who once upon a time shared their deep residence with the earliest ancestors of the human race.

BUDDHA AND CONFUCIUS

CONCERNING BUDDHA AND CONFUCIUS

THE discoveries of the Portuguese and the Spaniards had brought the Christians of western Europe into close contact with the people of India and of China. They knew of course that Christianity was not the only religion on this earth. There were the Mohammedans and the heathenish tribes of northern Africa who worshipped sticks and stones and dead trees. But in India and in China the Christian conquerors found new millions who had never heard of Christ and who did not want to hear of Him, because they thought their own religion, which was thousands of years old, much better than that of the West. As this is a story of mankind and not an exclusive history of the people of Europe and our western hemisphere, you ought to know something of two men whose teaching and whose example continue to influence the actions and the thoughts of the majority of our fellow-travellers on this earth.

In India, Buddha was recognised as the great religious teacher. His history is an interesting one. He was born in the Sixth Century before the birth of Christ, within sight of the mighty Himalaya Mountains, where four hundred years before Zarathustra (or Zoroaster), the first of the great leaders of the Aryan race (the name which the Eastern branch of the Indo-European race had given to itself), had taught his people to regard life as a continuous struggle between Ahriman, and Ormuzd, the Gods of Evil and Good. Buddha's father was Suddhodana, a mighty chief among the tribe of the Sakiyas. His mother, Maha Maya, was the daughter of a neighbouring king. She had been married when she was a very young girl. But many moons had passed beyond the distant ridge of hills and still her husband was without an heir who should rule his lands after him. At last, when she was fifty years old, her day came and she went forth that she might be among her own people when her baby should come into this world.

It was a long trip to the land of the Koliyans, where Maha Maya had spent her earliest years. One night she was resting among the cool trees of the garden of Lumbini. There her son was born. He was given the name of Siddhartha, but we know him as Buddha, which means the Enlightened One.

In due time, Siddhartha grew up to be a handsome young prince and when he was nineteen years old, he was married to his cousin Yasodhara. During the next ten years he lived far away from all pain and all suffering, behind the protecting walls of the royal palace, awaiting the day when he should succeed his father as King of the Sakiyas.

But it happened that when he was thirty years old, he drove outside of the palace gates and saw a man who was old and worn out with labour and whose weak limbs could hardly carry the burden of life. Siddhartha pointed him out to his coachman, Channa, but Channa answered that there were lots of poor people in this world and that one more or less did not matter. The young prince was very sad but he did not say anything and went back to live with his wife and his father and his mother and tried to be happy. A little while later he left the palace a second time. His carriage met a man who suffered from a terrible disease. Siddhartha asked Channa what had been the cause of this man's suffering, but the coachman answered that there were many sick people in this world and that such things could not be helped and did not matter very much. The young prince was very sad when he heard this but again he returned to his people.

A few weeks passed. One evening Siddhartha ordered his carriage in order to go to the river and bathe. Suddenly his horses were frightened by the sight of a dead man whose rotting body lay sprawling in the ditch beside the road. The young prince, who had never been allowed to see such things, was frightened, but Channa told him not to mind such trifles. The world was full of dead people. It was the rule of life that all things must come to an end. Nothing was eternal. The grave awaited us all and there was no escape.

That evening, when Siddhartha returned to his home, he was received with music. While he was away his wife had given birth to a son. The people were delighted because now they knew that there was an heir to the throne and they celebrated the event by the beating of many drums. Siddhartha, however, did not share their joy. The curtain of life had been lifted and he had learned the horror of man's existence. The sight of death and suffering followed him like a terrible dream.

That night the moon was shining brightly. Siddhartha woke up and began to think of many things. Never again could he be happy until he should have found a solution to the riddle of existence. He decided to find it far away from all those whom he loved. Softly he went into the room where Yasodhara was sleeping with her baby. Then he called for his faithful Channa and told him to follow.

Together the two men went into the darkness of the night, one to find rest for his soul, the other to be a faithful servant unto a beloved master.

The people of India among whom Siddhartha wandered for many years were just then in a state of change. Their ancestors, the native Indians, had been conquered without great difficulty by the war-like Aryans (our distant cousins) and thereafter the Aryans had been the rulers and masters of tens of millions of docile little brown men. To maintain themselves in the seat of the mighty, they had divided the population into different classes and gradually a system of "caste" of the most rigid sort had been enforced upon the natives. The descendants of the Indo-European conquerors belonged to the highest "caste," the class of warriors and nobles. Next came the caste of the priests. Below these followed the peasants and the business men. The ancient natives, however, who were called Pariahs, formed a class of despised and miserable slaves and never could hope to be anything else.

Even the religion of the people was a matter of caste. The old Indo-Europeans, during their thousands of years of wandering, had met with many strange adventures. These had been collected in a book called the Veda. The language of this book was called Sanskrit, and it was closely related to the different languages of the European continent, to Greek and Latin and Russian and German and two-score others. The three highest castes were allowed to read these holy scriptures. The Pariah, however, the despised member of the lowest caste, was not permitted to know its contents. Woe to the man of noble or priestly caste who should teach a Pariah to study the sacred volume!

The majority of the Indian people, therefore, lived in misery. Since this planet offered them very little joy, salvation from suffering must be found elsewhere. They tried to derive a little consolation from meditation upon the bliss of their future existence.

Brahma, the all-creator who was regarded by the Indian people as the supreme ruler of life and death, was worshipped as the highest ideal of perfection. To become like Brahma, to lose all desires for riches and power, was recognised as the most exalted purpose of existence. Holy thoughts were regarded as more important than holy deeds, and many people went into the desert and lived upon the leaves of trees and starved their bodies that they might feed their souls with the glorious contemplation of the splendours of Brahma, the Wise, the Good and the Merciful.

Siddhartha, who had often observed these solitary wanderers who were seeking the truth far away from the turmoil of the cities and the villages, decided to follow their example. He cut his hair. He took his pearls and his rubies and sent them back to his family with a message of farewell, which the ever faithful Channa carried. Without a single follower, the young prince then moved into the wilderness.

Soon the fame of his holy conduct spread among the mountains. Five young men came to him and asked that they might be allowed to listen to his words of wisdom. He agreed to be their master if they would follow him. They consented, and he took them into the hills and for six years he taught them all he knew amidst the lonely peaks of the Vindhya Mountains. But at the end of this period of study, he felt that he was still far from perfection. The world that he had left continued to tempt him. He now asked that his pupils leave him and then he fasted for forty-nine days and nights, sitting upon the roots of an old tree. At last he received his reward. In the dusk of the fiftieth evening, Brahma revealed himself to his faithful servant. From that moment on, Siddhartha was called Buddha and he was revered as the Enlightened One who had come to save men from their unhappy mortal fate.

The last forty-five years of his life, Buddha spent within the valley of the Ganges River, teaching his simple lesson of submission and meekness unto all men. In the year 488 before our era, he died, full of years and beloved by millions of people. He had not preached his doctrines for the benefit of a single class. Even the lowest Pariah might call himself his disciple.

This, however, did not please the nobles and the priests and the merchants who did their best to destroy a creed which recognised the equality of all living creatures and offered men the hope of a second life (a reincarnation) under happier circumstances. As soon as they could, they encouraged the people of India to return to the ancient doctrines of the Brahmin creed with its fasting and its tortures of the sinful body. But Buddhism could not be destroyed. Slowly the disciples of the Enlightened One wandered across the valleys of the Himalayas, and moved into China. They crossed the Yellow Sea and preached the wisdom of their master unto the people of Japan, and they faithfully obeyed the will of their great master, who had forbidden them to use force. To-day more people recognise Buddha as their teacher than ever before and their number surpasses that of the combined followers of Christ and Mohammed.

As for Confucius, the wise old man of the Chinese, his story is a simple one. He was born in the year 550 B.C. He led a quiet, dignified and uneventful life at a time when China was without a strong central government and when the Chinese people were at the mercy of bandits and robber-barons who went from city to city, pillaging and stealing and murdering and turning the busy plains of northern and central China into a wilderness of starving people.

Confucius, who loved his people, tried to save them. He did not have much faith in the use of violence. He was a very peaceful person. He did not think that he could make people over by giving them a lot of new laws. He knew that the only possible salvation would come from a change of heart, and he set out upon the seemingly hopeless task of changing the character of his millions of fellow men who inhabited the wide plains of eastern Asia. The Chinese had never been much interested in religion as we understand that word. They believed in devils and spooks as most primitive people do. But they had no prophets and recognised no "revealed truth." Confucius is almost the only one among the great moral leaders who did not see visions, who did not proclaim himself as the messenger of a divine power; who did not, at some time or another, claim that he was inspired by voices from above.

He was just a very sensible and kindly man, rather given to lonely wanderings and melancholy tunes upon his faithful flute. He asked for no recognition. He did not demand that any one should follow him or worship him. He reminds us of the ancient Greek philosophers, especially those of the Stoic School, men who believed in right living and righteous thinking without the hope of a reward but simply for the peace of the soul that comes with a good conscience.

Confucius was a very tolerant man. He went out of his way to visit Lao-Tse, the other great Chinese leader and the founder of a philosophic system called "Taoism," which was merely an early Chinese version of the Golden Rule.

Confucius bore no hatred to any one. He taught the virtue of supreme self-possession. A person of real worth, according to the teaching of Confucius, did not allow himself to be ruffled by anger and suffered whatever fate brought him with the resignation of those sages who understand that everything which happens, in one way or another, is meant for the best.

At first he had only a few students. Gradually the number increased. Before his death, in the year 478 B.C., several of the kings and the princes of China confessed themselves his disciples. When Christ was born in Bethlehem, the philosophy of Confucius had already become a part of the mental make-up of most Chinamen. It has continued to influence their lives ever since. Not however in its pure, original form. Most religions change as time goes on. Christ preached humility and meekness and absence from worldly ambitions, but fifteen centuries after Golgotha, the head of the Christian church was spending millions upon the erection of a building that bore little relation to the lonely stable of Bethlehem.

Lao-Tse taught the Golden Rule, and in less than three centuries the ignorant masses had made him into a real and very cruel God and had buried his wise commandments under a rubbish-heap of superstition which made the lives of the average Chinese one long series of frights and fears and horrors.

Confucius had shown his students the beauties of honouring their Father and their Mother. They soon began to be more interested in the memory of their departed parents than in the happiness of their children and their grandchildren. Deliberately they turned their backs upon the future and tried to peer into the vast darkness of the past. The worship of the ancestors became a positive religious system. Rather than disturb a cemetery situated upon the sunny and fertile side of a mountain, they would plant their rice and wheat upon the barren rocks of the other slope where nothing could possibly grow. And they preferred hunger and famine to the desecration of the ancestral grave.

At the same time the wise words of Confucius never quite lost their hold upon the increasing millions of eastern Asia. Confucianism, with its profound sayings and shrewd observations, added a touch of common-sense philosophy to the soul of every Chinaman and influenced his entire life, whether he was a simple laundry man in a steaming basement or the ruler of vast provinces who dwelt behind the high walls of a secluded palace.

In the sixteenth century the enthusiastic but rather uncivilised Christians of the western world came face to face with the older creeds of the East. The early Spaniards and Portuguese looked upon the peaceful statues of Buddha and contemplated the venerable pictures of Confucius and did not in the least know what to make of those worthy prophets with their far-away smile. They came to the easy conclusion that these strange divinities were just plain devils who represented something idolatrous and heretical and did not deserve the respect of the true sons of the Church. Whenever the spirit of Buddha or Confucius seemed to interfere with the trade in spices and silks, the Europeans attacked the "evil influence" with bullets and grape-shot. That system had certain very definite disadvantages. It has left us an unpleasant heritage of ill-will which promises little good for the immediate future.

THE REFORMATION

THE PROGRESS OF THE HUMAN RACE IS BEST COMPARED TO A GIGANTIC PENDULUM WHICH FOREVER SWINGS FORWARD AND BACKWARD. THE RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE AND THE ARTISTIC AND LITERARY ENTHUSIASM OF THE RENAISSANCE WERE FOLLOWED BY THE ARTISTIC AND LITERARY INDIFFERENCE AND THE RELIGIOUS ENTHUSIASM OF THE REFORMATION

Of course you have heard of the Reformation. You think of a small but courageous group of pilgrims who crossed the ocean to have "freedom of religious worship." Vaguely in the course of time (and more especially in our Protestant countries) the Reformation has come to stand for the idea of "liberty of thought." Martin Luther is represented as the leader of the vanguard of progress. But when history is something more than a series of flattering speeches addressed to our own glorious ancestors, when to use the words of the German historian Ranke, we try to discover what "actually happened," then much of the past is seen in a very different light.

Few things in human life are either entirely good or entirely bad. Few things are either black or white. It is the duty of the honest chronicler to give a true account of all the good and bad sides of every historical event. It is very difficult to do this because we all have our personal likes and dislikes. But we ought to try and be as fair as we can be, and must not allow our prejudices to influence us too much.

Take my own case as an example. I grew up in the very Protestant centre of a very Protestant country. I never saw any Catholics until I was about twelve years old. Then I felt very uncomfortable when I met them. I was a little bit afraid. I knew the story of the many thousand people who had been burned and hanged and quartered by the Spanish Inquisition when the Duke of Alba tried to cure the Dutch people of their Lutheran and Calvinistic heresies. All that was very real to me. It seemed to have happened only the day before. It might occur again. There might be another Saint Bartholomew's night, and poor little me would be slaughtered in my nightie and my body would be thrown out of the window, as had happened to the noble Admiral de Coligny.

Much later I went to live for a number of years in a Catholic country. I found the people much pleasanter and much more tolerant and quite as intelligent as my former countrymen. To my great surprise, I began to discover that there was a Catholic side to the Reformation, quite as much as a Protestant.

Of course the good people of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, who actually lived through the Reformation, did not see things that way. They were always right and their enemy was always wrong. It was a question of hang or be hanged, and both sides preferred to do the hanging. Which was no more than human and for which they deserve no blame.

When we look at the world as it appeared in the year 1500, an easy date to remember, and the year in which the Emperor Charles V was born, this is what we see. The feudal disorder of the Middle Ages has given way before the order of a number of highly centralised kingdoms. The most powerful of all sovereigns is the great Charles, then a baby in a cradle. He is the grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella and of Maximilian of Habsburg, the last of the mediaeval knights, and of his wife Mary, the daughter of Charles the Bold, the ambitious Burgundian duke who had made successful war upon France but had been killed by the independent Swiss peasants. The child Charles, therefore, has fallen heir to the greater part of the map, to all the lands of his parents, grandparents, uncles, cousins and aunts in Germany, in Austria, in Holland, in Belgium, in Italy, and in Spain, together with all their colonies in Asia, Africa and America. By a strange irony of fate, he has been born in Ghent, in that same castle of the counts of Flanders, which the Germans used as a prison during their recent occupation of Belgium, and although a Spanish king and a German emperor, he receives the training of a Fleming.

As his father is dead (poisoned, so people say, but this is never proved), and his mother has lost her mind (she is travelling through her domains with the coffin containing the body of her departed husband), the child is left to the strict discipline of his Aunt Margaret. Forced to rule Germans and Italians and Spaniards and a hundred strange races, Charles grows up a Fleming, a faithful son of the Catholic Church, but quite averse to religious intolerance. He is rather lazy, both as a boy and as a man. But fate condemns him to rule the world when the world is in a turmoil of religious fervour. Forever he is speeding from Madrid to Innsbruck and from Bruges to

Vienna. He loves peace and quiet and he is always at war. At the age of fifty-five, we see him turn his back upon the human race in utter disgust at so much hate and so much stupidity. Three years later he dies, a very tired and disappointed man.

So much for Charles the Emperor. How about the Church, the second great power in the world? The Church has changed greatly since the early days of the Middle Ages, when it started out to conquer the heathen and show them the advantages of a pious and righteous life. In the first place, the Church has grown too rich. The Pope is no longer the shepherd of a flock of humble Christians. He lives in a vast palace and surrounds himself with artists and musicians and famous literary men. His churches and chapels are covered with new pictures in which the saints look more like Greek Gods than is strictly necessary. He divides his time unevenly between affairs of state and art. The affairs of state take ten percent of his time. The other ninety percent goes to an active interest in Roman statues, recently discovered Greek vases, plans for a new summer home, the rehearsal of a new play. The Archbishops and the Cardinals follow the example of their Pope. The Bishops try to imitate the Archbishops. The village priests, however, have remained faithful to their duties. They keep themselves aloof from the wicked world and the heathenish love of beauty and pleasure. They stay away from the monasteries where the monks seem to have forgotten their ancient vows of simplicity and poverty and live as happily as they dare without causing too much of a public scandal.

Finally, there are the common people. They are much better off than they have ever been before. They are more prosperous, they live in better houses, their children go to better schools, their cities are more beautiful than before, their firearms have made them the equal of their old enemies, the robber-barons, who for centuries have levied such heavy taxes upon their trade. So much for the chief actors in the Reformation.

Now let us see what the Renaissance has done to Europe, and then you will understand how the revival of learning and art was bound to be followed by a revival of religious interests. The Renaissance began in Italy. From there it spread to France. It was not quite successful in Spain, where five hundred years of warfare with the Moors had made the people very narrow minded and very fanatical in all religious matters. The circle had grown wider and wider, but once the Alps had been crossed, the Renaissance had suffered a change.

The people of northern Europe, living in a very different climate, had an outlook upon life which contrasted strangely with that of their southern neighbours. The Italians lived out in the open, under a sunny sky. It was easy for them to laugh and to sing and to be happy. The Germans, the Dutch, the English, the Swedes, spent most of their time indoors, listening to the rain beating on the closed windows of their comfortable little houses. They did not laugh quite so much. They took everything more seriously. They were forever conscious of their immortal souls and they did not like to be funny about matters which they considered holy and sacred. The “humanistic” part of the Renaissance, the books, the studies of ancient authors, the grammar and the text-books, interested them greatly. But the general return to the old pagan civilisation of Greece and Rome, which was one of the chief results of the Renaissance in Italy, filled their hearts with horror.

But the Papacy and the College of Cardinals was almost entirely composed of Italians and they had turned the Church into a pleasant club where people discussed art and music and the theatre, but rarely mentioned religion. Hence the split between the serious north and the more civilised but easy-going and indifferent south was growing wider and wider all the time and nobody seemed to be aware of the danger that threatened the Church.

There were a few minor reasons which will explain why the Reformation took place in Germany rather than in Sweden or England. The Germans bore an ancient grudge against Rome. The endless quarrels between Emperor and Pope had caused much mutual bitterness. In the other European countries where the government rested in the hands of a strong king, the ruler had often been

able to protect his subjects against the greed of the priests. In Germany, where a shadowy emperor ruled a turbulent crowd of little princelings, the good burghers were more directly at the mercy of their bishops and prelates. These dignitaries were trying to collect large sums of money for the benefit of those enormous churches which were a hobby of the Popes of the Renaissance. The Germans felt that they were being mulcted and quite naturally they did not like it.

And then there is the rarely mentioned fact that Germany was the home of the printing press. In northern Europe books were cheap and the Bible was no longer a mysterious manuscript owned and explained by the priest. It was a household book of many families where Latin was understood by the father and by the children. Whole families began to read it, which was against the law of the Church. They discovered that the priests were telling them many things which, according to the original text of the Holy Scriptures, were somewhat different. This caused doubt. People began to ask questions. And questions, when they cannot be answered, often cause a great deal of trouble.

The attack began when the humanists of the North opened fire upon the monks. In their heart of hearts they still had too much respect and reverence for the Pope to direct their sallies against his Most Holy Person. But the lazy, ignorant monks, living behind the sheltering walls of their rich monasteries, offered rare sport.

The leader in this warfare, curiously enough, was a very faithful son of the church Gerard Gerardzoon, or Desiderius Erasmus, as he is usually called, was a poor boy, born in Rotterdam in Holland, and educated at the same Latin school of Deventer from which Thomas a Kempis had graduated. He had become a priest and for a time he had lived in a monastery. He had travelled a great deal and knew whereof he wrote, When he began his career as a public pamphleteer (he would have been called an editorial writer in our day) the world was greatly amused at an anonymous series of letters which had just appeared under the title of "Letters of Obscure Men." In these letters, the general stupidity and arrogance of the monks of the late Middle Ages was exposed in a strange German-Latin doggerel which reminds one of our modern limericks. Erasmus himself was a very learned and serious scholar, who knew both Latin and Greek and gave us the first reliable version of the New Testament, which he translated into Latin together with a corrected edition of the original Greek text. But he believed with Sallust, the Roman poet, that nothing prevents us from "stating the truth with a smile upon our lips."

In the year 1500, while visiting Sir Thomas More in England, he took a few weeks off and wrote a funny little book, called the "Praise of Folly," in which he attacked the monks and their credulous followers with that most dangerous of all weapons, humor. The booklet was the best seller of the sixteenth century. It was translated into almost every language and it made people pay attention to those other books of Erasmus in which he advocated reform of the many abuses of the church and appealed to his fellow humanists to help him in his task of bringing about a great rebirth of the Christian faith.

But nothing came of these excellent plans. Erasmus was too reasonable and too tolerant to please most of the enemies of the church. They were waiting for a leader of a more robust nature.

He came, and his name was Martin Luther.

Luther was a North-German peasant with a first-class brain and possessed of great personal courage. He was a university man, a master of arts of the University of Erfurt; afterwards he joined a Dominican monastery. Then he became a college professor at the theological school of Wittenberg and began to explain the scriptures to the indifferent ploughboys of his Saxon home. He had a lot of spare time and this he used to study the original texts of the Old and New Testaments. Soon he began to see the great difference which existed between the words of Christ and those that were preached by the Popes and the Bishops. In the year 1511, he visited Rome on

official business. Alexander VI, of the family of Borgia, who had enriched himself for the benefit of his son and daughter, was dead. But his successor, Julius II, a man of irreproachable personal character, was spending most of his time fighting and building and did not impress this serious minded German theologian with his piety. Luther returned to Wittenberg a much disappointed man. But worse was to follow.

The gigantic church of St. Peter which Pope Julius had wished upon his innocent successors, although only half begun, was already in need of repair. Alexander VI had spent every penny of the Papal treasury. Leo X, who succeeded Julius in the year 1513, was on the verge of bankruptcy. He reverted to an old method of raising ready cash. He began to sell "indulgences." An indulgence was a piece of parchment which in return for a certain sum of money, promised a sinner a decrease of the time which he would have to spend in purgatory. It was a perfectly correct thing according to the creed of the late Middle Ages. Since the church had the power to forgive the sins of those who truly repented before they died, the church also had the right to shorten, through its intercession with the Saints, the time during which the soul must be punfied in the shadowy realms of Purgatory.

It was unfortunate that these Indulgences must be sold for money. But they offered an easy form of revenue and besides, those who were too poor to pay, received theirs for nothing.

Now it happened in the year 1517 that the exclusive territory for the sale of indulgences in Saxony was given to a Dominican monk by the name of Johan Tetzel. Brother Johan was a hustling salesman. To tell the truth he was a little too eager. His business methods outraged the pious people of the little duchy. And Luther, who was an honest fellow, got so angry that he did a rash thing. On the 31st of October of the year 1517, he went to the court church and upon the doors thereof he posted a sheet of paper with ninety-five statements (or theses), attacking the sale of indulgences. These statements had been written in Latin. Luther had no intention of starting a riot. He was not a revolutionist. He objected to the institution of the Indulgences and he wanted his fellow professors to know what he thought about them. But this was still a private affair of the clerical and professorial world and there was no appeal to the prejudices of the community of laymen.

Unfortunately, at that moment when the whole world had begun to take an interest in the religious affairs of the day it was utterly impossible to discuss anything, without at once creating a serious mental disturbance. In less than two months, all Europe was discussing the ninety-five theses of the Saxon monk. Every one must take sides. Every obscure little theologian must print his own opinion. The papal authorities began to be alarmed. They ordered the Wittenberg professor to proceed to Rome and give an account of his action. Luther wisely remembered what had happened to Huss. He stayed in Germany and he was punished with excommunication. Luther burned the papal bull in the presence of an admiring multitude and from that moment, peace between himself and the Pope was no longer possible.

Without any desire on his part, Luther had become the leader of a vast army of discontented Christians. German patriots like Ulrich von Hutten, rushed to his defence. The students of Wittenberg and Erfurt and Leipzig offered to defend him should the authorities try to imprison him. The Elector of Saxony reassured the eager young men. No harm would befall Luther as long as he stayed on Saxon ground.

All this happened in the year 1520. Charles V was twenty years old and as the ruler of half the world, was forced to remain on pleasant terms with the Pope. He sent out calls for a Diet or general assembly in the good city of Worms on the Rhine and commanded Luther to be present and give an account of his extraordinary behaviour. Luther, who now was the national hero of the Germans, went. He refused to take back a single word of what he had ever written or said. His conscience was controlled only by the word of God. He would live and die for his conscience

The Diet of Worms, after due deliberation, declared Luther an outlaw before God and man, and forbade all Germans to give him shelter or food or drink, or to read a single word of the books which the dastardly heretic had written. But the great reformer was in no danger. By the majority of the Germans of the north the edict was denounced as a most unjust and outrageous document. For greater safety, Luther was hidden in the Wartburg, a castle belonging to the Elector of Saxony, and there he defied all papal authority by translating the entire Bible into the German language, that all the people might read and know the word of God for themselves.

By this time, the Reformation was no longer a spiritual and religious affair. Those who hated the beauty of the modern church building used this period of unrest to attack and destroy what they did not like because they did not understand it. Impoverished knights tried to make up for past losses by grabbing the territory which belonged to the monasteries. Discontented princes made use of the absence of the Emperor to increase their own power. The starving peasants, following the leadership of half-crazy agitators, made the best of the opportunity and attacked the castles of their masters and plundered and murdered and burned with the zeal of the old Crusaders.

A veritable reign of disorder broke loose throughout the Empire. Some princes became Protestants (as the "protesting" adherents of Luther were called) and persecuted their Catholic subjects. Others remained Catholic and hanged their Protestant subjects. The Diet of Speyer of the year 1526 tried to settle this difficult question of allegiance by ordering that "the subjects should all be of the same religious denomination as their princes." This turned Germany into a checkerboard of a thousand hostile little duchies and principalities and created a situation which prevented the normal political growth for hundreds of years.

In February of the year 1546 Luther died and was put to rest in the same church where twenty-nine years before he had proclaimed his famous objections to the sale of Indulgences. In less than thirty years, the indifferent, joking and laughing world of the Renaissance had been transformed into the arguing, quarrelling, back-biting, debating-society of the Reformation. The universal spiritual empire of the Popes came to a sudden end and the whole Western Europe was turned into a battle-field, where Protestants and Catholics killed each other for the greater glory of certain theological doctrines which are as incomprehensible to the present generation as the mysterious inscriptions of the ancient Etruscans.

RELIGIOUS WARFARE

THE AGE OF THE GREAT RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSIES

THE sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were the age of religious controversy.

If you will notice you will find that almost everybody around you is forever "talking economics" and discussing wages and hours of labor and strikes in their relation to the life of the community, for that is the main topic of interest of our own time.

The poor little children of the year 1600 or 1650 fared worse. They never heard anything but "religion." Their heads were filled with "predestination," "transubstantiation," "free will," and a hundred other queer words, expressing obscure points of "the true faith," whether Catholic or Protestant. According to the desire of their parents they were baptised Catholics or Lutherans or Calvinists or Zwinglians or Anabaptists. They learned their theology from the Augsburg catechism, composed by Luther, or from the "institutes of Christianity," written by Calvin, or they mumbled the Thirty-Nine Articles of Faith which were printed in the English Book of Common Prayer, and they were told that these alone represented the "True Faith."

They heard of the wholesale theft of church property perpetrated by King Henry VIII, the much-married monarch of England, who made himself the supreme head of the English church, and assumed the old papal rights of appointing bishops and priests. They had a nightmare whenever some one mentioned the Holy Inquisition, with its dungeons and its many torture chambers, and they were treated to equally horrible stories of how a mob of outraged Dutch Protestants had got hold of a dozen defenceless old priests and hanged them for the sheer pleasure of killing those who professed a different faith. It was unfortunate that the two contending parties were so equally matched. Otherwise the struggle would have come to a quick solution. Now it dragged on for eight generations, and it grew so complicated that I can only tell you the most important details, and must ask you to get the rest from one of the many histories of the Reformation.

The great reform movement of the Protestants had been followed by a thoroughgoing reform within the bosom of the Church. Those popes who had been merely amateur humanists and dealers in Roman and Greek antiquities, disappeared from the scene and their place was taken by serious men who spent twenty hours a day administering those holy duties which had been placed in their hands.

The long and rather disgraceful happiness of the monasteries came to an end. Monks and nuns were forced to be up at sunrise, to study the Church Fathers, to tend the sick and console the dying. The Holy Inquisition watched day and night that no dangerous doctrines should be spread by way of the printing press. Here it is customary to mention poor Galileo, who was locked up because he had been a little too indiscreet in explaining the heavens with his funny little telescope and had muttered certain opinions about the behaviour of the planets which were entirely opposed to the official views of the church. But in all fairness to the Pope, the clergy and the Inquisition, it ought to be stated that the Protestants were quite as much the enemies of science and medicine as the Catholics and with equal manifestations of ignorance and intolerance regarded the men who investigated things for themselves as the most dangerous enemies of mankind.

And Calvin, the great French reformer and the tyrant (both political and spiritual) of Geneva, not only assisted the French authorities when they tried to hang Michael Servetus (the Spanish theologian and physician who had become famous as the assistant of Vesalius, the first great anatomist), but when Servetus had managed to escape from his French jail and had fled to Geneva, Calvin threw this brilliant man into prison and after a prolonged trial, allowed him to be burned at the stake on account of his heresies, totally indifferent to his fame as a scientist.

And so it went. We have few reliable statistics upon the subject, but on the whole, the Protestants tired of this game long before the Catholics, and the greater part of honest men and women who were burned and hanged and decapitated on account of their religious beliefs fell as victims of the very energetic but also very drastic church of Rome.

For tolerance (and please remember this when you grow older), is of very recent origin and even the people of our own so-called "modern world" are apt to be tolerant only upon such matters as do not interest them very much. They are tolerant towards a native of Africa, and do not care whether he becomes a Buddhist or a Mohammedan, because neither Buddhism nor Mohammedanism means anything to them. But when they hear that their neighbour who was a Republican and believed in a high protective tariff, has joined the Socialist party and now wants to repeal all tariff laws, their tolerance ceases and they use almost the same words as those employed by a kindly Catholic (or Protestant) of the seventeenth century, who was informed that his best friend whom he had always respected and loved had fallen a victim to the terrible heresies of the Protestant (or Catholic) church.

"Heresy" until a very short time ago was regarded as a disease. Nowadays when we see a man neglecting the personal cleanliness of his body and his home and exposing himself and his children to the dangers of typhoid fever or another preventable disease, we send for the board-of-health and the health officer calls upon the police to aid him in removing this person who is

a danger to the safety of the entire community. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a heretic, a man or a woman who openly doubted the fundamental principles upon which his Protestant or Catholic religion had been founded, was considered a more terrible menace than a typhoid carrier. Typhoid fever might (very likely would) destroy the body. But heresy, according to them, would positively destroy the immortal soul. It was therefore the duty of all good and logical citizens to warn the police against the enemies of the established order of things and those who failed to do so were as culpable as a modern man who does not telephone to the nearest doctor when he discovers that his fellow-tenants are suffering from cholera or small-pox.

In the years to come you will hear a great deal about preventive medicine. Preventive medicine simply means that our doctors do not wait until their patients are sick, then step forward and cure them. On the contrary, they study the patient and the conditions under which he lives when he (the patient) is perfectly well and they remove every possible cause of illness by cleaning up rubbish, by teaching him what to eat and what to avoid, and by giving him a few simple ideas of personal hygiene. They go even further than that, and these good doctors enter the schools and teach the children how to use tooth-brushes and how to avoid catching colds.

The sixteenth century which regarded (as I have tried to show you) bodily illness as much less important than sickness which threatened the soul, organised a system of spiritual preventive medicine. As soon as a child was old enough to spell his first words, he was educated in the true (and the "only true") principles of the Faith. Indirectly this proved to be a good thing for the general progress of the people of Europe. The Protestant lands were soon dotted with schools. They used a great deal of very valuable time to explain the Catechism, but they gave instruction in other things besides theology. They encouraged reading and they were responsible for the great prosperity of the printing trade.

But the Catholics did not lag behind. They too devoted much time and thought to education. The Church, in this matter, found an invaluable friend and ally in the newly-founded order of the Society of Jesus. The founder of this remarkable organisation was a Spanish soldier who after a life of unholy adventures had been converted and thereupon felt himself bound to serve the church just as many former sinners, who have been shown the errors of their way by the Salvation Army, devote the remaining years of their lives to the task of aiding and consoling those who are less fortunate.

The name of this Spaniard was Ignatius de Loyola. He was born in the year before the discovery of America. He had been wounded and lamed for life and while he was in the hospital he had seen a vision of the Holy Virgin and her Son, who bade him give up the wickedness of his former life. He decided to go to the Holy Land and finish the task of the Crusades. But a visit to Jerusalem had shown him the impossibility of the task and he returned west to help in the warfare upon the heresies of the Lutherans.

In the year 1534 he was studying in Paris at the Sorbonne. Together with seven other students he founded a fraternity. The eight men promised each other that they would lead holy lives, that they would not strive after riches but after righteousness, and would devote themselves, body and soul, to the service of the Church. A few years later this small fraternity had grown into a regular organisation and was recognised by Pope Paul III as the Society of Jesus.

Loyola had been a military man. He believed in discipline, and absolute obedience to the orders of the superior dignitaries became one of the main causes for the enormous success of the Jesuits. They specialised in education. They gave their teachers a most thorough-going education before they allowed them to talk to a single pupil. They lived with their students and they entered into their games. They watched them with tender care. And as a result they raised a new generation of faithful Catholics who took their religious duties as seriously as the people of the early Middle Ages.

The shrewd Jesuits, however, did not waste all their efforts upon the education of the poor. They entered the palaces of the mighty and became the private tutors of future emperors and kings. And what this meant you will see for yourself when I tell you about the Thirty Years War. But before this terrible and final outbreak of religious fanaticism, a great many other things had happened.

Charles V was dead. Germany and Austria had been left to his brother Ferdinand. All his other possessions, Spain and the Netherlands and the Indies and America had gone to his son Philip. Philip was the son of Charles and a Portuguese princess who had been first cousin to her own husband. The children that are born of such a union are apt to be rather queer. The son of Philip, the unfortunate Don Carlos, (murdered afterwards with his own father's consent,) was crazy. Philip was not quite crazy, but his zeal for the Church bordered closely upon religious insanity. He believed that Heaven had appointed him as one of the saviours of mankind. Therefore, whosoever was obstinate and refused to share his Majesty's views, proclaimed himself an enemy of the human race and must be exterminated lest his example corrupt the souls of his pious neighbours.

Spain, of course, was a very rich country. All the gold and silver of the new world flowed into the Castilian and Aragonian treasuries. But Spain suffered from a curious economic disease. Her peasants were hard working men and even harder working women. But the better classes maintained a supreme contempt for any form of labour, outside of employment in the army or navy or the civil service. As for the Moors, who had been very industrious artisans, they had been driven out of the country long before. As a result, Spain, the treasure chest of the world, remained a poor country because all her money had to be sent abroad in exchange for the wheat and the other necessities of life which the Spaniards neglected to raise for themselves.

Philip, ruler of the most powerful nation of the sixteenth century, depended for his revenue upon the taxes which were gathered in the busy commercial bee-hive of the Netherlands. But these Flemings and Dutchmen were devoted followers of the doctrines of Luther and Calvin and they had cleansed their churches of all images and holy paintings and they had informed the Pope that they no longer regarded him as their shepherd but intended to follow the dictates of their consciences and the commands of their newly translated Bible.

This placed the king in a very difficult position. He could not possibly tolerate the heresies of his Dutch subjects, but he needed their money. If he allowed them to be Protestants and took no measures to save their souls he was deficient in his duty toward God. If he sent the Inquisition to the Netherlands and burned his subjects at the stake, he would lose the greater part of his income.

Being a man of uncertain will-power he hesitated a long time. He tried kindness and sternness and promises and threats. The Hollanders remained obstinate, and continued to sing psalms and listen to the sermons of their Lutheran and Calvinist preachers. Philip in his despair sent his "man of iron," the Duke of Alba, to bring these hardened sinners to terms. Alba began by decapitating those leaders who had not wisely left the country before his arrival. In the year 1572 (the same year that the French Protestant leaders were all killed during the terrible night of Saint Bartholomew), he attacked a number of Dutch cities and massacred the inhabitants as an example for the others. The next year he laid siege to the town of Leyden, the manufacturing center of Holland.

Meanwhile, the seven small provinces of the northern Netherlands had formed a defensive union, the so-called union of Utrecht, and had recognised William of Orange, a German prince who had been the private secretary of the Emperor Charles V, as the leader of their army and as commander of their freebooting sailors, who were known as the Beggars of the Sea. William, to save Leyden, cut the dykes, created a shallow inland sea, and delivered the town with the help

of a strangely equipped navy consisting of scows and flat-bottomed barges which were rowed and pushed and pulled through the mud until they reached the city walls.

It was the first time that an army of the invincible Spanish king had suffered such a humiliating defeat. It surprised the world just as the Japanese victory of Mukden, in the Russian- Japanese war, surprised our own generation. The Protestant powers took fresh courage and Philip devised new means for the purpose of conquering his rebellious subjects. He hired a poor half-witted fanatic to go and murder William of Orange. But the sight of their dead leader did not bring the Seven Provinces to their knees. On the contrary it made them furiously angry. In the year 1581, the Estates General (the meeting of the representatives of the Seven Provinces) came together at the Hague and most solemnly abjured their "wicked king Philip" and themselves assumed the burden of sovereignty which thus far had been invested in their "King by the Grace of God."

This is a very important event in the history of the great struggle for political liberty. It was a step which reached much further than the uprising of the nobles which ended with the signing of the Magna Carta. These good burghers said "Between a king and his subjects there is a silent understanding that both sides shall perform certain services and shall recognise certain definite duties. If either party fails to live up to this contract, the other has the right to consider it terminated." The American subjects of King George III in the year 1776 came to a similar conclusion. But they had three thousand miles of ocean between themselves and their ruler and the Estates General took their decision (which meant a slow death in case of defeat) within hearing of the Spanish guns and although in constant fear of an avenging Spanish fleet.

The stories about a mysterious Spanish fleet that was to conquer both Holland and England, when Protestant Queen Elizabeth had succeeded Catholic "Bloody Mary" was an old one. For years the sailors of the waterfront had talked about it. In the eighties of the sixteenth century, the rumour took a definite shape. According to pilots who had been in Lisbon, all the Spanish and Portuguese wharves were building ships. And in the southern Netherlands (in Belgium) the Duke of Parma was collecting a large expeditionary force to be carried from Ostend to London and Amsterdam as soon as the fleet should arrive.

In the year 1586 the Great Armada set sail for the north. But the harbours of the Flemish coast were blockaded by a Dutch fleet and the Channel was guarded by the English, and the Spaniards, accustomed to the quieter seas of the south, did not know how to navigate in this squally and bleak northern climate. What happened to the Armada once it was attacked by ships and by storms I need not tell you. A few ships, by sailing around Ireland, escaped to tell the terrible story of defeat. The others perished and lie at the bottom of the North Sea.

Turn about is fair play. The British and the Dutch Protestants now carried the war into the territory of the enemy. Before the end of the century, Houtman, with the help of a booklet written by Linschoten (a Hollander who had been in the Portuguese service), had at last discovered the route to the Indies. As a result the great Dutch East India Company was founded and a systematic war upon the Portuguese and Spanish colonies in Asia and Africa was begun in all seriousness.

It was during this early era of colonial conquest that a curious lawsuit was fought out in the Dutch courts. Early in the seventeenth century a Dutch Captain by the name of van Heemskerck, a man who had made himself famous as the head of an expedition which had tried to discover the North Eastern Passage to the Indies and who had spent a winter on the frozen shores of the island of Nova Zembla, had captured a Portuguese ship in the straits of Malacca. You will remember that the Pope had divided the world into two equal shares, one of which had been given to the Spaniards and the other to the Portuguese. The Portuguese quite naturally regarded the water which surrounded their Indian islands as part of their own property and since, for the

moment, they were not at war with the United Seven Netherlands, they claimed that the captain of a private Dutch trading company had no right to enter their private domain and steal their ships. And they brought suit. The directors of the Dutch East India Company hired a bright young lawyer, by the name of De Groot or Grotius, to defend their case. He made the astonishing plea that the ocean is free to all comers. Once outside the distance which a cannon ball fired from the land can reach, the sea is or (according to Grotius) ought to be, a free and open highway to all the ships of all nations. It was the first time that this startling doctrine had been publicly pronounced in a court of law. It was opposed by all the other seafaring people. To counteract the effect of Grotius' famous plea for the "Mare Liberum," or "Open Sea," John Selden, the Englishman, wrote his famous treatise upon the "Mare Clausum" or "Closed Sea" which treated of the natural right of a sovereign to regard the seas which surrounded his country as belonging to his territory. I mention this here because the question had not yet been decided and during the last war caused all sorts of difficulties and complications.

To return to the warfare between Spaniard and Hollander and Englishman, before twenty years were over the most valuable colonies of the Indies and the Cape of Good Hope and Ceylon and those along the coast of China and even Japan were in Protestant hands. In 1621 a West Indian Company was founded which conquered Brazil and in North America built a fortress called Nieuw Amsterdam at the mouth of the river which Henry Hudson had discovered in the year 1609

These new colonies enriched both England and the Dutch Republic to such an extent that they could hire foreign soldiers to do their fighting on land while they devoted themselves to commerce and trade. To them the Protestant revolt meant independence and prosperity. But in many other parts of Europe it meant a succession of horrors compared to which the last war was a mild excursion of kindly Sunday-school boys.

The Thirty Years War which broke out in the year 1618 and which ended with the famous treaty of Westphalia in 1648 was the perfectly natural result of a century of ever increasing religious hatred. It was, as I have said, a terrible war. Everybody fought everybody else and the struggle ended only when all parties had been thoroughly exhausted and could fight no longer.

In less than a generation it turned many parts of central Europe into a wilderness, where the hungry peasants fought for the carcass of a dead horse with the even hungrier wolf. Five-sixths of all the German towns and villages were destroyed. The Palatinate, in western Germany, was plundered twenty-eight times. And a population of eighteen million people was reduced to four million.

The hostilities began almost as soon as Ferdinand II of the House of Habsburg had been elected Emperor. He was the product of a most careful Jesuit training and was a most obedient and devout son of the Church. The vow which he had made as a young man, that he would eradicate all sects and all heresies from his domains, Ferdinand kept to the best of his ability. Two days before his election, his chief opponent, Frederick, the Protestant Elector of the Palatinate and a son-in-law of James I of England, had been made King of Bohemia, in direct violation of Ferdinand's wishes.

At once the Habsburg armies marched into Bohemia. The young king looked in vain for assistance against this formidable enemy. The Dutch Republic was willing to help, but, engaged in a desperate war of its own with the Spanish branch of the Habsburgs, it could do little. The Stuarts in England were more interested in strengthening their own absolute power at home than spending money and men upon a forlorn adventure in far away Bohemia. After a struggle of a few months, the Elector of the Palatinate was driven away and his domains were given to the Catholic house of Bavaria. This was the beginning of the great war.

Then the Habsburg armies, under Tilly and Wallenstein, fought their way through the Protestant part of Germany until they had reached the shores of the Baltic. A Catholic neighbour meant

serious danger to the Protestant king of Denmark. Christian IV tried to defend himself by attacking his enemies before they had become too strong for him. The Danish armies marched into Germany but were defeated. Wallenstein followed up his victory with such energy and violence that Denmark was forced to sue for peace. Only one town of the Baltic then remained in the hands of the Protestants. That was Stralsund.

There, in the early summer of the year 1630, landed King Gustavus Adolphus of the house of Vasa, king of Sweden, and famous as the man who had defended his country against the Russians. A Protestant prince of unlimited ambition, desirous of making Sweden the centre of a great Northern Empire, Gustavus Adolphus was welcomed by the Protestant princes of Europe as the saviour of the Lutheran cause. He defeated Tilly, who had just successfully butchered the Protestant inhabitants of Magdeburg. Then his troops began their great march through the heart of Germany in an attempt to reach the Habsburg possessions in Italy. Threatened in the rear by the Catholics, Gustavus suddenly veered around and defeated the main Habsburg army in the battle of Lutzen. Unfortunately the Swedish king was killed when he strayed away from his troops. But the Habsburg power had been broken.

Ferdinand, who was a suspicious sort of person, at once began to distrust his own servants. Wallenstein, his commander-in-chief, was murdered at his instigation. When the Catholic Bourbons, who ruled France and hated their Habsburg rivals, heard of this, they joined the Protestant Swedes. The armies of Louis XIII invaded the eastern part of Germany, and Turenne and Conde added their fame to that of Baner and Weimar, the Swedish generals, by murdering, pillaging and burning Habsburg property. This brought great fame and riches to the Swedes and caused the Danes to become envious. The Protestant Danes thereupon declared war upon the Protestant Swedes who were the allies of the Catholic French, whose political leader, the Cardinal de Richelieu, had just deprived the Huguenots (or French Protestants) of those rights of public worship which the Edict of Nantes of the year 1598 had guaranteed them.

The war, after the habit of such encounters, did not decide anything, when it came to an end with the treaty of Westphalia in 1648. The Catholic powers remained Catholic and the Protestant powers stayed faithful to the doctrines of Luther and Calvin and Zwingli. The Swiss and Dutch Protestants were recognised as independent republics. France kept the cities of Metz and Toul and Verdun and a part of the Alsace. The Holy Roman Empire continued to exist as a sort of scare-crow state, without men, without money, without hope and without courage.

The only good the Thirty Years War accomplished was a negative one. It discouraged both Catholics and Protestants from ever trying it again. Henceforth they left each other in peace. This however did not mean that religious feeling and theological hatred had been removed from this earth. On the contrary. The quarrels between Catholic and Protestant came to an end, but the disputes between the different Protestant sects continued as bitterly as ever before. In Holland a difference of opinion as to the true nature of predestination (a very obscure point of theology, but exceedingly important the eyes of your great-grandfather) caused a quarrel which ended with the decapitation of John of Oldenbarneveltdt, the Dutch statesman, who had been responsible for the success of the Republic during the first twenty years of its independence, and who was the great organising genius of her Indian trading company. In England, the feud led to civil war.

But before I tell you of this outbreak which led to the first execution by process-of-law of a European king, I ought to say something about the previous history of England. In this book I am trying to give you only those events of the past which can throw a light upon the conditions of the present world. If I do not mention certain countries, the cause is not to be found in any secret dislike on my part. I wish that I could tell you what happened to Norway and Switzerland and Serbia and China. But these lands exercised no great influence upon the development of Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. I therefore pass them by with a polite and very respectful bow. England however is in a different position. What the people of that small

island have done during the last five hundred years has shaped the course of history in every corner of the world. Without a proper knowledge of the background of English history, you cannot understand what you read in the newspapers. And it is therefore necessary that you know how England happened to develop a parliamentary form of government while the rest of the European continent was still ruled by absolute monarchs.

THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION

HOW THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE "DIVINE RIGHT" OF KINGS AND THE LESS DIVINE BUT MORE REASONABLE "RIGHT OF PARLIAMENT" ENDED DISASTROUSLY FOR KING CHARLES II

CAESAR, the earliest explorer of north-western Europe, had crossed the Channel in the year 55 B.C. and had conquered England. During four centuries the country then remained a Roman province. But when the Barbarians began to threaten Rome, the garrisons were called back from the frontier that they might defend the home country and Britannia was left without a government and without protection.

As soon as this became known among the hungry Saxon tribes of northern Germany, they sailed across the North Sea and made themselves at home in the prosperous island. They founded a number of independent Anglo-Saxon kingdoms (so called after the original Angles or English and the Saxon invaders) but these small states were for ever quarrelling with each other and no King was strong enough to establish himself as the head of a united country. For more than five hundred years, Mercia and Northumbria and Wessex and Sussex and Kent and East Anglia, or whatever their names, were exposed to attacks from various Scandinavian pirates. Finally in the eleventh century, England, together with Norway and northern Germany became part of the large Danish Empire of Canute the Great and the last vestiges of independence disappeared.

The Danes, in the course of time, were driven away but no sooner was England free, than it was conquered for the fourth time. The new enemies were the descendants of another tribe of Norsemen who early in the tenth century had invaded France and had founded the Duchy of Normandy. William, Duke of Normandy, who for a long time had looked across the water with an envious eye, crossed the Channel in October of the year 1066. At the battle of Hastings, on October the fourteenth of that year, he destroyed the weak forces of Harold of Wessex, the last of the Anglo-Saxon Kings and established himself as King of England. But neither William nor his successors of the House of Anjou and Plantagenet regarded England as their true home. To them the island was merely a part of their great inheritance on the continent--a sort of colony inhabited by rather backward people upon whom they forced their own language and civilisation. Gradually however the "colony" of England gained upon the "Mother country" of Normandy. At the same time the Kings of France were trying desperately to get rid of the powerful Norman-English neighbours who were in truth no more than disobedient servants of the French crown. After a century of warfare the French people, under the leadership of a young girl by the name of Joan of Arc, drove the "foreigners" from their soil. Joan herself, taken a prisoner at the battle of Compiègne in the year 1430 and sold by her Burgundian captors to the English soldiers, was burned as a witch. But the English never gained foothold upon the continent and their Kings were at last able to devote all their time to their British possessions. As the feudal nobility of the island had been engaged in one of those strange feuds which were as common in the middle ages as measles and small-pox, and as the greater part of the old landed proprietors had been killed during these so-called Wars of the Roses, it was quite easy for the Kings to increase their royal power. And by the end of the fifteenth century, England was a strongly centralised country, ruled by Henry VII of the House of Tudor, whose famous Court of Justice, the "Star Chamber" of terrible memory, suppressed all attempts on the part of the surviving nobles to regain their old influence upon the government of the country with the utmost severity.

In the year 1509 Henry VII was succeeded by his son Henry VIII, and from that moment on the history of England gained a new importance for the country ceased to be a mediaeval island and became a modern state.

Henry had no deep interest in religion. He gladly used a private disagreement with the Pope about one of his many divorces to declare himself independent of Rome and make the church of England the first of those "nationalistic churches" in which the worldly ruler also acts as the spiritual head of his subjects. This peaceful reformation of 1534 not only gave the house of Tudor the support of the English clergy, who for a long time had been exposed to the violent attacks of many Lutheran propagandists, but it also increased the Royal power through the confiscation of the former possessions of the monasteries. At the same time it made Henry popular with the merchants and tradespeople, who as the proud and prosperous inhabitants of an island which was separated from the rest of Europe by a wide and deep channel, had a great dislike for everything "foreign" and did not want an Italian bishop to rule their honest British souls.

In 1517 Henry died. He left the throne to his small son, aged ten. The guardians of the child, favoring the modern Lutheran doctrines, did their best to help the cause of Protestantism. But the boy died before he was sixteen, and was succeeded by his sister Mary, the wife of Philip II of Spain, who burned the bishops of the new "national church" and in other ways followed the example of her royal Spanish husband.

Fortunately she died, in the year 1558, and was succeeded by Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, the second of his six wives, whom he had decapitated when she no longer pleased him. Elizabeth, who had spent some time in prison, and who had been released only at the request of the Holy Roman Emperor, was a most cordial enemy of everything Catholic and Spanish. She shared her father's indifference in the matter of religion but she inherited his ability as a very shrewd judge of character, and spent the forty-five years of her reign in strengthening the power of the dynasty and in increasing the revenue and possessions of her merry islands. In this she was most ably assisted by a number of men who gathered around her throne and made the Elizabethan age a period of such importance that you ought to study it in detail in one of the special books of which I shall tell you in the bibliography at the end of this volume.

Elizabeth, however, did not feel entirely safe upon her throne. She had a rival and a very dangerous one. Mary, of the house of Stuart, daughter of a French duchess and a Scottish father, widow of king Francis II of France and daughter-in-law of Catherine of Medici (who had organised the murders of Saint Bartholomew's night), was the mother of a little boy who was afterwards to become the first Stuart king of England. She was an ardent Catholic and a willing friend to those who were the enemies of Elizabeth. Her own lack of political ability and the violent methods which she employed to punish her Calvinistic subjects, caused a revolution in Scotland and forced Mary to take refuge on English territory. For eighteen years she remained in England, plotting forever and a day against the woman who had given her shelter and who was at last obliged to follow the advice of her trusted councilors "to cutte off the Scottish Queen's heade."

The head was duly "cutte off" in the year 1587 and caused a war with Spain. But the combined navies of England and Holland defeated Philip's Invincible Armada, as we have already seen, and the blow which had been meant to destroy the power of the two great anti-Catholic leaders was turned into a profitable business adventure.

For now at last, after many years of hesitation, the English as well as the Dutch thought it their good right to invade the Indies and America and avenge the ills which their Protestant brethren had suffered at the hands of the Spaniards. The English had been among the earliest successors of Columbus. British ships, commanded by the Venetian pilot Giovanni Caboto (or Cabot), had been the first to discover and explore the northern American continent in 1496.

Labrador and Newfoundland were of little importance as a possible colony. But the banks of Newfoundland offered a rich reward to the English fishing fleet. A year later, in 1497, the same Cabot had explored the coast of Florida.

Then had come the busy years of Henry VII and Henry VIII when there had been no money for foreign explorations. But under Elizabeth, with the country at peace and Mary Stuart in prison, the sailors could leave their harbour without fear for the fate of those whom they left behind. While Elizabeth was still a child, Willoughby had ventured to sail past the North Cape and one of his captains, Richard Chancellor, pushing further eastward in his quest of a possible road to the Indies, had reached Archangel, Russia, where he had established diplomatic and commercial relations with the mysterious rulers of this distant Muscovite Empire. During the first years of Elizabeth's rule this voyage had been followed up by many others. Merchant adventurers, working for the benefit of a "joint stock Company" had laid the foundations of trading companies which in later centuries were to become colonies. Half pirate, half diplomat, willing to stake everything on a single lucky voyage, smugglers of everything that could be loaded into the hold of a vessel, dealers in men and merchandise with equal indifference to everything except their profit, the sailors of Elizabeth had carried the English flag and the fame of their Virgin Queen to the four corners of the Seven Seas. Meanwhile William Shakespeare kept her Majesty amused at home, and the best brains and the best wit of England co-operated with the queen in her attempt to change the feudal inheritance of Henry VIII into a modern national state.

In the year 1603 the old lady died at the age of seventy. Her cousin, the great-grandson of her own grandfather Henry VII and son of Mary Stuart, her rival and enemy, succeeded her as James I. By the Grace of God, he found himself the ruler of a country which had escaped the fate of its continental rivals. While the European Protestants and Catholics were killing each other in a hopeless attempt to break the power of their adversaries and establish the exclusive rule of their own particular creed, England was at peace and "reformed" at leisure without going to the extremes of either Luther or Loyola. It gave the island kingdom an enormous advantage in the coming struggle for colonial possessions. It assured England a leadership in international affairs which that country has maintained until the present day. Not even the disastrous adventure with the Stuarts was able to stop this normal development.

The Stuarts, who succeeded the Tudors, were "foreigners" in England. They do not seem to have appreciated or understood this fact. The native house of Tudor could steal a horse, but the "foreign" Stuarts were not allowed to look at the bridle without causing great popular disapproval. Old Queen Bess had ruled her domains very much as she pleased. In general however, she had always followed a policy which meant money in the pocket of the honest (and otherwise) British merchants. Hence the Queen had been always assured of the wholehearted support of her grateful people. And small liberties taken with some of the rights and prerogatives of Parliament were gladly overlooked for the ulterior benefits which were derived from her Majesty's strong and successful foreign policies.

Outwardly King James continued the same policy. But he lacked that personal enthusiasm which had been so very typical of his great predecessor. Foreign commerce continued to be encouraged. The Catholics were not granted any liberties. But when Spain smiled pleasantly upon England in an effort to establish peaceful relations, James was seen to smile back. The majority of the English people did not like this, but James was their King and they kept quiet.

Soon there were other causes of friction. King James and his son, Charles I, who succeeded him in the year 1625 both firmly believed in the principle of their "divine right" to administer their realm as they thought fit without consulting the wishes of their subjects. The idea was not new. The Popes, who in more than one way had been the successors of the Roman Emperors (or rather of the Roman Imperial ideal of a single and undivided state covering the entire known world), had always regarded themselves and had been publicly recognised as the "Vice-Regents of Christ upon Earth." No one questioned the right of God to rule the world as He saw fit. As a

natural result, few ventured to doubt the right of the divine "Vice-Regent" to do the same thing and to demand the obedience of the masses because he was the direct representative of the Absolute Ruler of the Universe and responsible only to Almighty God.

When the Lutheran Reformation proved successful, those rights which formerly had been invested in the Papacy were taken over by the many European sovereigns who became Protestants. As head of their own national or dynastic churches they insisted upon being "Christ's Vice-Regents" within the limit of their own territory. The people did not question the right of their rulers to take such a step. They accepted it, just as we in our own day accept the idea of a representative system which to us seems the only reasonable and just form of government. It is unfair therefore to state that either Lutheranism or Calvinism caused the particular feeling of irritation which greeted King-James's oft and loudly repeated assertion of his "Divine Right." There must have been other grounds for the genuine English disbelief in the Divine Right of Kings.

The first positive denial of the "Divine Right" of sovereigns had been heard in the Netherlands when the Estates General abjured their lawful sovereign King Philip II of Spain, in the year 1581. "The King," so they said, "has broken his contract and the King therefore is dismissed like any other unfaithful servant." Since then, this particular idea of a king's responsibilities towards his subjects had spread among many of the nations who inhabited the shores of the North Sea. They were in a very favourable position. They were rich. The poor people in the heart of central Europe, at the mercy of their Ruler's body-guard, could not afford to discuss a problem which would at once land them in the deepest dungeon of the nearest castle. But the merchants of Holland and England who possessed the capital necessary for the maintenance of great armies and navies, who knew how to handle the almighty weapon called "credit," had no such fear. They were willing to pit the "Divine Right" of their own good money against the "Divine Right" of any Habsburg or Bourbon or Stuart. They knew that their guilders and shillings could beat the clumsy feudal armies which were the only weapons of the King. They dared to act, where others were condemned to suffer in silence or run the risk of the scaffold.

When the Stuarts began to annoy the people of England with their claim that they had a right to do what they pleased and never mind the responsibility, the English middle classes used the House of Commons as their first line of defence against this abuse of the Royal Power. The Crown refused to give in and the King sent Parliament about its own business. Eleven long years, Charles I ruled alone. He levied taxes which most people regarded as illegal and he managed his British kingdom as if it had been his own country estate. He had capable assistants and we must say that he had the courage of his convictions.

Unfortunately, instead of assuring himself of the support of his faithful Scottish subjects, Charles became involved in a quarrel with the Scotch Presbyterians. Much against his will, but forced by his need for ready cash, Charles was at last obliged to call Parliament together once more. It met in April of 1640 and showed an ugly temper. It was dissolved a few weeks later. A new Parliament convened in November. This one was even less pliable than the first one. The members understood that the question of "Government by Divine Right" or "Government by Parliament" must be fought out for good and all. They attacked the King in his chief councillors and executed half a dozen of them. They announced that they would not allow themselves to be dissolved without their own approval. Finally on December 1, 1641, they presented to the King a "Grand Remonstrance" which gave a detailed account of the many grievances of the people against their Ruler.

Charles, hoping to derive some support for his own policy in the country districts, left London in January of 1642. Each side organised an army and prepared for open warfare between the absolute power of the crown and the absolute power of Parliament. During this struggle, the most powerful religious element of England, called the Puritans, (they were Anglicans who had tried

to purify their doctrines to the most absolute limits), came quickly to the front. The regiments of "Godly men," commanded by Oliver Cromwell, with their iron discipline and their profound confidence in the holiness of their aims, soon became the model for the entire army of the opposition. Twice Charles was defeated. After the battle of Naseby, in 1645, he fled to Scotland. The Scotch sold him to the English.

There followed a period of intrigue and an uprising of the Scotch Presbyterians against the English Puritan. In August of the year 1648 after the three-days' battle of Preston Pans, Cromwell made an end to this second civil war, and took Edinburgh. Meanwhile his soldiers, tired of further talk and wasted hours of religious debate, had decided to act on their own initiative. They removed from Parliament all those who did not agree with their own Puritan views. Thereupon the "Rump," which was what was left of the old Parliament, accused the King of high treason. The House of Lords refused to sit as a tribunal. A special tribunal was appointed and it condemned the King to death. On the 30th of January of the year 1649, King Charles walked quietly out of a window of White Hall onto the scaffold. That day, the Sovereign People, acting through their chosen representatives, for the first time executed a ruler who had failed to understand his own position in the modern state.

The period which followed the death of Charles is usually called after Oliver Cromwell. At first the unofficial Dictator of England, he was officially made Lord Protector in the year 1653. He ruled five years. He used this period to continue the policies of Elizabeth. Spain once more became the arch enemy of England and war upon the Spaniard was made a national and sacred issue.

The commerce of England and the interests of the traders were placed before everything else, and the Protestant creed of the strictest nature was rigourously maintained. In maintaining England's position abroad, Cromwell was successful. As a social reformer, however, he failed very badly. The world is made up of a number of people and they rarely think alike. In the long run, this seems a very wise provision. A government of and by and for one single part of the entire community cannot possibly survive. The Puritans had been a great force for good when they tried to correct the abuse of the royal power. As the absolute Rulers of England they became intolerable.

When Cromwell died in 1658, it was an easy matter for the Stuarts to return to their old kingdom. Indeed, they were welcomed as "deliverers" by the people who had found the yoke of the meek Puritans quite as hard to bear as that of autocratic King Charles. Provided the Stuarts were willing to forget about the Divine Right of their late and lamented father and were willing to recognise the superiority of Parliament, the people promised that they would be loyal and faithful subjects.

Two generations tried to make a success of this new arrangement. But the Stuarts apparently had not learned their lesson and were unable to drop their bad habits. Charles II, who came back in the year 1660, was an amiable but worthless person. His indolence and his constitutional insistence upon following the easiest course, together with his conspicuous success as a liar, prevented an open outbreak between himself and his people. By the act of Uniformity in 1662 he broke the power of the Puritan clergy by banishing all dissenting clergymen from their parishes. By the so-called Conventicle Act of 1664 he tried to prevent the Dissenters from attending religious meetings by a threat of deportation to the West Indies. This looked too much like the good old days of Divine Right. People began to show the old and well-known signs of impatience, and Parliament suddenly experienced difficulty in providing the King with funds.

Since he could not get money from an unwilling Parliament, Charles borrowed it secretly from his neighbour and cousin King Louis of France. He betrayed his Protestant allies in return for 200,000 pounds per year, and laughed at the poor simpletons of Parliament.

Economic independence suddenly gave the King great faith in his own strength. He had spent many years of exile among his Catholic relations and he had a secret liking for their religion. Perhaps he could bring England back to Rome! He passed a Declaration of Indulgence which suspended the old laws against the Catholics and Dissenters. This happened just when Charles' younger brother James was said to have become a Catholic. All this looked suspicious to the man in the street. People began to fear some terrible Popish plot. A new spirit of unrest entered the land. Most of the people wanted to prevent another outbreak of civil war. To them Royal Oppression and a Catholic King--yea, even Divine Right,--were preferable to a new struggle between members of the same race. Others however were less lenient. They were the much-feared Dissenters, who invariably had the courage of their convictions. They were led by several great noblemen who did not want to see a return of the old days of absolute royal power.

For almost ten years, these two great parties, the Whigs (the middle class element, called by this derisive name because in the year 1640 a lot of Scottish Whiggamores or horse-drovers headed by the Presbyterian clergy, had marched to Edinburgh to oppose the King) and the Tories (an epithet originally used against the Royalist Irish adherents but now applied to the supporters of the King) opposed each other, but neither wished to bring about a crisis. They allowed Charles to die peacefully in his bed and permitted the Catholic James II to succeed his brother in 1685. But when James, after threatening the country with the terrible foreign invention of a "standing army" (which was to be commanded by Catholic Frenchmen), issued a second Declaration of Indulgence in 1688, and ordered it to be read in all Anglican churches, he went just a trifle beyond that line of sensible demarcation which can only be transgressed by the most popular of rulers under very exceptional circumstances. Seven bishops refused to comply with the Royal Command. They were accused of "seditious libel." They were brought before a court. The jury which pronounced the verdict of "not guilty" reaped a rich harvest of popular approval.

At this unfortunate moment, James (who in a second marriage had taken to wife Maria of the Catholic house of Modena-Este) became the father of a son. This meant that the throne was to go to a Catholic boy rather than to his older sisters, Mary and Anne, who were Protestants. The man in the street again grew suspicious. Maria of Modena was too old to have children! It was all part of a plot! A strange baby had been brought into the palace by some Jesuit priest that England might have a Catholic monarch. And so on. It looked as if another civil war would break out. Then seven well-known men, both Whigs and Tories, wrote a letter asking the husband of James's oldest daughter Mary, William III the Stadtholder or head of the Dutch Republic, to come to England and deliver the country from its lawful but entirely undesirable sovereign.

On the fifth of November of the year 1688, William landed at Torbay. As he did not wish to make a martyr out of his father-in-law, he helped him to escape safely to France. On the 22nd of January of 1689 he summoned Parliament. On the 13th of February of the same year he and his wife Mary were proclaimed joint sovereigns of England and the country was saved for the Protestant cause.

Parliament, having undertaken to be something more than a mere advisory body to the King, made the best of its opportunities. The old Petition of Rights of the year 1628 was fished out of a forgotten nook of the archives. A second and more drastic Bill of Rights demanded that the sovereign of England should belong to the Anglican church. Furthermore it stated that the king had no right to suspend the laws or permit certain privileged citizens to disobey certain laws. It stipulated that "without consent of Parliament no taxes could be levied and no army could be maintained." Thus in the year 1689 did England acquire an amount of liberty unknown in any other country of Europe.

But it is not only on account of this great liberal measure that the rule of William in England is still remembered. During his lifetime, government by a "responsible" ministry first developed. No king of course can rule alone. He needs a few trusted advisors. The Tudors had

their Great Council which was composed of Nobles and Clergy. This body grew too large. It was restricted to the small "Privy Council." In the course of time it became the custom of these councillors to meet the king in a cabinet in the palace. Hence they were called the "Cabinet Council." After a short while they were known as the "Cabinet."

William, like most English sovereigns before him, had chosen his advisors from among all parties. But with the increased strength of Parliament, he had found it impossible to direct the politics of the country with the help of the Tories while the Whigs had a majority in the house of Commons. Therefore the Tories had been dismissed and the Cabinet Council had been composed entirely of Whigs. A few years later when the Whigs lost their power in the House of Commons, the king, for the sake of convenience, was obliged to look for his support among the leading Tories. Until his death in 1702, William was too busy fighting Louis of France to bother much about the government of England. Practically all important affairs had been left to his Cabinet Council. When William's sister-in-law, Anne, succeeded him in 1702 this condition of affairs continued. When she died in 1714 (and unfortunately not a single one of her seventeen children survived her) the throne went to George I of the House of Hanover, the son of Sophie, granddaughter of James I.

This somewhat rustic monarch, who never learned a word of English, was entirely lost in the complicated mazes of England's political arrangements. He left everything to his Cabinet Council and kept away from their meetings, which bored him as he did not understand a single sentence. In this way the Cabinet got into the habit of ruling England and Scotland (whose Parliament had been joined to that of England in 1707) without bothering the King, who was apt to spend a great deal of his time on the continent.

During the reign of George I and George II, a succession of great Whigs (of whom one, Sir Robert Walpole, held office for twenty-one years) formed the Cabinet Council of the King. Their leader was finally recognised as the official leader not only of the actual Cabinet but also of the majority party in power in Parliament. The attempts of George III to take matters into his own hands and not to leave the actual business of government to his Cabinet were so disastrous that they were never repeated. And from the earliest years of the eighteenth century on, England enjoyed representative government, with a responsible ministry which conducted the affairs of the land.

To be quite true, this government did not represent all classes of society. Less than one man in a dozen had the right to vote. But it was the foundation for the modern representative form of government. In a quiet and orderly fashion it took the power away from the King and placed it in the hands of an ever increasing number of popular representatives. It did not bring the millenium to England, but it saved that country from most of the revolutionary outbreaks which proved so disastrous to the European continent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

THE BALANCE OF POWER

IN FRANCE ON THE OTHER HAND THE "DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS" CONTINUED WITH GREATER POMP AND SPLENDOR THAN EVER BEFORE AND THE AMBITION OF THE RULER WAS ONLY TEMPERED BY THE NEWLY INVENTED LAW OF THE "BALANCE OF POWER"

As a contrast to the previous chapter, let me tell you what happened in France during the years when the English people were fighting for their liberty. The happy combination of the right man in the right country at the right moment is very rare in History. Louis XIV was a realisation of this ideal, as far as France was concerned, but the rest of Europe would have been happier without him.

The country over which the young king was called to rule was the most populous and the most brilliant nation of that day. Louis came to the throne when Mazarin and Richelieu, the two great Cardinals, had just hammered the ancient French Kingdom into the most strongly centralised state of the seventeenth century. He was himself a man of extraordinary ability. We, the people of the twentieth century, are still surrounded by the memories of the glorious age of the Sun King. Our social life is based upon the perfection of manners and the elegance of expression attained at the court of Louis. In international and diplomatic relations, French is still the official language of diplomacy and international gatherings because two centuries ago it reached a polished elegance and a purity of expression which no other tongue had as yet been able to equal. The theatre of King Louis still teaches us lessons which we are only too slow in learning. During his reign the French Academy (an invention of Richelieu) came to occupy a position in the world of letters which other countries have flattered by their imitation. We might continue this list for many pages. It is no matter of mere chance that our modern bill-of-fare is printed in French. The very difficult art of decent cooking, one of the highest expressions of civilisation, was first practiced for the benefit of the great Monarch. The age of Louis XIV was a time of splendour and grace which can still teach us a lot.

Unfortunately this brilliant picture has another side which was far less encouraging. Glory abroad too often means misery at home, and France was no exception to this rule. Louis XIV succeeded his father in the year 1643. He died in the year 1715. That means that the government of France was in the hands of one single man for seventy-two years, almost two whole generations.

It will be well to get a firm grasp of this idea, "one single man." Louis was the first of a long list of monarchs who in many countries established that particular form of highly efficient autocracy which we call "enlightened despotism." He did not like kings who merely played at being rulers and turned official affairs into a pleasant picnic. The Kings of that enlightened age worked harder than any of their subjects. They got up earlier and went to bed later than anybody else, and felt their "divine responsibility" quite as strongly as their "divine right" which allowed them to rule without consulting their subjects.

Of course, the king could not attend to everything in person. He was obliged to surround himself with a few helpers and councillors. One or two generals, some experts upon foreign politics, a few clever financiers and economists would do for this purpose. But these dignitaries could act only through their Sovereign. They had no individual existence. To the mass of the people, the Sovereign actually represented in his own sacred person the government of their country. The glory of the common fatherland became the glory of a single dynasty. It meant the exact opposite of our own American ideal. France was ruled of and by and for the House of Bourbon.

The disadvantages of such a system are clear. The King grew to be everything. Everybody else grew to be nothing at all. The old and useful nobility was gradually forced to give up its former shares in the government of the provinces. A little Royal bureaucrat, his fingers splashed with ink, sitting behind the greenish windows of a government building in faraway Paris, now performed the task which a hundred years before had been the duty of the feudal Lord. The feudal Lord, deprived of all work, moved to Paris to amuse himself as best he could at the court. Soon his estates began to suffer from that very dangerous economic sickness, known as "Absentee Landlordism." Within a single generation, the industrious and useful feudal administrators had become the well-mannered but quite useless loafers of the court of Versailles.

Louis was ten years old when the peace of Westphalia was concluded and the House of Habsburg, as a result of the Thirty Years War, lost its predominant position in Europe. It was inevitable that a man with his ambition should use so favourable a moment to gain for his own dynasty the honours which had formerly been held by the Habsburgs. In the year 1660 Louis had married Maria Theresa, daughter of the King of Spain. Soon afterward, his father-in-law, Philip IV, one of the

half-witted Spanish Habsburgs, died. At once Louis claimed the Spanish Netherlands (Belgium) as part of his wife's dowry. Such an acquisition would have been disastrous to the peace of Europe, and would have threatened the safety of the Protestant states. Under the leadership of Jan de Witt, Raadpensionaris or Foreign Minister of the United Seven Netherlands, the first great international alliance, the Triple Alliance of Sweden, England and Holland, of the year 1661, was concluded. It did not last long. With money and fair promises Louis bought up both King Charles and the Swedish Estates. Holland was betrayed by her allies and was left to her own fate. In the year 1672 the French invaded the low countries. They marched to the heart of the country. For a second time the dikes were opened and the Royal Sun of France set amidst the mud of the Dutch marshes. The peace of Nimwegen which was concluded in 1678 settled nothing but merely anticipated another war.

A second war of aggression from 1689 to 1697, ending with the Peace of Ryswick, also failed to give Louis that position in the affairs of Europe to which he aspired. His old enemy, Jan de Witt, had been murdered by the Dutch rabble, but his successor, William III (whom you met in the last chapter), had checkmated all efforts of Louis to make France the ruler of Europe.

The great war for the Spanish succession, begun in the year 1701, immediately after the death of Charles II, the last of the Spanish Habsburgs, and ended in 1713 by the Peace of Utrecht, remained equally undecided, but it had ruined the treasury of Louis. On land the French king had been victorious, but the navies of England and Holland had spoiled all hope for an ultimate French victory; besides the long struggle had given birth to a new and fundamental principle of international politics, which thereafter made it impossible for one single nation to rule the whole of Europe or the whole of the world for any length of time.

That was the so-called "balance of power." It was not a written law but for three centuries it has been obeyed as closely as are the laws of nature. The people who originated the idea maintained that Europe, in its nationalistic stage of development, could only survive when there should be an absolute balance of the many conflicting interests of the entire continent. No single power or single dynasty must ever be allowed to dominate the others. During the Thirty Years War, the Habsburgs had been the victims of the application of this law. They, however, had been unconscious victims. The issues during that struggle were so clouded in a haze of religious strife that we do not get a very clear view of the main tendencies of that great conflict. But from that time on, we begin to see how cold, economic considerations and calculations prevail in all matters of international importance. We discover the development of a new type of statesman, the statesman with the personal feelings of the slide-rule and the cash-register. Jan de Witt was the first successful exponent of this new school of politics. William III was the first great pupil. And Louis XIV with all his fame and glory, was the first conscious victim. There have been many others since.

THE RISE OF RUSSIA

THE STORY OF THE MYSTERIOUS MOSCOVITE EMPIRE WHICH SUDDENLY BURST UPON THE GRAND POLITICAL STAGE OF EUROPE

IN the year 1492, as you know, Columbus discovered America. Early in the year, a Tyrolese by the name of Schnups, travelling as the head of a scientific expedition for the Archbishop of Tyrol, and provided with the best letters of introduction and excellent credit tried to reach the mythical town of Moscow. He did not succeed. When he reached the frontiers of this vast Moscovite state which was vaguely supposed to exist in the extreme Eastern part of Europe, he was firmly turned back. No foreigners were wanted. And Schnups went to visit the heathen Turk in Constantinople, in order that he might have something to report to his clerical master when he came back from his explorations.

Sixty-one years later, Richard Chancellor, trying to discover the North-eastern passage to the Indies, and blown by an ill wind into the White Sea, reached the mouth of the Dwina and found the Moscovite village of Kholmogory, a few hours from the spot where in 1584 the town of Archangel was founded. This time the foreign visitors were requested to come to Moscow and show themselves to the Grand Duke. They went and returned to England with the first commercial treaty ever concluded between Russia and the western world. Other nations soon followed and something became known of this mysterious land.

Geographically, Russia is a vast plain. The Ural mountains are low and form no barrier against invaders. The rivers are broad but often shallow. It was an ideal territory for nomads.

While the Roman Empire was founded, grew in power and disappeared again, Slavic tribes, who had long since left their homes in Central Asia, wandered aimlessly through the forests and plains of the region between the Dniester and Dnieper rivers. The Greeks had sometimes met these Slavs and a few travellers of the third and fourth centuries mention them. Otherwise they were as little known as were the Nevada Indians in the year 1800.

Unfortunately for the peace of these primitive peoples, a very convenient trade-route ran through their country. This was the main road from northern Europe to Constantinople. It followed the coast of the Baltic until the Neva was reached. Then it crossed Lake Ladoga and went southward along the Volkhov river. Then through Lake Ilmen and up the small Lovat river. Then there was a short portage until the Dnieper was reached. Then down the Dnieper into the Black Sea.

The Norsemen knew of this road at a very early date. In the ninth century they began to settle in northern Russia, just as other Norsemen were laying the foundation for independent states in Germany and France. But in the year 862, three Norsemen, brothers, crossed the Baltic and founded three small dynasties. Of the three brothers, only one, Rurik, lived for a number of years. He took possession of the territory of his brothers, and twenty years after the arrival of this first Norseman, a Slavic state had been established with Kiev as its capital.

From Kiev to the Black Sea is a short distance. Soon the existence of an organised Slavic State became known in Constantinople. This meant a new field for the zealous missionaries of the Christian faith. Byzantine monks followed the Dnieper on their way northward and soon reached the heart of Russia. They found the people worshipping strange gods who were supposed to dwell in woods and rivers and in mountain caves. They taught them the story of Jesus. There was no competition from the side of Roman missionaries. These good men were too busy educating the heathen Teutons to bother about the distant Slavs. Hence Russia received its religion and its alphabet and its first ideas of art and architecture from the Byzantine monks and as the Byzantine empire (a relic of the eastern Roman empire) had become very oriental and had lost many of its European traits, the Russians suffered in consequence.

Politically speaking these new states of the great Russian plains did not fare well. It was the Norse habit to divide every inheritance equally among all the sons. No sooner had a small state been founded but it was broken up among eight or nine heirs who in turn left their territory to an ever increasing number of descendants. It was inevitable that these small competing states should quarrel among themselves. Anarchy was the order of the day. And when the red glow of the eastern horizon told the people of the threatened invasion of a savage Asiatic tribe, the little states were too weak and too divided to render any sort of defence against this terrible enemy.

It was in the year 1224 that the first great Tartar invasion took place and that the hordes of Jenghiz Khan, the conqueror of China, Bokhara, Tashkent and Turkestan made their first appearance in the west. The Slavic armies were beaten near the Kalka river and Russia was at the mercy of the Mongolians. Just as suddenly as they had come they disappeared. Thirteen years

later, in 1237, however, they returned. In less than five years they conquered every part of the vast Russian plains. Until the year 1380 when Dmitry Donskoi, Grand Duke of Moscow, beat them on the plains of Kulikovo, the Tartars were the masters of the Russian people.

All in all, it took the Russians two centuries to deliver themselves from this yoke. For a yoke it was and a most offensive and objectionable one. It turned the Slavic peasants into miserable slaves. No Russian could hope to survive unless he was willing to creep before a dirty little yellow man who sat in a tent somewhere in the heart of the steppes of southern Russia and spat at him. It deprived the mass of the people of all feeling of honour and independence. It made hunger and misery and maltreatment and personal abuse the normal state of human existence. Until at last the average Russian, were he peasant or nobleman, went about his business like a neglected dog who has been beaten so often that his spirit has been broken and he dare not wag his tail without permission.

There was no escape. The horsemen of the Tartar Khan were fast and merciless. The endless prairie did not give a man a chance to cross into the safe territory of his neighbour. He must keep quiet and bear what his yellow master decided to inflict upon him or run the risk of death. Of course, Europe might have interfered. But Europe was engaged upon business of its own, fighting the quarrels between the Pope and the emperor or suppressing this or that or the other heresy. And so Europe left the Slav to his fate, and forced him to work out his own salvation.

The final saviour of Russia was one of the many small states, founded by the early Norse rulers. It was situated in the heart of the Russian plain. Its capital, Moscow, was upon a steep hill on the banks of the Moskwa river. This little principality, by dint of pleasing the Tartar (when it was necessary to please), and opposing him (when it was safe to do so), had, during the middle of the fourteenth century made itself the leader of a new national life. It must be remembered that the Tartars were wholly deficient in constructive political ability. They could only destroy. Their chief aim in conquering new territories was to obtain revenue. To get this revenue in the form of taxes, it was necessary to allow certain remnants of the old political organization to continue. Hence there were many little towns, surviving by the grace of the Great Khan, that they might act as tax-gatherers and rob their neighbours for the benefit of the Tartar treasury.

The state of Moscow, growing fat at the expense of the surrounding territory, finally became strong enough to risk open rebellion against its masters, the Tartars. It was successful and its fame as the leader in the cause of Russian independence made Moscow the natural centre for all those who still believed in a better future for the Slavic race. In the year 1458, Constantinople was taken by the Turks. Ten years later, under the rule of Ivan III, Moscow informed the western world that the Slavic state laid claim to the worldly and spiritual inheritance of the lost Byzantine Empire, and such traditions of the Roman empire as had survived in Constantinople. A generation afterwards, under Ivan the Terrible, the grand dukes of Moscow were strong enough to adopt the title of Caesar, or Tsar, and to demand recognition by the western powers of Europe.

In the year 1598, with Feodor the First, the old Muscovite dynasty, descendants of the original Norseman Rurik, came to an end. For the next seven years, a Tartar half-breed, by the name of Boris Godunow, reigned as Tsar. It was during this period that the future destiny of the large masses of the Russian people was decided. This Empire was rich in land but very poor in money. There was no trade and there were no factories. Its few cities were dirty villages. It was composed of a strong central government and a vast number of illiterate peasants. This government, a mixture of Slavic, Norse, Byzantine and Tartar influences, recognised nothing beyond the interest of the state. To defend this state, it needed an army. To gather the taxes, which were necessary to pay the soldiers, it needed civil servants. To pay these many officials it needed land. In the vast wilderness on the east and west there was a sufficient supply of this commodity. But land without a few labourers to till the fields and tend the cattle, has no

value. Therefore the old nomadic peasants were robbed of one privilege after the other, until finally, during the first year of the sixteenth century, they were formally made a part of the soil upon which they lived. The Russian peasants ceased to be free men. They became serfs or slaves and they remained serfs until the year 1861, when their fate had become so terrible that they were beginning to die out.

In the seventeenth century, this new state with its growing territory which was spreading quickly into Siberia, had become a force with which the rest of Europe was obliged to reckon. In 1618, after the death of Boris Godunow, the Russian nobles had elected one of their own number to be Tsar. He was Michael, the son of Feodor, of the Moscow family of Romanow who lived in a little house just outside the Kremlin.

In the year 1672 his great-grandson, Peter, the son of another Feodor, was born. When the child was ten years old, his step-sister Sophia took possession of the Russian throne. The little boy was allowed to spend his days in the suburbs of the national capital, where the foreigners lived. Surrounded by Scotch barkeepers, Dutch traders, Swiss apothecaries, Italian barbers, French dancing teachers and German school-masters, the young prince obtained a first but rather extraordinary impression of that far-away and mysterious Europe where things were done differently.

When he was seventeen years old, he suddenly pushed Sister Sophia from the throne. Peter himself became the ruler of Russia. He was not contented with being the Tsar of a semi-barbarous and half-Asiatic people. He must be the sovereign head of a civilised nation. To change Russia overnight from a Byzantine-Tartar state into a European empire was no small undertaking. It needed strong hands and a capable head. Peter possessed both. In the year 1698, the great operation of grafting Modern Europe upon Ancient Russia was performed. The patient did not die. But he never got over the shock, as the events of the last five years have shown very plainly.

RUSSIA vs. SWEDEN

RUSSIA AND SWEDEN FIGHT MANY WARS TO DECIDE WHO SHALL BE THE LEADING POWER OF NORTH-EASTERN EUROPE

IN the year 1698, Tsar Peter set forth upon his first voyage to western Europe. He travelled by way of Berlin and went to Holland and to England. As a child he had almost been drowned sailing a homemade boat in the duck pond of his father's country home. This passion for water remained with him to the end of his life. In a practical way it showed itself in his wish to give his land-locked domains access to the open sea.

While the unpopular and harsh young ruler was away from home, the friends of the old Russian ways in Moscow set to work to undo all his reforms. A sudden rebellion among his life-guards, the Streltsi regiment, forced Peter to hasten home by the fast mail. He appointed himself executioner-in-chief and the Streltsi were hanged and quartered and killed to the last man. Sister Sophia, who had been the head of the rebellion, was locked up in a cloister and the rule of Peter began in earnest. This scene was repeated in the year 1716 when Peter had gone on his second western trip. That time the reactionaries followed the leadership of Peter's half-witted son, Alexis. Again the Tsar returned in great haste. Alexis was beaten to death in his prison cell and the friends of the old fashioned Byzantine ways marched thousands of dreary miles to their final destination in the Siberian lead mines. After that, no further outbreaks of popular discontent took place. Until the time of his death, Peter could reform in peace.

It is not easy to give you a list of his reforms in chronological order. The Tsar worked with furious haste. He followed no system. He issued his decrees with such rapidity that it is

difficult to keep count. Peter seemed to feel that everything that had ever happened before was entirely wrong. The whole of Russia therefore must be changed within the shortest possible time. When he died he left behind a well-trained army of 200,000 men and a navy of fifty ships. The old system of government had been abolished over night. The Duma, or convention of Nobles, had been dismissed and in its stead, the Tsar had surrounded himself with an advisory board of state officials, called the Senate.

Russia was divided into eight large "governments" or provinces. Roads were constructed. Towns were built. Industries were created wherever it pleased the Tsar, without any regard for the presence of raw material. Canals were dug and mines were opened in the mountains of the east. In this land of illiterates, schools were founded and establishments of higher learning, together with Universities and hospitals and professional schools. Dutch naval engineers and tradesmen and artisans from all over the world were encouraged to move to Russia. Printing shops were established, but all books must be first read by the imperial censors. The duties of each class of society were carefully written down in a new law and the entire system of civil and criminal laws was gathered into a series of printed volumes. The old Russian costumes were abolished by Imperial decree, and policemen, armed with scissiors, watching all the country roads, changed the long-haired Russian mou- jiks suddenly into a pleasing imitation of smooth-shaven west. Europeans.

In religious matters, the Tsar tolerated no division of power. There must be no chance of a rivalry between an Emperor and a Pope as had happened in Europe. In the year 1721, Peter made himself head of the Russian Church. The Patriarchate of Moscow was abolished and the Holy Synod made its appearance as the highest source of authority in all matters of the Established Church.

Since, however, these many reforms could not be successful while the old Russian elements had a rallying point in the town of Moscow, Peter decided to move his government to a new capital. Amidst the unhealthy marshes of the Baltic Sea the Tsar built this new city. He began to reclaim the land in the year 1703. Forty thousand peasants worked for years to lay the foundations for this Imperial city. The Swedes attacked Peter and tried to destroy his town and illness and misery killed tens of thousands of the peasants. But the work was continued, winter and summer, and the ready-made town soon began to grow. In the year 1712, it was officially declared to be the "Imperial Residence." A dozen years later it had 75,000 inhabitants. Twice a year the whole city was flooded by the Neva. But the terrific will-power of the Tsar created dykes and canals and the floods ceased to do harm. When Peter died in 1725 he was the owner of the largest city in northern Europe.

Of course, this sudden growth of so dangerous a rival had been a source of great worry to all the neighbours. From his side, Peter had watched with interest the many adventures of his Baltic rival, the kingdom of Sweden. In the year 1654, Christina, the only daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, the hero of the Thirty Years War, had renounced the throne and had gone to Rome to end her days as a devout Catholic. A Protestant nephew of Gustavus Adolphus had succeeded the last Queen of the House of Vasa. Under Charles X and Charles XI, the new dynasty had brought Sweden to its highest point of development. But in 1697, Charles XI died suddenly and was succeeded by a boy of fifteen, Charles XII.

This was the moment for which many of the northern states had waited. During the great religious wars of the seventeenth century, Sweden had grown at the expense of her neighbours. The time had come, so the owners thought, to balance the account. At once war broke out between Russia, Poland, Denmark and Saxony on the one side, and Sweden on the other. The raw and untrained armies of Peter were disastrously beaten by Charles in the famous battle of Narva in November of the year 1700. Then Charles, one of the most interesting military geniuses of that century, turned against his other enemies and for nine years he hacked and burned his way through the villages and cities of Poland, Saxony, Denmark and the Baltic provinces, while Peter drilled and trained his soldiers in distant Russia.

As a result, in the year 1709, in the battle of Poltawa, the Moscovites destroyed the exhausted armies of Sweden. Charles continued to be a highly picturesque figure, a wonderful hero of romance, but in his vain attempt to have his revenge, he ruined his own country. In the year 1718, he was accidentally killed or assassinated (we do not know which) and when peace was made in 1721, in the town of Nystadt, Sweden had lost all of her former Baltic possessions except Finland. The new Russian state, created by Peter, had become the leading power of northern Europe. But already a new rival was on the way. The Prussian state was taking shape.

THE RISE OF PRUSSIA

THE EXTRAORDINARY RISE OF A LITTLE STATE IN A DREARY PART OF NORTHERN GERMANY, CALLED PRUSSIA

THE history of Prussia is the history of a frontier district. In the ninth century, Charlemagne had transferred the old centre of civilisation from the Mediterranean to the wild regions of northwestern Europe. His Frankish soldiers had pushed the frontier of Europe further and further towards the east. They had conquered many lands from the heathenish Slavs and Lithuanians who were living in the plain between the Baltic Sea and the Carpathian Mountains, and the Franks administered those outlying districts just as the United States used to administer her territories before they achieved the dignity of statehood.

The frontier state of Brandenburg had been originally founded by Charlemagne to defend his eastern possessions against raids of the wild Saxon tribes. The Wends, a Slavic tribe which inhabited that region, were subjugated during the tenth century and their market-place, by the name of Brennabor, became the centre of and gave its name to the new province of Brandenburg.

During the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, a succession of noble families exercised the functions of imperial governor in this frontier state. Finally in the fifteenth century, the House of Hohenzollern made its appearance, and as Electors of Brandenburg, commenced to change a sandy and forlorn frontier territory into one of the most efficient empires of the modern world.

These Hohenzollerns, who have just been removed from the historical stage by the combined forces of Europe and America, came originally from southern Germany. They were of very humble origin. In the twelfth century a certain Frederick of Hohenzollern had made a lucky marriage and had been appointed keeper of the castle of Nuremberg. His descendants had used every chance and every opportunity to improve their power and after several centuries of watchful grabbing, they had been appointed to the dignity of Elector, the name given to those sovereign princes who were supposed to elect the Emperors of the old German Empire. During the Reformation, they had taken the side of the Protestants and the early seventeenth century found them among the most powerful of the north German princes.

During the Thirty Years War, both Protestants and Catholics had plundered Brandenburg and Prussia with equal zeal. But under Frederick William, the Great Elector, the damage was quickly repaired and by a wise and careful use of all the economic and intellectual forces of the country, a state was founded in which there was practically no waste.

Modern Prussia, a state in which the individual and his wishes and aspirations have been entirely absorbed by the interests of the community as a whole this Prussia dates back to the father of Frederick the Great. Frederick William I was a hard working, parsimonious Prussian sergeant, with a great love for bar-room stories and strong Dutch tobacco, an intense dislike of all frills and feathers, (especially if they were of French origin,) and possessed of but one idea. That idea was Duty. Severe with himself, he tolerated no weakness in his subjects, whether

they be generals or common soldiers. The relation between himself and his son Frederick was never cordial, to say the least. The boorish manners of the father offended the finer spirit of the son. The son's love for French manners, literature, philosophy and music was rejected by the father as a manifestation of sissy-ness. There followed a terrible outbreak between these two strange temperaments. Frederick tried to escape to England. He was caught and court-martialed and forced to witness the decapitation of his best friend who had tried to help him. Thereupon as part of his punishment, the young prince was sent to a little fortress somewhere in the provinces to be taught the details of his future business of being a king. It proved a blessing in disguise. When Frederick came to the throne in 1740, he knew how his country was managed from the birth certificate of a pauper's son to the minutest detail of a complicated annual Budget.

As an author, especially in his book called the "Anti-Macchiavelli," Frederick had expressed his contempt for the political creed of the ancient Florentine historian, who had advised his princely pupils to lie and cheat whenever it was necessary to do so for the benefit of their country. The ideal ruler in Frederick's volume was the first servant of his people, the enlightened despot after the example of Louis XIV. In practice, however, Frederick, while working for his people twenty hours a day, tolerated no one to be near him as a counsellor. His ministers were superior clerks. Prussia was his private possession, to be treated according to his own wishes. And nothing was allowed to interfere with the interest of the state.

In the year 1740 the Emperor Charles VI, of Austria, died. He had tried to make the position of his only daughter, Maria Theresa, secure through a solemn treaty, written black on white, upon a large piece of parchment. But no sooner had the old emperor been deposited in the ancestral crypt of the Habsburg family, than the armies of Frederick were marching towards the Austrian frontier to occupy that part of Silesia for which (together with almost everything else in central Europe) Prussia clamored, on account of some ancient and very doubtful rights of claim. In a number of wars, Frederick conquered all of Silesia, and although he was often very near defeat, he maintained himself in his newly acquired territories against all Austrian counter-attacks.

Europe took due notice of this sudden appearance of a very powerful new state. In the eighteenth century, the Germans were a people who had been ruined by the great religious wars and who were not held in high esteem by any one. Frederick, by an effort as sudden and quite as terrific as that of Peter of Russia, changed this attitude of contempt into one of fear. The internal affairs of Prussia were arranged so skillfully that the subjects had less reason for complaint than elsewhere. The treasury showed an annual surplus instead of a deficit. Torture was abolished. The judiciary system was improved. Good roads and good schools and good universities, together with a scrupulously honest administration, made the people feel that whatever services were demanded of them, they (to speak the vernacular) got their money's worth.

After having been for several centuries the battle field of the French and the Austrians and the Swedes and the Danes and the Poles, Germany, encouraged by the example of Prussia, began to regain self-confidence. And this was the work of the little old man, with his hook-nose and his old uniforms covered with snuff, who said very funny but very unpleasant things about his neighbours, and who played the scandalous game of eighteenth century diplomacy without any regard for the truth, provided he could gain something by his lies. This in spite of his book, "Anti-Macchiavelli." In the year 1786 the end came. His friends were all gone. Children he had never had. He died alone, tended by a single servant and his faithful dogs, whom he loved better than human beings because, as he said, they were never ungrateful and remained true to their friends.

THE MERCANTILE SYSTEM

HOW THE NEWLY FOUNDED NATIONAL OR DYNASTIC STATES OF EUROPE TRIED TO MAKE THEMSELVES RICH AND WHAT WAS MEANT BY THE MERCANTILE SYSTEM

WE have seen how, during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, the states of our modern world began to take shape. Their origins were different in almost every case. Some had been the result of the deliberate effort of a single king. Others had happened by chance. Still others had been the result of favourable natural geographic boundaries. But once they had been founded, they had all of them tried to strengthen their internal administration and to exert the greatest possible influence upon foreign affairs. All this of course had cost a great deal of money. The mediaeval state with its lack of centralised power did not depend upon a rich treasury. The king got his revenues from the crown domains and his civil service paid for itself. The modern centralised state was a more complicated affair. The old knights disappeared and hired government officials or bureaucrats took their place. Army, navy, and internal administration demanded millions. The question then became where was this money to be found?

Gold and silver had been a rare commodity in the middle ages. The average man, as I have told you, never saw a gold piece as long as he lived. Only the inhabitants of the large cities were familiar with silver coin. The discovery of America and the exploitation of the Peruvian mines changed all this. The centre of trade was transferred from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic seaboard. The old “commercial cities” of Italy lost their financial importance. New “commercial nations” took their place and gold and silver were no longer a curiosity.

Through Spain and Portugal and Holland and England, precious metals began to find their way to Europe. The sixteenth century had its own writers on the subject of political economy and they evolved a theory of national wealth which seemed to them entirely sound and of the greatest possible benefit to their respective countries. They reasoned that both gold and silver were actual wealth. Therefore they believed that the country with the largest supply of actual cash in the vaults of its treasury and its banks was at the same time the richest country. And since money meant armies, it followed that the richest country was also the most powerful and could rule the rest of the world.

We call this system the “mercantile system,” and it was accepted with the same unquestioning faith with which the early Christians believed in Miracles and many of the present-day American business men believe in the Tariff. In practice, the Mercantile system worked out as follows: To get the largest surplus of precious metals a country must have a favourable balance of export trade. If you can export more to your neighbour than he exports to your own country, he will owe you money and will be obliged to send you some of his gold. Hence you gain and he loses. As a result of this creed, the economic program of almost every seventeenth century state was as follows:

1. Try to get possession of as many precious metals as you can.
2. Encourage foreign trade in preference to domestic trade.
3. Encourage those industries which change raw materials into exportable finished products.
4. Encourage a large population, for you will need workmen for your factories and an agricultural community does not raise enough workmen.
5. Let the State watch this process and interfere whenever it is necessary to do so.

Instead of regarding International Trade as something akin to a force of nature which would always obey certain natural laws regardless of man's interference, the people of the sixteenth

and seventeenth centuries tried to regulate their commerce by the help of official decrees and royal laws and financial help on the part of the government.

In the sixteenth century Charles V adopted this Mercantile System (which was then something entirely new) and introduced it into his many possessions. Elizabeth of England flattered him by her imitation. The Bourbons, especially King Louis XIV, were fanatical adherents of this doctrine and Colbert, his great minister of finance, became the prophet of Mercantilism to whom all Europe looked for guidance.

The entire foreign policy of Cromwell was a practical application of the Mercantile System. It was invariably directed against the rich rival Republic of Holland. For the Dutch shippers, as the common-carriers of the merchandise of Europe, had certain leanings towards free-trade and therefore had to be destroyed at all cost.

It will be easily understood how such a system must affect the colonies. A colony under the Mercantile System became merely a reservoir of gold and silver and spices, which was to be tapped for the benefit of the home country. The Asiatic, American and African supply of precious metals and the raw materials of these tropical countries became a monopoly of the state which happened to own that particular colony. No outsider was ever allowed within the precincts and no native was permitted to trade with a merchant whose ship flew a foreign flag.

Undoubtedly the Mercantile System encouraged the development of young industries in certain countries where there never had been any manufacturing before. It built roads and dug canals and made for better means of transportation. It demanded greater skill among the workmen and gave the merchant a better social position, while it weakened the power of the landed aristocracy.

On the other hand, it caused very great misery. It made the natives in the colonies the victims of a most shameless exploitation. It exposed the citizens of the home country to an even more terrible fate. It helped in a great measure to turn every land into an armed camp and divided the world into little bits of territory, each working for its own direct benefit, while striving at all times to destroy the power of its neighbours and get hold of their treasures. It laid so much stress upon the importance of owning wealth that "being rich" came to be regarded as the sole virtue of the average citizen. Economic systems come and go like the fashions in surgery and in the clothes of women, and during the nineteenth century the Mercantile System was discarded in favor of a system of free and open competition. At least, so I have been told.

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

AT THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY EUROPE HEARD STRANGE REPORTS OF SOMETHING WHICH HAD HAPPENED IN THE WILDERNESS; OF THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT. THE DESCENDANTS OF THE MEN WHO HAD PUNISHED KING CHARLES FOR HIS INSISTENCE UPON HIS "DIVINE RIGHTS" ADDED A NEW CHAPTER TO THE OLD STORY OF THE STRUGGLE FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT

FOR the sake of convenience, we ought to go back a few centuries and repeat the early history of the great struggle for colonial possessions.

As soon as a number of European nations had been created upon the new basis of national or dynastic interests, that is to say, during and immediately after the Thirty Years War, their rulers, backed up by the capital of their merchants and the ships of their trading companies, continued the fight for more territory in Asia, Africa and America.

The Spaniards and the Portuguese had been exploring the Indian Sea and the Pacific Ocean for more than a century ere Holland and England appeared upon the stage. This proved an advantage to

the latter. The first rough work had already been done. What is more, the earliest navigators had so often made themselves unpopular with the Asiatic and American and African natives that both the English and the Dutch were welcomed as friends and deliverers. We cannot claim any superior virtues for either of these two races. But they were merchants before everything else. They never allowed religious considerations to interfere with their practical common sense. During their first relations with weaker races, all European nations have behaved with shocking brutality. The English and the Dutch, however, knew better where to draw the line. Provided they got their spices and their gold and silver and their taxes, they were willing to let the native live as it best pleased him.

It was not very difficult for them therefore to establish themselves in the richest parts of the world. But as soon as this had been accomplished, they began to fight each other for still further possessions. Strangely enough, the colonial wars were never settled in the colonies themselves. They were decided three thousand miles away by the navies of the contending countries. It is one of the most interesting principles of ancient and modern warfare (one of the few reliable laws of history) that "the nation which commands the sea is also the nation which commands the land." So far this law has never failed to work, but the modern airplane may have changed it. In the eighteenth century, however, there were no flying machines and it was the British navy which gained for England her vast American and Indian and African colonies.

The series of naval wars between England and Holland in the seventeenth century does not interest us here. It ended as all such encounters between hopelessly ill-matched powers will end. But the warfare between England and France (her other rival) is of greater importance to us, for while the superior British fleet in the end defeated the French navy, a great deal of the preliminary fighting was done on our own American continent. In this vast country, both France and England claimed everything which had been discovered and a lot more which the eye of no white man had ever seen. In 1497 Cabot had landed in the northern part of America and twenty-seven years later, Giovanni Verrazano had visited these coasts. Cabot had flown the English flag. Verrazano had sailed under the French flag. Hence both England and France proclaimed themselves the owners of the entire continent.

During the seventeenth century, some ten small English colonies had been founded between Maine and the Carolinas. They were usually a haven of refuge for some particular sect of English dissenters, such as the Puritans, who in the year 1620 went to New England, or the Quakers, who settled in Pennsylvania in 1681. They were small frontier communities, nestling close to the shores of the ocean, where people had gathered to make a new home and begin life among happier surroundings, far away from royal supervision and interference.

The French colonies, on the other hand, always remained a possession of the crown. No Huguenots or Protestants were allowed in these colonies for fear that they might contaminate the Indians with their dangerous Protestant doctrines and would perhaps interfere with the missionary work of the Jesuit fathers. The English colonies, therefore, had been founded upon a much healthier basis than their French neighbours and rivals. They were an expression of the commercial energy of the English middle classes, while the French settlements were inhabited by people who had crossed the ocean as servants of the king and who expected to return to Paris at the first possible chance.

Politically, however, the position of the English colonies was far from satisfactory. The French had discovered the mouth of the Saint Lawrence in the sixteenth century. From the region of the Great Lakes they had worked their way southward, had descended the Mississippi and had built several fortifications along the Gulf of Mexico. After a century of exploration, a line of sixty French forts cut off the English settlements along the Atlantic seaboard from the interior.

The English land grants, made to the different colonial companies had given them "all land from sea to sea." This sounded well on paper, but in practice, British territory ended where the

line of French fortifications began. To break through this barrier was possible but it took both men and money and caused a series of horrible border wars in which both sides murdered their white neighbours, with the help of the Indian tribes.

As long as the Stuarts had ruled England there had been no danger of war with France. The Stuarts needed the Bourbons in their attempt to establish an autocratic form of government and to break the power of Parliament. But in 1689 the last of the Stuarts had disappeared from British soil and Dutch William, the great enemy of Louis XIV succeeded him. From that time on, until the Treaty of Paris of 1763, France and England fought for the possession of India and North America.

During these wars, as I have said before, the English navies invariably beat the French. Cut off from her colonies, France lost most of her possessions, and when peace was declared, the entire North American continent had fallen into British hands and the great work of exploration of Cartier, Champlain, La Salle, Marquette and a score of others was lost to France.

Only a very small part of this vast domain was inhabited. From Massachusetts in the north, where the Pilgrims (a sect of Puritans who were very intolerant and who therefore had found no happiness either in Anglican England or Calvinist Holland) had landed in the year 1620, to the Carolinas and Virginia (the tobacco-raising provinces which had been founded entirely for the sake of profit), stretched a thin line of sparsely populated territory. But the men who lived in this new land of fresh air and high skies were very different from their brethren of the mother country. In the wilderness they had learned independence and self-reliance. They were the sons of hardy and energetic ancestors. Lazy and timorous people did not cross the ocean in those days. The American colonists hated the restraint and the lack of breathing space which had made their lives in the old country so very unhappy. They meant to be their own masters. This the ruling classes of England did not seem to understand. The government annoyed the colonists and the colonists, who hated to be bothered in this way, began to annoy the British government.

Bad feeling caused more bad feeling. It is not necessary to repeat here in detail what actually happened and what might have been avoided if the British king had been more intelligent than George III or less given to drowsiness and indifference than his minister, Lord North. The British colonists, when they understood that peaceful arguments would not settle the difficulties, took to arms. From being loyal subjects, they turned rebels, who exposed themselves to the punishment of death when they were captured by the German soldiers, whom George hired to do his fighting after the pleasant custom of that day, when Teutonic princes sold whole regiments to the highest bidder.

The war between England and her American colonies lasted seven years. During most of that time, the final success of the rebels seemed very doubtful. A great number of the people, especially in the cities, had remained loyal to their king. They were in favour of a compromise, and would have been willing to sue for peace. But the great figure of Washington stood guard over the cause of the colonists.

Able assisted by a handful of brave men, he used his steadfast but badly equipped armies to weaken the forces of the king. Time and again when defeat seemed unavoidable, his strategy turned the tide of battle. Often his men were ill-fed. During the winter they lacked shoes and coats and were forced to live in unhealthy dug-outs. But their trust in their great leader was absolute and they stuck it out until the final hour of victory.

But more interesting than the campaigns of Washington or the diplomatic triumphs of Benjamin Franklin who was in Europe getting money from the French government and the Amsterdam bankers, was an event which occurred early in the revolution. The representatives of the different colonies had gathered in Philadelphia to discuss matters of common importance. It was the first year of the Revolution. Most of the big towns of the sea coast were still in the hands of the

British. Reinforcements from England were arriving by the ship load. Only men who were deeply convinced of the righteousness of their cause would have found the courage to take the momentous decision of the months of June and July of the year 1776.

In June, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia proposed a motion to the Continental Congress that “these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is and ought to be, totally dissolved.”

The motion was seconded by John Adams of Massachusetts. It was carried on July the second and on July fourth, it was followed by an official Declaration of Independence, which was the work of Thomas Jefferson, a serious and exceedingly capable student of both politics and government and destined to be one of the most famous of our American presidents.

When news of this event reached Europe, and was followed by the final victory of the colonists and the adoption of the famous Constitution of the year 1787 (the first of all written constitutions) it caused great interest. The dynastic system of the highly centralised states which had been developed after the great religious wars of the seventeenth century had reached the height of its power. Everywhere the palace of the king had grown to enormous proportions, while the cities of the royal realm were being surrounded by rapidly growing acres of slums. The inhabitants of those slums were showing signs of restlessness. They were quite helpless. But the higher classes, the nobles and the professional men, they too were beginning to have certain doubts about the economic and political conditions under which they lived. The success of the American colonists showed them that many things were possible which had been held impossible only a short time before.

According to the poet, the shot which opened the battle of Lexington was “heard around the world.” That was a bit of an exaggeration. The Chinese and the Japanese and the Russians (not to speak of the Australians, who had just been re-discovered by Captain Cook, whom they killed for his trouble,) never heard of it at all. But it carried across the Atlantic Ocean. It landed in the powder house of European discontent and in France it caused an explosion which rocked the entire continent from Petrograd to Madrid and buried the representatives of the old statecraft and the old diplomacy under several tons of democratic bricks.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

THE GREAT FRENCH REVOLUTION PROCLAIMS THE PRINCIPLES OF LIBERTY, FRATERNITY AND EQUALITY UNTO ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE EARTH

BEFORE we talk about a revolution it is just as well that we explain just what this word means. In the terms of a great Russian writer (and Russians ought to know what they are talking about in this field) a revolution is “a swift overthrow, in a few years, of institutions which have taken centuries to root in the soil, and seem so fixed and immovable that even the most ardent reformers hardly dare to attack them in their writings. It is the fall, the crumbling away in a brief period, of all that up to that time has composed the essence of social, religious, political and economic life in a nation.”

Such a revolution took place in France in the eighteenth century when the old civilisation of the country had grown stale. The king in the days of Louis XIV had become EVERYTHING and was the state. The Nobility, formerly the civil servant of the federal state, found itself without any duties and became a social ornament of the royal court.

This French state of the eighteenth century, however, cost incredible sums of money. This money had to be produced in the form of taxes. Unfortunately the kings of France had not been strong enough to force the nobility and the clergy to pay their share of these taxes. Hence the taxes were paid entirely by the agricultural population. But the peasants living in dreary hovels, no longer in intimate contact with their former landlords, but victims of cruel and incompetent land agents, were going from bad to worse. Why should they work and exert themselves? Increased returns upon their land merely meant more taxes and nothing for themselves and therefore they neglected their fields as much as they dared.

Hence we have a king who wanders in empty splendour through the vast halls of his palaces, habitually followed by hungry office seekers, all of whom live upon the revenue obtained from peasants who are no better than the beasts of the fields. It is not a pleasant picture, but it is not exaggerated. There was, however, another side to the so-called "Ancien Regime" which we must keep in mind.

A wealthy middle class, closely connected with the nobility (by the usual process of the rich banker's daughter marrying the poor baron's son) and a court composed of all the most entertaining people of France, had brought the polite art of graceful living to its highest development. As the best brains of the country were not allowed to occupy themselves with questions of political economics, they spent their idle hours upon the discussion of abstract ideas.

As fashions in modes of thought and personal behaviour are quite as likely to run to extremes as fashion in dress, it was natural that the most artificial society of that day should take a tremendous interest in what they considered "the simple life." The king and the queen, the absolute and unquestioned proprietors of this country galled France, together with all its colonies and dependencies, went to live in funny little country houses all dressed up as milk-maids and stable-boys and played at being shepherds in a happy vale of ancient Hellas. Around them, their courtiers danced attendance, their court-musicians composed lovely minuets, their court barbers devised more and more elaborate and costly headgear, until from sheer boredom and lack of real jobs, this whole artificial world of Versailles (the great show place which Louis XIV had built far away from his noisy and restless city) talked of nothing but those subjects which were furthest removed from their own lives, just as a man who is starving will talk of nothing except food.

When Voltaire, the courageous old philosopher, playwright, historian and novelist, and the great enemy of all religious and political tyranny, began to throw his bombs of criticism at everything connected with the Established Order of Things, the whole French world applauded him and his theatrical pieces played to standing room only. When Jean Jacques Rousseau waxed sentimental about primitive man and gave his contemporaries delightful descriptions of the happiness of the original inhabitants of this planet, (about whom he knew as little as he did about the children, upon whose education he was the recognised authority,) all France read his "Social Contract" and this society in which the king and the state were one, wept bitter tears when they heard Rousseau's appeal for a return to the blessed days when the real sovereignty had lain in the hands of the people and when the king had been merely the servant of his people.

When Montesquieu published his "Persian Letters" in which two distinguished Persian travellers turn the whole existing society of France topsy-turvy and poke fun at everything from the king down to the lowest of his six hundred pastry cooks, the book immediately went through four editions and assured the writer thousands of readers for his famous discussion of the "Spirit of the Laws" in which the noble Baron compared the excellent English system with the backward system of France and advocated instead of an absolute monarchy the establishment of a state in which the Executive, the Legislative and the Judicial powers should be in separate hands and should work independently of each other. When Lebreton, the Parisian book-seller, announced that Messieurs Diderot, d'Alembert, Turgot and a score of other distinguished writers were going to

publish an Encyclopaedia which was to contain "all the new ideas and the new science and the new knowledge," the response from the side of the public was most satisfactory, and when after twenty-two years the last of the twenty-eight volumes had been finished, the somewhat belated interference of the police could not repress the enthusiasm with which French society received this most important but very dangerous contribution to the discussions of the day.

Here, let me give you a little warning. When you read a novel about the French revolution or see a play or a movie, you will easily get the impression that the Revolution was the work of the rabble from the Paris slums. It was nothing of the kind. The mob appears often upon the "evolutionary stage, but invariably at the instigation and under the leadership of those middle-class professional men who used the hungry multitude as an efficient ally in their warfare upon the king and his court. But the fundamental ideas which caused the revolution were invented by a few brilliant minds, and they were at first introduced into the charming drawing-rooms of the "Ancien Regime" to provide amiable diversion for the much-bored ladies and gentlemen of his Majesty's court. These pleasant but careless people played with the dangerous fireworks of social criticism until the sparks fell through the cracks of the floor, which was old and rotten just like the rest of the building. Those sparks unfortunately landed in the basement where age-old rubbish lay in great confusion. Then there was a cry of fire. But the owner of the house who was interested in everything except the management of his property, did not know how to put the small blaze out. The flame spread rapidly and the entire edifice was consumed by the conflagration, which we call the Great French Revolution.

For the sake of convenience, we can divide the French Revolution into two parts. From 1789 to 1791 there was a more or less orderly attempt to introduce a constitutional monarchy. This failed, partly through lack of good faith and stupidity on the part of the monarch himself, partly through circumstances over which nobody had any control.

From 1792 to 1799 there was a Republic and a first effort to establish a democratic form of government. But the actual outbreak of violence had been preceded by many years of unrest and many sincere but ineffectual attempts at reform.

When France had a debt of 4000 million francs and the treasury was always empty and there was not a single thing upon which new taxes could be levied, even good King Louis (who was an expert locksmith and a great hunter but a very poor statesman) felt vaguely that something ought to be done. Therefore he called for Turgot, to be his Minister of Finance. Anne Robert Jacques Turgot, Baron de l'Aulne, a man in the early sixties, a splendid representative of the fast disappearing class of landed gentry, had been a successful governor of a province and was an amateur political economist of great ability. He did his best. Unfortunately, he could not perform miracles. As it was impossible to squeeze more taxes out of the ragged peasants, it was necessary to get the necessary funds from the nobility and clergy who had never paid a centime. This made Turgot the best hated man at the court of Versailles. Furthermore he was obliged to face the enmity of Marie Antoinette, the queen, who was against everybody who dared to mention the word "economy" within her hearing. Soon Turgot was called an "unpractical visionary" and a "theoretical- professor" and then of course his position became untenable. In the year 1776 he was forced to resign.

After the "professor" there came a man of Practical Business Sense. He was an industrious Swiss by the name of Necker who had made himself rich as a grain speculator and the partner in an international banking house. His ambitious wife had pushed him into the government service that she might establish a position for her daughter who afterwards as the wife of the Swedish minister in Paris, Baron de Stael, became a famous literary figure of the early nineteenth century.

Necker set to work with a fine display of zeal just as Turgot had done. In 1781 he published a careful review of the French finances. The king understood nothing of this "Compte Rendu." He

had just sent troops to America to help the colonists against their common enemies, the English. This expedition proved to be unexpectedly expensive and Necker was asked to find the necessary funds. When instead of producing revenue, he published more figures and made statistics and began to use the dreary warning about "necessary economies" his days were numbered. In the year 1781 he was dismissed as an incompetent servant.

After the Professor and the Practical Business Man came the delightful type of financier who will guarantee everybody 100 per cent. per month on their money if only they will trust his own infallible system.

He was Charles Alexandre de Calonne, a pushing official, who had made his career both by his industry and his complete lack of honesty and scruples. He found the country heavily indebted, but he was a clever man, willing to oblige everybody, and he invented a quick remedy. He paid the old debts by contracting new ones. This method is not new. The result since time immemorial has been disastrous. In less than three years more than 800,000,000 francs had been added to the French debt by this charming Minister of Finance who never worried and smilingly signed his name to every demand that was made by His Majesty and by his lovely Queen, who had learned the habit of spending during the days of her youth in Vienna.

At last even the Parliament of Paris (a high court of justice and not a legislative body) although by no means lacking in loyalty to their sovereign, decided that something must be done. Calonne wanted to borrow another 80,000,000 francs. It had been a bad year for the crops and the misery and hunger in the country districts were terrible. Unless something sensible were done, France would go bankrupt. The King as always was unaware of the seriousness of the situation. Would it not be a good idea to consult the representatives of the people? Since 1614 no Estates General had been called together. In view of the threatening panic there was a demand that the Estates be convened. Louis XVI however, who never could take a decision, refused to go as far as that.

To pacify the popular clamour he called together a meeting of the Notables in the year 1787. This merely meant a gathering of the best families who discussed what could and should be done, without touching their feudal and clerical privilege of tax-exemption. It is unreasonable to expect that a certain class of society shall commit political and economic suicide for the benefit of another group of fellow-citizens. The 127 Notables obstinately refused to surrender a single one of their ancient rights. The crowd in the street, being now exceedingly hungry, demanded that Necker, in whom they had confidence, be reappointed. The Notables said "No." The crowd in the street began to smash windows and do other unseemly things. The Notables fled. Calonne was dismissed.

A new colourless Minister of Finance, the Cardinal Lomenie de Brienne, was appointed and Louis, driven by the violent threats of his starving subjects, agreed to call together the old Estates General as "soon as practicable." This vague promise of course satisfied no one.

No such severe winter had been experienced for almost a century. The crops had been either destroyed by floods or had been frozen to death in the fields. All the olive trees of the Provence had been killed. Private charity tried to do something but could accomplish little for eighteen million starving people. Everywhere bread riots occurred. A generation before these would have been put down by the army. But the work of the new philosophical school had begun to bear fruit. People began to understand that a shotgun is no effective remedy for a hungry stomach and even the soldiers (who came from among the people) were no longer to be depended upon. It was absolutely necessary that the king should do something definite to regain the popular goodwill, but again he hesitated.

Here and there in the provinces, little independent Republics were established by followers of the new school. The cry of "no taxation without representation" (the slogan of the American

rebels a quarter of a century before) was heard among the faithful middle classes. France was threatened with general anarchy. To appease the people and to increase the royal popularity, the government unexpectedly suspended the former very strict form of censorship of books. At once a flood of ink descended upon France. Everybody, high or low, criticised and was criticised. More than 2000 pamphlets were published. Lomenie de Brienne was swept away by a storm of abuse. Necker was hastily called back to placate, as best he could, the nation-wide unrest. Immediately the stock market went up thirty per cent. And by common consent, people suspended judgment for a little while longer. In May of 1789 the Estates General were to assemble and then the wisdom of the entire nation would speedily solve the difficult problem of recreating the kingdom of France into a healthy and happy state.

This prevailing idea, that the combined wisdom of the people would be able to solve all difficulties, proved disastrous. It lamed all personal effort during many important months. Instead of keeping the government in his own hands at this critical moment, Necker allowed everything to drift. Hence there was a new outbreak of the acrimonious debate upon the best ways to reform the old kingdom. Everywhere the power of the police weakened. The people of the Paris suburbs, under the leadership of professional agitators, gradually began to discover their strength, and commenced to play the role which was to be theirs all through the years of the great unrest, when they acted as the brute force which was used by the actual leaders of the Revolution to secure those things which could not be obtained in a legitimate fashion.

As a sop to the peasants and the middle class, Necker decided that they should be allowed a double representation in the Estates General. Upon this subject, the Abbe Sieyes then wrote a famous pamphlet, "To what does the Third Estate Amount?" in which he came to the conclusion that the Third Estate (a name given to the middle class) ought to amount to everything, that it had not amounted to anything in the past, and that it now desired to amount to something. He expressed the sentiment of the great majority of the people who had the best interests of the country at heart.

Finally the elections took place under the worst conditions imaginable. When they were over, 308 clergymen, 285 noblemen and 621 representatives of the Third Estate packed their trunks to go to Versailles. The Third Estate was obliged to carry additional luggage. This consisted of voluminous reports called "cahiers" in which the many complaints and grievances of their constituents had been written down. The stage was set for the great final act that was to save France.

The Estates General came together on May 5th, 1789. The king was in a bad humour. The Clergy and the Nobility let it be known that they were unwilling to give up a single one of their privileges. The king ordered the three groups of representatives to meet in different rooms and discuss their grievances separately. The Third Estate refused to obey the royal command. They took a solemn oath to that effect in a squash court (hastily put in order for the purpose of this illegal meeting) on the 20th of June, 1789. They insisted that all three Estates, Nobility, Clergy and Third Estate, should meet together and so informed His Majesty. The king gave in.

As the "National Assembly," the Estates General began to discuss the state of the French kingdom. The King got angry. Then again he hesitated. He said that he would never surrender his absolute power. Then he went hunting, forgot all about the cares of the state and when he returned from the chase he gave in. For it was the royal habit to do the right thing at the wrong time in the wrong way. When the people clamoured for A, the king scolded them and gave them nothing. Then, when the Palace was surrounded by a howling multitude of poor people, the king surrendered and gave his subjects what they had asked for. By this time, however, the people wanted A plus B. The comedy was repeated. When the king signed his name to the Royal Decree which granted his beloved subjects A and B they were threatening to kill the entire royal family unless they received A plus B plus C. And so on, through the whole alphabet and up to the scaffold.

Unfortunately the king was always just one letter behind. He never understood this. Even when he laid his head under the guillotine, he felt that he was a much-abused man who had received a most unwarrantable treatment at the hands of people whom he had loved to the best of his limited ability.

Historical "ifs," as I have often warned you, are never of any value. It is very easy for us to say that the monarchy might have been saved "if" Louis had been a man of greater energy and less kindness of heart. But the king was not alone. Even "if" he had possessed the ruthless strength of Napoleon, his career during these difficult days might have been easily ruined by his wife who was the daughter of Maria Theresa of Austria and who possessed all the characteristic virtues and vices of a young girl who had been brought up at the most autocratic and mediaeval court of that age.

She decided that some action must be taken and planned a counter-revolution. Necker was suddenly dismissed and loyal troops were called to Paris. The people, when they heard of this, stormed the fortress of the Bastille prison, and on the fourteenth of July of the year 1789, they destroyed this familiar but much-hated symbol of Autocratic Power which had long since ceased to be a political prison and was now used as the city lock-up for pickpockets and second-story men. Many of the nobles took the hint and left the country. But the king as usual did nothing. He had been hunting on the day of the fall of the Bastille and he had shot several deer and felt very much pleased.

The National Assembly now set to work and on the 4th of August, with the noise of the Parisian multitude in their ears, they abolished all privileges. This was followed on the 27th of August by the "Declaration of the Rights of Man," the famous preamble to the first French constitution. So far so good, but the court had apparently not yet learned its lesson. There was a wide-spread suspicion that the king was again trying to interfere with these reforms and as a result, on the 5th of October, there was a second riot in Paris. It spread to Versailles and the people were not pacified until they had brought the king back to his palace in Paris. They did not trust him in Versailles. They liked to have him where they could watch him and control his correspondence with his relatives in Vienna and Madrid and the other courts of Europe.

In the Assembly meanwhile, Mirabeau, a nobleman who had become leader of the Third Estate, was beginning to put order into chaos. But before he could save the position of the king he died, on the 2nd of April of the year 1791. The king, who now began to fear for his own life, tried to escape on the 21st of June. He was recognised from his picture on a coin, was stopped near the village of Varennes by members of the National Guard, and was brought back to Paris,

In September of 1791, the first constitution of France was accepted, and the members of the National Assembly went home. On the first of October of 1791, the legislative assembly came together to continue the work of the National Assembly. In this new gathering of popular representatives there were many extremely revolutionary elements. The boldest among these were known as the Jacobins, after the old Jacobin cloister in which they held their political meetings. These young men (most of them belonging to the professional classes) made very violent speeches and when the newspapers carried these orations to Berlin and Vienna, the King of Prussia and the Emperor decided that they must do something to save their good brother and sister. They were very busy just then dividing the kingdom of Poland, where rival political factions had caused such a state of disorder that the country was at the mercy of anybody who wanted to take a couple of provinces. But they managed to send an army to invade France and deliver the king.

Then a terrible panic of fear swept throughout the land of France. All the pent-up hatred of years of hunger and suffering came to a horrible climax. The mob of Paris stormed the palace of the Tuilleries. The faithful Swiss bodyguards tried to defend their master, but Louis, unable to

make up his mind, gave order to “cease firing” just when the crowd was retiring. The people, drunk with blood and noise and cheap wine, murdered the Swiss to the last man, then invaded the palace, and went after Louis who had escaped into the meeting hall of the Assembly, where he was immediately suspended of his office, and from where he was taken as a prisoner to the old castle of the Temple.

But the armies of Austria and Prussia continued their advance and the panic changed into hysteria and turned men and women into wild beasts. In the first week of September of the year 1792, the crowd broke into the jails and murdered all the prisoners. The government did not interfere. The Jacobins, headed by Danton, knew that this crisis meant either the success or the failure of the revolution, and that only the most brutal audacity could save them. The Legislative Assembly was closed and on the 21st of September of the year 1792, a new National Convention came together. It was a body composed almost entirely of extreme revolutionists. The king was formally accused of high treason and was brought before the Convention. He was found guilty and by a vote of 361 to 360 (the extra vote being that of his cousin the Duke of Orleans) he was condemned to death. On the 21st of January of the year 1793, he quietly and with much dignity suffered himself to be taken to the scaffold. He had never understood what all the shooting and the fuss had been about. And he had been too proud to ask questions.

Then the Jacobins turned against the more moderate element in the convention, the Girondists, called after their southern district, the Gironde. A special revolutionary tribunal was instituted and twenty-one of the leading Girondists were condemned to death. The others committed suicide. They were capable and honest men but too philosophical and too moderate to survive during these frightful years.

In October of the year 1793 the Constitution was suspended by the Jacobins “until peace should have been declared.” All power was placed in the hands of a small committee of Public Safety, with Danton and Robespierre as its leaders. The Christian religion and the old chronology were abolished. The “Age of Reason” (of which Thomas Paine had written so eloquently during the American Revolution) had come and with it the “Terror” which for more than a year killed good and bad and indifferent people at the rate of seventy or eighty a day.

The autocratic rule of the King had been destroyed. It was succeeded by the tyranny of a few people who had such a passionate love for democratic virtue that they felt compelled to kill all those who disagreed with them. France was turned into a slaughter house. Everybody suspected everybody else. No one felt safe. Out of sheer fear, a few members of the old Convention, who knew that they were the next candidates for the scaffold, finally turned against Robespierre, who had already decapitated most of his former colleagues. Robespierre, “the only true and pure Democrat,” tried to kill himself but failed His shattered jaw was hastily bandaged and he was dragged to the guillotine. On the 27th of July, of the year 1794 (the 9th Thermidor of the year II, according to the strange chronology of the revolution), the reign of Terror came to an end, and all Paris danced with joy.

The dangerous position of France, however, made it necessary that the government remain in the hands of a few strong men, until the many enemies of the revolution should have been driven from the soil of the French fatherland. While the half-clad and half-starved revolutionary armies fought their desperate battles of the Rhine and Italy and Belgium and Egypt, and defeated every one of the enemies of the Great Revolution, five Directors were appointed, and they ruled France for four years. Then the power was vested in the hands of a successful general by the name of Napoleon Bonaparte, who became “First Consul” of France in the year 1799. And during the next fifteen years, the old European continent became the laboratory of a number of political experiments, the like of which the world had never seen before.

NAPOLEON

NAPOLEON

NAPOLEON was born in the year 1769, the third son of Carlo Maria Buonaparte, an honest notary public of the city of Ajaccio in the island of Corsica, and his good wife, Letizia Ramolino. He therefore was not a Frenchman, but an Italian whose native island (an old Greek, Carthaginian and Roman colony in the Mediterranean Sea) had for years been struggling to regain its independence, first of all from the Genoese, and after the middle of the eighteenth century from the French, who had kindly offered to help the Corsicans in their struggle for freedom and had then occupied the island for their own benefit.

During the first twenty years of his life, young Napoleon was a professional Corsican patriot--a Corsican Sinn Feiner, who hoped to deliver his beloved country from the yoke of the bitterly hated French enemy. But the French revolution had unexpectedly recognised the claims of the Corsicans and gradually Napoleon, who had received a good training at the military school of Brienne, drifted into the service of his adopted country. Although he never learned to spell French correctly or to speak it without a broad Italian accent, he became a Frenchman. In due time he came to stand as the highest expression of all French virtues. At present he is regarded as the symbol of the Gallic genius.

Napoleon was what is called a fast worker. His career does not cover more than twenty years. In that short span of time he fought more wars and gained more victories and marched more miles and conquered more square kilometers and killed more people and brought about more reforms and generally upset Europe to a greater extent than anybody (including Alexander the Great and Jenghis Khan) had ever managed to do.

He was a little fellow and during the first years of his life his health was not very good. He never impressed anybody by his good looks and he remained to the end of his days very clumsy whenever he was obliged to appear at a social function. He did not enjoy a single advantage of breeding or birth or riches. For the greater part of his youth he was desperately poor and often he had to go without a meal or was obliged to make a few extra pennies in curious ways.

He gave little promise as a literary genius. When he competed for a prize offered by the Academy of Lyons, his essay was found to be next to the last and he was number 15 out of 16 candidates. But he overcame all these difficulties through his absolute and unshakable belief in his own destiny, and in his own glorious future. Ambition was the main-spring of his life. The thought of self, the worship of that capital letter "N" with which he signed all his letters, and which recurred forever in the ornaments of his hastily constructed palaces, the absolute will to make the name Napoleon the most important thing in the world next to the name of God, these desires carried Napoleon to a pinnacle of fame which no other man has ever reached.

When he was a half-pay lieutenant, young Bonaparte was very fond of the "Lives of Famous Men" which Plutarch, the Roman historian, had written. But he never tried to live up to the high standard of character set by these heroes of the older days. Napoleon seems to have been devoid of all those considerate and thoughtful sentiments which make men different from the animals. It will be very difficult to decide with any degree of accuracy whether he ever loved anyone besides himself. He kept a civil tongue to his mother, but Letizia had the air and manners of a great lady and after the fashion of Italian mothers, she knew how to rule her brood of children and command their respect. For a few years he was fond of Josephine, his pretty Creole wife, who was the daughter of a French officer of Martinique and the widow of the Vicomte de Beauharnais, who had been executed by Robespierre when he lost a battle against the Prussians. But the Emperor divorced her when she failed to give him a son and heir and married the daughter of the Austrian Emperor, because it seemed good policy.

During the siege of Toulon, where he gained great fame as commander of a battery, Napoleon studied Macchiavelli with industrious care. He followed the advice of the Florentine statesman and never kept his word when it was to his advantage to break it. The word "gratitude" did not occur in his personal dictionary. Neither, to be quite fair, did he expect it from others. He was totally indifferent to human suffering. He executed prisoners of war (in Egypt in 1798) who had been promised their lives, and he quietly allowed his wounded in Syria to be chloroformed when he found it impossible to transport them to his ships. He ordered the Duke of Enghien to be condemned to death by a prejudiced court-martial and to be shot contrary to all law on the sole ground that the "Bourbons needed a warning." He decreed that those German officers who were made prisoner while fighting for their country's independence should be shot against the nearest wall, and when Andreas Hofer, the Tyrolese hero, fell into his hands after a most heroic resistance, he was executed like a common traitor.

In short, when we study the character of the Emperor, we begin to understand those anxious British mothers who used to drive their children to bed with the threat that "Bonaparte, who ate little boys and girls for breakfast, would come and get them if they were not very good." And yet, having said these many unpleasant things about this strange tyrant, who looked after every other department of his army with the utmost care, but neglected the medical service, and who ruined his uniforms with Eau de Cologne because he could not stand the smell of his poor sweating soldiers; having said all these unpleasant things and being fully prepared to add many more, I must confess to a certain lurking feeling of doubt.

Here I am sitting at a comfortable table loaded heavily with books, with one eye on my typewriter and the other on Licorice the cat, who has a great fondness for carbon paper, and I am telling you that the Emperor Napoleon was a most contemptible person. But should I happen to look out of the window, down upon Seventh Avenue, and should the endless procession of trucks and carts come to a sudden halt, and should I hear the sound of the heavy drums and see the little man on his white horse in his old and much-worn green uniform, then I don't know, but I am afraid that I would leave my books and the kitten and my home and everything else to follow him wherever he cared to lead. My own grandfather did this and Heaven knows he was not born to be a hero. Millions of other people's grandfathers did it. They received no reward, but they expected none. They cheerfully gave legs and arms and lives to serve this foreigner, who took them a thousand miles away from their homes and marched them into a barrage of Russian or English or Spanish or Italian or Austrian cannon and stared quietly into space while they were rolling in the agony of death.

If you ask me for an explanation, I must answer that I have none. I can only guess at one of the reasons. Napoleon was the greatest of actors and the whole European continent was his stage. At all times and under all circumstances he knew the precise attitude that would impress the spectators most and he understood what words would make the deepest impression. Whether he spoke in the Egyptian desert, before the backdrop of the Sphinx and the pyramids, or addressed his shivering men on the dew-soaked plains of Italy, made no difference. At all times he was master of the situation. Even at the end, an exile on a little rock in the middle of the Atlantic, a sick man at the mercy of a dull and intolerable British governor, he held the centre of the stage.

After the defeat of Waterloo, no one outside of a few trusted friends ever saw the great Emperor. The people of Europe knew that he was living on the island of St. Helena-- they knew that a British garrison guarded him day and night --they knew that the British fleet guarded the garrison which guarded the Emperor on his farm at Longwood. But he was never out of the mind of either friend or enemy. When illness and despair had at last taken him away, his silent eyes continued to haunt the world. Even to-day he is as much of a force in the life of France as a hundred years ago when people fainted at the mere sight of this sallow-faced man who stabled his horses in the holiest temples of the Russian Kremlin, and who treated the Pope and the mighty ones of this earth as if they were his lackeys.

To give you a mere outline of his life would demand couple of volumes. To tell you of his great political reform of the French state, of his new codes of laws which were adopted in most European countries, of his activities in every field of public activity, would take thousands of pages. But I can explain in a few words why he was so successful during the first part of his career and why he failed during the last ten years. From the year 1789 until the year 1804, Napoleon was the great leader of the French revolution. He was not merely fighting for the glory of his own name. He defeated Austria and Italy and England and Russia because he, himself, and his soldiers were the apostles of the new creed of "Liberty, Fraternity and Equality" and were the enemies of the courts while they were the friends of the people.

But in the year 1804, Napoleon made himself Hereditary Emperor of the French and sent for Pope Pius VII to come and crown him, even as Leo III, in the year 800 had crowned that other great King of the Franks, Charlemagne, whose example was constantly before Napoleon's eyes.

Once upon the throne, the old revolutionary chieftain became an unsuccessful imitation of a Habsburg monarch. He forgot his spiritual Mother, the Political Club of the Jacobins. He ceased to be the defender of the oppressed. He became the chief of all the oppressors and kept his shooting squads ready to execute those who dared to oppose his imperial will. No one had shed a tear when in the year 1806 the sad remains of the Holy Roman Empire were carted to the historical dustbin and when the last relic of ancient Roman glory was destroyed by the grandson of an Italian peasant. But when the Napoleonic armies had invaded Spain, had forced the Spaniards to recognise a king whom they detested, had massacred the poor Madrilenes who remained faithful to their old rulers, then public opinion turned against the former hero of Marengo and Austerlitz and a hundred other revolutionary battles. Then and only then, when Napoleon was no longer the hero of the revolution but the personification of all the bad traits of the Old Regime, was it possible for England to give direction to the fast-spreading sentiment of hatred which was turning all honest men into enemies of the French Emperor.

The English people from the very beginning had felt deeply disgusted when their newspapers told them the gruesome details of the Terror. They had staged their own great revolution (during the reign of Charles I) a century before. It had been a very simple affair compared to the upheaval of Paris. In the eyes of the average Englishman a Jacobin was a monster to be shot at sight and Napoleon was the Chief Devil. The British fleet had blockaded France ever since the year 1798. It had spoiled Napoleon's plan to invade India by way of Egypt and had forced him to beat an ignominious retreat, after his victories along the banks of the Nile. And finally, in the year 1805, England got the chance it had waited for so long.

Near Cape Trafalgar on the southwestern coast of Spain, Nelson annihilated the Napoleonic fleet, beyond a possible chance of recovery. From that moment on, the Emperor was landlocked. Even so, he would have been able to maintain himself as the recognised ruler of the continent had he understood the signs of the times and accepted the honourable peace which the powers offered him. But Napoleon had been blinded by the blaze of his own glory. He would recognise no equals. He could tolerate no rivals. And his hatred turned against Russia, the mysterious land of the endless plains with its inexhaustible supply of cannon-fodder.

As long as Russia was ruled by Paul I, the half-witted son of Catherine the Great, Napoleon had known how to deal with the situation. But Paul grew more and more irresponsible until his exasperated subjects were obliged to murder him (lest they all be sent to the Siberian lead-mines) and the son of Paul, the Emperor Alexander, did not share his father's affection for the usurper whom he regarded as the enemy of mankind, the eternal disturber of the peace. He was a pious man who believed that he had been chosen by God to deliver the world from the Corsican curse. He joined Prussia and England and Austria and he was defeated. He tried five times and five times he failed. In the year 1812 he once more taunted Napoleon until the French Emperor, in a blind rage, vowed that he would dictate peace in Moscow. Then, from far and wide, from

Spain and Germany and Holland and Italy and Portugal, unwilling regiments were driven northward, that the wounded pride of the great Emperor might be duly avenged. The rest of the story is common knowledge. After a march of two months, Napoleon reached the Russian capital and established his headquarters in the holy Kremlin. On the night of September 15 of the year 1812, Moscow caught fire. The town burned four days. When the evening of the fifth day came, Napoleon gave the order for the retreat. Two weeks later it began to snow. The army trudged through mud and sleet until November the 26th when the river Berezina was reached. Then the Russian attacks began in all seriousness. The Cossacks swarmed around the "Grande Armee" which was no longer an army but a mob. In the middle of December the first of the survivors began to be seen in the German cities of the East.

Then there were many rumours of an impending revolt. "The time has come," the people of Europe said, "to free ourselves from this insufferable yoke." And they began to look for old shotguns which had escaped the eye of the ever-present French spies. But ere they knew what had happened, Napoleon was back with a new army. He had left his defeated soldiers and in his little sleigh had rushed ahead to Paris, making a final appeal for more troops that he might defend the sacred soil of France against foreign invasion.

Children of sixteen and seventeen followed him when he moved eastward to meet the allied powers. On October 16, 18, and 19 of the year 1813, the terrible battle of Leipzig took place where for three days boys in green and boys in blue fought each other until the Elbe ran red with blood. On the afternoon of the 17th of October, the massed reserves of Russian infantry broke through the French lines and Napoleon fled.

Back to Paris he went. He abdicated in favour of his small son, but the allied powers insisted that Louis XVIII, the brother of the late king Louis XVI, should occupy the French throne, and surrounded by Cossacks and Uhlans, the dull-eyed Bourbon prince made his triumphal entry into Paris.

As for Napoleon he was made the sovereign ruler of the little island of Elba in the Mediterranean where he organised his stable boys into a miniature army and fought battles on a chess board.

But no sooner had he left France than the people began to realise what they had lost. The last twenty years, however costly, had been a period of great glory. Paris had been the capital of the world. The fat Bourbon king who had learned nothing and had forgotten nothing during the days of his exile disgusted everybody by his indolence.

On the first of March of the year 1815, when the representatives of the allies were ready to begin the work of unscrambling the map of Europe, Napoleon suddenly landed near Cannes. In less than a week the French army had deserted the Bourbons and had rushed southward to offer their swords and bayonets to the "little Corporal." Napoleon marched straight to Paris where he arrived on the twentieth of March. This time he was more cautious. He offered peace, but the allies insisted upon war. The whole of Europe arose against the "perfidious Corsican." Rapidly the Emperor marched northward that he might crush his enemies before they should be able to unite their forces. But Napoleon was no longer his old self. He felt sick. He got tired easily. He slept when he ought to have been up directing the attack of his advance-guard. Besides, he missed many of his faithful old generals. They were dead.

Early in June his armies entered Belgium. On the 16th of that month he defeated the Prussians under Blucher. But a subordinate commander failed to destroy the retreating army as he had been ordered to do.

Two days later, Napoleon met Wellington near Waterloo. It was the 18th of June, a Sunday. At two o'clock of the afternoon, the battle seemed won for the French. At three a speck of dust

appeared upon the eastern horizon. Napoleon believed that this meant the approach of his own cavalry who would now turn the English defeat into a rout. At four o'clock he knew better. Cursing and swearing, old Blucher drove his deathly tired troops into the heart of the fray. The shock broke the ranks of the guards. Napoleon had no further reserves. He told his men to save themselves as best they could, and he fled.

For a second time, he abdicated in favor of his son. Just one hundred days after his escape from Elba, he was making for the coast. He intended to go to America. In the year 1803, for a mere song, he had sold the French colony of Louisiana (which was in great danger of being captured by the English) to the young American Republic. "The Americans," so he said, "will be grateful and will give me a little bit of land and a house where I may spend the last days of my life in peace and quiet." But the English fleet was watching all French harbours. Caught between the armies of the Allies and the ships of the British, Napoleon had no choice. The Prussians intended to shoot him. The English might be more generous. At Rochefort he waited in the hope that something might turn up. One month after Waterloo, he received orders from the new French government to leave French soil inside of twenty-four hours. Always the tragedian, he wrote a letter to the Prince Regent of England (George IV, the king, was in an insane asylum) informing His Royal Highness of his intention to "throw himself upon the mercy of his enemies and like Themistocles, to look for a welcome at the fireside of his foes . . .

On the 15th of July he went on board the "Bellerophon," and surrendered his sword to Admiral Hotham. At Plymouth he was transferred to the "Northumberland" which carried him to St. Helena. There he spent the last seven years of his life. He tried to write his memoirs, he quarrelled with his keepers and he dreamed of past times. Curiously enough he returned (at least in his imagination) to his original point of departure. He remembered the days when he had fought the battles of the Revolution. He tried to convince himself that he had always been the true friend of those great principles of "Liberty, Fraternity and Equality" which the ragged soldiers of the convention had carried to the ends of the earth. He liked to dwell upon his career as Commander-in-Chief and Consul. He rarely spoke of the Empire. Sometimes he thought of his son, the Duke of Reichstadt, the little eagle, who lived in Vienna, where he was treated as a "poor relation" by his young Habsburg cousins, whose fathers had trembled at the very mention of the name of Him. When the end came, he was leading his troops to victory. He ordered Ney to attack with the guards. Then he died.

But if you want an explanation of this strange career, if you really wish to know how one man could possibly rule so many people for so many years by the sheer force of his will, do not read the books that have been written about him. Their authors either hated the Emperor or loved him. You will learn many facts, but it is more important to "feel history" than to know it. Don't read, but wait until you have a chance to hear a good artist sing the song called "The Two Grenadiers." The words were written by Heine, the great German poet who lived through the Napoleonic era. The music was composed by Schumann, a German who saw the Emperor, the enemy of his country, whenever he came to visit his imperial father-in-law. The song therefore is the work of two men who had every reason to hate the tyrant.

Go and hear it. Then you will understand what a thousand volumes could not possibly tell you.

THE HOLY ALLIANCE

AS SOON AS NAPOLEON HAD BEEN SENT TO ST. HELENA THE RULERS WHO SO OFTEN HAD BEEN DEFEATED BY THE HATED "CORSICAN" MET AT VIENNA AND TRIED TO UNDO THE MANY CHANGES THAT HAD BEEN BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

THE Imperial Highnesses, the Royal Highnesses, their Graces the Dukes, the Ministers Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, together with the plain Excellencies and their army of secretaries, servants and hangers-on, whose labours had been so rudely interrupted by the sudden return of the terrible Corsican (now sweltering under the hot sun of St. Helena) went back to their jobs. The victory was duly celebrated with dinners, garden parties and balls at which the new and very shocking "waltz" was danced to the great scandal of the ladies and gentlemen who remembered the minuet of the old Regime.

For almost a generation they had lived in retirement. At last the danger was over. They were very eloquent upon the subject of the terrible hardships which they had suffered. And they expected to be recompensed for every penny they had lost at the hands of the unspeakable Jacobins who had dared to kill their anointed king, who had abolished wigs and who had discarded the short trousers of the court of Versailles for the ragged pantaloons of the Parisian slums.

You may think it absurd that I should mention such a detail. But, if you please, the Congress of Vienna was one long succession of such absurdities and for many months the question of "short trousers vs. long trousers" interested the delegates more than the future settlement of the Saxon or Spanish problems. His Majesty the King of Prussia went so far as to order a pair of short ones, that he might give public evidence of his contempt for everything revolutionary.

Another German potentate, not to be outdone in this noble hatred for the revolution, decreed that all taxes which his subjects had paid to the French usurper should be paid a second time to the legitimate ruler who had loved his people from afar while they were at the mercy of the Corsican ogre. And so on. From one blunder to another, until one gasps and exclaims "but why in the name of High Heaven did not the people object?" Why not indeed? Because the people were utterly exhausted, were desperate, did not care what happened or how or where or by whom they were ruled, provided there was peace. They were sick and tired of war and revolution and reform.

In the eighties of the previous century they had all danced around the tree of liberty. Princes had embraced their cooks and Duchesses had danced the Carmagnole with their lackeys in the honest belief that the Millennium of Equality and Fraternity had at last dawned upon this wicked world. Instead of the Millennium they had been visited by the Revolutionary commissary who had lodged a dozen dirty soldiers in their parlor and had stolen the family plate when he returned to Paris to report to his government upon the enthusiasm with which the "liberated country" had received the Constitution, which the French people had presented to their good neighbours.

When they had heard how the last outbreak of revolutionary disorder in Paris had been suppressed by a young officer, called Bonaparte, or Buonaparte, who had turned his guns upon the mob, they gave a sigh of relief. A little less liberty, fraternity and equality seemed a very desirable thing. But ere long, the young officer called Buonaparte or Bonaparte became one of the three consuls of the French Republic, then sole consul and finally Emperor. As he was much more efficient than any ruler that had ever been seen before, his hand pressed heavily upon his poor subjects. He showed them no mercy. He impressed their sons into his armies, he married their daughters to his generals and he took their pictures and their statues to enrich his own museums. He turned the whole of Europe into an armed camp and killed almost an entire generation of men.

Now he was gone, and the people (except a few professional military men) had but one wish. They wanted to be let alone. For awhile they had been allowed to rule themselves, to vote for mayors and aldermen and judges. The system had been a terrible failure. The new rulers had been inexperienced and extravagant. From sheer despair the people turned to the representative men of the old Regime. "You rule us," they said, "as you used to do. Tell us what we owe you for taxes and leave us alone. We are busy repairing the damage of the age of liberty."

The men who stage-managed the famous congress certainly did their best to satisfy this longing for rest and quiet. The Holy Alliance, the main result of the Congress, made the policeman the most important dignitary of the State and held out the most terrible punishment to those who dared criticise a single official act.

Europe had peace, but it was the peace of the cemetery.

The three most important men at Vienna were the Emperor Alexander of Russia, Metternich, who represented the interests of the Austrian house of Habsburg, and Talleyrand, the erstwhile bishop of Autun, who had managed to live through the different changes in the French government by the sheer force of his cunning and his intelligence and who now travelled to the Austrian capital to save for his country whatever could be saved from the Napoleonic ruin. Like the gay young man of the limerick, who never knew when he was slighted, this unbidden guest came to the party and ate just as heartily as if he had been really invited. Indeed, before long, he was sitting at the head of the table entertaining everybody with his amusing stories and gaining the company's good will by the charm of his manner.

Before he had been in Vienna twenty-four hours he knew that the allies were divided into two hostile camps. On the one side were Russia, who wanted to take Poland, and Prussia, who wanted to annex Saxony; and on the other side were Austria and England, who were trying to prevent this grab because it was against their own interest that either Prussia or Russia should be able to dominate Europe. Talleyrand played the two sides against each other with great skill and it was due to his efforts that the French people were not made to suffer for the ten years of oppression which Europe had endured at the hands of the Imperial officials. He argued that the French people had been given no choice in the matter. Napoleon had forced them to act at his bidding. But Napoleon was gone and Louis XVIII was on the throne. "Give him a chance," Talleyrand pleaded. And the Allies, glad to see a legitimate king upon the throne of a revolutionary country, obligingly yielded and the Bourbons were given their chance, of which they made such use that they were driven out after fifteen years.

The second man of the triumvirate of Vienna was Metternich, the Austrian prime minister, the leader of the foreign policy of the house of Habsburg. Wenzel Lothar, Prince of Metternich-Winneburg, was exactly what the name suggests. He was a Grand Seigneur, a very handsome gentleman with very fine manners, immensely rich, and very able, but the product of a society which lived a thousand miles away from the sweating multitudes who worked and slaved in the cities and on the farms. As a young man, Metternich had been studying at the University of Strassburg when the French Revolution broke out. Strassburg, the city which gave birth to the Marseillaise, had been a centre of Jacobin activities. Metternich remembered that his pleasant social life had been sadly interrupted, that a lot of incompetent citizens had suddenly been called forth to perform tasks for which they were not fit, that the mob had celebrated the dawn of the new liberty by the murder of perfectly innocent persons. He had failed to see the honest enthusiasm of the masses, the ray of hope in the eyes of women and children who carried bread and water to the ragged troops of the Convention, marching through the city on their way to the front and a glorious death for the French Fatherland.

The whole thing had filled the young Austrian with disgust. It was uncivilised. If there were any fighting to be done it must be done by dashing young men in lovely uniforms, charging across the green fields on well-groomed horses. But to turn an entire country into an evil-smelling armed camp where tramps were overnight promoted to be generals, that was both wicked and senseless. "See what came of all your fine ideas," he would say to the French diplomats whom he met at a quiet little dinner given by one of the innumerable Austrian grand-dukes. "You wanted liberty, equality and fraternity and you got Napoleon. How much better it would have been if you had been contented with the existing order of things." And he would explain his system of "stability." He would advocate a return to the normalcy of the good old days before the war, when everybody was happy and nobody talked nonsense about "everybody being as good as

everybody else.” In this attitude he was entirely sincere and as he was an able man of great strength of will and a tremendous power of persuasion, he was one of the most dangerous enemies of the Revolutionary ideas. He did not die until the year 1859, and he therefore lived long enough to see the complete failure of all his policies when they were swept aside by the revolution of the year 1848. He then found himself the most hated man of Europe and more than once ran the risk of being lynched by angry crowds of outraged citizens. But until the very last, he remained steadfast in his belief that he had done the right thing.

He had always been convinced that people preferred peace to liberty and he had tried to give them what was best for them. And in all fairness, it ought to be said that his efforts to establish universal peace were fairly successful. The great powers did not fly at each other's throat for almost forty years, indeed not until the Crimean war between Russia and England, France and Italy and Turkey, in the year 1854. That means a record for the European continent.

The third hero of this waltzing congress was the Emperor Alexander. He had been brought up at the court of his grand-mother, the famous Catherine the Great. Between the lessons of this shrewd old woman, who taught him to regard the glory of Russia as the most important thing in life, and those of his private tutor, a Swiss admirer of Voltaire and Rousseau, who filled his mind with a general love of humanity, the boy grew up to be a strange mixture of a selfish tyrant and a sentimental revolutionist. He had suffered great indignities during the life of his crazy father, Paul I. He had been obliged to witness the wholesale slaughter of the Napoleonic battle-fields. Then the tide had turned. His armies had won the day for the Allies. Russia had become the saviour of Europe and the Tsar of this mighty people was acclaimed as a half-god who would cure the world of its many ills.

But Alexander was not very clever. He did not know men and women as Talleyrand and Metternich knew them. He did not understand the strange game of diplomacy. He was vain (who would not be under the circumstances?) and loved to hear the applause of the multitude and soon he had become the main “attraction” of the Congress while Metternich and Talleyrand and Castlereagh (the very able British representative) sat around a table and drank a bottle of Tokay and decided what was actually going to be done. They needed Russia and therefore they were very polite to Alexander, but the less he had personally to do with the actual work of the Congress, the better they were pleased. They even encouraged his plans for a Holy Alliance that he might be fully occupied while they were engaged upon the work at hand.

Alexander was a sociable person who liked to go to parties and meet people. Upon such occasions he was happy and gay but there was a very different element in his character. He tried to forget something which he could not forget. On the night of the 23rd of March of the year 1801 he had been sitting in a room of the St. Michael Palace in Petersburg, waiting for the news of his father's abdication. But Paul had refused to sign the document which the drunken officers had placed before him on the table, and in their rage they had put a scarf around his neck and had strangled him to death. Then they had gone downstairs to tell Alexander that he was Emperor of all the Russian lands.

The memory of this terrible night stayed with the Tsar who was a very sensitive person. He had been educated in the school of the great French philosophers who did not believe in God but in Human Reason. But Reason alone could not satisfy the Emperor in his predicament. He began to hear voices and see things. He tried to find a way by which he could square himself with his conscience. He became very pious and began to take an interest in mysticism, that strange love of the mysterious and the unknown which is as old as the temples of Thebes and Babylon.

The tremendous emotion of the great revolutionary era had influenced the character of the people of that day in a strange way. Men and women who had lived through twenty years of anxiety and fear were no longer quite normal. They jumped whenever the door-bell rang. It might mean the news of the “death on the field of honour” of an only son. The phrases about “brotherly love

” and “liberty” of the Revolution were hollow words in the ears of sorely stricken peasants. They clung to anything that might give them a new hold on the terrible problems of life. In their grief and misery they were easily imposed upon by a large number of imposters who posed as prophets and preached a strange new doctrine which they dug out of the more obscure passages of the Book of Revelations.

In the year 1814, Alexander, who had already consulted a large number of wonder-doctors, heard of a new seeress who was foretelling the coming doom of the world and was exhorting people to repent ere it be too late. The Baroness von Krudener, the lady in question, was a Russian woman of uncertain age and similar reputation who had been the wife of a Russian diplomat in the days of the Emperor Paul. She had squandered her husband's money and had disgraced him by her strange love affairs. She had lived a very dissolute life until her nerves had given way and for a while she was not in her right mind. Then she had been converted by the sight of the sudden death of a friend. Thereafter she despised all gaiety. She confessed her former sins to her shoemaker, a pious Moravian brother, a follower of the old reformer John Huss, who had been burned for his heresies by the Council of Constance in the year 1415.

The next ten years the Baroness spent in Germany making a specialty of the “conversion” of kings and princes. To convince Alexander, the Saviour of Europe, of the error of his ways was the greatest ambition of her life. And as Alexander, in his misery, was willing to listen to anybody who brought him a ray of hope, the interview was easily arranged. On the evening of the fourth of June of the year 1815, she was admitted to the tent of the Emperor. She found him reading his Bible. We do not know what she said to Alexander, but when she left him three hours later, he was bathed in tears, and vowed that “at last his soul had found peace.” From that day on the Baroness was his faithful companion and his spiritual adviser. She followed him to Paris and then to Vienna and the time which Alexander did not spend dancing he spent at the Krudener prayer-meetings.

You may ask why I tell you this story in such great detail? Are not the social changes of the nineteenth century of greater importance than the career of an ill-balanced woman who had better be forgotten? Of course they are, but there exist any number of books which will tell you of these other things with great accuracy and in great detail. I want you to learn something more from this history than a mere succession of facts. I want you to approach all historical events in a frame of mind that will take nothing for granted. Don't be satisfied with the mere statement that “such and such a thing happened then and there.” Try to discover the hidden motives behind every action and then you will understand the world around you much better and you will have a greater chance to help others, which (when all is said and done) is the only truly satisfactory way of living.

I do not want you to think of the Holy Alliance as a piece of paper which was signed in the year 1815 and lies dead and forgotten somewhere in the archives of state. It may be forgotten but it is by no means dead. The Holy Alliance was directly responsible for the promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine, and the Monroe Doctrine of America for the Americans has a very distinct bearing upon your own life. That is the reason why I want you to know exactly how this document happened to come into existence and what the real motives were underlying this outward manifestation of piety and Christian devotion to duty.

The Holy Alliance was the joint labour of an unfortunate man who had suffered a terrible mental shock and who was trying to pacify his much-disturbed soul, and of an ambitious woman who after a wasted life had lost her beauty and her attraction and who satisfied her vanity and her desire for notoriety by assuming the role of self-appointed Messiah of a new and strange creed. I am not giving away any secrets when I tell you these details. Such sober minded people as Castlereagh, Metternich and Talleyrand fully understood the limited abilities of the sentimental Baroness. It would have been easy for Metternich to send her back to her German estates. A few lines to the almighty commander of the imperial police and the thing was done.

But France and England and Austria depended upon the good-will of Russia. They could not afford to offend Alexander. And they tolerated the silly old Baroness because they had to. And while they regarded the Holy Alliance as utter rubbish and not worth the paper upon which it was written, they listened patiently to the Tsar when he read them the first rough draft of this attempt to create the Brotherhood of Men upon a basis of the Holy Scriptures. For this is what the Holy Alliance tried to do, and the signers of the document solemnly declared that they would "in the administration of their respective states and in their political relations with every other government take for their sole guide the precepts of that Holy Religion, namely the precepts of Justice, Christian Charity and Peace, which far from being applicable only to private concerns must have an immediate influence on the councils of princes, and must guide all their steps as being the only means of consolidating human institutions and remedying their imperfections." They then proceeded to promise each other that they would remain united "by the bonds of a true and indissoluble fraternity, and considering each other as fellow-countrymen, they would on all occasions and in all places lend each other aid and assistance." And more words to the same effect.

Eventually the Holy Alliance was signed by the Emperor of Austria, who did not understand a word of it. It was signed by the Bourbons who needed the friendship of Napoleon's old enemies. It was signed by the King of Prussia, who hoped to gain Alexander for his plans for a "greater Prussia," and by all the little nations of Europe who were at the mercy of Russia. England never signed, because Castlereagh thought the whole thing buncombe. The Pope did not sign because he resented this interference in his business by a Greek-Orthodox and a Protestant. And the Sultan did not sign because he never heard of it.

The general mass of the European people, however, soon were forced to take notice. Behind the hollow phrases of the Holy Alliance stood the armies of the Quintuple Alliance which Metternich had created among the great powers. These armies meant business. They let it be known that the peace of Europe must not be disturbed by the so-called liberals who were in reality nothing but disguised Jacobins, and hoped for a return of the revolutionary days. The enthusiasm for the great wars of liberation of the years 1812, 1813, 1814 and 1815 had begun to wear off. It had been followed by a sincere belief in the coming of a happier day. The soldiers who had borne the brunt of the battle wanted peace and they said so.

But they did not want the sort of peace which the Holy Alliance and the Council of the European powers had now bestowed upon them. They cried that they had been betrayed. But they were careful lest they be heard by a secret-police spy. The reaction was victorious. It was a reaction caused by men who sincerely believed that their methods were necessary for the good of humanity. But it was just as hard to bear as if their intentions had been less kind. And it caused a great deal of unnecessary suffering and greatly retarded the orderly progress of political development.

THE GREAT REACTION

THEY TRIED TO ASSURE THE WORLD AN ERA OF UNDISTURBED PEACE BY SUPPRESSING ALL NEW IDEAS. THEY MADE THE POLICE-SPY THE HIGHEST FUNCTIONARY IN THE STATE AND SOON THE PRISONS OF ALL COUNTRIES WERE FILLED WITH THOSE WHO CLAIMED THAT PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT TO GOVERN THEMSELVES AS THEY SEE FIT

To undo the damage done by the great Napoleonic flood was almost impossible. Age-old fences had been washed away. The palaces of two score dynasties had been damaged to such an extent that they had to be condemned as uninhabitable. Other royal residences had been greatly enlarged at the expense of less fortunate neighbours. Strange odds and ends of revolutionary doctrine had been left behind by the receding waters and could not be dislodged without danger to the entire

community. But the political engineers of the Congress did the best they could and this is what they accomplished.

France had disturbed the peace of the world for so many years that people had come to fear that country almost instinctively. The Bourbons, through the mouth of Talleyrand, had promised to be good, but the Hundred Days had taught Europe what to expect should Napoleon manage to escape for a second time. The Dutch Republic, therefore, was changed into a Kingdom, and Belgium (which had not joined the Dutch struggle for independence in the sixteenth century and since then had been part of the Habsburg domains, first under Spanish rule and thereafter under Austrian rule) was made part of this new kingdom of the Netherlands. Nobody wanted this union either in the Protestant North or in the Catholic South, but no questions were asked. It seemed good for the peace of Europe and that was the main consideration.

Poland had hoped for great things because a Pole, Prince Adam Czartoryski, was one of the most intimate friends of Tsar Alexander and had been his constant advisor during the war and at the Congress of Vienna. But Poland was made a semi-independent part of Russia with Alexander as her king. This solution pleased no one and caused much bitter feeling and three revolutions.

Denmark, which had remained a faithful ally of Napoleon until the end, was severely punished. Seven years before, an English fleet had sailed down the Kattegat and without a declaration of war or any warning had bombarded Copenhagen and had taken away the Danish fleet, lest it be of value to Napoleon. The Congress of Vienna went one step further. It took Norway (which since the union of Calmar of the year 1397 had been united with Denmark) away from Denmark and gave it to Charles XIV of Sweden as a reward for his betrayal of Napoleon, who had set him up in the king business. This Swedish king, curiously enough, was a former French general by the name of Bernadotte, who had come to Sweden as one of Napoleon's{sic} adjutants, and had been invited to the throne of that good country when the last of the rulers of the house of Holstein-Gottorp had died without leaving either son or daughter. From 1815 until 1844 he ruled his adopted country (the language of which he never learned) with great ability. He was a clever man and enjoyed the respect of both his Swedish and his Norwegian subjects, but he did not succeed in joining two countries which nature and history had put asunder. The dual Scandinavian state was never a success and in 1905, Norway, in a most peaceful and orderly manner, set up as an independent kingdom and the Swedes bade her "good speed" and very wisely let her go her own way.

The Italians, who since the days of the Renaissance had been at the mercy of a long series of invaders, also had put great hopes in General Bonaparte. The Emperor Napoleon, however, had grievously disappointed them. Instead of the United Italy which the people wanted, they had been divided into a number of little principalities, duchies, republics and the Papal State, which (next to Naples) was the worst governed and most miserable region of the entire peninsula. The Congress of Vienna abolished a few of the Napoleonic republics and in their place resurrected several old principalities which were given to deserving members, both male and female, of the Habsburg family.

The poor Spaniards, who had started the great nationalistic revolt against Napoleon, and who had sacrificed the best blood of the country for their king, were punished severely when the Congress allowed His Majesty to return to his domains. This vicious creature, known as Ferdinand VII, had spent the last four years of his life as a prisoner of Napoleon. He had improved his days by knitting garments for the statues of his favourite patron saints. He celebrated his return by re-introducing the Inquisition and the torture-chamber, both of which had been abolished by the Revolution. He was a disgusting person, despised as much by his subjects as by his four wives, but the Holy Alliance maintained him upon his legitimate throne and all efforts of the decent Spaniards to get rid of this curse and make Spain a constitutional kingdom ended in bloodshed and executions.

Portugal had been without a king since the year 1807 when the royal family had fled to the colonies in Brazil. The country had been used as a base of supply for the armies of Wellington during the Peninsula war, which lasted from 1808 until 1814. After 1815 Portugal continued to be a sort of British province until the house of Braganza returned to the throne, leaving one of its members behind in Rio de Janeiro as Emperor of Brazil, the only American Empire which lasted for more than a few years, and which came to an end in 1889 when the country became a republic.

In the east, nothing was done to improve the terrible conditions of both the Slavs and the Greeks who were still subjects of the Sultan. In the year 1804 Black George, a Servian swineherd, (the founder of the Karageorgevich dynasty) had started a revolt against the Turks, but he had been defeated by his enemies and had been murdered by one of his supposed friends, the rival Servian leader, called Milosh Obrenovich, (who became the founder of the Obrenovich dynasty) and the Turks had continued to be the undisputed masters of the Balkans.

The Greeks, who since the loss of their independence, two thousand years before, had been subjects of the Macedonians, the Romans, the Venetians and the Turks, had hoped that their countryman, Capo d'Istria, a native of Corfu and together with Czartoryski, the most intimate personal friends of Alexander, would do something for them. But the Congress of Vienna was not interested in Greeks, but was very much interested in keeping all "legitimate" monarchs, Christian, Moslem and otherwise, upon their respective thrones. Therefore nothing was done.

The last, but perhaps the greatest blunder of the Congress was the treatment of Germany. The Reformation and the Thirty Years War had not only destroyed the prosperity of the country, but had turned it into a hopeless political rubbish heap, consisting of a couple of kingdoms, a few grand-duchies, a large number of duchies and hundreds of margravates, principalities, baronies, electorates, free cities and free villages, ruled by the strangest assortment of potentates that was ever seen off the comic opera stage. Frederick the Great had changed this when he created a strong Prussia, but this state had not survived him by many years.

Napoleon had blue-penciled the demand for independence of most of these little countries, and only fifty-two out of a total of more than three hundred had survived the year 1806. During the years of the great struggle for independence, many a young soldier had dreamed of a new Fatherland that should be strong and united. But there can be no union without a strong leadership, and who was to be this leader?

There were five kingdoms in the German speaking lands. The rulers of two of these, Austria and Prussia, were kings by the Grace of God. The rulers of three others, Bavaria, Saxony and Wurtemberg, were kings by the Grace of Napoleon, and as they had been the faithful henchmen of the Emperor, their patriotic credit with the other Germans was therefore not very good.

The Congress had established a new German Confederation, a league of thirty-eight sovereign states, under the chairmanship of the King of Austria, who was now known as the Emperor of Austria. It was the sort of make-shift arrangement which satisfied no one. It is true that a German Diet, which met in the old coronation city of Frankfort. had been created to discuss matters of "common policy and importance." But in this Diet, thirty-eight delegates represented thirty-eight different interests and as no decision could be taken without a unanimous vote (a parliamentary rule which had in previous centuries ruined the mighty kingdom of Poland), the famous German Confederation became very soon the laughing stock of Europe and the politics of the old Empire began to resemble those of our Central American neighbours in the forties and the fifties of the last century.

It was terribly humiliating to the people who had sacrificed everything for a national ideal. But the Congress was not interested in the private feelings of "subjects," and the debate was closed.

Did anybody object? Most assuredly. As soon as the first feeling of hatred against Napoleon had quieted down--as soon as the enthusiasm of the great war had subsided--as soon as the people came to a full realisation of the crime that had been committed in the name of "peace and stability" they began to murmur. They even made threats of open revolt. But what could they do? They were powerless. They were at the mercy of the most pitiless and efficient police system the world had ever seen.

The members of the Congress of Vienna honestly and sincerely believed that "the Revolutionary Principle had led to the criminal usurpation of the throne by the former emperor Napoleon." They felt that they were called upon to eradicate the adherents of the so-called "French ideas" just as Philip II had only followed the voice of his conscience when he burned Protestants or hanged Moors. In the beginning of the sixteenth century a man who did not believe in the divine right of the Pope to rule his subjects as he saw fit was a "heretic" and it was the duty of all loyal citizens to kill him. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, on the continent of Europe, a man who did not believe in the divine right of his king to rule him as he or his Prime Minister saw fit, was a "heretic," and it was the duty of all loyal citizens to denounce him to the nearest policeman and see that he got punished.

But the rulers of the year 1815 had learned efficiency in the school of Napoleon and they performed their task much better than it had been done in the year 1517. The period between the year 1815 and the year 1860 was the great era of the political spy. Spies were everywhere. They lived in palaces and they were to be found in the lowest gin-shops. They peeped through the key-holes of the ministerial cabinet and they listened to the conversations of the people who were taking the air on the benches of the Municipal Park. They guarded the frontier so that no one might leave without a duly viséed passport and they inspected all packages, that no books with dangerous "French ideas" should enter the realm of their Royal masters. They sat among the students in the lecture hall and woe to the Professor who uttered a word against the existing order of things. They followed the little boys and girls on their way to church lest they play hockey.

In many of these tasks they were assisted by the clergy. The church had suffered greatly during the days of the revolution. The church property had been confiscated. Several priests had been killed and the generation that had learned its catechism from Voltaire and Rousseau and the other French philosophers had danced around the Altar of Reason when the Committee of Public Safety had abolished the worship of God in October of the year 1793. The priests had followed the "emigres" into their long exile. Now they returned in the wake of the allied armies and they set to work with a vengeance.

Even the Jesuits came back in 1814 and resumed their former labours of educating the young. Their order had been a little too successful in its fight against the enemies of the church. It had established "provinces" in every part of the world, to teach the natives the blessings of Christianity, but soon it had developed into a regular trading company which was for ever interfering with the civil authorities. During the reign of the Marquis de Pombal, the great reforming minister of Portugal, they had been driven out of the Portuguese lands and in the year 1773 at the request of most of the Catholic powers of Europe, the order had been suppressed by Pope Clement XIV. Now they were back on the job, and preached the principles of "obedience" and "love for the legitimate dynasty" to children whose parents had hired shopwindows that they might laugh at Marie Antoinette driving to the scaffold which was to end her misery.

But in the Protestant countries like Prussia, things were not a whit better. The great patriotic leaders of the year 1812, the poets and the writers who had preached a holy war upon the usurper, were now branded as dangerous "demagogues." Their houses were searched. Their letters were read. They were obliged to report to the police at regular intervals and give an account of themselves. The Prussian drill master was let loose in all his fury upon the younger generation. When a party of students celebrated the tercentenary of the Reformation with noisy but harmless

festivities on the old Wartburg, the Prussian bureaucrats had visions of an imminent revolution. When a theological student, more honest than intelligent, killed a Russian government spy who was operating in Germany, the universities were placed under police-supervision and professors were jailed or dismissed without any form of trial.

Russia, of course, was even more absurd in these anti-revolutionary activities. Alexander had recovered from his attack of piety. He was gradually drifting toward melancholia. He well knew his own limited abilities and understood how at Vienna he had been the victim both of Metternich and the Krudener woman. More and more he turned his back upon the west and became a truly Russian ruler whose interests lay in Constantinople, the old holy city that had been the first teacher of the Slavs. The older he grew, the harder he worked and the less he was able to accomplish. And while he sat in his study, his ministers turned the whole of Russia into a land of military barracks.

It is not a pretty picture. Perhaps I might have shortened this description of the Great Reaction. But it is just as well that you should have a thorough knowledge of this era. It was not the first time that an attempt had been made to set the clock of history back. The result was the usual one.

NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

THE LOVE OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, HOWEVER WAS TOO STRONG TO BE DESTROYED IN THIS WAY. THE SOUTH AMERICANS WERE THE FIRST TO REBEL AGAINST THE REACTIONARY MEASURES OF THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA, GREECE AND BELGIUM AND SPAIN AND A LARGE NUMBER OF OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN CONTINENT FOLLOWED SUIT AND THE NINETEENTH CENTURY WAS FILLED WITH THE RUMOUR OF MANY WARS OF INDEPENDENCE

IT will serve no good purpose to say "if only the Congress of Vienna had done such and such a thing instead of taking such and such a course, the history of Europe in the nineteenth century would have been different." The Congress of Vienna was a gathering of men who had just passed through a great revolution and through twenty years of terrible and almost continuous warfare. They came together for the purpose of giving Europe that "peace and stability" which they thought that the people needed and wanted. They were what we call reactionaries. They sincerely believed in the inability of the mass of the people to rule themselves. They re-arranged the map of Europe in such a way as seemed to promise the greatest possibility of a lasting success. They failed, but not through any premeditated wickedness on their part. They were, for the greater part, men of the old school who remembered the happier days of their quiet youth and ardently wished a return of that blessed period. They failed to recognise the strong hold which many of the revolutionary principles had gained upon the people of the European continent. That was a misfortune but hardly a sin. But one of the things which the French Revolution had taught not only Europe but America as well, was the right of people to their own "nationality."

Napoleon, who respected nothing and nobody, was utterly ruthless in his dealing with national and patriotic aspirations. But the early revolutionary generals had proclaimed the new doctrine that "nationality was not a matter of political frontiers or round skulls and broad noses, but a matter of the heart and soul." While they were teaching the French children the greatness of the French nation, they encouraged Spaniards and Hollanders and Italians to do the same thing. Soon these people, who all shared Rousseau's belief in the superior virtues of Original Man, began to dig into their past and found, buried beneath the ruins of the feudal system, the bones of the mighty races of which they supposed themselves the feeble descendants.

The first half of the nineteenth century was the era of the great historical discoveries. Everywhere historians were busy publishing mediaeval charters and early mediaeval chronicles and in every country the result was a new pride in the old fatherland. A great deal of this

sentiment was based upon the wrong interpretation of historical facts. But in practical politics, it does not matter what is true, but everything depends upon what the people believe to be true. And in most countries both the kings and their subjects firmly believed in the glory and fame of their ancestors.

The Congress of Vienna was not inclined to be sentimental. Their Excellencies divided the map of Europe according to the best interests of half a dozen dynasties and put "national aspirations" upon the Index, or list of forbidden books, together with all other dangerous "French doctrines."

But history is no respecter of Congresses. For some reason or other (it may be an historical law, which thus far has escaped the attention of the scholars) "nations" seemed to be necessary for the orderly development of human society and the attempt to stem this tide was quite as unsuccessful as the Metternichian effort to prevent people from thinking.

Curiously enough the first trouble began in a very distant part of the world, in South America. The Spanish colonies of that continent had been enjoying a period of relative independence during the many years of the great Napoleonic wars. They had even remained faithful to their king when he was taken prisoner by the French Emperor and they had refused to recognise Joseph Bonaparte, who had in the year 1808 been made King of Spain by order of his brother.

Indeed, the only part of America to get very much upset by the Revolution was the island of Haiti, the Espagnola of Columbus' first trip. Here in the year 1791 the French Convention, in a sudden outburst of love and human brotherhood, had bestowed upon their black brethren all the privileges hitherto enjoyed by their white masters. Just as suddenly they had repented of this step, but the attempt to undo the original promise led to many years of terrible warfare between General Leclerc, the brother-in-law of Napoleon, and Toussaint l'Ouverture, the negro chieftain. In the year 1801, Toussaint was asked to visit Leclerc and discuss terms of peace. He received the solemn promise that he would not be molested. He trusted his white adversaries, was put on board a ship and shortly afterwards died in a French prison. But the negroes gained their independence all the same and founded a Republic. Incidentally they were of great help to the first great South American patriot in his efforts to deliver his native country from the Spanish yoke.

Simon Bolivar, a native of Caracas in Venezuela, born in the year 1783, had been educated in Spain, had visited Paris where he had seen the Revolutionary government at work, had lived for a while in the United States and had returned to his native land where the widespread discontent against Spain, the mother country, was beginning to take a definite form. In the year 1811, Venezuela declared its independence and Bolivar became one of the revolutionary generals. Within two months, the rebels were defeated and Bolivar fled.

For the next five years he was the leader of an apparently lost cause. He sacrificed all his wealth and he would not have been able to begin his final and successful expedition without the support of the President of Haiti. Thereafter the revolt spread all over South America and soon it appeared that Spain was not able to suppress the rebellion unaided. She asked for the support of the Holy Alliance.

This step greatly worried England. The British shippers had succeeded the Dutch as the Common Carriers of the world and they expected to reap heavy profits from a declaration of independence on the part of all South America. They had hopes that the United States of America would interfere but the Senate had no such plans and in the House, too, there were many voices which declared that Spain ought to be given a free hand.

Just then, there was a change of ministers in England. The Whigs went out and the Tories came in. George Canning became secretary of State. He dropped a hint that England would gladly back

up the American government with all the might of her fleet, if said government would declare its disapproval of the plans of the Holy Alliance in regard to the rebellious colonies of the southern continent. President Monroe thereupon, on the 2nd of December of the year 1823, addressed Congress and stated that: "America would consider any attempt on the part of the allied powers to extend their system to any portion of this western hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety," and gave warning that "the American government would consider such action on the part of the Holy Alliance as a manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States." Four weeks later, the text of the "Monroe Doctrine" was printed in the English newspapers and the members of the Holy Alliance were forced to make their choice.

Metternich hesitated. Personally he would have been willing to risk the displeasure of the United States (which had allowed both its army and navy to fall into neglect since the end of the Anglo-American war of the year 1812.) But Canning's threatening attitude and trouble on the continent forced him to be careful. The expedition never took place and South America and Mexico gained their independence.

As for the troubles on the continent of Europe, they were coming fast and furious. The Holy Alliance had sent French troops to Spain to act as guardians of the peace in the year 1820. Austrian troops had been used for a similar purpose in Italy when the "Carbonari" (the secret society of the Charcoal Burners) were making propaganda for a united Italy and had caused a rebellion against the unspeakable Ferdinand of Naples.

Bad news also came from Russia where the death of Alexander had been the sign for a revolutionary outbreak in St. Petersburg, a short but bloody upheaval, the so-called Dekaberist revolt (because it took place in December,) which ended with the hanging of a large number of good patriots who had been disgusted by the reaction of Alexander's last years and had tried to give Russia a constitutional form of government.

But worse was to follow. Metternich had tried to assure himself of the continued support of the European courts by a series of conferences at Aix-la-Chapelle at Troppau at Laibach and finally at Verona. The delegates from the different powers duly travelled to these agreeable watering places where the Austrian prime minister used to spend his summers. They always promised to do their best to suppress revolt but they were none too certain of their success. The spirit of the people was beginning to be ugly and especially in France the position of the king was by no means satisfactory.

The real trouble however began in the Balkans, the gateway to western Europe through which the invaders of that continent had passed since the beginning of time. The first outbreak was in Moldavia, the ancient Roman province of Dacia which had been cut off from the Empire in the third century. Since then, it had been a lost land, a sort of Atlantis, where the people had continued to speak the old Roman tongue and still called themselves Romans and their country Roumania. Here in the year 1821, a young Greek, Prince Alexander Ypsilanti, began a revolt against the Turks. He told his followers that they could count upon the support of Russia. But Metternich's fast couriers were soon on their way to St Petersburg and the Tsar, entirely persuaded by the Austrian arguments in favor of "peace and stability," refused to help. Ypsilanti was forced to flee to Austria where he spent the next seven years in prison.

In the same year, 1821, trouble began in Greece. Since 1815 a secret society of Greek patriots had been preparing the way for a revolt. Suddenly they hoisted the flag of independence in the Morea (the ancient Peloponnesus) and drove the Turkish garrisons away. The Turks answered in the usual fashion. They took the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople, who was regarded as their Pope both by the Greeks and by many Russians, and they hanged him on Easter Sunday of the year 1821, together with a number of his bishops. The Greeks came back with a massacre of all the Mohammedans in Tripolitsa, the capital of the Morea and the Turks retaliated by an attack upon

the island of Chios, where they murdered 25,000 Christians and sold 45,000 others as slaves into Asia and Egypt.

Then the Greeks appealed to the European courts, but Metternich told them in so many words that they could “stew in their own grease,” (I am not trying to make a pun, but I am quoting His Serene Highness who informed the Tsar that this “fire of revolt ought to burn itself out beyond the pale of civilisation) and the frontiers were closed to those volunteers who wished to go to the rescue of the patriotic Hellenes. Their cause seemed lost. At the request of Turkey, an Egyptian army was landed in the Morea and soon the Turkish flag was again flying from the Acropolis, the ancient stronghold of Athens. The Egyptian army then pacified the country “à la Turque,” and Metternich followed the proceedings with quiet interest, awaiting the day when this “attempt against the peace of Europe” should be a thing of the past.

Once more it was England which upset his plans. The greatest glory of England does not lie in her vast colonial possessions, in her wealth or her navy, but in the quiet heroism and independence of her average citizen. The Englishman obeys the law because he knows that respect for the rights of others marks the difference between a dog-kennel and civilised society. But he does not recognize the right of others to interfere with his freedom of thought. If his country does something which he believes to be wrong, he gets up and says so and the government which he attacks will respect him and will give him full protection against the mob which to-day, as in the time of Socrates, often loves to destroy those who surpass it in courage or intelligence. There never has been a good cause, however unpopular or however distant, which has not counted a number of Englishmen among its staunchest adherents. The mass of the English people are not different from those in other lands. They stick to the business at hand and have no time for impractical “sporting ventures.” But they rather admire their eccentric neighbour who drops everything to go and fight for some obscure people in Asia or Africa and when he has been killed they give him a fine public funeral and hold him up to their children as an example of valor and chivalry.

Even the police spies of the Holy Alliance were powerless against this national characteristic. In the year 1824, Lord Byron, a rich young Englishman who wrote the poetry over which all Europe wept, hoisted the sails of his yacht and started south to help the Greeks. Three months later the news spread through Europe that their hero lay dead in Missolonghi, the last of the Greek strongholds. His lonely death caught the imagination of the people. In all countries, societies were formed to help the Greeks. Lafayette, the grand old man of the American revolution, pleaded their cause in France. The king of Bavaria sent hundreds of his officers. Money and supplies poured in upon the starving men of Missolonghi.

In England, George Canning, who had defeated the plans of the Holy Alliance in South America, was now prime minister. He saw his chance to checkmate Metternich for a second time. The English and Russian fleets were already in the Mediterranean. They were sent by governments which dared no longer suppress the popular enthusiasm for the cause of the Greek patriots. The French navy appeared because France, since the end of the Crusades, had assumed the role of the defender of the Christian faith in Mohammedan lands. On October 20 of the year 1827, the ships of the three nations attacked the Turkish fleet in the bay of Navarino and destroyed it. Rarely has the news of a battle been received with such general rejoicing. The people of western Europe and Russia who enjoyed no freedom at home consoled themselves by fighting an imaginary war of liberty on behalf of the oppressed Greeks. In the year 1829 they had their reward. Greece became an independent nation and the policy of reaction and stability suffered its second great defeat.

It would be absurd were I to try, in this short volume, to give you a detailed account of the struggle for national independence in all other countries. There are a large number of excellent books devoted to such subjects. I have described the struggle for the independence of Greece because it was the first successful attack upon the bulwark of reaction which the Congress of

Vienna had erected to "maintain the stability of Europe." That mighty fortress of suppression still held out and Metternich continued to be in command. But the end was near.

In France the Bourbons had established an almost unbearable rule of police officials who were trying to undo the work of the French revolution, with an absolute disregard of the regulations and laws of civilised warfare. When Louis XVIII died in the year 1824, the people had enjoyed nine years of "peace" which had proved even more unhappy than the ten years of war of the Empire. Louis was succeeded by his brother, Charles X.

Louis had belonged to that famous Bourbon family which, although it never learned anything, never forgot anything. The recollection of that morning in the town of Hamm, when news had reached him of the decapitation of his brother, remained a constant warning of what might happen to those kings who did not read the signs of the times aright. Charles, on the other hand, who had managed to run up private debts of fifty million francs before he was twenty years of age, knew nothing, remembered nothing and firmly intended to learn nothing. As soon as he had succeeded his brother, he established a government "by priests, through priests and for priests," and while the Duke of Wellington, who made this remark, cannot be called a violent liberal, Charles ruled in such a way that he disgusted even that trusted friend of law and order. When he tried to suppress the newspapers which dared to criticise his government, and dismissed the Parliament because it supported the Press, his days were numbered.

On the night of the 27th of July of the year 1830, a revolution took place in Paris. On the 30th of the same month, the king fled to the coast and set sail for England. In this way the "famous farce of fifteen years" came to an end and the Bourbons were at last removed from the throne of France. They were too hopelessly incompetent. France then might have returned to a Republican form of government, but such a step would not have been tolerated by Metternich.

The situation was dangerous enough. The spark of rebellion had leaped beyond the French frontier and had set fire to another powder house filled with national grievances. The new kingdom of the Netherlands had not been a success. The Belgian and the Dutch people had nothing in common and their king, William of Orange (the descendant of an uncle of William the Silent), while a hard worker and a good business man, was too much lacking in tact and pliability to keep the peace among his uncongenial subjects. Besides, the horde of priests which had descended upon France, had at once found its way into Belgium and whatever Protestant William tried to do was howled down by large crowds of excited citizens as a fresh attempt upon the "freedom of the Catholic church." On the 25th of August there was a popular outbreak against the Dutch authorities in Brussels. Two months later, the Belgians declared themselves independent and elected Leopold of Coburg, the uncle of Queen Victoria of England, to the throne. That was an excellent solution of the difficulty. The two countries, which never ought to have been united, parted their ways and thereafter lived in peace and harmony and behaved like decent neighbours.

News in those days when there were only a few short railroads, travelled slowly, but when the success of the French and the Belgian revolutionists became known in Poland there was an immediate clash between the Poles and their Russian rulers which led to a year of terrible warfare and ended with a complete victory for the Russians who "established order along the banks of the Vistula" in the well-known Russian fashion Nicholas the first, who had succeeded his brother Alexander in 1825, firmly believed in the Divine Right of his own family, and the thousands of Polish refugees who had found shelter in western Europe bore witness to the fact that the principles of the Holy Alliance were still more than a hollow phrase in Holy Russia.

In Italy too there was a moment of unrest. Marie Louise Duchess of Parma and wife of the former Emperor Napoleon, whom she had deserted after the defeat of Waterloo, was driven away from her country, and in the Papal state the exasperated people tried to establish an independent Republic. But the armies of Austria marched to Rome and soon every thing was as of old. Metternich continued to reside at the Ball Platz, the home of the foreign minister of the

Habsburg dynasty, the police spies returned to their job, and peace reigned supreme. Eighteen more years were to pass before a second and more successful attempt could be made to deliver Europe from the terrible inheritance of the Vienna Congress.

Again it was France, the revolutionary weather-cock of Europe, which gave the signal of revolt. Charles X had been succeeded by Louis Philippe, the son of that famous Duke of Orleans who had turned Jacobin, had voted for the death of his cousin the king, and had played a role during the early days of the revolution under the name of "Philippe Egalite" or "Equality Philip." Eventually he had been killed when Robespierre tried to purge the nation of all "traitors," (by which name he indicated those people who did not share his own views) and his son had been forced to run away from the revolutionary army. Young Louis Philippe thereupon had wandered far and wide. He had taught school in Switzerland and had spent a couple of years exploring the unknown "far west" of America. After the fall of Napoleon he had returned to Paris. He was much more intelligent than his Bourbon cousins. He was a simple man who went about in the public parks with a red cotton umbrella under his arm, followed by a brood of children like any good housefather. But France had outgrown the king business and Louis did not know this until the morning of the 24th of February, of the year 1848, when a crowd stormed the Tuilleries and drove his Majesty away and proclaimed the Republic.

When the news of this event reached Vienna, Metternich expressed the casual opinion that this was only a repetition of the year 1793 and that the Allies would once more be obliged to march upon Paris and make an end to this very unseemly democratic row. But two weeks later his own Austrian capital was in open revolt. Metternich escaped from the mob through the back door of his palace, and the Emperor Ferdinand was forced to give his subjects a constitution which embodied most of the revolutionary principles which his Prime Minister had tried to suppress for the last thirty-three years.

This time all Europe felt the shock. Hungary declared itself independent, and commenced a war against the Habsburgs under the leadership of Louis Kossuth. The unequal struggle lasted more than a year. It was finally suppressed by the armies of Tsar Nicholas who marched across the Carpathian mountains and made Hungary once more safe for autocracy. The Habsburgs thereupon established extraordinary court-martials and hanged the greater part of the Hungarian patriots whom they had not been able to defeat in open battle.

As for Italy, the island of Sicily declared itself independent from Naples and drove its Bourbon king away. In the Papal states the prime minister, Rossi, was murdered and the Pope was forced to flee. He returned the next year at the head of a French army which remained in Rome to protect His Holiness against his subjects until the year 1870. Then it was called back to defend France against the Prussians, and Rome became the capital of Italy. In the north, Milan and Venice rose against their Austrian masters. They were supported by king Albert of Sardinia, but a strong Austrian army under old Radetzky marched into the valley of the Po, defeated the Sardinians near Custoza and Novara and forced Albert to abdicate in favour of his son, Victor Emanuel, who a few years later was to be the first king of a united Italy.

In Germany the unrest of the year 1848 took the form of a great national demonstration in favour of political unity and a representative form of government. In Bavaria, the king who had wasted his time and money upon an Irish lady who posed as a Spanish dancer--(she was called Lola Montez and lies buried in New York's Potter's Field)--was driven away by the enraged students of the university. In Prussia, the king was forced to stand with uncovered head before the coffins of those who had been killed during the street fighting and to promise a constitutional form of government. And in March of the year 1849, a German parliament, consisting of 550 delegates from all parts of the country came together in Frankfort and proposed that king Frederick William of Prussia should be the Emperor of a United Germany.

Then, however, the tide began to turn. Incompetent Ferdinand had abdicated in favour of his nephew Francis Joseph. The well-drilled Austrian army had remained faithful to their war-lord. The hangman was given plenty of work and the Habsburgs, after the nature of that strangely cat-like family, once more landed upon their feet and rapidly strengthened their position as the masters of eastern and western Europe. They played the game of politics very adroitly and used the jealousies of the other German states to prevent the elevation of the Prussian king to the Imperial dignity. Their long training in the art of suffering defeat had taught them the value of patience. They knew how to wait. They bided their time and while the liberals, utterly untrained in practical politics, talked and talked and talked and got intoxicated by their own fine speeches, the Austrians quietly gathered their forces, dismissed the Parliament of Frankfort and re-established the old and impossible German confederation which the Congress of Vienna had wished upon an unsuspecting world.

But among the men who had attended this strange Parliament of unpractical enthusiasts, there was a Prussian country squire by the name of Bismarck, who had made good use of his eyes and ears. He had a deep contempt for oratory. He knew (what every man of action has always known) that nothing is ever accomplished by talk. In his own way he was a sincere patriot. He had been trained in the old school of diplomacy and he could outlie his opponents just as he could outwalk them and outdrink them and outride them.

Bismarck felt convinced that the loose confederation of little states must be changed into a strong united country if it would hold its own against the other European powers. Brought up amidst feudal ideas of loyalty, he decided that the house of Hohenzollern, of which he was the most faithful servant, should rule the new state, rather than the incompetent Habsburgs. For this purpose he must first get rid of the Austrian influence, and he began to make the necessary preparations for this painful operation.

Italy in the meantime had solved her own problem, and had rid herself of her hated Austrian master. The unity of Italy was the work of three men, Cavour, Mazzini and Garibaldi. Of these three, Cavour, the civil-engineer with the short-sighted eyes and the steel-rimmed glasses, played the part of the careful political pilot. Mazzini, who had spent most of his days in different European garrets, hiding from the Austrian police, was the public agitator, while Garibaldi, with his band of red-shirted rough-riders, appealed to the popular imagination.

Mazzini and Garibaldi were both believers in the Republican form of government. Cavour, however, was a monarchist, and the others who recognised his superior ability in such matters of practical statecraft, accepted his decision and sacrificed their own ambitions for the greater good of their beloved Fatherland.

Cavour felt towards the House of Sardinia as Bismarck did towards the Hohenzollern family. With infinite care and great shrewdness he set to work to jockey the Sardinian King into a position from which His Majesty would be able to assume the leadership of the entire Italian people. The unsettled political conditions in the rest of Europe greatly helped him in his plans and no country contributed more to the independence of Italy than her old and trusted (and often distrusted) neighbour, France.

In that turbulent country, in November of the year 1852, the Republic had come to a sudden but not unexpected end. Napoleon III the son of Louis Bonaparte the former King of Holland, and the small nephew of a great uncle, had re-established an Empire and had made himself Emperor "by the Grace of God and the Will of the People."

This young man, who had been educated in Germany and who mixed his French with harsh Teutonic gutturals (just as the first Napoleon had always spoken the language of his adopted country with a strong Italian accent) was trying very hard to use the Napoleonic tradition for his own benefit. But he had many enemies and did not feel very certain of his hold upon his ready-made

throne. He had gained the friendship of Queen Victoria but this had not been a difficult task, as the good Queen was not particularly brilliant and was very susceptible to flattery. As for the other European sovereigns, they treated the French Emperor with insulting haughtiness and sat up nights devising new ways in which they could show their upstart "Good Brother" how sincerely they despised him.

Napoleon was obliged to find a way in which he could break this opposition, either through love or through fear. He well knew the fascination which the word "glory" still held for his subjects. Since he was forced to gamble for his throne he decided to play the game of Empire for high stakes. He used an attack of Russia upon Turkey as an excuse for bringing about the Crimean war in which England and France combined against the Tsar on behalf of the Sultan. It was a very costly and exceedingly unprofitable enterprise. Neither France nor England nor Russia reaped much glory.

But the Crimean war did one good thing. It gave Sardinia a chance to volunteer on the winning side and when peace was declared it gave Cavour the opportunity to lay claim to the gratitude of both England and France.

Having made use of the international situation to get Sardinia recognised as one of the more important powers of Europe, the clever Italian then provoked a war between Sardinia and Austria in June of the year 1859. He assured himself of the support of Napoleon in exchange for the provinces of Savoy and the city of Nice, which was really an Italian town. The Franco-Italian armies defeated the Austrians at Magenta and Solferino, and the former Austrian provinces and duchies were united into a single Italian kingdom. Florence became the capital of this new Italy until the year 1870 when the French recalled their troops from Home to defend France against the Germans. As soon as they were gone, the Italian troops entered the eternal city and the House of Sardinia took up its residence in the old Palace of the Quirinal which an ancient Pope had built on the ruins of the baths of the Emperor Constantine.

The Pope, however, moved across the river Tiber and hid behind the walls of the Vatican, which had been the home of many of his predecessors since their return from the exile of Avignon in the year 1377. He protested loudly against this high-handed theft of his domains and addressed letters of appeal to those faithful Catholics who were inclined to sympathise with him in his loss. Their number, however, was small, and it has been steadily decreasing. For, once delivered from the cares of state, the Pope was able to devote all his time to questions of a spiritual nature. Standing high above the petty quarrels of the European politicians, the Papacy assumed a new dignity which proved of great benefit to the church and made it an international power for social and religious progress which has shown a much more intelligent appreciation of modern economic problems than most Protestant sects.

In this way, the attempt of the Congress of Vienna to settle the Italian question by making the peninsula an Austrian province was at last undone.

The German problem however remained as yet unsolved. It proved the most difficult of all. The failure of the revolution of the year 1848 had led to the wholesale migration of the more energetic and liberal elements among the German people. These young fellows had moved to the United States of America, to Brazil, to the new colonies in Asia and America. Their work was continued in Germany but by a different sort of men.

In the new Diet which met at Frankfort, after the collapse of the German Parliament and the failure of the Liberals to establish a united country, the Kingdom of Prussia was represented by that same Otto von Bismarck from whom we parted a few pages ago. Bismarck by now had managed to gain the complete confidence of the king of Prussia. That was all he asked for. The opinion of the Prussian parliament or of the Prussian people interested him not at all. With his own eyes he had seen the defeat of the Liberals. He knew that he would not be able to get rid of Austria

without a war and he began by strengthening the Prussian army. The Landtag, exasperated at his high-handed methods, refused to give him the necessary credits. Bismarck did not even bother to discuss the matter. He went ahead and increased his army with the help of funds which the Prussian house of Peers and the king placed at his disposal. Then he looked for a national cause which could be used for the purpose of creating a great wave of patriotism among all the German people.

In the north of Germany there were the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein which ever since the middle ages had been a source of trouble. Both countries were inhabited by a certain number of Danes and a certain number of Germans, but although they were governed by the King of Denmark, they were not an integral part of the Danish State and this led to endless difficulties. Heaven forbid that I should revive this forgotten question which now seems settled by the acts of the recent Congress of Versailles. But the Germans in Holstein were very loud in their abuse of the Danes and the Danes in Schleswig made a great ado of their Danishness, and all Europe was discussing the problem and German Mannerchors and Turnvereins listened to sentimental speeches about the "lost brethren" and the different chancelleries were trying to discover what it was all about, when Prussia mobilised her armies to "save the lost provinces." As Austria, the official head of the German Confederation, could not allow Prussia to act alone in such an important matter, the Habsburg troops were mobilised too and the combined armies of the two great powers crossed the Danish frontiers and after a very brave resistance on the part of the Danes, occupied the two duchies. The Danes appealed to Europe, but Europe was otherwise engaged and the poor Danes were left to their fate.

Bismarck then prepared the scene for the second number upon his Imperial programme. He used the division of the spoils to pick a quarrel with Austria. The Habsburgs fell into the trap. The new Prussian army, the creation of Bismarck and his faithful generals, invaded Bohemia and in less than six weeks, the last of the Austrian troops had been destroyed at Koniggratz and Sadowa and the road to Vienna lay open. But Bismarck did not want to go too far. He knew that he would need a few friends in Europe. He offered the defeated Habsburgs very decent terms of peace, provided they would resign their chairmanship of the Confederation. He was less merciful to many of the smaller German states who had taken the side of the Austrians, and annexed them to Prussia. The greater part of the northern states then formed a new organisation, the so-called North German Confederacy, and victorious Prussia assumed the unofficial leadership of the German people.

Europe stood aghast at the rapidity with which the work of consolidation had been done. England was quite indifferent but France showed signs of disapproval. Napoleon's hold upon the French people was steadily diminishing. The Crimean war had been costly and had accomplished nothing.

A second adventure in the year 1863, when a French army had tried to force an Austrian Grand-Duke by the name of Maximilian upon the Mexican people as their Emperor, had come to a disastrous end as soon as the American Civil War had been won by the North. For the Government at Washington had forced the French to withdraw their troops and this had given the Mexicans a chance to clear their country of the enemy and shoot the unwelcome Emperor.

It was necessary to give the Napoleonic throne a new coat of glory-paint. Within a few years the North German Confederation would be a serious rival of France. Napoleon decided that a war with Germany would be a good thing for his dynasty. He looked for an excuse and Spain, the poor victim of endless revolutions, gave him one.

Just then the Spanish throne happened to be vacant. It had been offered to the Catholic branch of the house of Hohenzollern. The French government had objected and the Hohenzollerns had politely refused to accept the crown. But Napoleon, who was showing signs of illness, was very much under the influence of his beautiful wife, Eugenie de Montijo, the daughter of a Spanish gentleman and the grand-daughter of William Kirkpatrick, an American consul at Malaga, where the grapes come from. Eugenie, although shrewd enough, was as badly educated as most Spanish women

of that day. She was at the mercy of her spiritual advisers and these worthy gentlemen felt no love for the Protestant King of Prussia. "Be bold," was the advice of the Empress to her husband, but she omitted to add the second half of that famous Persian proverb which admonishes the hero to "be bold but not too bold." Napoleon, convinced of the strength of his army, addressed himself to the king of Prussia and insisted that the king give him assurances that "he would never permit another candidature of a Hohenzollern prince to the Spanish crown." As the Hohenzollerns had just declined the honour, the demand was superfluous, and Bismarck so informed the French government. But Napoleon was not satisfied.

It was the year 1870 and King William was taking the waters at Ems. There one day he was approached by the French minister who tried to re-open the discussion. The king answered very pleasantly that it was a fine day and that the Spanish question was now closed and that nothing more remained to be said upon the subject. As a matter of routine, a report of this interview was telegraphed to Bismarck, who handled all foreign affairs. Bismarck edited the dispatch for the benefit of the Prussian and French press. Many people have called him names for doing this. Bismarck however could plead the excuse that the doctoring of official news, since time immemorial, had been one of the privileges of all civilised governments. When the "edited" telegram was printed, the good people in Berlin felt that their old and venerable king with his nice white whiskers had been insulted by an arrogant little Frenchman and the equally good people of Paris flew into a rage because their perfectly courteous minister had been shown the door by a Royal Prussian flunkey.

And so they both went to war and in less than two months, Napoleon and the greater part of his army were prisoners of the Germans. The Second Empire had come to an end and the Third Republic was making ready to defend Paris against the German invaders. Paris held out for five long months. Ten days before the surrender of the city, in the nearby palace of Versailles, built by that same King Louis XIV who had been such a dangerous enemy to the Germans, the King of Prussia was publicly proclaimed German Emperor and a loud booming of guns told the hungry Parisians that a new German Empire had taken the place of the old harmless Confederation of Teutonic states and stateless.

In this rough way, the German question was finally settled. By the end of the year 1871, fifty-six years after the memorable gathering at Vienna, the work of the Congress had been entirely undone. Metternich and Alexander and Talleyrand had tried to give the people of Europe a lasting peace. The methods they had employed had caused endless wars and revolutions and the feeling of a common brotherhood of the eighteenth century was followed by an era of exaggerated nationalism which has not yet come to an end.

THE AGE OF THE ENGINE

BUT WHILE THE PEOPLE OF EUROPE WERE FIGHTING FOR THEIR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, THE WORLD IN WHICH THEY LIVED HAD BEEN ENTIRELY CHANGED BY A SERIES OF INVENTIONS, WHICH HAD MADE THE CLUMSY OLD STEAM ENGINE OF THE 18TH CENTURY THE MOST FAITHFUL AND EFFICIENT SLAVE OF MAN

THE greatest benefactor of the human race died more than half a million years ago. He was a hairy creature with a low brow and sunken eyes, a heavy jaw and strong tiger-like teeth. He would not have looked well in a gathering of modern scientists, but they would have honoured him as their master. For he had used a stone to break a nut and a stick to lift up a heavy boulder. He was the inventor of the hammer and the lever, our first tools, and he did more than any human being who came after him to give man his enormous advantage over the other animals with whom he shares this planet.

Ever since, man has tried to make his life easier by the use of a greater number of tools. The first wheel (a round disc made out of an old tree) created as much stir in the communities of 100,000 B.C. as the flying machine did only a few years ago.

In Washington, the story is told of a director of the Patent Office who in the early thirties of the last century suggested that the Patent Office be abolished, because "everything that possibly could be invented had been invented." A similar feeling must have spread through the prehistoric world when the first sail was hoisted on a raft and the people were able to move from place to place without rowing or punting or pulling from the shore.

Indeed one of the most interesting chapters of history is the effort of man to let some one else or something else do his work for him, while he enjoyed his leisure, sitting in the sun or painting pictures on rocks, or training young wolves and little tigers to behave like peaceful domestic animals.

Of course in the very olden days; it was always possible to enslave a weaker neighbour and force him to do the unpleasant tasks of life. One of the reasons why the Greeks and Romans, who were quite as intelligent as we are, failed to devise more interesting machinery, was to be found in the wide-spread existence of slavery. Why should a great mathematician waste his time upon wires and pulleys and cogs and fill the air with noise and smoke when he could go to the marketplace and buy all the slaves he needed at a very small expense?

And during the middle-ages, although slavery had been abolished and only a mild form of serfdom survived, the guilds discouraged the idea of using machinery because they thought this would throw a large number of their brethren out of work. Besides, the Middle-Ages were not at all interested in producing large quantities of goods. Their tailors and butchers and carpenters worked for the immediate needs of the small community in which they lived and had no desire to compete with their neighbours, or to produce more than was strictly necessary.

During the Renaissance, when the prejudices of the Church against scientific investigations could no longer be enforced as rigidly as before, a large number of men began to devote their lives to mathematics and astronomy and physics and chemistry. Two years before the beginning of the Thirty Years War, John Napier, a Scotchman, had published his little book which described the new invention of logarithms. During the war itself, Gottfried Leibnitz of Leipzig had perfected the system of infinitesimal calculus. Eight years before the peace of Westphalia, Newton, the great English natural philosopher, was born, and in that same year Galileo, the Italian astronomer, died. Meanwhile the Thirty Years War had destroyed the prosperity of central Europe and there was a sudden but very general interest in "alchemy," the strange pseudo-science of the middle-ages by which people hoped to turn base metals into gold. This proved to be impossible but the alchemists in their laboratories stumbled upon many new ideas and greatly helped the work of the chemists who were their successors.

The work of all these men provided the world with a solid scientific foundation upon which it was possible to build even the most complicated of engines, and a number of practical men made good use of it. The Middle-Ages had used wood for the few bits of necessary machinery. But wood wore out easily. Iron was a much better material but iron was scarce except in England. In England therefore most of the smelting was done. To smelt iron, huge fires were needed. In the beginning, these fires had been made of wood, but gradually the forests had been used up. Then "stone coal" (the petrified trees of prehistoric times) was used. But coal as you know has to be dug out of the ground and it has to be transported to the smelting ovens and the mines have to be kept dry from the ever invading waters.

These were two problems which had to be solved at once. For the time being, horses could still be used to haul the coal-wagons, but the pumping question demanded the application of special machinery. Several inventors were busy trying to solve the difficulty. They all knew that steam

would have to be used in their new engine. The idea of the steam engine was very old. Hero of Alexandria, who lived in the first century before Christ, has described to us several bits of machinery which were driven by steam. The people of the Renaissance had played with the notion of steam-driven war chariots. The Marquis of Worcester, a contemporary of Newton, in his book of inventions, tells of a steam engine. A little later, in the year 1698, Thomas Savery of London applied for a patent for a pumping engine. At the same time, a Hollander, Christian Huygens, was trying to perfect an engine in which gun-powder was used to cause regular explosions in much the same way as we use gasoline in our motors.

All over Europe, people were busy with the idea. Denis Papin, a Frenchman, friend and assistant of Huygens, was making experiments with steam engines in several countries. He invented a little wagon that was driven by steam, and a paddle-wheel boat. But when he tried to take a trip in his vessel, it was confiscated by the authorities on a complaint of the boatmen's union, who feared that such a craft would deprive them of their livelihood. Papin finally died in London in great poverty, having wasted all his money on his inventions. But at the time of his death, another mechanical enthusiast, Thomas Newcomen, was working on the problem of a new steam-pump. Fifty years later his engine was improved upon by James Watt, a Glasgow instrument maker. In the year 1777, he gave the world the first steam engine that proved of real practical value.

But during the centuries of experiments with a "heat-engine," the political world had greatly changed. The British people had succeeded the Dutch as the common-carriers of the world's trade. They had opened up new colonies. They took the raw materials which the colonies produced to England, and there they turned them into finished products, and then they exported the finished goods to the four corners of the world. During the seventeenth century, the people of Georgia and the Carolinas had begun to grow a new shrub which gave a strange sort of woolly substance, the so-called "cotton wool." After this had been plucked, it was sent to England and there the people of Lancashire wove it into cloth. This weaving was done by hand and in the homes of the workmen. Very soon a number of improvements were made in the process of weaving. In the year 1730, John Kay invented the "fly shuttle." In 1770, James Hargreaves got a patent on his "spinning jenny." Eli Whitney, an American, invented the cotton-gin, which separated the cotton from its seeds, a job which had previously been done by hand at the rate of only a pound a day. Finally Richard Arkwright and the Reverend Edmund Cartwright invented large weaving machines, which were driven by water power. And then, in the eighties of the eighteenth century, just when the Estates General of France had begun those famous meetings which were to revolutionise the political system of Europe, the engines of Watt were arranged in such a way that they could drive the weaving machines of Arkwright, and this created an economic and social revolution which has changed human relationship in almost every part of the world.

As soon as the stationary engine had proved a success, the inventors turned their attention to the problem of propelling boats and carts with the help of a mechanical contrivance. Watt himself designed plans for a "steam locomotive," but ere he had perfected his ideas, in the year 1804, a locomotive made by Richard Trevithick carried a load of twenty tons at Pen-y-darwan in the Wales mining district.

At the same time an American jeweller and portrait-painter by the name of Robert Fulton was in Paris, trying to convince Napoleon that with the use of his submarine boat, the "Nautilus," and his "steam-boat," the French might be able to destroy the naval supremacy of England.

Fulton's idea of a steamboat was not original. He had undoubtedly copied it from John Fitch, a mechanical genius of Connecticut whose cleverly constructed steamer had first navigated the Delaware river as early as the year 1787. But Napoleon and his scientific advisers did not believe in the practical possibility of a self-propelled boat, and although the Scotch-built engine of the little craft puffed merrily on the Seine, the great Emperor neglected to avail himself of this formidable weapon which might have given him his revenge for Trafalgar.

As for Fulton, he returned to the United States and, being a practical man of business, he organised a successful steamboat company together with Robert R. Livingston, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, who was American Minister to France when Fulton was in Paris, trying to sell his invention. The first steamer of this new company, the "Clermont," which was given a monopoly of all the waters of New York State, equipped with an engine built by Boulton and Watt of Birmingham in England, began a regular service between New York and Albany in the year 1807.

As for poor John Fitch, the man who long before any one else had used the "steam-boat" for commercial purposes, he came to a sad death. Broken in health and empty of purse, he had come to the end of his resources when his fifth boat, which was propelled by means of a screw-propeller, had been destroyed. His neighbours jeered at him as they were to laugh a hundred years later when Professor Langley constructed his funny flying machines. Fitch had hoped to give his country an easy access to the broad rivers of the west and his countrymen preferred to travel in flat-boats or go on foot. In the year 1798, in utter despair and misery, Fitch killed himself by taking poison.

But twenty years later, the "Savannah," a steamer of 1850 tons and making six knots an hour, (the Mauretania goes just four times as fast,) crossed the ocean from Savannah to Liverpool in the record time of twenty-five days. Then there was an end to the derision of the multitude and in their enthusiasm the people gave the credit for the invention to the wrong man.

Six years later, George Stephenson, a Scotchman, who had been building locomotives for the purpose of hauling coal from the mine-pit to smelting ovens and cotton factories, built his famous "travelling engine" which reduced the price of coal by almost seventy per cent and which made it possible to establish the first regular passenger service between Manchester and Liverpool, when people were whisked from city to city at the unheard-of speed of fifteen miles per hour. A dozen years later, this speed had been increased to twenty miles per hour. At the present time, any well-behaved flivver (the direct descendant of the puny little motor-driven machines of Daimler and Levassor of the eighties of the last century) can do better than these early "Puffing Billies."

But while these practically-minded engineers were improving upon their rattling "heat engines," a group of "pure" scientists (men who devote fourteen hours of each day to the study of those "theoretical" scientific phenomena without which no mechanical progress would be possible) were following a new scent which promised to lead them into the most secret and hidden domains of Nature.

Two thousand years ago, a number of Greek and Roman philosophers (notably Thales of Miletus and Pliny who was killed while trying to study the eruption of Vesuvius of the year 79 when Pompeii and Herculaneum were buried beneath the ashes) had noticed the strange antics of bits of straw and of feather which were held near a piece of amber which was being rubbed with a bit of wool. The schoolmen of the Middle Ages had not been interested in this mysterious "electric" power. But immediately after the Renaissance, William Gilbert, the private physician of Queen Elizabeth, wrote his famous treatise on the character and behaviour of Magnets. During the Thirty Years War Otto von Guericke, the burgomaster of Magdeburg and the inventor of the air-pump, constructed the first electrical machine. During the next century a large number of scientists devoted themselves to the study of electricity. Not less than three professors invented the famous Leyden Jar in the year 1795. At the same time, Benjamin Franklin, the most universal genius of America next to Benjamin Thomson (who after his flight from New Hampshire on account of his pro-British sympathies became known as Count Rumford) was devoting his attention to this subject. He discovered that lightning and the electric spark were manifestations of the same electric power and continued his electric studies until the end of his busy and useful life. Then came Volta with his famous "electric pile" and Galvani and Day and the Danish

professor Hans Christian Oersted and Ampere and Arago and Faraday, all of them diligent searchers after the true nature of the electric forces.

They freely gave their discoveries to the world and Samuel Morse (who like Fulton began his career as an artist) thought that he could use this new electric current to transmit messages from one city to another. He intended to use copper wire and a little machine which he had invented. People laughed at him. Morse therefore was obliged to finance his own experiments and soon he had spent all his money and then he was very poor and people laughed even louder. He then asked Congress to help him and a special Committee on Commerce promised him their support. But the members of Congress were not at all interested and Morse had to wait twelve years before he was given a small congressional appropriation. He then built a "telegraph" between Baltimore and Washington. In the year 1837 he had shown his first successful "telegraph" in one of the lecture halls of New York University. Finally, on the 24th of May of the year 1844 the first long-distance message was sent from Washington to Baltimore and to-day the whole world is covered with telegraph wires and we can send news from Europe to Asia in a few seconds. Twenty-three years later Alexander Graham Bell used the electric current for his telephone. And half a century afterwards Marconi improved upon these ideas by inventing a system of sending messages which did away entirely with the old-fashioned wires.

While Morse, the New Englander, was working on his "telegraph," Michael Faraday, the Yorkshire-man, had constructed the first "dynamo." This tiny little machine was completed in the year 1831 when Europe was still trembling as a result of the great July revolutions which had so severely upset the plans of the Congress of Vienna. The first dynamo grew and grew and grew and to-day it provides us with heat and with light (you know the little incandescent bulbs which Edison, building upon French and English experiments of the forties and fifties, first made in 1878) and with power for all sorts of machines. If I am not mistaken the electric-engine will soon entirely drive out the "heat engine" just as in the olden days the more highly-organised prehistoric animals drove out their less efficient neighbours.

Personally (but I know nothing about machinery) this will make me very happy. For the electric engine which can be run by waterpower is a clean and companionable servant of mankind but the "heat-engine," the marvel of the eighteenth century, is a noisy and dirty creature for ever filling the world with ridiculous smoke-stacks and with dust and soot and asking that it be fed with coal which has to be dug out of mines at great inconvenience and risk to thousands of people.

And if I were a novelist and not a historian, who must stick to facts and may not use his imagination, I would describe the happy day when the last steam locomotive shall be taken to the Museum of Natural History to be placed next to the skeleton of the Dynosaur and the Pteredactyl and the other extinct creatures of a by-gone age.

THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION

BUT THE NEW ENGINES WERE VERY EXPENSIVE AND ONLY PEOPLE OF WEALTH COULD AFFORD THEM. THE OLD CARPENTER OR SHOEMAKER WHO HAD BEEN HIS OWN MASTER IN HIS LITTLE WORKSHOP WAS OBLIGED TO HIRE HIMSELF OUT TO THE OWNERS OF THE BIG MECHANICAL TOOLS, AND WHILE HE MADE MORE MONEY THAN BEFORE, HE LOST HIS FORMER INDEPENDENCE AND HE DID NOT LIKE THAT

IN the olden days the work of the world had been done by independent workmen who sat in their own little workshops in the front of their houses, who owned their tools, who boxed the ears of their own apprentices and who, within the limits prescribed by their guilds, conducted their business as it pleased them. They lived simple lives, and were obliged to work very long hours,

but they were their own masters. If they got up and saw that it was a fine day to go fishing, they went fishing and there was no one to say "no."

But the introduction of machinery changed this. A machine is really nothing but a greatly enlarged tool. A railroad train which carries you at the speed of a mile a minute is in reality a pair of very fast legs, and a steam hammer which flattens heavy plates of iron is just a terrible big fist, made of steel.

But whereas we can all afford a pair of good legs and a good strong fist, a railroad train and a steam hammer and a cotton factory are very expensive pieces of machinery and they are not owned by a single man, but usually by a company of people who all contribute a certain sum and then divide the profits of their railroad or cotton mill according to the amount of money which they have invested.

Therefore, when machines had been improved until they were really practicable and profitable, the builders of those large tools, the machine manufacturers, began to look for customers who could afford to pay for them in cash.

During the early middle ages, when land had been almost the only form of wealth, the nobility were the only people who were considered wealthy. But as I have told you in a previous chapter, the gold and silver which they possessed was quite insignificant and they used the old system of barter, exchanging cows for horses and eggs for honey. During the crusades, the burghers of the cities had been able to gather riches from the reviving trade between the east and the west, and they had been serious rivals of the lords and the knights.

The French revolution had entirely destroyed the wealth of the nobility and had enormously increased that of the middle class or "bourgeoisie." The years of unrest which followed the Great Revolution had offered many middle-class people a chance to get more than their share of this world's goods. The estates of the church had been confiscated by the French Convention and had been sold at auction. There had been a terrific amount of graft. Land speculators had stolen thousands of square miles of valuable land, and during the Napoleonic wars, they had used their capital to "profiteer" in grain and gun-powder, and now they possessed more wealth than they needed for the actual expenses of their households, and they could afford to build themselves factories and to hire men and women to work the machines.

This caused a very abrupt change in the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. Within a few years, many cities doubled the number of their inhabitants and the old civic centre which had been the real "home" of the citizens was surrounded with ugly and cheaply built suburbs where the workmen slept after their eleven or twelve hours, or thirteen hours, spent in the factories and from where they returned to the factory as soon as the whistle blew.

Far and wide through the countryside there was talk of the fabulous sums of money that could be made in the towns. The peasant boy, accustomed to a life in the open, went to the city. He rapidly lost his old health amidst the smoke and dust and dirt of those early and badly ventilated workshops, and the end, very often, was death in the poor-house or in the hospital.

Of course the change from the farm to the factory on the part of so many people was not accomplished without a certain amount of opposition. Since one engine could do as much work as a hundred men, the ninety-nine others who were thrown out of employment did not like it. Frequently they attacked the factory-buildings and set fire to the machines, but Insurance Companies had been organised as early as the 17th century and as a rule the owners were well protected against loss.

Soon, newer and better machines were installed, the factory was surrounded with a high wall and then there was an end to the rioting. The ancient guilds could not possibly survive in this new

world of steam and iron. They went out of existence and then the workmen tried to organise regular labour unions. But the factory-owners, who through their wealth could exercise great influence upon the politicians of the different countries, went to the Legislature and had laws passed which forbade the forming of such trade unions because they interfered with the "liberty of action" of the working man.

Please do not think that the good members of Parliament who passed these laws were wicked tyrants. They were the true sons of the revolutionary period when everybody talked of "liberty" and when people often killed their neighbours because they were not quite as liberty-loving as they ought to have been. Since "liberty" was the foremost virtue of man, it was not right that labour-unions should dictate to their members the hours during which they could work and the wages which they must demand. The workman must at all times, be "free to sell his services in the open market," and the employer must be equally "free" to conduct his business as he saw fit. The days of the Mercantile System, when the state had regulated the industrial life of the entire community, were coming to an end. The new idea of "freedom" insisted that the state stand entirely aside and let commerce take its course.

The last half of the 18th century had not merely been a time of intellectual and political doubt, but the old economic ideas, too, had been replaced by new ones which better suited the need of the hour. Several years before the French revolution, Turgot, who had been one of the unsuccessful ministers of finance of Louis XVI, had preached the novel doctrine of "economic liberty." Turgot lived in a country which had suffered from too much red-tape, too many regulations, too many officials trying to enforce too many laws. "Remove this official supervision," he wrote, "let the people do as they please, and everything will be all right." Soon his famous advice of "laissez faire" became the battle-cry around which the economists of that period rallied,

At the same time in England, Adam Smith was working on his mighty volumes on the "Wealth of Nations," which made another plea for "liberty" and the "natural rights of trade." Thirty years later, after the fall of Napoleon, when the reactionary powers of Europe had gained their victory at Vienna, that same freedom which was denied to the people in their political relations was forced upon them in their industrial life.

The general use of machinery, as I have said at the beginning of this chapter, proved to be of great advantage to the state. Wealth increased rapidly. The machine made it possible for a single country, like England, to carry all the burdens of the great Napoleonic wars. The capitalists (the people who provided the money with which machines were bought) reaped enormous profits. They became ambitious and began to take an interest in politics. They tried to compete with the landed aristocracy which still exercised great influence upon the government of most European countries.

In England, where the members of Parliament were still elected according to a Royal Decree of the year 1265, and where a large number of recently created industrial centres were without representation, they brought about the passing of the Reform Bill of the year 1832, which changed the electoral system and gave the class of the factory-owners more influence upon the legislative body. This however caused great discontent among the millions of factory workers, who were left without any voice in the government. They too began an agitation for the right to vote. They put their demands down in a document which came to be known as the "People's Charter." The debates about this charter grew more and more violent. They had not yet come to an end when the revolutions of the year 1848 broke out. Frightened by the threat of a new outbreak or Jacobinism and violence, the English government placed the Duke of Wellington, who was now in his eightieth year, at the head of the army, and called for Volunteers. London was placed in a state of siege and preparations were made to suppress the coming revolution.

But the Chartist movement killed itself through bad leadership and no acts of violence took place. The new class of wealthy factory owners, (I dislike the word "bourgeoisie" which has been used to death by the apostles of a new social order,) slowly increased its hold upon the government, and the conditions of industrial life in the large cities continued to transform vast acres of pasture and wheat-land into dreary slums, which guard the approach of every modern European town.

EMANCIPATION

THE GENERAL INTRODUCTION OF MACHINERY DID NOT BRING ABOUT THE ERA OF HAPPINESS AND PROSPERITY WHICH HAD BEEN PREDICTED BY THE GENERATION WHICH SAW THE STAGE COACH REPLACED BY THE RAILROAD. SEVERAL REMEDIES WERE SUGGESTED BUT NONE OF THESE QUITE SOLVED THE PROBLEM

IN the year 1831, just before the passing of the first Reform Bill Jeremy Bentham, the great English student of legislative methods and the most practical political reformer of that day, wrote to a friend: "The way to be comfortable is to make others comfortable. The way to make others comfortable is to appear to love them. The way to appear to love them is to love them in reality." Jeremy was an honest man. He said what he believed to be true. His opinions were shared by thousands of his countrymen. They felt responsible for the happiness of their less fortunate neighbours and they tried their very best to help them. And Heaven knows it was time that something be done!

The ideal of "economic freedom" (the "laissez faire" of Turgot) had been necessary in the old society where mediaeval restrictions lamed all industrial effort. But this "liberty of action" which had been the highest law of the land had led to a terrible, yea, a frightful condition. The hours in the factory were limited only by the physical strength of the workers. As long as a woman could sit before her loom, without fainting from fatigue, she was supposed to work. Children of five and six were taken to the cotton mills, to save them from the dangers of the street and a life of idleness. A law had been passed which forced the children of paupers to go to work or be punished by being chained to their machines. In return for their services they got enough bad food to keep them alive and a sort of pigsty in which they could rest at night. Often they were so tired that they fell asleep at their job. To keep them awake a foreman with a whip made the rounds and beat them on the knuckles when it was necessary to bring them back to their duties. Of course, under these circumstances thousands of little children died. This was regrettable and the employers, who after all were human beings and not without a heart, sincerely wished that they could abolish "child labour." But since man was "free" it followed that children were "free" too. Besides, if Mr. Jones had tried to work his factory without the use of children of five and six, his rival, Mr. Stone, would have hired an extra supply of little boys and Jones would have been forced into bankruptcy. It was therefore impossible for Jones to do without child labour until such time as an act of Parliament should forbid it for all employers.

But as Parliament was no longer dominated by the old landed aristocracy (which had despised the upstart factory-owners with their money bags and had treated them with open contempt), but was under control of the representatives from the industrial centres, and as long as the law did not allow workmen to combine in labour-unions, very little was accomplished. Of course the intelligent and decent people of that time were not blind to these terrible conditions. They were just helpless. Machinery had conquered the world by surprise and it took a great many years and the efforts of thousands of noble men and women to make the machine what it ought to be, man's servant, and not his master.

Curiously enough, the first attack upon the outrageous system of employment which was then common in all parts of the world, was made on behalf of the black slaves of Africa and America.

Slavery had been introduced into the American continent by the Spaniards. They had tried to use the Indians as labourers in the fields and in the mines, but the Indians, when taken away from a life in the open, had lain down and died and to save them from extinction a kind-hearted priest had suggested that negroes be brought from Africa to do the work. The negroes were strong and could stand rough treatment. Besides, association with the white man would give them a chance to learn Christianity and in this way, they would be able to save their souls, and so from every possible point of view, it would be an excellent arrangement both for the kindly white man and for his ignorant black brother. But with the introduction of machinery there had been a greater demand for cotton and the negroes were forced to work harder than ever before, and they too, like the Indians, began to die under the treatment which they received at the hands of the overseers.

Stories of incredible cruelty constantly found their way to Europe and in all countries men and women began to agitate for the abolition of slavery. In England, William Wilberforce and Zachary Macaulay, (the father of the great historian whose history of England you must read if you want to know how wonderfully interesting a history-book can be,) organised a society for the suppression of slavery. First of all they got a law passed which made "slave trading" illegal. And after the year 1840 there was not a single slave in any of the British colonies. The revolution of 1848 put an end to slavery in the French possessions. The Portuguese passed a law in the year 1858 which promised all slaves their liberty in twenty years from date. The Dutch abolished slavery in 1863 and in the same year Tsar Alexander II returned to his serfs that liberty which had been taken away from them more than two centuries before.

In the United States of America the question led to grave difficulties and a prolonged war. Although the Declaration of Independence had laid down the principle that "all men were created free and equal," an exception had been made for those men and women whose skins were dark and who worked on the plantations of the southern states. As time went on, the dislike of the people of the North for the institution of slavery increased and they made no secret of their feelings. The southerners however claimed that they could not grow their cotton without slave-labour, and for almost fifty years a mighty debate raged in both the Congress and the Senate.

The North remained obdurate and the South would not give in. When it appeared impossible to reach a compromise, the southern states threatened to leave the Union. It was a most dangerous point in the history of the Union. Many things "might" have happened. That they did not happen was the work of a very great and very good man.

On the sixth of November of the year 1860, Abraham Lincoln, an Illinois lawyer, and a man who had made his own intellectual fortune, had been elected president by the Republicans who were very strong in the anti-slavery states. He knew the evils of human bondage at first hand and his shrewd common-sense told him that there was no room on the northern continent for two rival nations. When a number of southern states seceded and formed the "Confederate States of America," Lincoln accepted the challenge. The Northern states were called upon for volunteers. Hundreds of thousands of young men responded with eager enthusiasm and there followed four years of bitter civil war. The South, better prepared and following the brilliant leadership of Lee and Jackson, repeatedly defeated the armies of the North. Then the economic strength of New England and the West began to tell. An unknown officer by the name of Grant arose from obscurity and became the Charles Martel of the great slave war. Without interruption he hammered his mighty blows upon the crumbling defences of the South. Early in the year 1863, President Lincoln issued his "Emancipation Proclamation" which set all slaves free. In April of the year 1865 Lee surrendered the last of his brave armies at Appomattox. A few days later, President Lincoln was murdered by a lunatic. But his work was done. With the exception of Cuba which was still under Spanish domination, slavery had come to an end in every part of the civilised world.

But while the black man was enjoying an increasing amount of liberty, the "free" workmen of Europe did not fare quite so well. Indeed, it is a matter of surprise to many contemporary

writers and observers that the masses of workmen (the so-called proletariat) did not die out from sheer misery. They lived in dirty houses situated in miserable parts of the slums. They ate bad food. They received just enough schooling to fit them for their tasks. In case of death or an accident, their families were not provided for. But the brewery and distillery interests, (who could exercise great influence upon the Legislature,) encouraged them to forget their woes by offering them unlimited quantities of whisky and gin at very cheap rates.

The enormous improvement which has taken place since the thirties and the forties of the last century is not due to the efforts of a single man. The best brains of two generations devoted themselves to the task of saving the world from the disastrous results of the all-too-sudden introduction of machinery. They did not try to destroy the capitalistic system. This would have been very foolish, for the accumulated wealth of other people, when intelligently used, may be of very great benefit to all mankind. But they tried to combat the notion that true equality can exist between the man who has wealth and owns the factories and can close their doors at will without the risk of going hungry, and the labourer who must take whatever job is offered, at whatever wage he can get, or face the risk of starvation for himself, his wife and his children.

They endeavoured to introduce a number of laws which regulated the relations between the factory owners and the factory workers. In this, the reformers have been increasingly successful in all countries. To-day, the majority of the labourers are well protected; their hours are being reduced to the excellent average of eight, and their children are sent to the schools instead of to the mine pit and to the carding-room of the cotton mills.

But there were other men who also contemplated the sight of all the belching smoke-stacks, who heard the rattle of the railroad trains, who saw the store-houses filled with a surplus of all sorts of materials, and who wondered to what ultimate goal this tremendous activity would lead in the years to come. They remembered that the human race had lived for hundreds of thousands of years without commercial and industrial competition. Could they change the existing order of things and do away with a system of rivalry which so often sacrificed human happiness to profits?

This idea--this vague hope for a better day--was not restricted to a single country. In England, Robert Owen, the owner of many cotton mills, established a so-called "socialistic community" which was a success. But when he died, the prosperity of New Lanark came to an end and an attempt of Louis Blanc, a French journalist, to establish "social workshops" all over France fared no better. Indeed, the increasing number of socialistic writers soon began to see that little individual communities which remained outside of the regular industrial life, would never be able to accomplish anything at all. It was necessary to study the fundamental principles underlying the whole industrial and capitalistic society before useful remedies could be suggested.

The practical socialists like Robert Owen and Louis Blanc and Francois Fournier were succeeded by theoretical students of socialism like Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Of these two, Marx is the best known. He was a very brilliant Jew whose family had for a long time lived in Germany. He had heard of the experiments of Owen and Blanc and he began to interest himself in questions of labour and wages and unemployment. But his liberal views made him very unpopular with the police authorities of Germany, and he was forced to flee to Brussels and then to London, where he lived a poor and shabby life as the correspondent of the New York Tribune.

No one, thus far, had paid much attention to his books on economic subjects. But in the year 1864 he organised the first international association of working men and three years later in 1867, he published the first volume of his well-known treatise called "Capital." Marx believed that all history was a long struggle between those who "have" and those who "don't have." The introduction and general use of machinery had created a new class in society, that of the capitalists who used their surplus wealth to buy the tools which were then used by the

labourers to produce still more wealth, which was again used to build more factories and so on, until the end of time. Meanwhile, according to Marx, the third estate (the bourgeoisie) was growing richer and richer and the fourth estate (the proletariat) was growing poorer and poorer, and he predicted that in the end, one man would possess all the wealth of the world while the others would be his employees and dependent upon his good will.

To prevent such a state of affairs, Marx advised working men of all countries to unite and to fight for a number of political and economic measures which he had enumerated in a Manifesto in the year 1848, the year of the last great European revolution.

These views of course were very unpopular with the governments of Europe, many countries, especially Prussia, passed severe laws against the Socialists and policemen were ordered to break up the Socialist meetings and to arrest the speakers. But that sort of persecution never does any good. Martyrs are the best possible advertisements for an unpopular cause. In Europe the number of socialists steadily increased and it was soon clear that the Socialists did not contemplate a violent revolution but were using their increasing power in the different Parliaments to promote the interests of the labouring classes. Socialists were even called upon to act as Cabinet Ministers, and they co-operated with progressive Catholics and Protestants to undo the damage that had been caused by the Industrial Revolution and to bring about a fairer division of the many benefits which had followed the introduction of machinery and the increased production of wealth.

THE AGE OF SCIENCE

BUT THE WORLD HAD UNDERGONE ANOTHER CHANGE WHICH WAS OF GREATER IMPORTANCE THAN EITHER THE POLITICAL OR THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTIONS. AFTER GENERATIONS OF OPPRESSION AND PERSECUTION, THE SCIENTIST HAD AT LAST GAINED LIBERTY OF ACTION AND HE WAS NOW TRYING TO DISCOVER THE FUNDAMENTAL LAWS WHICH GOVERN THE UNIVERSE

THE Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Chaldeans, the Greeks and the Romans, had all contributed something to the first vague notions of science and scientific investigation. But the great migrations of the fourth century had destroyed the classical world of the Mediterranean, and the Christian Church, which was more interested in the life of the soul than in the life of the body, had regarded science as a manifestation of that human arrogance which wanted to pry into divine affairs which belonged to the realm of Almighty God, and which therefore was closely related to the seven deadly sins.

The Renaissance to a certain but limited extent had broken through this wall of Mediaeval prejudices. The Reformation, however, which had overtaken the Renaissance in the early 16th century, had been hostile to the ideals of the "new civilisation," and once more the men of science were threatened with severe punishment, should they try to pass beyond the narrow limits of knowledge which had been laid down in Holy Writ.

Our world is filled with the statues of great generals, atop of prancing horses, leading their cheering soldiers to glorious victory. Here and there, a modest slab of marble announces that a man of science has found his final resting place. A thousand years from now we shall probably do these things differently, and the children of that happy generation shall know of the splendid courage and the almost inconceivable devotion to duty of the men who were the pioneers of that abstract knowledge, which alone has made our modern world a practical possibility.

Many of these scientific pioneers suffered poverty and contempt and humiliation. They lived in garrets and died in dungeons. They dared not print their names on the title-pages of their books and they dared not print their conclusions in the land of their birth, but smuggled the

manuscripts to some secret printing shop in Amsterdam or Haarlem. They were exposed to the bitter enmity of the Church, both Protestant and Catholic, and were the subjects of endless sermons, inciting the parishioners to violence against the "heretics."

Here and there they found an asylum. In Holland, where the spirit of tolerance was strongest, the authorities, while regarding these scientific investigations with little favour, yet refused to interfere with people's freedom of thought. It became a little asylum for intellectual liberty where French and English and German philosophers and mathematicians and physicians could go to enjoy a short spell of rest and get a breath of free air.

In another chapter I have told you how Roger Bacon, the great genius of the thirteenth century, was prevented for years from writing a single word, lest he get into new troubles with the authorities of the church. And five hundred years later, the contributors to the great philosophic "Encyclopaedia" were under the constant supervision of the French gendarmerie. Half a century afterwards, Darwin, who dared to question the story of the creation of man, as revealed in the Bible, was denounced from every pulpit as an enemy of the human race.

Even to-day, the persecution of those who venture into the unknown realm of science has not entirely come to an end. And while I am writing this Mr. Bryan is addressing a vast multitude on the "Menace of Darwinism," warning his hearers against the errors of the great English naturalist.

All this, however, is a mere detail. The work that has to be done invariably gets done, and the ultimate profit of the discoveries and the inventions goes to the mass of those same people who have always decried the man of vision as an impractical idealist.

The seventeenth century had still preferred to investigate the far off heavens and to study the position of our planet in relation to the solar system. Even so, the Church had disapproved of this unseemly curiosity, and Copernicus who first of all had proved that the sun was the centre of the universe, did not publish his work until the day of his death. Galileo spent the greater part of his life under the supervision of the clerical authorities, but he continued to use his telescope and provided Isaac Newton with a mass of practical observations, which greatly helped the English mathematician when he discovered the existence of that interesting habit of falling objects which came to be known as the Law of Gravitation.

That, for the moment at least, exhausted the interest in the Heavens, and man began to study the earth. The invention of a workable microscope, (a strange and clumsy little thing,) by Anthony van Leeuwenhoek during the last half of the 17th century, gave man a chance to study the "microscopic" creatures who are responsible for so many of his ailments. It laid the foundations of the science of "bacteriology" which in the last forty years has delivered the world from a great number of diseases by discovering the tiny organisms which cause the complaint. It also allowed the geologists to make a more careful study of different rocks and of the fossils (the petrified prehistoric plants) which they found deep below the surface of the earth. These investigations convinced them that the earth must be a great deal older than was stated in the book of Genesis and in the year 1830, Sir Charles Lyell published his "Principles of Geology" which denied the story of creation as related in the Bible and gave a far more wonderful description of slow growth and gradual development.

At the same time, the Marquis de Laplace was working on a new theory of creation, which made the earth a little blotch in the nebulous sea out of which the planetary system had been formed and Bunsen and Kirchhoff, by the use of the spectroscope, were investigating the chemical composition of the stars and of our good neighbour, the sun, whose curious spots had first been noticed by Galileo.

Meanwhile after a most bitter and relentless warfare with the clerical authorities of Catholic and Protestant lands, the anatomists and physiologists had at last obtained permission to dissect bodies and to substitute a positive knowledge of our organs and their habits for the guesswork of the mediaeval quack.

Within a single generation (between 1810 and 1840) more progress was made in every branch of science than in all the hundreds of thousands of years that had passed since man first looked at the stars and wondered why they were there. It must have been a very sad age for the people who had been educated under the old system. And we can understand their feeling of hatred for such men as Lamarck and Darwin, who did not exactly tell them that they were “descended from monkeys,” (an accusation which our grandfathers seemed to regard as a personal insult,) but who suggested that the proud human race had evolved from a long series of ancestors who could trace the family-tree back to the little jelly-fishes who were the first inhabitants of our planet.

The dignified world of the well-to-do middle class, which dominated the nineteenth century, was willing to make use of the gas or the electric light, of all the many practical applications of the great scientific discoveries, but the mere investigator, the man of the “scientific theory” without whom no progress would be possible, continued to be distrusted until very recently. Then, at last, his services were recognised. Today the rich people who in past ages donated their wealth for the building of a cathedral, construct vast laboratories where silent men do battle upon the hidden enemies of mankind and often sacrifice their lives that coming generations may enjoy greater happiness and health.

Indeed it has come to pass that many of the ills of this world, which our ancestors regarded as inevitable “acts of God,” have been exposed as manifestations of our own ignorance and neglect. Every child nowadays knows that he can keep from getting typhoid fever by a little care in the choice of his drinking water. But it took years and years of hard work before the doctors could convince the people of this fact. Few of us now fear the dentist chair. A study of the microbes that live in our mouth has made it possible to keep our teeth from decay. Must perchance a tooth be pulled, then we take a sniff of gas, and go our way rejoicing. When the newspapers of the year 1846 brought the story of the “painless operation” which had been performed in America with the help of ether, the good people of Europe shook their heads. To them it seemed against the will of God that man should escape the pain which was the share of all mortals, and it took a long time before the practice of taking ether and chloroform for operations became general.

But the battle of progress had been won. The breach in the old walls of prejudice was growing larger and larger, and as time went by, the ancient stones of ignorance came crumbling down. The eager crusaders of a new and happier social order rushed forward. Suddenly they found themselves facing a new obstacle. Out of the ruins of a long-gone past, another citadel of reaction had been erected, and millions of men had to give their lives before this last bulwark was destroyed.

ART

A CHAPTER OF ART

WHEN a baby is perfectly healthy and has had enough to eat and has slept all it wants, then it hums a little tune to show how happy it is. To grown-ups this humming means nothing. It sounds like “goo-zum, goo-zum, goo-o-o-o-o,” but to the baby it is perfect music. It is his first contribution to art.

As soon as he (or she) gets a little older and is able to sit up, the period of mud-pie making begins. These mud-pies do not interest the outside world. There are too many million babies, making too many million mud-pies at the same time. But to the small infant they represent another expedition into the pleasant realm of art. The baby is now a sculptor.

At the age of three or four, when the hands begin to obey the brain, the child becomes a painter. His fond mother gives him a box of coloured chalks and every loose bit of paper is rapidly covered with strange pothooks and scrawls which represent houses and horses and terrible naval battles.

Soon however this happiness of just "making things" comes to an end. School begins and the greater part of the day is filled up with work. The business of living, or rather the business of "making a living," becomes the most important event in the life of every boy and girl. There is little time left for "art" between learning the tables of multiplication and the past participles of the irregular French verbs. And unless the desire for making certain things for the mere pleasure of creating them without any hope of a practical return be very strong, the child grows into manhood and forgets that the first five years of his life were mainly devoted to art.

Nations are not different from children. As soon as the cave-man had escaped the threatening dangers of the long and shivering ice-period, and had put his house in order, he began to make certain things which he thought beautiful, although they were of no earthly use to him in his fight with the wild animals of the jungle. He covered the walls of his grotto with pictures of the elephants and the deer which he hunted, and out of a piece of stone, he hacked the rough figures of those women he thought most attractive.

As soon as the Egyptians and the Babylonians and the Persians and all the other people of the east had founded their little countries along the Nile and the Euphrates, they began to build magnificent palaces for their kings, invented bright pieces of jewellery for their women and planted gardens which sang happy songs of colour with their many bright flowers.

Our own ancestors, the wandering nomads from the distant Asiatic prairies, enjoying a free and easy existence as fighters and hunters, composed songs which celebrated the mighty deeds of their great leaders and invented a form of poetry which has survived until our own day. A thousand years later, when they had established themselves on the Greek mainland, and had built their "city-states," they expressed their joy (and their sorrows) in magnificent temples, in statues, in comedies and in tragedies, and in every conceivable form of art.

The Romans, like their Carthaginian rivals, were too busy administering other people and making money to have much love for "useless and unprofitable" adventures of the spirit. They conquered the world and built roads and bridges but they borrowed their art wholesale from the Greeks. They invented certain practical forms of architecture which answered the demands of their day and age. But their statues and their histories and their mosaics and their poems were mere Latin imitations of Greek originals. Without that vague and hard-to-define something which the world calls "personality," there can be no art and the Roman world distrusted that particular sort of personality. The Empire needed efficient soldiers and tradesmen. The business of writing poetry or making pictures was left to foreigners.

Then came the Dark Ages. The barbarian was the proverbial bull in the china-shop of western Europe. He had no use for what he did not understand. Speaking in terms of the year 1921, he liked the magazine covers of pretty ladies, but threw the Rembrandt etchings which he had inherited into the ash-can. Soon he came to learn better. Then he tried to undo the damage which he had created a few years before. But the ash-cans were gone and so were the pictures.

But by this time, his own art, which he had brought with him from the east, had developed into something very beautiful and he made up for his past neglect and indifference by the so-called "art of the Middle Ages" which as far as northern Europe is concerned was a product of the Germanic mind and had borrowed but little from the Greeks and the Latins and nothing at all from the older forms of art of Egypt and Assyria, not to speak of India and China, which simply did not exist, as far as the people of that time were concerned. Indeed, so little had the northern races been influenced by their southern neighbours that their own architectural products were completely misunderstood by the people of Italy and were treated by them with downright and unmitigated contempt.

You have all heard the word Gothic. You probably associate it with the picture of a lovely old cathedral, lifting its slender spires towards high heaven. But what does the word really mean?

It means something "uncouth" and "barbaric" --something which one might expect from an "uncivilised Goth," a rough backwoods-man who had no respect for the established rules of classical art and who built his "modern horrors" to please his own low tastes without a decent regard for the examples of the Forum and the Acropolis.

And yet for several centuries this form of Gothic architecture was the highest expression of the sincere feeling for art which inspired the whole northern continent. From a previous chapter, you will remember how the people of the late Middle Ages lived. Unless they were peasants and dwelt in villages, they were citizens of a "city" or "civitas," the old Latin name for a tribe. And indeed, behind their high walls and their deep moats, these good burghers were true tribesmen who shared the common dangers and enjoyed the common safety and prosperity which they derived from their system of mutual protection.

In the old Greek and Roman cities the market-place, where the temple stood, had been the centre of civic life. During the Middle Ages, the Church, the House of God, became such a centre. We modern Protestant people, who go to our church only once a week, and then for a few hours only, hardly know what a mediaeval church meant to the community. Then, before you were a week old, you were taken to the Church to be baptised. As a child, you visited the Church to learn the holy stories of the Scriptures. Later on you became a member of the congregation, and if you were rich enough you built yourself a separate little chapel sacred to the memory of the Patron Saint of your own family. As for the sacred edifice, it was open at all hours of the day and many of the night. In a certain sense it resembled a modern club, dedicated to all the inhabitants of the town. In the church you very likely caught a first glimpse of the girl who was to become your bride at a great ceremony before the High Altar. And finally, when the end of the journey had come, you were buried beneath the stones of this familiar building, that all your children and their grandchildren might pass over your grave until the Day of Judgement.

Because the Church was not only the House of God but also the true centre of all common life, the building had to be different from anything that had ever been constructed by the hands of man. The temples of the Egyptians and the Greeks and the Romans had been merely the shrine of a local divinity. As no sermons were preached before the images of Osiris or Zeus or Jupiter, it was not necessary that the interior offer space for a great multitude. All the religious processions of the old Mediterranean peoples took place in the open. But in the north, where the weather was usually bad, most functions were held under the roof of the church.

During many centuries the architects struggled with this problem of constructing a building that was large enough. The Roman tradition taught them how to build heavy stone walls with very small windows lest the walls lose their strength. On the top of this they then placed a heavy stone roof. But in the twelfth century, after the beginning of the Crusades, when the architects had seen the pointed arches of the Mohammedan builders, the western builders discovered a new style which gave them their first chance to make the sort of building which those days of an intense religious life demanded. And then they developed this strange style upon which the Italians

bestowed the contemptuous name of "Gothic" or barbaric. They achieved their purpose by inventing a vaulted roof which was supported by "ribs." But such a roof, if it became too heavy, was apt to break the walls, just as a man of three hundred pounds sitting down upon a child's chair will force it to collapse. To overcome this difficulty, certain French architects then began to re-enforce the walls with "buttresses" which were merely heavy masses of stone against which the walls could lean while they supported the roof. And to assure the further safety of the roof they supported the ribs of the roof by so-called "flying buttresses," a very simple method of construction which you will understand at once when you look at our picture.

This new method of construction allowed the introduction of enormous windows. In the twelfth century, glass was still an expensive curiosity, and very few private buildings possessed glass windows. Even the castles of the nobles were without protection and this accounts for the eternal drafts and explains why people of that day wore furs in-doors as well as out.

Fortunately, the art of making coloured glass, with which the ancient people of the Mediterranean had been familiar, had not been entirely lost. There was a revival of stained glass-making and soon the windows of the Gothic churches told the stories of the Holy Book in little bits of brilliantly coloured window-pane, which were caught in a long framework of lead.

Behold, therefore, the new and glorious house of God, filled with an eager multitude, "living" its religion as no people have ever done either before or since! Nothing is considered too good or too costly or too wondrous for this House of God and Home of Man. The sculptors, who since the destruction of the Roman Empire have been out of employment, haltingly return to their noble art. Portals and pillars and buttresses and cornices are all covered with carven images of Our Lord and the blessed Saints. The embroiderers too are set to work to make tapestries for the walls. The jewellers offer their highest art that the shrine of the altar may be worthy of complete adoration. Even the painter does his best. Poor man, he is greatly handicapped by lack of a suitable medium.

And thereby hangs a story.

The Romans of the early Christian period had covered the floors and the walls of their temples and houses with mosaics; pictures made of coloured bits of glass. But this art had been exceedingly difficult. It gave the painter no chance to express all he wanted to say, as all children know who have ever tried to make figures out of coloured blocks of wood. The art of mosaic painting therefore died out during the late Middle Ages except in Russia, where the Byzantine mosaic painters had found a refuge after the fall of Constantinople and continued to ornament the walls of the orthodox churches until the day of the Bolsheviki, when there was an end to the building of churches.

Of course, the mediaeval painter could mix his colours with the water of the wet plaster which was put upon the walls of the churches. This method of painting upon "fresh plaster" (which was generally called "fresco" or "fresh" painting) was very popular for many centuries. To-day, it is as rare as the art of painting miniatures in manuscripts and among the hundreds of artists of our modern cities there is perhaps one who can handle this medium successfully. But during the Middle Ages there was no other way and the artists were "fresco" workers for lack of something better. The method however had certain great disadvantages. Very often the plaster came off the walls after only a few years, or dampness spoiled the pictures, just as dampness will spoil the pattern of our wall paper. People tried every imaginable expedient to get away from this plaster background. They tried to mix their colours with wine and vinegar and with honey and with the sticky white of egg, but none of these methods were satisfactory. For more than a thousand years these experiments continued. In painting pictures upon the parchment leaves of manuscripts the mediaeval artists were very successful. But when it came to covering large spaces of wood or stone with paint which would stick, they did not succeed very well.

At last, during the first half of the fifteenth century, the problem was solved in the southern Netherlands by Jan and Hubert van Eyck. The famous Flemish brothers mixed their paint with specially prepared oils and this allowed them to use wood and canvas or stone or anything else as a background for their pictures.

But by this time the religious ardour of the early Middle Ages was a thing of the past. The rich burghers of the cities were succeeding the bishops as patrons of the arts. And as art invariably follows the full dinner-pail, the artists now began to work for these worldly employers and painted pictures for kings, for grand-dukes and for rich bankers. Within a very short time, the new method of painting with oil spread through Europe and in every country there developed a school of special painting which showed the characteristic tastes of the people for whom these portraits and landscapes were made.

In Spain, for example, Velasquez painted court-dwarfs and the weavers of the royal tapestry-factories, and all sorts of persons and subjects connected with the king and his court. But in Holland, Rembrandt and Frans Hals and Vermeer painted the barnyard of the merchant's house, and they painted his rather dowdy wife and his healthy but bumptious children and the ships which had brought him his wealth. In Italy on the other hand, where the Pope remained the largest patron of the arts, Michelangelo and Correggio continued to paint Madonnas and Saints, while in England, where the aristocracy was very rich and powerful and in France where the kings had become uppermost in the state, the artists painted distinguished gentlemen who were members of the government, and very lovely ladies who were friends of His Majesty.

The great change in painting, which came about with the neglect of the old church and the rise of a new class in society, was reflected in all other forms of art. The invention of printing had made it possible for authors to win fame and reputation by writing books for the multitudes. In this way arose the profession of the novelist and the illustrator. But the people who had money enough to buy the new books were not the sort who liked to sit at home at nights, looking at the ceiling or just sitting. They wanted to be amused. The few minstrels of the Middle Ages were not sufficient to cover the demand for entertainment. For the first time since the early Greek city-states of two thousand years before, the professional playwright had a chance to ply his trade. The Middle Ages had known the theatre merely as part of certain church celebrations. The tragedies of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries had told the story of the suffering of our Lord. But during the sixteenth century the worldly theatre made its reappearance. It is true that, at first, the position of the professional playwright and actor was not a very high one. William Shakespeare was regarded as a sort of circus-fellow who amused his neighbours with his tragedies and comedies. But when he died in the year 1616 he had begun to enjoy the respect of his neighbours and actors were no longer subjects of police supervision.

William's contemporary, Lope de Vega, the incredible Spaniard who wrote no less than 1800 worldly and 400 religious plays, was a person of rank who received the papal approval upon his work. A century later, Moliere, the Frenchman, was deemed worthy of the companionship of none less than King Louis XIV.

Since then, the theatre has enjoyed an ever increasing affection on the part of the people. To-day a "theatre" is part of every well-regulated city, and the "silent drama" of the movies has penetrated to the tiniest of our prairie hamlets.

Another art, however, was to become the most popular of all. That was music. Most of the old art-forms demanded a great deal of technical skill. It takes years and years of practice before our clumsy hand is able to follow the commands of the brain and reproduce our vision upon canvas or in marble. It takes a life-time to learn how to act or how to write a good novel. And it takes a great deal of training on the part of the public to appreciate the best in painting and writing and sculpture. But almost any one, not entirely tone-deaf, can follow a tune and almost

everybody can get enjoyment out of some sort of music. The Middle Ages had heard a little music but it had been entirely the music of the church. The holy chants were subject to very severe laws of rhythm and harmony and soon these became monotonous. Besides, they could not well be sung in the street or in the market-place.

The Renaissance changed this. Music once more came into its own as the best friend of man, both in his happiness and in his sorrows.

The Egyptians and the Babylonians and the ancient Jews had all been great lovers of music. They had even combined different instruments into regular orchestras. But the Greeks had frowned upon this barbaric foreign noise. They liked to hear a man recite the stately poetry of Homer and Pindar. They allowed him to accompany himself upon the lyre (the poorest of all stringed instruments). That was as far as any one could go without incurring the risk of popular disapproval. The Romans on the other hand had loved orchestral music at their dinners and parties and they had invented most of the instruments which (in VERY modified form) we use to-day. The early church had despised this music which smacked too much of the wicked pagan world which had just been destroyed. A few songs rendered by the entire congregation were all the bishops of the third and fourth centuries would tolerate. As the congregation was apt to sing dreadfully out of key without the guidance of an instrument, the church had afterwards allowed the use of an organ, an invention of the second century of our era which consisted of a combination of the old pipes of Pan and a pair of bellows.

Then came the great migrations. The last of the Roman musicians were either killed or became tramp-fiddlers going from city to city and playing in the street, and begging for pennies like the harpist on a modern ferry-boat.

But the revival of a more worldly civilisation in the cities of the late Middle Ages had created a new demand for musicians. Instruments like the horn, which had been used only as signal-instruments for hunting and fighting, were remodelled until they could reproduce sounds which were agreeable in the dance-hall and in the banqueting room. A bow strung with horse-hair was used to play the old-fashioned guitar and before the end of the Middle Ages this six-stringed instrument (the most ancient of all string-instruments which dates back to Egypt and Assyria) had grown into our modern four-stringed fiddle which Stradivarius and the other Italian violin-makers of the eighteenth century brought to the height of perfection.

And finally the modern piano was invented, the most wide-spread of all musical instruments, which has followed man into the wilderness of the jungle and the ice-fields of Greenland. The organ had been the first of all keyed instruments but the performer always depended upon the co-operation of some one who worked the bellows, a job which nowadays is done by electricity. The musicians therefore looked for a handier and less circumstantial instrument to assist them in training the pupils of the many church choirs. During the great eleventh century, Guido, a Benedictine monk of the town of Arezzo (the birthplace of the poet Petrarch) gave us our modern system of musical notation. Some time during that century, when there was a great deal of popular interest in music, the first instrument with both keys and strings was built. It must have sounded as tinkly as one of those tiny children's pianos which you can buy at every toy-shop. In the city of Vienna, the town where the strolling musicians of the Middle Ages (who had been classed with jugglers and card sharps) had formed the first separate Guild of Musicians in the year 1288, the little monochord was developed into something which we can recognise as the direct ancestor of our modern Steinway. From Austria the "clavichord" as it was usually called in those days (because it had "craves" or keys) went to Italy. There it was perfected into the "spinnet" which was so called after the inventor, Giovanni Spinetti of Venice. At last during the eighteenth century, some time between 1709 and 1720, Bartolomeo Cristofori made a "clavier" which allowed the performer to play both loudly and softly or as it was said in Italian, "piano" and "forte." This instrument with certain changes became our "pianoforte" or piano.

Then for the first time the world possessed an easy and convenient instrument which could be mastered in a couple of years and did not need the eternal tuning of harps and fiddles and was much pleasanter to the ears than the mediaeval tubas, clarinets, trombones and oboes. Just as the phonograph has given millions of modern people their first love of music so did the early “pianoforte” carry the knowledge of music into much wider circles. Music became part of the education of every well-bred man and woman. Princes and rich merchants maintained private orchestras. The musician ceased to be a wandering “jongleur” and became a highly valued member of the community. Music was added to the dramatic performances of the theatre and out of this practice, grew our modern Opera. Originally only a few very rich princes could afford the expenses of an “opera troupe.” But as the taste for this sort of entertainment grew, many cities built their own theatres where Italian and afterwards German operas were given to the unlimited joy of the whole community with the exception of a few sects of very strict Christians who still regarded music with deep suspicion as something which was too lovely to be entirely good for the soul.

By the middle of the eighteenth century the musical life of Europe was in full swing. Then there came forward a man who was greater than all others, a simple organist of the Thomas Church of Leipzig, by the name of Johann Sebastian Bach. In his compositions for every known instrument, from comic songs and popular dances to the most stately of sacred hymns and oratorios, he laid the foundation for all our modern music. When he died in the year 1750 he was succeeded by Mozart, who created musical fabrics of sheer loveliness which remind us of lace that has been woven out of harmony and rhythm. Then came Ludwig van Beethoven, the most tragic of men, who gave us our modern orchestra, yet heard none of his greatest compositions because he was deaf, as the result of a cold contracted during his years of poverty.

Beethoven lived through the period of the great French Revolution. Full of hope for a new and glorious day, he had dedicated one of his symphonies to Napoleon. But he lived to regret the hour. When he died in the year 1827, Napoleon was gone and the French Revolution was gone, but the steam engine had come and was filling the world with a sound that had nothing in common with the dreams of the Third Symphony.

Indeed, the new order of steam and iron and coal and large factories had little use for art, for painting and sculpture and poetry and music. The old protectors of the arts, the Church and the princes and the merchants of the Middle Ages and the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries no longer existed. The leaders of the new industrial world were too busy and had too little education to bother about etchings and sonatas and bits of carved ivory, not to speak of the men who created those things, and who were of no practical use to the community in which they lived. And the workmen in the factories listened to the drone of their engines until they too had lost all taste for the melody of the flute or fiddle of their peasant ancestry. The arts became the step-children of the new industrial era. Art and Life became entirely separated. Whatever paintings had been left, were dying a slow death in the museums. And music became a monopoly of a few “virtuosi” who took the music away from the home and carried it to the concert-hall.

But steadily, although slowly, the arts are coming back into their own. People begin to understand that Rembrandt and Beethoven and Rodin are the true prophets and leaders of their race and that a world without art and happiness resembles a nursery without laughter.

COLONIAL EXPANSION AND WAR

A CHAPTER WHICH OUGHT TO GIVE YOU A GREAT DEAL OF POLITICAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE LAST FIFTY YEARS, BUT WHICH REALLY CONTAINS SEVERAL EXPLANATIONS AND A FEW APOLOGIES

IF I had known how difficult it was to write a History of the World, I should never have undertaken the task. Of course, any one possessed of enough industry to lose himself for half a dozen years in the musty stacks of a library, can compile a ponderous tome which gives an account of the events in every land during every century. But that was not the purpose of the present book. The publishers wanted to print a history that should have rhythm--a story which galloped rather than walked. And now that I have almost finished I discover that certain chapters gallop, that others wade slowly through the dreary sands of long forgotten ages--that a few parts do not make any progress at all, while still others indulge in a veritable jazz of action and romance. I did not like this and I suggested that we destroy the whole manuscript and begin once more from the beginning. This, however, the publishers would not allow.

As the next best solution of my difficulties, I took the type-written pages to a number of charitable friends and asked them to read what I had said, and give me the benefit of their advice. The experience was rather disheartening. Each and every man had his own prejudices and his own hobbies and preferences. They all wanted to know why, where and how I dared to omit their pet nation, their pet statesman, or even their most beloved criminal. With some of them, Napoleon and Jenghiz Khan were candidates for high honours. I explained that I had tried very hard to be fair to Napoleon, but that in my estimation he was greatly inferior to such men as George Washington, Gustavus Wasa, Augustus, Hammurabi or Lincoln, and a score of others all of whom were obliged to content themselves with a few paragraphs, from sheer lack of space. As for Jenghiz Khan, I only recognise his superior ability in the field of wholesale murder and I did not intend to give him any more publicity than I could help.

"This is very well as far as it goes," said the next critic, "but how about the Puritans? We are celebrating the tercentenary of their arrival at Plymouth. They ought to have more space." My answer was that if I were writing a history of America, the Puritans would get fully one half of the first twelve chapters; that however this was a history of mankind and that the event on Plymouth rock was not a matter of far-reaching international importance until many centuries later; that the United States had been founded by thirteen colonies and not by a single one; that the most prominent leaders of the first twenty years of our history had been from Virginia, from Pennsylvania, and from the island of Nevis, rather than from Massachusetts; and that therefore the Puritans ought to content themselves with a page of print and a special map.

Next came the prehistoric specialist. Why in the name of the great Tyrannosaur had I not devoted more space to the wonderful race of Cro-Magnon men, who had developed such a high stage of civilisation 10,000 years ago?

Indeed, and why not? The reason is simple. I do not take as much stock in the perfection of these early races as some of our most noted anthropologists seem to do. Rousseau and the philosophers of the eighteenth century created the "noble savage" who was supposed to have dwelt in a state of perfect happiness during the beginning of time. Our modern scientists have discarded the "noble savage," so dearly beloved by our grandfathers, and they have replaced him by the "splendid savage" of the French Valleys who 35,000 years ago made an end to the universal rule of the low-browed and low-living brutes of the Neanderthal and other Germanic neighbourhoods. They have shown us the elephants the Cro-Magnon painted and the statues he carved and they have surrounded him with much glory.

I do not mean to say that they are wrong. But I hold that we know by far too little of this entire period to re-construct that early west-European society with any degree (however humble) of accuracy. And I would rather not state certain things than run the risk of stating certain things that were not so.

Then there were other critics, who accused me of direct unfairness. Why did I leave out such countries as Ireland and Bulgaria and Siam while I dragged in such other countries as Holland and Iceland and Switzerland? My answer was that I did not drag in any countries. They pushed

themselves in by main force of circumstances, and I simply could not keep them out. And in order that my point may be understood, let me state the basis upon which active membership to this book of history was considered.

There was but one rule. "Did the country or the person in question produce a new idea or perform an original act without which the history of the entire human race would have been different?" It was not a question of personal taste. It was a matter of cool, almost mathematical judgment. No race ever played a more picturesque role in history than the Mongolians, and no race, from the point of view of achievement or intelligent progress, was of less value to the rest of mankind.

The career of Tiglath-Pileser, the Assyrian, is full of dramatic episodes. But as far as we are concerned, he might just as well never have existed at all. In the same way, the history of the Dutch Republic is not interesting because once upon a time the sailors of de Ruyter went fishing in the river Thames, but rather because of the fact that this small mud-bank along the shores of the North Sea offered a hospitable asylum to all sorts of strange people who had all sorts of queer ideas upon all sorts of very unpopular subjects.

It is quite true that Athens or Florence, during the hey-day of their glory, had only one tenth of the population of Kansas City. But our present civilisation would be very different had neither of these two little cities of the Mediterranean basin existed. And the same (with due apologies to the good people of Wyandotte County) can hardly be said of this busy metropolis on the Missouri River.

And since I am being very personal, allow me to state one other fact.

When we visit a doctor, we find out before hand whether he is a surgeon or a diagnostician or a homeopath or a faith healer, for we want to know from what angle he will look at our complaint. We ought to be as careful in the choice of our historians as we are in the selection of our physicians. We think, "Oh well, history is history," and let it go at that. But the writer who was educated in a strictly Presbyterian household somewhere in the backwoods of Scotland will look differently upon every question of human relationships from his neighbour who as a child, was dragged to listen to the brilliant exhortations of Robert Ingersoll, the enemy of all revealed Devils. In due course of time, both men may forget their early training and never again visit either church or lecture hall. But the influence of these impressionable years stays with them and they cannot escape showing it in whatever they write or say or do.

In the preface to this book, I told you that I should not be an infallible guide and now that we have almost reached the end, I repeat the warning. I was born and educated in an atmosphere of the old-fashioned liberalism which had followed the discoveries of Darwin and the other pioneers of the nineteenth century. As a child, I happened to spend most of my waking hours with an uncle who was a great collector of the books written by Montaigne, the great French essayist of the sixteenth century. Because I was born in Rotterdam and educated in the city of Gouda, I ran continually across Erasmus and for some unknown reason this great exponent of tolerance took hold of my intolerant self. Later I discovered Anatole France and my first experience with the English language came about through an accidental encounter with Thackeray's "Henry Esmond," a story which made more impression upon me than any other book in the English language.

If I had been born in a pleasant middle western city I probably should have a certain affection for the hymns which I had heard in my childhood. But my earliest recollection of music goes back to the afternoon when my Mother took me to hear nothing less than a Bach fugue. And the mathematical perfection of the great Protestant master influenced me to such an extent that I cannot hear the usual hymns of our prayer-meetings without a feeling of intense agony and direct pain.

Again, if I had been born in Italy and had been warmed by the sunshine of the happy valley of the Arno, I might love many colourful and sunny pictures which now leave me indifferent because I got my first artistic impressions in a country where the rare sun beats down upon the rain-soaked land with almost cruel brutality and throws everything into violent contrasts of dark and light.

I state these few facts deliberately that you may know the personal bias of the man who wrote this history and may understand his point-of-view. The bibliography at the end of this book, which represents all sorts of opinions and views, will allow you to compare my ideas with those of other people. And in this way, you will be able to reach your own final conclusions with a greater degree of fairness than would otherwise be possible.

After this short but necessary excursion, we return to the history of the last fifty years. Many things happened during this period but very little occurred which at the time seemed to be of paramount importance. The majority of the greater powers ceased to be mere political agencies and became large business enterprises. They built railroads. They founded and subsidized steamship lines to all parts of the world. They connected their different possessions with telegraph wires. And they steadily increased their holdings in other continents. Every available bit of African or Asiatic territory was claimed by one of the rival powers. France became a colonial nation with interests in Algiers and Madagascar and Annam and Tonkin (in eastern Asia). Germany claimed parts of southwest and east Africa, built settlements in Kameroun on the west coast of Africa and in New Guinea and many of the islands of the Pacific, and used the murder of a few missionaries as a welcome excuse to take the harbour of Kisochoau on the Yellow Sea in China. Italy tried her luck in Abyssinia, was disastrously defeated by the soldiers of the Negus, and consoled herself by occupying the Turkish possessions in Tripoli in northern Africa. Russia, having occupied all of Siberia, took Port Arthur away from China. Japan, having defeated China in the war of 1895, occupied the island of Formosa and in the year 1905 began to lay claim to the entire empire of Korea. In the year 1883 England, the largest colonial empire the world has ever seen, undertook to "protect" Egypt. She performed this task most efficiently and to the great material benefit of that much neglected country, which ever since the opening of the Suez canal in 1868 had been threatened with a foreign invasion. During the next thirty years she fought a number of colonial wars in different parts of the world and in 1902 (after three years of bitter fighting) she conquered the independent Boer republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Meanwhile she had encouraged Cecil Rhodes to lay the foundations for a great African state, which reached from the Cape almost to the mouth of the Nile, and had faithfully picked up such islands or provinces as had been left without a European owner.

The shrewd king of Belgium, by name Leopold, used the discoveries of Henry Stanley to found the Congo Free State in the year 1885. Originally this gigantic tropical empire was an "absolute monarchy." But after many years of scandalous mismanagement, it was annexed by the Belgian people who made it a colony (in the year 1908) and abolished the terrible abuses which had been tolerated by this very unscrupulous Majesty, who cared nothing for the fate of the natives as long as he got his ivory and rubber.

As for the United States, they had so much land that they desired no further territory. But the terrible misrule of Cuba, one of the last of the Spanish possessions in the western hemisphere, practically forced the Washington government to take action. After a short and rather uneventful war, the Spaniards were driven out of Cuba and Puerto Rico and the Philippines, and the two latter became colonies of the United States.

This economic development of the world was perfectly natural. The increasing number of factories in England and France and Germany needed an ever increasing amount of raw materials and the equally increasing number of European workers needed an ever increasing amount of food. Everywhere the cry was for more and for richer markets, for more easily accessible coal mines and iron mines and rubber plantations and oil-wells, for greater supplies of wheat and grain.

The purely political events of the European continent dwindled to mere insignificance in the eyes of men who were making plans for steamboat lines on Victoria Nyanza or for railroads through the interior of Shantung. They knew that many European questions still remained to be settled, but they did not bother, and through sheer indifference and carelessness they bestowed upon their descendants a terrible inheritance of hate and misery. For untold centuries the south-eastern corner of Europe had been the scene of rebellion and bloodshed. During the seventies of the last century the people of Serbia and Bulgaria and Montenegro and Roumania were once more trying to gain their freedom and the Turks (with the support of many of the western powers), were trying to prevent this.

After a period of particularly atrocious massacres in Bulgaria in the year 1876, the Russian people lost all patience. The Government was forced to intervene just as President McKinley was obliged to go to Cuba and stop the shooting-squads of General Weyler in Havana. In April of the year 1877 the Russian armies crossed the Danube, stormed the Shipka pass, and after the capture of Plevna, marched southward until they reached the gates of Constantinople. Turkey appealed for help to England. There were many English people who denounced their government when it took the side of the Sultan. But Disraeli (who had just made Queen Victoria Empress of India and who loved the picturesque Turks while he hated the Russians who were brutally cruel to the Jewish people within their frontiers) decided to interfere. Russia was forced to conclude the peace of San Stefano (1878) and the question of the Balkans was left to a Congress which convened at Berlin in June and July of the same year.

This famous conference was entirely dominated by the personality of Disraeli. Even Bismarck feared the clever old man with his well-oiled curly hair and his supreme arrogance, tempered by a cynical sense of humor and a marvellous gift for flattery. At Berlin the British prime-minister carefully watched over the fate of his friends the Turks. Montenegro, Serbia and Roumania were recognised as independent kingdoms. The principality of Bulgaria was given a semi-independent status under Prince Alexander of Battenberg, a nephew of Tsar Alexander II. But none of those countries were given the chance to develop their powers and their resources as they would have been able to do, had England been less anxious about the fate of the Sultan, whose domains were necessary to the safety of the British Empire as a bulwark against further Russian aggression.

To make matters worse, the congress allowed Austria to take Bosnia and Herzegovina away from the Turks to be "administered" as part of the Habsburg domains. It is true that Austria made an excellent job of it. The neglected provinces were as well managed as the best of the British colonies, and that is saying a great deal. But they were inhabited by many Serbians. In older days they had been part of the great Serbian empire of Stephan Dushan, who early in the fourteenth century had defended western Europe against the invasions of the Turks and whose capital of Uskub had been a centre of civilisation one hundred and fifty years before Columbus discovered the new lands of the west. The Serbians remembered their ancient glory as who would not? They resented the presence of the Austrians in two provinces, which, so they felt, were theirs by every right of tradition.

And it was in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, that the archduke Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian throne, was murdered on June 28 of the year 1914. The assassin was a Serbian student who had acted from purely patriotic motives.

But the blame for this terrible catastrophe which was the immediate, though not the only cause of the Great World War did not lie with the half-crazy Serbian boy or his Austrian victim. It must be traced back to the days of the famous Berlin Conference when Europe was too busy building a material civilisation to care about the aspirations and the dreams of a forgotten race in a dreary corner of the old Balkan peninsula.

A NEW WORLD

THE GREAT WAR WHICH WAS REALLY THE STRUGGLE FOR A NEW AND BETTER WORLD

THE Marquis de Condorcet was one of the noblest characters among the small group of honest enthusiasts who were responsible for the outbreak of the great French Revolution. He had devoted his life to the cause of the poor and the unfortunate. He had been one of the assistants of d'Alembert and Diderot when they wrote their famous Encyclopedie. During the first years of the Revolution he had been the leader of the Moderate wing of the Convention.

His tolerance, his kindness, his stout common sense, had made him an object of suspicion when the treason of the king and the court clique had given the extreme radicals their chance to get hold of the government and kill their opponents. Condorcet was declared "hors de loi," or outlawed, an outcast who was henceforth at the mercy of every true patriot. His friends offered to hide him at their own peril. Condorcet refused to accept their sacrifice. He escaped and tried to reach his home, where he might be safe. After three nights in the open, torn and bleeding, he entered an inn and asked for some food. The suspicious yokels searched him and in his pockets they found a copy of Horace, the Latin poet. This showed that their prisoner was a man of gentle breeding and had no business upon the highroads at a time when every educated person was regarded as an enemy of the Revolutionary state. They took Condorcet and they bound him and they gagged him and they threw him into the village lock-up, but in the morning when the soldiers came to drag him back to Paris and cut his head off, behold! he was dead.

This man who had given all and had received nothing had good reason to despair of the human race. But he has written a few sentences which ring as true to-day as they did one hundred and thirty years ago. I repeat them here for your benefit.

"Nature has set no limits to our hopes," he wrote, "and the picture of the human race, now freed from its chains and marching with a firm tread on the road of truth and virtue and happiness, offers to the philosopher a spectacle which consoles him for the errors, for the crimes and the injustices which still pollute and afflict this earth."

The world has just passed through an agony of pain compared to which the French Revolution was a mere incident. The shock has been so great that it has killed the last spark of hope in the breasts of millions of men. They were chanting a hymn of progress, and four years of slaughter followed their prayers for peace. "Is it worth while," so they ask, "to work and slave for the benefit of creatures who have not yet passed beyond the stage of the earliest cave men?"

There is but one answer.

That answer is "Yes!"

The World War was a terrible calamity. But it did not mean the end of things. On the contrary it brought about the coming of a new day.

It is easy to write a history of Greece and Rome or the Middle Ages. The actors who played their parts upon that long-forgotten stage are all dead. We can criticize them with a cool head. The audience that applauded their efforts has dispersed. Our remarks cannot possibly hurt their feelings.

But it is very difficult to give a true account of contemporary events. The problems that fill the minds of the people with whom we pass through life, are our own problems, and they hurt us too much or they please us too well to be described with that fairness which is necessary when

we are writing history and not blowing the trumpet of propaganda. All the same I shall endeavour to tell you why I agree with poor Condorcet when he expressed his firm faith in a better future.

Often before have I warned you against the false impression which is created by the use of our so-called historical epochs which divide the story of man into four parts, the ancient world, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Reformation, and Modern Time. The last of these terms is the most dangerous. The word "modern" implies that we, the people of the twentieth century, are at the top of human achievement. Fifty years ago the liberals of England who followed the leadership of Gladstone felt that the problem of a truly representative and democratic form of government had been solved forever by the second great Reform Bill, which gave workmen an equal share in the government with their employers. When Disraeli and his conservative friends talked of a dangerous "leap in the dark" they answered "No." They felt certain of their cause and trusted that henceforth all classes of society would co-operate to make the government of their common country a success. Since then many things have happened, and the few liberals who are still alive begin to understand that they were mistaken.

There is no definite answer to any historical problem.

Every generation must fight the good fight anew or perish as those sluggish animals of the prehistoric world have perished.

If you once get hold of this great truth you will get a new and much broader view of life. Then, go one step further and try to imagine yourself in the position of your own great- great-grandchildren who will take your place in the year 10,000. They too will learn history. But what will they think of those short four thousand years during which we have kept a written record of our actions and of our thoughts? They will think of Napoleon as a contemporary of Tiglath Pileser, the Assyrian conqueror. Perhaps they will confuse him with Jenghiz Khan or Alexander the Macedonian. The great war which has just come to an end will appear in the light of that long commercial conflict which settled the supremacy of the Mediterranean when Rome and Carthage fought during one hundred and twenty-eight years for the mastery of the sea. The Balkan troubles of the 19th century (the struggle for freedom of Serbia and Greece and Bulgaria and Montenegro) to them will seem a continuation of the disordered conditions caused by the Great Migrations. They will look at pictures of the Rheims cathedral which only yesterday was destroyed by German guns as we look upon a photograph of the Acropolis ruined two hundred and fifty years ago during a war between the Turks and the Venetians. They will regard the fear of death, which is still common among many people, as a childish superstition which was perhaps natural in a race of men who had burned witches as late as the year 1692. Even our hospitals and our laboratories and our operating rooms of which we are so proud will look like slightly improved workshops of alchemists and mediaeval surgeons.

And the reason for all this is simple. We modern men and women are not "modern" at all. On the contrary we still belong to the last generations of the cave-dwellers. The foundation for a new era was laid but yesterday. The human race was given its first chance to become truly civilised when it took courage to question all things and made "knowledge and understanding" the foundation upon which to create a more reasonable and sensible society of human beings. The Great War was the "growing-pain" of this new world.

For a long time to come people will write mighty books to prove that this or that or the other person brought about the war. The Socialists will publish volumes in which they will accuse the "capitalists" of having brought about the war for "commercial gain." The capitalists will answer that they lost infinitely more through the war than they made--that their children were among the first to go and fight and be killed--and they will show how in every country the bankers tried their very best to avert the outbreak of hostilities. French historians will go through the register of German sins from the days of Charlemagne until the days of William of Hohenzollern and German historians will return the compliment and will go through the list of

French horrors from the days of Charlemagne until the days of President Poincare. And then they will establish to their own satisfaction that the other fellow was guilty of "causing the war." Statesmen, dead and not yet dead, in all countries will take to their typewriters and they will explain how they tried to avert hostilities and how their wicked opponents forced them into it.

The historian, a hundred years hence, will not bother about these apologies and vindications. He will understand the real nature of the underlying causes and he will know that personal ambitions and personal wickedness and personal greed had very little to do with the final outburst. The original mistake, which was responsible for all this misery, was committed when our scientists began to create a new world of steel and iron and chemistry and electricity and forgot that the human mind is slower than the proverbial turtle, is lazier than the well-known sloth, and marches from one hundred to three hundred years behind the small group of courageous leaders.

A Zulu in a frock coat is still a Zulu. A dog trained to ride a bicycle and smoke a pipe is still a dog. And a human being with the mind of a sixteenth century tradesman driving a 1921 Rolls-Royce is still a human being with the mind of a sixteenth century tradesman.

If you do not understand this at first, read it again. It will become clearer to you in a moment and it will explain many things that have happened these last six years.

Perhaps I may give you another, more familiar, example, to show you what I mean. In the movie theatres, jokes and funny remarks are often thrown upon the screen. Watch the audience the next time you have a chance. A few people seem almost to inhale the words. It takes them but a second to read the lines. Others are a bit slower. Still others take from twenty to thirty seconds. Finally those men and women who do not read any more than they can help, get the point when the brighter ones among the audience have already begun to decipher the next cut-in. It is not different in human life, as I shall now show you.

In a former chapter I have told you how the idea of the Roman Empire continued to live for a thousand years after the death of the last Roman Emperor. It caused the establishment of a large number of "imitation empires." It gave the Bishops of Rome a chance to make themselves the head of the entire church, because they represented the idea of Roman world-supremacy. It drove a number of perfectly harmless barbarian chieftains into a career of crime and endless warfare because they were for ever under the spell of this magic word "Rome." All these people, Popes, Emperors and plain fighting men were not very different from you or me. But they lived in a world where the Roman tradition was a vital issue something living--something which was remembered clearly both by the father and the son and the grandson. And so they struggled and sacrificed themselves for a cause which to-day would not find a dozen recruits.

In still another chapter I have told you how the great religious wars took place more than a century after the first open act of the Reformation and if you will compare the chapter on the Thirty Years War with that on Inventions, you will see that this ghastly butchery took place at a time when the first clumsy steam engines were already puffing in the laboratories of a number of French and German and English scientists. But the world at large took no interest in these strange contraptions, and went on with a grand theological discussion which to-day causes yawns, but no anger.

And so it goes. A thousand years from now, the historian will use the same words about Europe of the out-going nine-teenth century, and he will see how men were engaged upon terrific nationalistic struggles while the laboratories all around them were filled with serious folk who cared not one whit for politics as long as they could force nature to surrender a few more of her million secrets.

You will gradually begin to understand what I am driving at. The engineer and the scientist and the chemist, within a single generation, filled Europe and America and Asia with their vast machines, with their telegraphs, their flying machines, their coal-tar products. They created a new world in which time and space were reduced to complete insignificance. They invented new products and they made these so cheap that almost every one could buy them. I have told you all this before but it certainly will bear repeating.

To keep the ever increasing number of factories going, the owners, who had also become the rulers of the land, needed raw materials and coal. Especially coal. Meanwhile the mass of the people were still thinking in terms of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and clinging to the old notions of the state as a dynastic or political organisation. This clumsy mediaeval institution was then suddenly called upon to handle the highly modern problems of a mechanical and industrial world. It did its best, according to the rules of the game which had been laid down centuries before. The different states created enormous armies and gigantic navies which were used for the purpose of acquiring new possessions in distant lands. Whereever{sic} there was a tiny bit of land left, there arose an English or a French or a German or a Russian colony. If the natives objected, they were killed. In most cases they did not object, and were allowed to live peacefully, provided they did not interfere with the diamond mines or the coal mines or the oil mines or the gold mines or the rubber plantations, and they derived many benefits from the foreign occupation.

Sometimes it happened that two states in search of raw materials wanted the same piece of land at the same time. Then there was a war. This occurred fifteen years ago when Russia and Japan fought for the possession of certain territories which belonged to the Chinese people. Such conflicts, however, were the exception. No one really desired to fight. Indeed, the idea of fighting with armies and battleships and submarines began to seem absurd to the men of the early 20th century. They associated the idea of violence with the long-ago age of unlimited monarchies and intriguing dynasties. Every day they read in their papers of still further inventions, of groups of English and American and German scientists who were working together in perfect friendship for the purpose of an advance in medicine or in astronomy. They lived in a busy world of trade and of commerce and factories. But only a few noticed that the development of the state, (of the gigantic community of people who recognise certain common ideals,) was lagging several hundred years behind. They tried to warn the others. But the others were occupied with their own affairs.

I have used so many similes that I must apologise for bringing in one more. The Ship of State (that old and trusted expression which is ever new and always picturesque,) of the Egyptians and the Greeks and the Romans and the Venetians and the merchant adventurers of the seventeenth century had been a sturdy craft, constructed of well-seasoned wood, and commanded by officers who knew both their crew and their vessel and who understood the limitations of the art of navigating which had been handed down to them by their ancestors.

Then came the new age of iron and steel and machinery. First one part, then another of the old ship of state was changed. Her dimensions were increased. The sails were discarded for steam. Better living quarters were established, but more people were forced to go down into the stoke-hole, and while the work was safe and fairly remunerative, they did not like it as well as their old and more dangerous job in the rigging. Finally, and almost imperceptibly, the old wooden square-rigger had been transformed into a modern ocean liner. But the captain and the mates remained the same. They were appointed or elected in the same way as a hundred years before. They were taught the same system of navigation which had served the mariners of the fifteenth century. In their cabins hung the same charts and signal flags which had done service in the days of Louis XIV and Frederick the Great. In short, they were (through no fault of their own) completely incompetent.

The sea of international politics is not very broad. When those Imperial and Colonial liners began to try and outrun each other, accidents were bound to happen. They did happen. You can still see the wreckage if you venture to pass through that part of the ocean.

And the moral of the story is a simple one. The world is in dreadful need of men who will assume the new leadership-- who will have the courage of their own visions and who will recognise clearly that we are only at the beginning of the voyage, and have to learn an entirely new system of seamanship.

They will have to serve for years as mere apprentices. They will have to fight their way to the top against every possible form of opposition. When they reach the bridge, mutiny of an envious crew may cause their death. But some day, a man will arise who will bring the vessel safely to port, and he shall be the hero of the ages.

AS IT EVER SHALL BE

"The more I think of the problems of our lives, the more I am persuaded that we ought to choose Irony and Pity for our assessors and judges as the ancient Egyptians called upon the Goddess Isis and the Goddess Nephtys on behalf of their dead. Irony and Pity are both of good counsel; the first with her smiles makes life agreeable; the other sanctifies it with her tears. The Irony which I invoke is no cruel Deity. She mocks neither love nor beauty. She is gentle and kindly disposed. Her mirth disarms and it is she who teaches us to laugh at rogues and fools, whom but for her we might be so weak as to despise and hate."

And with these wise words of a very great Frenchman I bid you farewell.
8 Barrow Street, New York.
Saturday, June 26, xxi.

AN ANIMATED CHRONOLOGY, 500,000 B.C. --A.D. 1922

THE END

CONCERNING THE PICTURES

CONCERNING THE PICTURES OF THIS BOOK AND A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE BIBLIOGRAPHY.

The day of the historical textbook without illustrations has gone. Pictures and photographs of famous personages and equally famous occurrences cover the pages of Breasted and Robinson and Beard. In this volume the photographs have been omitted to make room for a series of home-made drawings which represent ideas rather than events.

While the author lays no claim to great artistic excellence (being possessed of a decided leaning towards drawing as a child, he was taught to play the violin as a matter of discipline,) he prefers to make his own maps and sketches because he knows exactly what he wants to say and cannot possibly explain this meaning to his more proficient brethren in the field of art. Besides, the pictures were all drawn for children and their ideas of art are very different from those of their parents.

To all teachers the author would give this advice--let your boys and girls draw their history after their own desire just as often as you have a chance. You can show a class a photograph of

a Greek temple or a mediaeval castle and the class will dutifully say, "Yes, Ma'am," and proceed to forget all about it. But make the Greek temple or the Roman castle the centre of an event, tell the boys to make their own picture of "the building of a temple," or "the storming of the castle," and they will stay after school-hours to finish the job. Most children, before they are taught how to draw from plaster casts, can draw after a fashion, and often they can draw remarkably well. The product of their pencil may look a bit prehistoric. It may even resemble the work of certain native tribes from the upper Congo. But the child is quite frequently prehistoric or upper-Congoish in his or her own tastes, and expresses these primitive instincts with a most astonishing accuracy.

The main thing in teaching history, is that the pupil shall remember certain events "in their proper sequence." The experiments of many years in the Children's School of New York has convinced the author that few children will ever forget what they have drawn, while very few will ever remember what they have merely read.

It is the same with the maps. Give the child an ordinary conventional map with dots and lines and green seas and tell him to reevaluate that geographic scene in his or her own terms. The mountains will be a bit out of gear and the cities will look astonishingly mediaeval. The outlines will be often very imperfect, but the general effect will be quite as truthful as that of our conventional maps, which ever since the days of good Gerardus Mercator have told a strangely erroneous story. Most important of all, it will give the child a feeling of intimacy with historical and geographic facts which cannot be obtained in any other way.

Neither the publishers nor the author claim that "The Story of Mankind" is the last word to be said upon the subject of history for children. It is an appetizer. The book tries to present the subject in such a fashion that the average child shall get a taste for History and shall ask for more.

To facilitate the work of both parents and teachers, the publishers have asked Miss Leonore St. John Power (who knows more upon this particular subject than any one else they could discover) to compile a list of readable and instructive books.

The list was made and was duly printed.

The parents who live near our big cities will experience no difficulty in ordering these volumes from their booksellers. Those who for the sake of fresh air and quiet, dwell in more remote spots, may not find it convenient to go to a book-store. In that case, Boni and Liveright will be happy to act as middle-man and obtain the books that are desired. They want it to be distinctly understood that they have not gone into the retail book business, but they are quite willing to do their share towards a better and more general historical education, and all orders will receive their immediate attention.

AN HISTORICAL READING LIST FOR CHILDREN

"Don't stop (I say) to explain that Hebe was (for once) the legitimate daughter of Zeus and, as such, had the privilege to draw wine for the Gods. Don't even stop, just yet, to explain who the Gods were. Don't discourse on amber, otherwise ambergris; don't explain that `gris' in this connection doesn't mean `grease'; don't trace it through the Arabic into Noah's Ark; don't prove its electrical properties by tearing up paper into little bits and attracting them with the mouth-piece of your pipe rubbed on your sleeve. Don't insist philologically that when every

shepherd `tells his tale' he is not relating an anecdote but simply keeping `tally' of his flock. Just go on reading, as well as you can, and be sure that when the children get the thrill of the story, for which you wait, they will be asking more questions, and pertinent ones, than you are able to answer.--

("On the Art of Reading for Children," by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch.)

The Days Before History

"How the Present Came From the Past," by Margaret E. Wells,

Volume I.

How earliest man learned to make tools and build homes, and the stories he told about the fire-makers, the sun and the frost. A simple, illustrated account of these things for children.

"The Story of Ab, by Stanley Waterloo.

A romantic tale of the time of the cave-man. (A much simplified

edition of this for little children is "Ab, the Cave Man" adapted by William Lewis Nida.)

"Industrial and Social History Series," by Katharine E. Dopp.

"The Tree Dwellers--The Age of Fear"

"The Early Cave-Men--The Age of Combat"

"The Later Cave-Men--The Age of the Chase"

"The Early Sea People--First Steps in the Conquest of the Waters"

"The Tent-Dwellers--The Early Fishing Men"

Very simple stories of the way in which man learned how to make pottery, how to weave and spin, and how to conquer land and sea.

"Ancient Man," written and drawn and done into colour by Hendrik

Willem van Loon.

The beginning of civilisations pictured and written in a new and fascinating fashion, with story maps showing exactly what happened in all parts of the world. A book for children of all ages.

The Dawn of History

“The Civilisation of the Ancient Egyptians,” by A. Bothwell Gosse.

“No country possesses so many wonders, and has such a number of works which defy description.” An excellent, profusely illustrated account of the domestic life, amusements, art, religion and occupations of these wonderful people.

“How the Present Came From the Past,” by Margaret E. Wells, Volume II.

What the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians and the Persians contributed to civilisation. This is brief and simple and may be used as a first book on the subject.

“Stories of Egyptian Gods and Heroes,” by F. H. Brooksbank.

The beliefs of the Egyptians, the legend of Isis and Osiris, the builders of the Pyramids and the Temples, the Riddle of the Sphinx, all add to the fascination of this romantic picture of Egypt.

“Wonder Tales of the Ancient World,” by Rev. James Baikie.

Tales of the Wizards, Tales of Travel and Adventure, and Legends
of the Gods all gathered from ancient Egyptian literature.

“Ancient Assyria,” by Rev. James Baikie.

Which tells of a city 2800 years ago with a street lined with beautiful enamelled reliefs, and with libraries of clay.

“The Bible for Young People,” arranged from the King James version, with twenty-four full page illustrations from old masters.

“Old, Old Tales From the Old, Old Book,” by Nora Archibald Smith.

“Written in the East these characters live forever in the West-- they pervade the world.” A good rendering of the Old Testament. “The Jewish Fairy Book,” translated and adapted by Gerald Friedlander.

Stories of great nobility and beauty from the Talmud and the old Jewish chap-books.

“Eastern Stories and Legends,” by Marie L. Shedlock.

“The soldiers of Alexander who had settled in the East, wandering merchants of many nations and climes, crusading knights and hermits brought these Buddha Stories from the East to the West.”

Stories of Greece and Rome

“The Story of the Golden Age,” by James Baldwin.

Some of the most beautiful of the old Greek myths woven into the story of the Odyssey make this book a good introduction to the glories of the Golden Age.

“A Wonder Book and Tanglewood Tales,” by Nathaniel Hawthorne, with pictures by Maxfield Parrish.

“The Adventures of Odysseus and the Tale of Troy,” by Padraic Colum, presented by Willy Pogany.

An attractive, poetically rendered account of “the world’s greatest story.”

“The Story of Rome,” by Mary Macgregor, with twenty plates in colour.

Attractively illustrated and simply presented story of Rome from the earliest times to the death of Augustus.

“Plutarch’s Lives for Boys and Girls,” retold by W. H. Weston.

“The Lays of Ancient Rome,” by Lord Macaulay.

“The early history of Rome is indeed far more poetical than anything else in Latin Literature.”

“Children of the Dawn,” by Elsie Finnemore Buckley.

Old Greek tales of love, adventure, heroism, skill, achievement, or defeat exceptionally well told. Especially recommended for girls.

“The Heroes; or, Greek Fairy Tales for My Children,” by Charles Kingsley.

“The Story of Greece,” by Mary Macgregor, with nineteen plates in colour by Walter Crane.

Attractively illustrated and simply presented--a good book to begin on.

Christianity

“The Story of Jesus,” pictures from paintings by Giotto, Fra Angelico, Duccio, Ghirlandais, and Barnja-da-Siena. Descriptive text from the New Testament, selected and arranged by Ethel Natalie Dana.

A beautiful book and a beautiful way to present the Christ Story.

“A Child’s Book of Saints,” by William Canton.

Sympathetically told and charmingly written stories of men and women whose faith brought about strange miracles, and whose goodness to man and beast set the world wondering.

“The Seven Champions of Christendom,” edited by F. J. H. Darton.

How the knights of old--St. George of England, St. Denis of France, St. James of Spain, and others--fought with enchanter and evil spirits to preserve the Kingdom of God. Fine old romances interestingly told for children.

“Stories From the Christian East,” by Stephen Gaselee.

Unusual stories which have been translated from the Coptic, the Greek, the Latin and the Ethiopic.

“Jerusalem and the Crusades,” by Estelle Blyth, with eight plates in colour.

Historical stories telling how children and priests, hermits and knights all strove to keep the Cross in the East.

Stories of Legend and Chivalry

“Stories of Norse Heroes From the Eddas and Sagas,” retold by E. M. Wilmot-Buxton.

These are tales which the Northmen tell concerning the wisdom of All-Father Odin, and how all things began and how they ended. A good book for all children, and for story-tellers.

“The Story of Siegfried,” by James Baldwin.

A good introduction to this Northern hero whose strange and daring deeds fill the pages of the old sagas.

“The Story of King Arthur and His Knights,” written and illustrated
by Howard Pyle.

This, and the companion volumes, “The Story of the Champions of
the Round Table,” “The Story of Sir Launcelot and His Companions,” “The Story of the Grail
and the Passing of Arthur,” form an incomparable collection for children.

“The Boy’s King Arthur,” edited by Sidney Lanier, illustrated by N. C. Wyeth.

A very good rendering of Malory’s King Arthur, made especially attractive by the coloured illustrations.

“Irish Fairy Tales,” by James Stephens, illustrated by Arthur Rackham.

Beautifully pictured and poetically told legends of Ireland’s epic hero Fionn. A book for the boy or girl who loves the old romances, and a book for story-telling or reading aloud.

“Stories of Charlemagne and the Twelve Peers of France,” by A. J. Church.

Stories from the old French and English chronicles showing the romantic glamour surrounding the great Charlemagne and his crusading knights.

“The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood,” written and illustrated by Howard Pyle.

Both in picture and in story this book holds first place in the hearts
of children.

"A Book of Ballad Stories," by Mary Macleod.

Good prose versions of some of the famous old ballads sung by the minstrels of England and Scotland.

"The Story of Roland," by James Baldwin.

"There is, in short, no country in Europe, and no language, in which the exploits of Charlemagne and Roland have not at some time been recounted and sung." This book will serve as a good introduction to a fine heroic character.

"The Boy's Froissart," being Sir John Froissart's Chronicles of Adventure, Battle, and Custom in England, France, Spain.

"Froissart sets the boy's mind upon manhood and the man's mind upon boyhood." An invaluable background for the future study of history.

"The Boy's Percy," being old ballads of War, Adventure and Love from Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, edited by

Sidney Lanier.

"He who walks in the way these following ballads point, will be manful in necessary fight, loyal in love, generous to the poor, tender in the household, prudent in living, merry upon occasion, and honest in all things."

"Tales of the Canterbury Pilgrims," retold from Chaucer and others

by E. J. H. Darton.

"Sometimes a pilgrimage seemed nothing but an excuse for a lively and pleasant holiday, and the travellers often made themselves very merry on the road, with their jests and songs, and their flutes and fiddles and bagpipes." A good prose version much enjoyed by boys and girls.

"Joan of Arc," written and illustrated by M. Boutet de Monvel.

A very fine interpretation of the life of this great heroine. A book to be owned by every boy and girl.

"When Knights Were Bold," by Eva March Tappan.

Telling of the training of a knight, of the daily life in a castle, of pilgrimages and crusades, of merchant guilds, of schools and literature, in short, a full picture of life in the days of chivalry. A good book to supplement the romantic stories of the time.

Adventurers in New Worlds

“A Book of Discovery,” by M. B. Synge, fully illustrated from authentic sources and with maps.

A thoroughly fascinating book about the world's exploration from the earliest times to the discovery of the South Pole. A book to be owned by older boys and girls who like true tales of adventure.

“A Short History of Discovery From the Earliest Times to the Founding of the Colonies on the American Continent,” written and done into colour by Hendrik Willem van Loon.

“Dear Children: History is the most fascinating and entertaining and instructive of arts.” A book to delight children of all ages.

“The Story of Marco Polo,” by Noah Brooks.

“Olaf the Glorious,” by Robert Leighton.

An historical story of the Viking age.

“The Conquerors of Mexico,” retold from Prescott's “Conquest of Mexico,” by Henry Gilbert.

“The Conquerors of Peru,” retold from Prescott's “Conquest of Peru,” by Henry Gilbert.

“Vikings of the Pacific,” by A. C. Laut.

Adventures of Bering the Dane; the outlaw hunters of Russia; Benyowsky, the Polish pirate; Cook and Vancouver; Drake, and other soldiers of fortune on the West Coast of America.

“The Argonauts of Faith,” by Basil Mathews.

The Adventures of the “Mayflower” Pilgrims.

“Pathfinders of the West,” by A. C. Laut.

The thrilling story of the adventures of the men who discovered the great Northwest.

“Beyond the Old Frontier,” by George Bird Grinnell.

Adventures of Indian Fighters, Hunters, and Fur-Traders on the Pacific Coast.

“A History of Travel in America,” by Seymour Dunbar, illustrated from old woodcuts and engravings. 4 volumes.

An interesting book for children who wish to understand the problems and difficulties their grandfathers had in the conquest of the West. This is a standard book upon the subject of early travel, but is so readable as to be of interest to older children.

“The Golden Book of the Dutch Navigators,” by Hendrik Willem van Loon. Fully illustrated from old prints.

The World’s Progress in Invention--Art--Music.

“Gabriel and the Hour Book,” by Evaleen Stein.

How a boy learned from the monks how to grind and mix the colours for illuminating the beautiful hand-printed books of the time and how he himself made books that are now treasured in the museums of France and England.

“Historic Inventions,” by Rupert S. Holland.

Stories of the invention of printing, the steam-engine, the spinning-jenny, the safety-lamp, the sewing machine, electric light, and other wonders of mechanism.

“A History of Everyday Things in England,” written and illustrated
by Marjorie and C. V. B. Quennell. 2 Volumes.

A most fascinating book, profusely illustrated in black and white and in colour, giving a vivid picture of life in England from 1066-1799. It tells of wars and of home-life, of amusements and occupations, of art and literature, of science and invention. A book to be owned by every boy and girl.

“First Steps in the Enjoyment of Pictures,” by Maude I. G. Oliver.

A book designed to help children in their appreciation of art by giving them technical knowledge of the media, the draughtsmanship, the composition and the technique of well-known American pictures.

“Knights of Art,” by Amy Steedman.

Stories of Italian Painters. Attractively illustrated in colour from old masters.

“Masters of Music,” by Anna Alice Chapin.

“Story Lives of Men of Science,” by F. J. Rowbotham.

“All About Treasures of the Earth,” by Frederick A. Talbot.

A book that tells many interesting things about coal, salt, iron, rare metals and precious stones.

“The Boys’ Book of New Inventions,” by Harry E. Maule.

An account of the machines and mechanical processes that are making the history of our time more dramatic than that of any other age since the world began.

“Masters of Space,” by Walter Kellogg Towers.

Stories of the wonders of telegraphing through the air and beneath the sea with signals, and of speaking across continents.

“All About Railways,” by F. S. Hartnell.

“The Man-of-War, What She Has Done and What She Is Doing,” by Commander E. Hamilton Currey.

True stories about galleys and pirate ships, about the Spanish Main and famous frigates, and about slave-hunting expeditions in the days of old.

The Democracy of To-Day.

“The Land of Fair Play,” by Geoffrey Parsons.

“This book aims to make clear the great, unseen services that America renders each of us, and the active devotion each of us must yield in return for America to endure.” An excellent book on our government for boys and girls.

“The American Idea as Expounded by American Statesmen,” compiled
by Joseph B. Gilder.

A good collection, including The Declaration of Independence, The Constitution of the United States, the Monroe Doctrine, and the famous speeches of Washington, Lincoln, Webster and Roosevelt.

“The Making of an American,” by Jacob A. Riis.

The true story of a Danish boy who became one of America's finest citizens.

“The Promised Land,” by Mary Antin.

A true story about a little immigrant. “Before we came, the New World knew not the Old; but since we have begun to come, the Young World has taken the Old by the hand, and the two are learning to march side by side, seeking a common destiny.”

Illustrated Histories in French.

(The colourful and graphic pictures make these histories beloved by all children whether they read the text or not.)

“Voyages et Glorieuses Decouvertes des Grands Navigateurs et Explorateurs Francais, illustre par Edy Segrand.”

“Collection d'Albums Historiques.”

Louis XI, texte de Georges Montorgueil, aquarelles de Job.

Francois I, texte de G. Gustave Toudouze, aquarelles de Job.

Henri IV, texte de Georges Montorgueil, aquarelles de H. Vogel.

Richelieu, texte de Th. Cahu, aquarelles de Maurice Leloir.

Le Roy Soleil, texte de Gustave Toudouze, aquarelles de Mauriaie Leloir.

Bonaparte, texte de Georges Montorgueil, aquarelles de Job.

“Fabliaux et Contes du Moyen-Âge” ; illustrations de A. Robida

End

人类的故事

前言

汉斯及威廉：

当我十二三岁的时候，我的那位引导我爱上书籍和图画舅舅，答应带我做一次永难忘怀的探险——他要我跟他一起上到鹿特丹老圣劳伦斯教堂的塔楼顶上去。

于是，在一个风和日丽的日子里，教堂司事拿着一把足以与圣彼得的钥匙相媲美的大钥匙，给我俩打开了那扇通往塔楼的神秘大门。“等你们下楼出来时”他说，“拉拉铃就行啦。”说完，在生锈的铰链发出的吱吱声中，他关上了门，一下子将繁忙街道的喧嚣隔在我们身后，把我们锁进了一个崭新而陌生的世界里。

在我生命中的头一回，就发觉了“可听见的寂静”这种现象。当我们踏上第一段楼梯时，在我的自然现象的有限知识里面又增加了另一种经验——可触摸得到的黑暗。一根火柴为我们指引出向上的路。我们上到第二层，第三层，第四层……一层层不断往上，数不清是第几层，前面的楼梯却仿佛无穷无尽。最后，我们猛然走进一片巨大的光泽之中。塔楼的这一层与教堂的顶部齐平，用作储藏室，散乱地堆放着许多古老信仰的圣像。这座城市的善良居民们在很多年前就弃绝了这种信仰，在被抛弃的圣像们身上，积满了厚厚的灰尘。那些对我们的先人意味着生和死的重要事物，在这里论为了尘埃和垃圾。勤劳的耗子在这些雕像间搭了窝，永远警觉的蜘蛛还在一尊仁慈的圣像伸出的双臂间结了网。

再上一层楼梯，我们终于发现光亮来自这里敞开的窗户。沉重的铁条嵌在巨大的窗户上，其间出入的上百只鸽子把这个高处不胜寒的地方当成了他们惬意的居所。风透过铁栅吹进来，空气中浸润着一种神秘而令人愉悦的音乐。仔细一听原来那是从我们脚传来的城市的声音。遥远的距离将它们过滤得澄澈而干净了。

楼梯到这一层就没有了，再往上必须爬梯子。爬完第一架梯子（它又旧又滑，你必须小心翼翼踩稳每一级）迎接我们的是一个崭新而伟大的奇迹——城市的时钟。我仿佛看见了时间的核心，我听见了飞速流逝的时间那沉重的脉搏声，一秒、两秒、三秒，一直到六十秒。这时，随着一阵猛然的震颤声，所有的齿轮仿佛一齐停止了转动，被从永恒的时间长河中切割了下来。再上一层是许许多多的钟。有优雅的小钟，还有体形巨大、令人害怕的巨型大钟。房间正中是一口大钟。当它在半夜敲响，告之某一处大火或洪水的消息时，我总是吓得浑身僵硬、汗不敢出。而现在，大钟却笼罩在寂寞庄严的气氛里，仿佛正在回思过去600年里，它和鹿特丹人民一道经历了那些欢乐和哀愁。大钟的身边是挂着一一些小钟，它们整齐规矩的样子活像老式药店至摆放的大口瓶子

我们接着往上爬，再度进入一片漆黑当中。此时，梯子也比刚才的更陡峭、更危险。爬着爬着，突然间，我们已经呼吸到广阔天地的清新空气了。我们到达了塔楼的最高点。头上是高远的碧空，脚下是城市——

个积木搭建的玩具般的城市。人们像蚂蚁似的匆匆来去，人人专注于自己的心思，忙着自己的事情。远处，在一片乱石堆外，是乡村宽广的绿色田野。

这是我对辽阔世界的最初一瞥。

从此一有机会，我就上到塔楼顶上去自得其乐。登上楼顶是一件很费力气的事情，可我体力上的付出却得到了充分的精神回报。

并且，我清楚这份回报是什么。我可以极目纵览大地和天空，我可以从我好心的朋友——塔楼看守人那里听到许许多多的故事。在塔楼的一个隐蔽的角落里搭着一间小房子，看守人就住在里面。他负责照顾城市的时钟，也是呵护其它大小钟的细心的父亲。他还密切地注视着城市，一有火灾的迹象就敲钟发出警讯。

他熟悉历史故事，它们对他来说都是活生生的事情。“看那儿”他会指着一处河弯对我讲道，“就是在那儿，我的孩子，你看见那些树了么？那是奥兰治亲王挖开河堤，淹没大片田地的地方。为拯救莱顿城，他必须这么做。”他还给我讲老梅兹河源远流长的故事，讲解这条宽阔的河流如何由便利的良港变成壮观的大马路的。还有著名的德·鲁伊特与特隆普的船队的最后出航。他俩为探索未知的海域，让人们能自由航行于茫茫大洋之上，而一会不返了。

再看过去是一些小村庄，围绕在护佑它们的那座教堂四周。很多年前，这里曾是守护圣徒们居住的家。远处还能望见德尔夫的斜塔。它高耸的拱顶曾目睹了沉默者威廉遭暗杀的过程。格罗斯特就是在这里开始了他最初的拉丁文语法分析的。再远些那长而低的建筑就是高达教堂，也是一位智慧的威力超过国王军队的伟人早年曾居住在这里。他就是举世闻名的埃拉斯穆斯高达教堂收养的孤儿。

最后，我们的目光落在了浩瀚海洋的银色边际上。它与近在脚下的大片屋顶、烟囱、花园、学校、铁路等建筑形成了鲜明的对照。我们把这片拼凑的大杂烩称为自己的“家”但塔楼却赋予了这旧家新的启示。从塔顶上俯瞰下去：那些混乱无章的街道和市场，工厂与作坊，历历变成了人类能力和目标的井然有序的展示。更有益的是，纵览围绕在我们四周的人类的辉煌过去，能使我们带着新的勇气，回到日常生活中，直面未来的种种难题。

历史是一座雄伟壮丽的经验之塔，它是时间在无尽的逝去岁月中苦心搭建起来的。要登上这座古老建筑的顶端去一览众山并非易事。这里没有电梯，可年轻人有强健有力的双脚，能够完成这一艰苦的攀登。

在这里，我送给你们一把打开世界之门的钥匙。当你们返回时，你们就会理解我为何如此热情了。

亨德里克·威廉·房龙

第一章 人类历史舞台的形成

人类一直以来都生活在一个巨大问号的阴影下面

我们是谁？

我们从哪儿来？

我们要去向哪里？

凭着坚持不懈的勇气与毅力，人类慢慢将这个问题推向越来越远的边界，朝着我们希望找到答案的天际步步逼近。

可迄今为止，我们还没能走出多远。我们知道的依然少得可怜。但我们至少能以相当精确的程度，推测出许多事情来。

在这一章，我要告诉你们，人类历史的舞台是如何被搭建起来的。如果我们以一定长度的直线来代表动物生命可能存在于地球上的时间，那么在它下面那条最短的线则表示人类（或多少类似人的生命）生活在这块土地上的时间。

人类是最后出现在地球上，却最先学会用脑力征服大自然的。这就是我们打算研究人，而非研究猫、狗、马或其它动物的原因。要知道，在这些动物身后，同样也留下了许多就其自身来说非常有趣的历史。

最初，我们居住的这颗行星（就目前所知），是燃烧着的一个巨大球体。可相对于浩瀚无边的宇宙，它只不过是一块微小的烟云。几百万年过去了，它的表面渐渐地燃烧殆尽，并覆上了一层薄薄的岩石。在这片生机全无的岩石之上，暴雨无休无止地下着，雨水将坚硬的花岗岩慢慢地侵蚀掉，并把冲刷下来的泥土带到了雾气笼罩的高峰之间的峡谷。最后雨过天霁，太阳破云而出。遍布这颗星球上的众多小水洼逐渐扩展成了东西半球的巨大海洋。

随后的某一天，最美妙的奇迹发生了：这个死气沉沉的世界终于出现了生命。第一个活着的细胞漂流在大海之上。

它毫无目标地随波飘荡了几百万年。在此过程中，它慢慢发展着自己的某些习性。这些习性使它在环境恶劣的地球上能更容易地生存下去。这些细胞中的部分成员觉得呆在黑沉沉的湖泊和池塘的底部最舒适不过，于是它们在从山顶冲刷到水底的淤泥间扎下根来，变成了植物。另一些细胞则情愿四处游荡，它们长出了奇形怪状的有节的腿，像蝎子一样，在海底植物和状似水母的淡绿色物体间爬行。还有一些身上覆着鳞片的细胞，它们凭借游泳似的动作四处来去，寻找食物。慢慢地，它们变成了海洋里繁若晨星的鱼类。

与此同时，植物的数量也在不断滋长，海底的空间已经不够容纳它们了。为了生存，它们不得不开辟新的栖息地，很不情愿地在沼泽和山脚下的泥岸上安了新家。每天早晚的潮汐淹没了它们，让它们品尝到故乡的咸味。除此之外的时间里，它们不得不学习如何适应不舒适的环境，争取在覆盖地球表面的稀薄空气里生存下来。经过长时间的训练，它们终于学会了如何自在地生活于空气里，就像以前在水中一样。它们的体形逐渐增大，变成了灌木和树林。最后，它们还学会如何开出美丽的花朵，让繁忙的大黄蜂和鸟儿将自己的种子带到远方，使整个陆地都布满碧绿的原野和大树的浓荫。

此时一些鱼类也开始迁离海洋。它们学会既用鳃，也用肺呼吸。我们叫它们两栖动物，意思是，它们在水里和陆上都能活得同样悠游自在。你在路边看见的第一只青蛙就能告诉你身为两栖动物穿梭于水陆之间的乐趣。

一旦离开了水，这些动物会变得越来越适应陆上生活。其中的一些成为了爬行动物（那些像蜥蜴一样爬行的动物），它们与昆虫们一起分享森林的寂静。为便于更迅速地穿过松软的土壤，它们逐渐发展自己的四肢，体形也相应地增大。最终，整个世界都被这些身高三十到四十英尺的庞然大物占领。若它们跟大象玩耍，就如同体形壮硕的成年猫逗弄自己的小崽子。这些庞然大物就是被生物学手册称为鱼龙、斑龙、雷龙等等的恐龙家族。

后来，这些爬行动物家族中的一些成员开始到上百英尺高的树顶会生活。它们不必再用腿来走路，可迅速地从一棵树枝跃到另一棵树枝，却变成了树上生活的必需技能。于是，它们身体两侧和脚趾间的部分皮肤逐渐变成一种类似降落伞的肉膜，这些薄薄的肉膜上又长出了羽毛，尾巴则成为了方向舵。就这样，它们开始在树林间飞行，最终进化成真正的鸟类。

这时，一件神秘的事情发生了。所有这些庞大的爬行动物在短时间内悉数灭绝。我们不知道其中的原因。也许是由于气候的突然变化，也许是因为它们的身体长得过于庞大，以至行动困难，再不能游泳、奔走和爬行。它们只能眼睁睁地看着肥美的蕨类植物和树叶近在咫尺，却活活饿死。不管出于什么原因，统治地球数百万年的古爬行动物帝国到此就覆灭了。

现在，地球开始被不同的动物占据。这些动物属于爬行动物的子孙，但其性情与体质都迥异于自己的先祖。它们用乳房“哺事”自己的后代，因此现代科学称这些动物为“哺乳动物”。它们褪去了鱼类身上的鳞甲，也不像鸟儿那样长出羽毛，而是周身覆以浓密的毛发。由此，哺乳动物发展出另一些比之其它动物更有利于延续种族的习性。比如雌性动物会将下一代的受精卵孕含在身体内部，直至它们孵化；比如当同时期的其它动物还将自己的子女暴露于严寒酷热，任其道猛兽袭击时，哺乳动物却将下一代长时间留在身边，在它们无法应付各种天敌的脆弱阶段保护它们。这样，年幼的哺乳动物便能得到最佳的生存机会，因为它们能从母亲身上学习到很多东西。如果你看过母猫是如何教小猫照顾自己，如何洗脸，如何捉老鼠等等，你就能理解这一点了。

不过关于这些哺乳动物，不用我告诉你很多。它们遍布你的四周，你早已熟悉。它们是你日常生活的同伴，出没于街道和你家的房屋。在动物园的铁栅栏后面，你还能一睹你那些不太熟悉的表亲们的尊容。

现在，我们来到了历史发展的分水岭。此时，人类突然脱离了动物沉默无言、生生死死的生命过程，开始运用脑子来掌握自己种族的命运。一头特别聪明的哺乳动物在觅食和寻找栖身之所的技能方面，大大超越了他动物。它不仅学会用前肢捕捉猎物，并且通过长期的训练，它还进化出类似手掌的前爪。又经过无数次的尝试之后，它还学会了用两条后腿站立，并保持身体的平衡。（这是一个非常困难的动作，尽管整个人类已经有上百万年直立行走的历史，可每一个小孩子在成长过程中都得从头学起。）

这种动物一半像猿，一半像猴，可比两者都要优越，成为了地球上最成功的猎手，并且能在各种气候条件下生活。为了更安全，更便于相互照顾，它们常常成群结队地行动。一开始，它只能发出奇怪的咕喀声、吼声，以此警告自己的子女们正在逼近的危险。可经过几十万年的发展，它竟然学会了如何用喉音来交谈。你也许觉得难以置信，这种动物就是我们最初“类人”的先祖。

第二章 人类最早的祖先

对于“真正”的人类最初是什么模样，我们知之甚少

他们没有照片和图画留传下来。不过在古代土壤的最深处，我们能不时地挖到他们的几片骨头。这些骨头与一些早已在地球表面消失的动物们的碎骨静静地躺在一起，昭示着地球的巨大变迁。人类学家，也就是那些把人类当作动物王国的一员，终其一生来潜心研究的渊博科学家们，拿到这些碎骨，长时间的加以揣摩，现在已能相当精确地复制出我们早期始祖的模样来了。

人类最早的祖先是一种外表丑陋、毫无领力的哺乳动物。他不仅身材比现代人矮小许多，而且长期的风吹日晒，还使他的皮肤变成了难看的暗棕色。他的头上、手上、腿上以及全身的大部分皮肤都覆着长而粗糙的毛发。他的手指细而有力，看上去像猴的爪子。他长着一个低陷的前额，下颚看起来像那些惯于把牙齿当刀叉的食肉野兽。他赤身裸体，除偶尔看见咆哮的火山以燃烧的岩浆和浓烟吞噬大地，还不知道什么是火。

他住在大森林的阴暗潮湿处。直到如今，非洲的俾格米原始部落还住在这样的地方。当他感到阵阵袭来的饥饿，他就大吃生树叶和植物的根茎，或者从愤怒的鸟儿那里偷走鸟蛋，喂给自己的孩子。运气不错时，经一番漫长而耐心的追逐，他能抓到一只松鼠、小野狗或老鼠什么的，开开荤。他吃什么都生吞活剥，因为他还未发现经火烤过的食物味道要好一些。

白天，这些原始人在莽莽森林中四处潜行，寻找可吃的东西。一俟黑暗降临大地，他便把自己的妻女藏进空树干或巨石后面。凶猛危险的野兽遍布他的四周，它们惯于在夜间悄悄活动，为它们的配偶和幼仔寻找食物。它们很喜欢人肉的味道。这是一个你要么吃野兽，要么被野兽吃的世界，人类早期的生活非常悲惨，充满了恐惧和痛苦。

夏天，人类被烈日炙烤；冬天，他的孩子冻死在自己怀里。当他不小心弄伤了自己（追猎野兽是很容易摔断骨头或者扭伤脚踝的），没人可以照顾他，只能在惊恐和疼痛中自生自灭。

就像动物园会充斥着动物们林林总总、稀奇古怪的叫声一样，早期的人类也喜欢发出急促不清的怪叫。也就是说，他不断地重复着一些相同的胡言乱语，因为他

喜欢听见自己的声音。日子长了，他突然意识到，可以用这种喉部发出的声音去提醒同伴。当某种危险悄然接近的时候，他便发出具有特定含义的尖叫，比如“那儿有一只老虎”或者“这边来了5头大象”。同伴听见他的警告，也向他回吼几声，表示“我看见它们了”或者“我们快跑开藏起来吧”。这大概就是所有语言的起源。

可正如我前面讲过的，我们对这些起源知道的非常之少。早期的人类不会制造工具，不会修建房屋。他活着，死去，除了留下几根锁骨与头骨的碎片，再没有其它线索可以追寻他们生存的踪迹。我们只知道在几百万年前，地球上曾生活着某种哺乳动物，他们与其它所有的动物都截然不同。他们可能是由一种像猪的动物进化而来的。他们学会了用下肢直立行走，把前爪当手来使用。他们与恰巧是我们直接的祖先的动物可能具有某种联系。

总之，我们对人类祖先知道的就这些，其它的秘密仍然匿于沉沉黑暗之中。

第三章 史前人类

史前人类开始为自己制造工具

早期的人类不懂得时间的含义，他们从不记录生日、结婚纪念日或者悼亡日，也不理解什么叫日、月、年。可通过一种普遍的方法，他们跟上了季节变迁的轨迹。他们发现，寒冷的冬天过后，温暖惬意的春天总是翩然而至；随着春天慢慢地变成炎夏，树上的果实饱含浆汁，野麦穗迎风招展，等待收割；然后夏天结束，阵阵狂风卷光树上的叶子，一些动物已准备好漫长的冬眠了。

这时，一件不同寻常的恐怖事情发生了，它与气候有关。暖和的夏日姗姗来迟，果实无法长熟。那些本来覆盖着绿草如茵的群山之顶，现在却为一层厚厚的积雪所笼罩。

随后的一天早上，一群野人突然从山上摇摇晃晃地冲下来。他们与住在山脚下的居民很不相同。他们瘦弱干枯，看起来已经挨饿好久。本地的居民听不懂他们唧唧咕咕的语言，可看样子；他们好像在说自己想吃东西。本地的食物不足以同时养活老居民和新来者，当过了几天他们还赖着不走，于是一场可怕的战斗发生了。人们相互撕咬，发疯般地肉搏。有的全家被杀死，其他人则逃回山区，死于下一场袭来的暴风雪。可住在森林里的居民也吓坏了。现在，白昼变得一天比一天短，而夜晚却冷得异乎寻常。

最后，在两山之间的裂缝里，出现了星星点点的绿色小冰块。它们迅速地变大，长成巨大的冰川，沿山坡滑下来，把巨大的石块推进山谷。在雷鸣般的响声中，裹挟着冰块、泥浆和花岗岩的巨流呼啸着卷过森林，许多人在睡梦中就遭受了灭顶之灾。百年的老树被齐腰折断，倒在燃烧起来的森林里。随后，大雪纷纷扬扬地下了起来。

绵绵不绝的大雪下了一个又一个。所有的植物都冻死了，大批动物逃往南方，去寻找温暖的太阳。人类肩挑手打，背起年幼的孩子，跟动物一起踏上了逃难的旅程。可他们跋涉的速度比用四肢奔跑的动物慢了许多，严寒却毫不留情地在身后紧紧追赶。他们不得不迅速想出办法，否则只能坐以待毙。事实证明，他们更情愿开动脑子。在冰川纪，有四种情形对地球上的人类构成了致命的威胁，可他们都一一想出了对付的办法，使自己幸免于难。

首先，人类必须穿衣服御寒，否则只能冻死。于是，他们学会了怎样制造捕猎的陷阱：挖一些大坑，上面覆以枝条和树叶，一俟熊和鬣狗掉下去，便用石块砸死它们，用它们的毛皮做大衣。接下来是解决住房的问题。这很简单。许多动物都有睡黑乎乎的山洞的习性。现在，人类也学动物的样子。他们把动物们赶出这些温暖的巢穴，自己住了进去。

即便有毛皮大衣穿、有山洞住，天气对大部分人来说也是太寒冷了。老年人和小孩成批地死去。这时，人类中的一个天才想出了用火御寒的主意，他记得有一次在森林里差点被火烤死。那时，火是一个凶险的敌人。可在眼下的冰天雪地里，火很有希望变成一个助人为乐的朋友。这位天才把枯树干拖进山洞，从一棵着火的树上取下一根燃烧的枝条，点着了洞里的枯树干。熊熊的火光一下子使得黑暗寒冷的洞穴变成了一个温暖宜人的小房间。

一天傍晚，一只死鸡不小心掉进了火堆。一开始，没人在意这事儿，直到烤熟的阵阵香味飘进人们的鼻孔。啃一口尝尝，人们发现，烤熟的肉食味道比生吃好上许多。于是，人类终于抛弃了长期以来与动物一样生吃食物的习惯，开始做起熟食来了。

慢慢地，几千年的冰川纪过去了。只有那些脑子最聪明、最肯动手的家伙们幸存了下来。他们必须日夜不停地与寒冷、饥饿搏斗，他们被迫发明出种种工具。他们学会了怎样磨制锋利的石斧，制造石锤；为度过漫长的寒冬，他们必须储存大量的食物；他们发现能用黏土制成碗和罐子，放在阳光下晒硬后使用。就这样，时时威胁着要毁灭整个人类的冰川纪，到头来却变成了人类最伟大的导师。因为它迫使人类运用自己的脑子去思考。

第四章 象形文字

埃及人发明了书写术，有文字记录的历史从此拉开了序幕

我们这些最早的祖先生活在欧洲的荒野上，他们迅速学习着许多新事物。可以肯定，到某个时候，他们必将脱离野蛮人的生活，发展出一种属于自己的文明。不出所料，他们与世隔绝的状态完结了。他们被发现了。

一个来自神秘南方的旅行者，勇敢地跨过海洋，越过沿途的高山，来到欧洲大陆的野蛮人中间。此人来自非洲，他的故乡名叫“埃及”。

在西方人看见刀叉、车轮、房屋等等文明之物前的几千年，位于尼罗河谷的埃及便已发展出一种高级的文明。现在，我们要离开自己尚处穴居阶段的祖先，去拜访一下地中海南岸和东岸的人们。那里是人类文明的第一个摇篮。

古埃及人教会了我们许多东西。他们是优秀的农夫，精通灌溉术。他们建造的神庙不仅被后来的希腊人仿效，而且还是我们现代教堂的最初蓝本。他们发明的日历能精确地计量时间，稍加修改后，一直沿用至今。最重要的是，古埃及人发明了为后人保存语言的方法——文字。

如今，我们每天都在阅读报纸、书籍、杂志。我们理所当然地认为，读书写字是从来都有的事情。可事实上；作为人类最重要的发明，书写和文字是人类历史上最近才出现的创举。如果没有文字记录的文献，人类便会像猫狗一样。猫狗只能教下一代一些简单的东西，因为它们没有掌握一种方法，能把前面一代代猫狗的经验保存下来，全部传给下一代。

公元前1世纪，古罗马人来到埃及。他们发现整个尼罗河谷遍布一种奇怪的小图案，它似乎和这个国家的历史有关。可罗马人对任何“外国的”东西都不感兴趣，也就没对这些雕刻在神庙和宫殿墙上，或是描画在无数纸莎草纸上的奇怪图案刨根究底。最后一个懂得这种神圣宗教艺术的埃及祭司，在好几年前就已经死去。失去独立的埃及此时就仿佛是一个充斥着重要历史记录的大仓库，没有人能够破译，也没人想去破译。因为它们对人或兽都没有任何尘世的价值。

1700多年过去了，埃及依然是一片神秘的国土。到1789年，一位姓波拿巴的法国将军正好率部路过东非，准备对英属印度殖民地发动进攻。他还没能越过尼罗河，战役失败了。不过很凑巧的是，法国人这次著名的远征却无意之中解决了古埃及图像文字的难题。

一天，一位年轻的法国军官，厌倦了罗塞塔河边（尼罗河口）窄小城堡里的单调生活，决定到尼罗河三角洲的古废墟去溜达一番，翻检古文物。就这样，他找到了一块让他迷惑不解的石头。像埃及的其它东西一样，它上面刻有许多小图像。与此前发现的别的物件不同的是，这块特别的黑玄武岩石板上刻有三种文字的碑文，其中之一是人们知道的希腊文。“只要把希腊文的意思和埃及图像加以比较，”他推论道，“马上就能揭开这些埃及小图像的秘密。”

这办法听起来简单，可要完全揭开这个谜底，是20年过后的事情。1802年，一位叫商博良的法国教授开始对著名的罗塞塔石碑上的希腊和埃及文字进行比较。到1823年，他宣布自己破译了石碑上14个小图像的含义。不久，商博良因为劳累过度而死，可埃及文字的主要法则此时已大白于天下了。今天，我们了解的尼罗河流域的历史要比密西西比河的清楚得多，因为我们拥有了整整4000年的文字记录。

古埃及的象形文字（这个字眼的原义为“神圣的书写”）在历史上扮演了一个异常重要的角色，其中几个字历经变动还融入了我们现代的字母中。所以，你应该稍微了解一下这个5000年前使用的极富天才的文字体系，要知道，是它首次为后人保留了前人说过的口语。

当然，你是知道图像语言的。我们西方流传的每一个印地安故事都有专门的一章，用以介绍印地安人使用的奇怪小图案。它们传递着诸如有多少野牛被杀或者有多少猎手参加某一次围猎之类的信息。一般来说，理解这些信息是不难的。

不过，古埃及文字可不是简单的图像语言。尼罗河畔的人民早就聪明地跨越了这一原始的阶段。他们的小图像代表着比图案本身更多的意思。现在，我将试着给你们解释一下。

设想你就是商博良，你正在检视着一叠写满了古埃及象形文字的纸莎草纸。这时，你遇上一个图案，画的是一个男人拿着一把锯子。你会说：“好啊，它的意思当然是指一个农夫拿着锯子出去伐木。”然后，你又看另一张纸。它讲的是一位皇后在82岁高龄时死去的故事。在句子中间，你再次看见了这个男人拿着一把锯子的图像。82岁的皇后当然不会去做伐木之类的事情。这个图像肯定代表着别的意思。可到底是什么意思呢？

这就是法国人商博良最终为我们揭示的谜底。他发现，古埃及人是第一个运用了“语音文字”的人。这种文字再现了口语单词的声音，凭着一些点、划、撇、捺，它让我们能够把所有的口头语言都以书面的形式记录下来。让我们回到一个男人拿着一把锯子的图案上。“锯”（saw）这个单词，它一方面意味着你在木工店看见的一件工具，另一方面，它又代表动词“看”（to see）的过去时。

这个单词在古埃及是这样变化的：首先，它只代表着图案中特定的工具“锯子”。后来，这个意义逐渐失去了，它变成了一个动词过去时。经过了几百年，古埃及人把这两种意义都扔掉了，图案只代表一个单独的字母，即“S”。我举一个简单的句子来说明我讲的意思。这里有一个现代的英文句子，用古埃及文字表达如下：

图案 或者表示长在你脸上、让你能够看见大千世界的圆圆的东西（眼睛），或者代表“我”（I），也就是那个正在说话的人。

图案 或者表示一种采蜜的昆虫（蜜蜂），或者代表动词“是”（to be）。最后，它变成了“成为”（be—come）或“举止”（be—have）之类动词的前缀。在这个句子中，紧随其后的图案为 ，它的意思是“树叶”（leaf）、“离开”（leave）或“存在”（lieve），这三个词的发音相同。

接下来的图案又是“眼睛”，前面已经讲过它的意思。

最后，你遇上了图案 它是一只长颈鹿。这个词属于古代埃及图像语言保留的一部分，而象形文字就是从这种古老的图像语言中发展而来的。

现在，你可以根据读音很容易的读出这句用象形文字写的话。

“我相信我看见了一只长颈鹿。”（I believe I saw a giraffe.）

发明这种象形文字体系后，古埃及人又用了数千年的时间不断完善它，直到他们能够用它记录任何想表达的东西。他们用这种文字告知朋友消息，记录商业帐目，描述自己国家的历史，以便后人能从过去的失误中汲取教训。

第五章 尼罗河河谷

人类文明发源于尼罗河河谷

人类的历史也是一部人们四处觅食、逃避饥饿的记录。哪里食物丰足，人们就迁徙到哪里去安家。

尼罗河河谷肯定在很早的时期就已名声在外。从非洲内陆、从阿拉伯沙漠、从亚洲西部，人们成群结队地涌入埃及，分享那里富饶的农田。这些外来者组成了一个新的种族，称自己为“雷米”或“人们”，正如我们有时称美洲为“上帝的国土一样”。他们有理由感激命运之神把他们带到了这块狭长的河谷地带。每年夏季，泛滥的尼罗河将两岸变成浅湖；洪水退去，留下几英寸厚的肥沃黏土，覆盖着所有的农田和牧场。

在埃及，仁慈的尼罗河替代了大量的人力，使人类历史上第一批大城市的居民得以养活。当然，并不是所有的耕地都位于河谷地带。可通过一个由许多小运河及长等吊桶构成的复杂提水系统，河水从河面被引至堤岸的最高处，再由一个更精密的灌溉沟渠网，将水分配到各处的农田。

史前人类通常要1天劳动16个小时，为自己的家人和部落成员寻找食物。可埃及的农民和城市居民却拥有一定的闲暇时间。他们把这些空余时间用于制作许多仅具装饰性而毫无实用价值的东西。不仅如此。有一天，他突然发现自己的脑子能用来想各式各样、稀奇古怪的念头。这些念头与日常的吃饭啊、穿衣啊、睡觉啊、为小孩子找个住处啊都毫无关系。比如星星来自那里？那些电闪雷鸣究竟是谁制造的？是谁使尼罗河水规规矩矩的按时涨落，让日历可以据此制定出来？还有他自己，一个被死亡和疾病团团包围，却同样能感受幸福与欢笑 的奇怪生物，又是谁呢？

他问了许多这样的问题，有人则恳切地走上前来，尽其所能地加以解答。古埃及人把这些负责回答问题的人称为“祭司”，他们是思想的守护者，倍受一般老百姓的尊重。他们学识渊博，被委以用文字书写历史的神圣职务。他们懂得，人不能只考虑眼前的利益，这是大有害处的。他们将人们关注的目光引向来世。到那时，人的灵魂将居住在西部的群山之外，并将向威力无穷、掌管生死的大神奥赛西斯汇报自己前世的作为，神则根据他们的德行做出裁决。事实上，祭司们过分强调在大神奥赛西斯与艾西斯国土里的来世生活了，这使得古埃及人将此生仅仅当作是为来世所做的短暂准备，把富饶而生机勃勃的尼罗河谷变成了一块奉献给死者的国土。

很奇怪的是，古埃及人渐渐相信：一个人如果失去了今世的寄身之躯，他的灵魂也就不可能进入奥赛西斯的国土。因此当人一死，他的亲属们马上便对其尸体进行处理，涂上香料和药物防腐。然后，放在氧化钠溶液里浸泡数星期，再填以树脂。在波斯文里，树脂读作“木米乃”（Mumiai），因此经过防腐处理的尸体便被称为“木乃伊”（Mummy）。木乃伊用特制的亚麻布层层包裹起来，放在事先准备好的特制棺材中，运往死者最后的安居之所。不过，埃及人的坟墓倒是像一个真正的家，墓室里摆放着家具和乐器（以打发等待进入奥赛西斯国土的沉闷岁月），还有厨师、面包师和理发师的小雕像环立四周（这样墓室的主人就能体面地梳洗、进食，不至于胡子拉茬的四处乱走）。

最初，这些坟墓是建在西部山脉的岩石里面，随着埃及人向北迁移，他们不得不在沙漠里为死者建造坟墓。不过，沙漠里充斥着凶险的野兽和同样凶险的盗墓贼。他们闯进墓室，搬动木乃伊，窃走随葬的珠宝。为防止这种亵渎死者的行为发生，古埃及人在死者的坟墓之上建起小石冢。后来，随着富人们相互攀比，石冢被越建越高，大家都争着要建最高的石冢。创造最高纪录的是公元前 13 世纪的埃及国王胡夫法老，也就是希腊人所说的芝奥普斯王。他的皇陵被希腊人称为金字塔（在古埃及文里，“高”为 Pir- ern-us），高达 500 多英尺。

胡夫金字塔占地 13 英亩，其占地面积相当于基督教最大建筑圣彼得教堂的 3 倍。在 20 多年的漫长时间里，10 余万奴隶马不停蹄地从尼罗河对岸搬运石材，将其运过河（他们是怎样完成这项不可思议的工作的，我们仍不知道），再有条不紊地将巨石拖过宽阔的沙漠，最后将其吊装到适当的位置。胡夫法老的建筑师和工程师们异常出色地完成了工作。一直到今天，虽然几千吨巨石从各个方向经历了长达数千年的重压，但是通往老陵墓中心的狭长过道丝毫未曾变形。

第六章 埃及的故事

埃及的盛衰

尼罗河是人类的好友，可有时候，它又像一位严厉的监工。它教会了生活在两岸的人们“协作劳动”的艺术。他们依赖彼此合作的力量，一起建造灌溉沟渠，修筑防洪堤坝。这样一来，他们也学会了如何与自己的邻人和睦相处。这种互利互惠的联系很容易发展成了一个有组织的国家。

后来，有一个精明强干的人，他的权力和威望逐渐膨胀，超过了所有的邻居们。这个人不但顺理成章的成为了社区的领袖，而且当嫉妒的西亚邻居入侵这个富饶河谷时，他还担当了抵御外敌的军事首脑。到后来，他终于变成了人们的国王，统治着从地中海沿岸到西部山脉的广袤土地。

不过，古埃及法老（法老一词意为“住在大宫殿里的贵人”）的种种政治冒险事业，很少让那些勤劳的农夫们感兴趣。只要不被强征超过合理限度的赋税，只要不加重过分繁重的劳役，他们就愿意像敬爱大神奥赛西斯一样，接受法老们的统治。

可一旦某个外族入侵者闯入，剥夺掉他们的一切，情况便会变得很悲惨。经过 2000 年的独立之后，一个名为希克索斯的野蛮的阿拉伯游牧部落闯入了埃及，统治了尼罗河河谷达 500 年之久。希克索斯人横征暴敛，极不受欢迎。同样不受欢迎的还有希伯来人（犹太人）。他们经长期流浪，穿过沙漠来到埃及的歌珊地定居。当埃及人丧失独立的时候，他们却帮助外国入侵者，充当入侵者的税吏和官员，深为埃及人所憎。

公元前 1700 年后不久，底比斯的人民发动起义。经过长期的斗争，希克索斯人被逐出尼罗河谷，埃及重新获得了独立。

1000 年之后，当亚述人征服整个西亚时，埃及沦为了沙达纳帕卢斯帝国的一部分。公元前 7 世纪，埃及再度成为一个独立的国家，接受居住在尼罗河三角洲萨伊斯城的国王的统治。但在公元前 525 年，波斯国王甘

比西斯占领了埃及。到公元前 4 世纪，当亚历山大大帝征服波斯时，埃及也随之成为了马其顿的一个行省。亚历山大死后，他的一位将军自立为新埃及之王，建都亚历山大城，开创了托勒密王朝。埃及又一次获得了名义上的独立。

公元前 39 年，罗马人来了。最后一代埃及君主，艳后克娄帕特拉竭尽全力挽救自己的国家。她的美貌和领力倾倒了罗马的将军们，其威力甚于数个埃及军团。她先后使罗马征服者恺撒大帝及安东尼将军拜倒在她脚下，靠美色维持着自己的统治。可在公元前 30 年，恺撒的侄子兼继承人奥古斯都大帝在亚历山大城登陆。他不是像自己过世的叔叔一样拜倒在这位妖艳女王的裙下，而是毫不犹豫地歼灭了埃及军队。他饶过克娄帕特拉一命，打算把她作为战利品之一，在返回罗马城的凯旋仪式上游街，去供罗马市民欣赏。克娄帕特拉知悉这一计划后，便服毒自杀了。埃及从此变成了罗马的一个省。

第七章 美索不达米亚

美索不达米亚——东方文明的第二个中心

现在，我将带你到最雄伟的金字塔之巅，让你想象自己拥有一双鹰一般锐利的眼睛。你将目光指向遥远的东方，越过沙漠的漫漫黄沙，你将看见一块绿色的国土在闪烁微光，那是位于两条大河之间的一个河谷，《旧约全书》曾提到的乐土。这块充满神秘的仙境被希腊人称为“美索不达米亚”，意为“两河之间的国度”。这两条河分别叫“幼发拉底河”（巴比伦人称其为普拉图河）和“底格里斯河”（也叫迪克拉特河）。它们发源于亚美尼亚白雪皑皑的群山之中，就是挪亚逃难途中曾驻脚休息的地方。然后，它们缓慢的流过南部的平原，抵达波斯湾泥泞的海岸。它们养育着两岸的人民，将西亚干旱的沙漠地区变成了肥沃的花园。

尼罗河谷吸引人们，是因为它供给了丰盛的食物。这块“两河之间的国土”同样因此倍受青睐。它是一块充满希望的土地，来自北部高山的居民和游荡在南部荒漠的部落都曾试图独占它，拒绝外人的进入。山区居民与沙漠游牧部落的长期争夺招致了无休无止的战争，只有最强悍、最聪明的人才能存活下来。这也解释了为什么美索不达米亚会成为一个最强壮种族的家园，他们何以能创造一个在各方面都足与古埃及比肩的伟大文明。



第八章 苏美尔人

苏美尔人用刻在泥版上的楔形文字给我们讲述了闪米特人的大熔炉——亚述和巴比伦王国的故事

15 世纪是一个地理大发现的世纪。哥伦布想要找到一条通往香料群岛的水路，却意料之外地来到了美洲新大陆。一位奥地利主教出资装备了一支探险队，向东方去探寻莫斯科大公的家园，却无功而返。直到一代人之后，西方人才首次造访了莫斯科。与此同时，一个名为巴贝罗的威尼斯人考察了西亚的古迹，并带回有关一种神秘文字的报告。这种神秘的文字有的刻在伊朗谢拉兹地区许多庙宇的石壁上，更多的是刻在无数烘干的泥版上。

不过，此时的欧洲正忙于许多别的事情。直到 18 世纪末，第一批“楔形文字”泥版（所以如此称呼，是因为该文字的字母呈楔状）才由一个叫尼布尔的丹麦勘测员带回欧洲。极富耐心的德国教师格罗特芬德花了 30 年时间，破译了前面的四个字母，分别是 D，A，R 及 SH，合起来正是波斯国王大流士的名字。又过了 20 年，英国官员罗林森发现了著名的贝希通岩壁换形文字，这才为我们打开了译解这种西亚文字的大门。

与破译楔形文字的难题相比，商博良的工作还算是轻松的。古埃及人至少运用了图像。可美索不达米亚最早的居民苏美尔人，他们想出了把文字刻在泥版上的主意，决定完全放弃象形文字的路子，逐渐发展出一种全新的 V 形文字系统。相较之下，你很难看出它与象形文字之间有任何联系。我举几个简单的例子，你就能明白我说的意思。

最初，将一颗“星星”用钉子刻在砖上，它的形状如下：。不过，这个图案太繁琐了。不久之后，当把“天空”的意思加在“星星”上时，该图案便被简化成：。它当然更难让人看明白了。同样，一头牛的写法从变为，一条鱼从变成。太阳最初是一个平面的圆圈，后来变为。如果我们现在仍然使用苏美尔人的写法，一条鱼看起来就会是

这种记录思想的文字系统看上去相当复杂，可在 3000 多年的时间里，苏美尔人、亚述人、巴比伦人、波斯人以及所有那些曾进占两河之间富饶土地的种族，无一例外地使用过这种文字。

美索不达米亚的故事交织着连绵不断的征战与杀伐。最早，苏美尔人从北部来到这里，他们是住在山区的白种人，惯于在山顶之上祭祖他们的众神。进入平原地区后，他们开始堆造人工的山丘，并在山丘顶上修建祭坛。他们不会建造楼梯，因此用环绕高塔的倾斜长廊代之。现代的工程师借用了这个创意，正如我们今天的大火车站，由上升的回廊与楼层之间连接起来的。我们可能还借用过苏美尔人的其它创意，只是不自知而已。后来，苏美尔人被占领两河流域的其他种族同化，再也找不到踪迹，只有他们建造的高塔依然屹立在美索不达米亚的废墟之中。犹太人在流浪途中经过巴比伦时，看见了这些宏伟的建筑，便把它们称为“巴别塔”（通天之塔）。

苏美尔人于公元前 40 世纪进入美索不达米亚，不久后便为阿卡德人所征服。阿卡德人是阿拉伯沙漠中讲同样方言的诸多部落的一支，这些部族被通称为“闪米特人”，因为他们相信自己是挪亚 3 个儿子之一的“闪”的直系后裔。又过了 1000 年，阿卡德人被迫臣服于另一个闪米特沙漠部落阿莫赖特人的统治。阿莫赖特人拥有一位伟大的国王——汉谟拉比。他在圣城巴比伦为自己建造了一座华丽的宫殿，并向其子民颁布了一套法律（汉谟拉比法典），使巴比伦成为古代世界管理最完善的帝国。接着，《旧约全书》曾记述过的赫梯人掠夺了这块富饶的河谷，他们把一切不能带走的东西通通摧毁。没过多久，他们被同样信仰沙漠大神阿舒尔的亚述人所征服。亚述人以首都尼尼微为中心，建立了一个囊括全部西亚与埃及的恐怖帝国，并向统治下的无数种族征收赋税。到公元前 7 世纪，同为闪米特部族的迦勒底人重建了巴比伦，使它成为当时世界上最重要的首都。迦勒底人最著名的国王尼布甲尼撒鼓励科学研究，我们当代的天文学和数学就是从迦勒底人发现的最基本的原理中发展而来的。

公元前 538 年，一支野蛮的波斯游牧部落侵占了这块古老的土地，推翻了迦勒底人的帝国。200 年后，亚历山大帝击败了他们，把这块富饶的河谷、众多闪米特部族的大熔炉，变成了马其顿的一个行省。随后又来了罗马人，罗马人之后是土耳其人。而美索不达米亚，这个世界文明的第二中心，终于沦为了一片广漠的荒原。只有那些巨大的土丘，在述说着这块古老土地昔日的光荣与沧桑。

第九章 摩西

犹太民族的领袖摩西的故事

公元前 2000 年的某一天，一支小而不重要的闪米特游牧部落踏上了流浪的旅程。他们离开位于幼法拉底河口的旧家园乌尔，想在巴比伦国王的领土内找一块新的牧场。国王的士兵驱赶他们，他们不得不继续向西流浪，希望找到一块无主的土地，以便安营扎寨。

这支游牧部落被称为希伯来人，我们通常叫他们犹太人。他们辗转而行，经过长时间的悲惨漂泊之后，终于在埃及得到了一小块栖身之地。他们在埃及居住了 500 多年，一直与当地居民和睦相处。后来当接纳他们的国家被希克索斯人征服时（参见“埃及的故事”），他们转而竭力为外国侵略者效劳，总算使自己的牧场得以保全。经过长期的独立战争，埃及人将希克索斯人赶出了尼罗河谷。此时，犹太人的厄运临头了。他们被贬为奴隶，被迫在皇家大道和金字塔工地上像牛马一样干活。并且，由于边境上有埃及士兵的严密看守，犹太人根本不可能逃出埃及。历经多年的磨难，终于有一位名叫摩西的年轻犹太人带领族人逃出了苦海。摩西曾常年居住在沙漠，那里的牧民遵循祖先的传统，拒绝被外国文明的安逸奢华所污染。摩西很欣赏祖先们的质朴美德，决意唤回族人对它们的热爱。

他成功地躲过了埃及追兵，带领族人来到西奈山脚下的平原中心。他曾在漫长而孤单的沙漠生活中，学会了敬畏闪电与风暴之神的力量。这位神统治着天庭，牧人的生命、取火和呼吸都有赖于他。此神是西亚广受崇拜的众神之一，名为耶和华。通过摩西对族人的教诲，耶和华成为了希伯来民族唯一的主宰。

一天，摩西突然离开犹太人的营地不见了，有人传言他是带着两块粗石板出去的。当天下午，乌云蔽日，风暴大作，人们望不见西奈山的山顶。可当摩西返回时，看啊，两块粗石板上已经刻满了耶和华在电闪雷鸣中对以色列民族说的话。从这时起，耶和华被所有犹太人奉为他们命运的最高主宰，唯一的真神。他教犹太人如何按十诫的训示去过圣洁的生活。

摩西带领犹太人继续其穿越沙漠的旅程，人们都跟随他。摩西告诉他们该吃什么，喝什么以及怎样做才能在炎热气候中保持身体健康，他们都一一遵从。经过多年的艰难跋涉，犹太人终于来到一块快乐而富饶的土地。此地名为巴勒斯坦，意思是“皮利斯塔人的国度”。皮利斯塔人属于克里特人的一支，他们被赶出自己的海岛后，就在西亚海岸定居下来。很不幸的是，此时的巴勒斯坦内陆已经被另一支闪米特部族迦南人占据。然而犹太人奋力冲开道路，进入山谷，建立起许多城市。他们修筑了一座敬奉耶和华的宏伟庙宇，并将庙宇所在的城市命名为“耶路撒冷”，意思是“和平之乡”。

至于摩西，此时的他已不再是犹太人的领袖了。他安详地望着远方巴勒斯坦的群山，然后永远闭上了疲倦的双眼。他一直虔诚而勤勉地工作，取悦耶和华。他不仅把族人从外国的奴役中带到了个自由独立的新家园，他还使犹太人成为历史上第一个敬奉唯一神的民族。

第十章 腓尼基人

腓尼基人为我们创造了字母

腓尼基人是犹太人的邻居，同属闪米特部族。在很早的时候，他们沿地中海海岸定居下来。他们修筑了两座防备坚固的城市——提尔和西顿。没用多长时间，他们便垄断了西方海域的贸易。他们的船只定期开往希腊、意大利和西班牙，甚至还冒险地驶过直布罗陀海峡，到锡利群岛采购锡。所到之处，他们建立起一些小型的贸易据点，称为“殖民地”。许多现代城市都起源于腓尼基人建立的小贸易站，比如加的斯和马赛。

腓尼基人买卖有利可图的一切东西，从未觉得良心不安。如果他们的邻居没有夸大其辞，那么腓尼基人就是既不诚实，也不正直的人。他们把装得满满的钱箱当成是所有正派公民的最高理想。事实上，他们极不招人喜欢，也从未交到过朋友。不过，他们给后人留下了一笔极有价值的遗产——他们创造了字母。

腓尼基人当然熟悉苏美尔人发明的楔形文字，不过他们觉得这些歪斜的笔划既笨拙又浪费时间。他们是凡事讲求实际的商人，不肯把大量的时间花在雕刻这些繁琐的字母上。于是他们投入工作，发明了一种大大优于楔形文字的新文字体系。他们从埃及的象形文字中借来几个图案，并简化了数个苏美尔人的楔形文字，以牺牲旧有文字的优美外形为代价，追求书写的速度和效率，终于，他们将数千个不同的文字图案简化成短小而方便的 22 个字母。

后来，这些字母越过爱琴海传入希腊。希腊人为其增添了几个自己创造的字母，并将改进的字母系统带到意大利。罗马人对字母的外形稍加修改，又将它们教给西欧的野蛮部落。这些野蛮人即我们的祖先。这也是本书以起源于腓尼基人的字母文字而非以埃及象形文字或苏美尔人的楔形文字来写作的原因。

第十一章 印欧人

印欧语族的波斯人征服了闪米特人与埃及人

古埃及人、巴比伦人、亚述人及腓尼基人的世界已存在了将近 3000 年。这些河谷地带的古老民族日渐变得衰朽而疲惫。当一支精力焕发新兴民族出现在地平线时，他们便注定了覆灭的命运。我们称这个新民族为“印欧种族”，因为它不仅征服了欧洲，还使自己成为印度的统治者。

和闪米特人一样，这些印欧人属于白种人，但他们说一种全然不同的语言。这种语言被视为所有欧洲语言的共同起源，只有匈牙利语、芬兰语及西班牙北部的巴斯克方言例外。

当我们最早听说他们时，他们已经在里海沿岸居住了许多世纪。但有一天，他们突然收拾好帐篷，开始向北迁移，寻找新的家园。其中的一些人进入了中亚的群山；在环绕伊朗高地的山峰间居住了多个世纪。这也是印欧人被称为亚利安人的原因。其他人则朝着日落的方向前进，最终占据了整个欧洲平原。在讲到希腊和罗马时，我将告诉你这段故事。

现在，我们到了该追随亚利安人的时候了。在他们的伟大导师查拉斯图特拉（又名琐罗亚斯德）的带领下，许多亚利安人离开了山中的家园，沿湍急的印度河而下，一直来到海边。

其他人则宁愿留在西亚的群山中，在此建立了米底亚人和波斯人的半独立社区。这两个民族的名字，都得自于古希腊的史书。在公元前 17 世纪，米底亚人建立起自己的米底亚王国。当安申部落的首领居鲁士成为所有波斯部族的国王时，他消灭了米底亚王国，从此开始四处远征，不久他和他的子孙成为了整个西亚及埃及的无可争议的统治者。

凭着蓬勃的精力，这些印欧种族的波斯人继续向西征战，并连连获胜。不久，他们便与数世纪前迁入欧洲并占据了希腊半岛及爱琴海岛屿的另一个印欧部族发生了严重的冲突。这些冲突导致了希腊和波斯之间的三次著名战争。波斯国王大流士和泽克西斯先后率兵入侵半岛北部，掠夺希腊人的领土，并竭尽全力要在欧洲大陆上得到一个根据地。

可他们最终失败了。雅典的海军战无不胜。通过切断波斯军队的补给线，雅典的水手总是能迫使亚洲人入侵者退回到他们的基地。这是亚洲与欧洲的第一次交锋。一方是古老的导师，一方是年轻气盛的学生。这本书的其它章节还将给你讲述许多东方与西方交手的故事，这种争斗一直持续到现在。

第十二章 爱琴海

爱琴海的人民将亚洲的古老文明带到了蛮荒的欧洲

当海因里希·谢尔曼还是个小孩子的时候，他父亲给他讲了特洛伊的故事。这些故事深深的迷住了他。他从此立下志愿，一旦自己长大，能够离家远行的时候，他将前往希腊去“寻找特洛伊”。尽管谢尔曼的父亲只是梅克伦堡村的一个贫寒的乡村牧师，可这并未使他放弃理想。他知道寻找特洛伊花费不菲，所以决定先挣一笔钱，然后再进行考古挖掘。事实上，他在很短的时间内积攒了一大笔财富，足以装备一支探险队。于是，他启程前往自己认为的特洛伊城旧址，小亚细亚的西北海岸。

在小亚细亚的那块角落里，坐落着一座长满谷物的高丘。据当地的传说，普里阿摩斯王的特洛伊城便埋藏在下面。此时，谢尔曼高涨的情绪超越了他的考古知识，他马上着手挖掘。其热情之高，挖掘速度之快，使他与自己梦寐以求的城市失之交臂。他的壕沟径直穿越了特洛伊城的中心，将他带到了深埋地下的另一座城市的废墟。这座城市比荷马描写的特洛伊城至少要古老 1000 年。如果谢尔曼只找到几把打磨过的石锤或者几个粗陶罐，没人会为此吃惊。人们通常就是将这些器物与在希腊人之前定居此地的史前人类联想在一起的。可事实上，谢尔曼在废墟里发现了做工精美的小雕像、贵重的珠宝和饰有非希腊图案的花瓶。

根据这些发现，谢尔曼大胆提出：距伟大的特洛伊战争 1000 年以前，爱琴海沿岸就居住着一个神秘的种族。他们的文化在许多方面都比入侵他们的国土、摧毁或吸收他们的文明的希腊野蛮部落要优越得多。”谢尔曼的推测最后被证实。

19 世纪 70 年代末，谢尔曼考察了迈锡尼废墟。这些废墟曾让古罗马的旅行指南对其悠久的历史表示过惊叹，更别说现代人了。在一道小圆围墙的方石板下面，谢尔曼再度意外发现了令人惊羡的藏宝库。留下这些宝物的仍是那个早于希腊人 1000 年的神秘种族。他们在希腊海岸到处修筑城市，其城墙高大、厚实、坚固，被古希腊人敬羡地称为“巨人泰坦的作品”。泰坦相传是古代希腊像天神一样的巨人，他常与山峰掷球为戏。

经考古学家一番详细的研究，揭开了笼罩在这些为数众多的遗迹上的神秘面纱。这些早期工艺品的制作者及巨大城堡的建筑师们并非什么魔法师，而是淳朴的水手与商人，他们曾定居在克里特岛和爱琴海的诸多小岛上。他们辛勤坚韧地工作，把爱琴海变成了一个贸易繁忙的商业中心，在高度文明的东方与蛮荒落后的欧洲之间源源不断地交易着商品和物资。

这个繁荣的海岛帝国维持了 1000 多年，发展出高超的工艺。其中最重要的城市克诺索斯位于克里特岛北部海岸。它在卫生条件和舒适程度方面，达到了相当现代化的水准。宫殿的排水设施精良，住宅配有取暖的火炉。另外，克诺索斯人还是历史上第一个把浴缸引入日常生活的民族。克里特国王的宫殿以其蜿蜒盘旋的楼梯和宽敞高大的宴会厅而蜚声于世。宫殿下面建有储藏葡萄酒和橄榄油的地窖，每个都硕大无朋，给第一批前来参观的古希腊游客留下过深刻印象。于是，他们据此创造了克里特“迷宫”的故事。迷宫常被我们用来形容一座有着许多复杂通道的建筑物，一旦其前门在我们身后重重地台上时，我们将惊恐地发现自己找不到其它的出口。

然而这个伟大岛国最后究竟发生了什么，是何人何事导致了它突然的衰落？本人对此也一无所知。

克里特人精通书写术，可迄今为止，还没人能破译他们留下的碑文。因此，我们无法熟悉其历史，只能从爱琴海人存留的遗迹中，推测他们英雄业绩的点点滴滴。那些废墟表明，爱琴海人的世界是一夜之间被来自欧洲北部平原的野蛮民族攻陷的。如果猜得没错，这个摧毁克里特人和爱琴海文明的野蛮种族就是刚刚占领亚得里亚海与爱琴海之间那个岩石半岛的游牧部族，也即我们称呼的古希腊人。

第十三章 希腊人

印欧语系的赫楞人占据了希腊半岛

在历史上的某一天，当一支印欧种族的小游牧部落离开多瑙河畔的家园，向南找寻新鲜牧场时，金字塔已经屹立 1000 年了，正开始显出衰败的征兆，而巴比伦的睿智帝王汉谟拉比，此时也已长眠于地下数个世纪。这支游牧部落称自己为赫楞人，即希腊人的祖先。根据古老的神话，很久以前，这个世界的人类曾一度变得异常邪恶。居住在奥林匹斯山的众神之王宙斯对此大发雷霆之怒，以洪水冲毁了整个尘世，杀死所有人类，只有狄优克里安和他的妻子皮拉得以幸免。赫楞即狄优克里安与皮拉的儿子。

我们对这些早期的赫楞人了解不多。记述雅典衰落的历史学家修昔底德曾以鄙夷的口气谈起过自己的这些先祖，说他们“不值一提”。他说的多半是实话。这些赫楞人粗野无礼，过着牲畜一般的生活。他们对敌人异常残忍，常常将他们的尸体扔给凶猛的牧羊狗分食。他们毫不尊重其他民族的权利，大肆残杀希腊半岛的土著皮拉斯基人，掠夺其农庄和牲畜，并将他们的妻女卖为奴隶。亚该亚人曾充当赫楞人的前锋，引导他们进入塞萨利和伯罗奔尼撒的山区，于是赫楞人写了很多颂歌来赞美亚该亚人”的勇气。

不过在各处的高山顶上，他们也看见了爱琴海人的城堡。他们没敢对之下手。爱琴海人使用金属刀剑与长矛，赫楞人知道，凭自己手里的粗陋石斧，绝对是讨不到任何便宜的。在许多世纪里，他们就这样四处游荡，往来于一个又一个山谷与山腰。后来，等全部的土地都被他们占领，他们便定居下来作了农民。

这就是希腊文明的开始。这些希腊农民住在看得见爱琴海人殖民地的地方，终于忍不住好奇心，去拜访了他们的高傲邻居。他们发现，原来自己可以从这些居住在迈锡尼和蒂林斯的高大石墙后面的人们那里学到许多有用的东西。

他们是绝顶聪明的学生。没用多久，便学会了如何使用爱琴海人从巴比伦和底比斯买回的那些奇怪的铁制武器，也懂得了航海的奥秘。于是，他们开始自己建造小船，出海航行。

当他们学会了爱琴海人的所有技艺，便掉转矛头，把自己的老师赶回了爱琴海岛屿。不久，他们冒险渡海，征服了爱琴海上的所有城市。最后，在公元前 13 世纪，他们洗劫了克诺索斯，将其夷为平地。就这样，在赫楞人初次登上历史舞台 10 世纪后，他们成为了整个希腊、爱琴海和小亚细亚沿岸地区的无可争议的主人。公元前 11 世纪，古老文明的最后一个伟大贸易中心特洛伊被希腊人摧毁。欧洲历史于此便真正开始了。

第十四章 古希腊城邦

古希腊的城市其实是独立的国家

我们现代人总喜欢“大”这个字眼。我们为自己属于世界上“最大”的国家、拥有“最大”的军队、出产“最大”的柑橘和马铃薯而自豪不已。我们喜欢住在数百万人口的“大城市”，死后被葬在“全国最大的公墓”。

如果一个古希腊公民听见我们诸如此类的说法，他很可能一头雾水，根本不明白我们的意思。“万事追求适度”，这是他们对理想生活的准则。单纯的数量与体积的庞大根本引不起他们的兴趣。并且，这种对适度与节制的热爱并非特定场合的空洞说辞，它渗入了古希腊人由生到死的全部日常生活。它是他们文学的一个组成部分；它使他们造出了小巧而完美的神庙；它在男人穿着的服装和女人佩戴的手镯里，也表现出自己的特性；它还随公众来到剧场，使他们对任何胆敢违反高雅趣味和优良理性的剧作家报以一片嘘声。

希腊人甚至要他们的政治家和最受欢迎的运动员也具备这种平衡与适度感。当一位著名的长跑手来到斯巴达，吹嘘自己能够用单脚长时间站立，比希腊的任何人都来得久，这时人们会不留情面地把他赶出城市，因为任何一只普通的鹅都能做到他引以为豪的“壮举”。

“那很好啊，”你会说，“注重适度与完美当然是一种优秀的德性。可是为什么在古代只有古希腊人一个民族发展了这种素质呢？”作为对你问题的回答，我必须讲一讲古希腊人的生活状态。

在埃及或者美索不达米亚，人们仅仅是一个神秘莫测的最高统治者的“臣民”。这位统治者住在遥远的宫廷里面，统治着他庞大的帝国。他的绝大部分臣民一生都未见过他一面。可希腊人正好相反：他们是分属数百个小型“城邦”的“自由公民”。这些城邦中最大的，其人口也超不过一个现代的大型村庄。当一个住在乌尔的农民说自己是巴比伦人时，他的意思是，他属于数百万向当时正好是西亚统治者的国王纳税进贡的大众之一。可当一个希腊人自豪地称自己是雅典人或底比斯人，他谈到的是那个既是他的家园又是他的国家的小城镇。那里不承认有什么最高的统治者，一切由集市上的人们说了算。

对希腊人来说，祖国就是他出生的地方，是他在雅典卫城的石墙间玩捉迷藏游戏而度过童年的地方，是他与许多男孩女孩一起长大成人的地方。他对他们每一个人的熟悉就如同你知道班级里所有同学的绰号一样。他的祖国是他的父母亲埋骨于此的圣洁土壤。它高大坚固的城墙庇佑着他的小屋，让他的妻女能安乐无悠地生活。他的整个世界不过是四、五英亩岩石丛生的土地。现在你明白没有，这样的生活环境是如何影响一个人的所作所为、所思所想？巴比伦、亚述、埃及的人们仅仅是广大贱民的一分子，就像一滴水消失在大河里；可希腊人却从未失去与周围环境最切近的感触，他从来就是那座人人相熟的小镇的一员。他感觉到，那些聪明睿智的邻居们时刻都在关注着他。无论他做什么事情——写一出戏剧、雕一座大理石塑像或者谱几首曲子，他都不能忘记一点：自己的努力将呈现在故乡所有这些生而自由的公民们眼前，接受他们内行的评判。这种意识驱迫着他，使他不得不努力追求完美。而根据他从童年开始便接受的教导：缺少适度 and 节制，完美便如镜中花、水中月，永不能企及。

在这所严格的学校里，希腊人在许多方面都有卓越表现。他们创造了新型的政治体制，发明了新的文学样式，发展出新的艺术理念，其业绩是我们现代人永难超越的。令人惊叹的是，他们创造了奇迹的场所，尽管是些相当于现代城市四、五个街区大小的小村庄。

看看最后发生了什么吧！

公元前4世纪，马其顿的亚历山大大帝征服了全世界。一俟战事完毕，亚历山大就决意将真正的希腊精神传播给全人类。他将希腊精神从那些小村庄、小城市里带出来，努力让它们在自己新建立的辽阔帝国里开花结果。可一旦远离朝夕相处的熟悉庙宇，闻不到故乡弯曲的小巷里的亲切声响与味道，希腊人似乎一夜之间便丧失了激发他们创造出伟大作品的生气勃勃的欢乐与良好的均衡感。他们的手和脑子失去了灵气，沦为廉价的艺匠，仅仅满足于二流的拙劣品。

从古希腊的小城邦丧失独立；被迫成为一个伟大帝国的属地那天开始，古老的希腊精神即随之死去了。它永远地死去，再未曾复活过来。

第十五章 古希腊的自治制度

古希腊人是历史上最早进行自治实验的民族

一开始，所有希腊人贫福均等。人人都有一定数量的牛羊。泥糊的小屋就是自己的宫殿。平时，人们按自己的意愿行事，一旦有重要的事务需公众讨论，所有市民便聚集在市场上议事。人们选出一位众望所归的老人作为会议主席，他的职责就是保证每一个人都能平等得到表达意见的机会。当有战事发生，一位精力特别充沛且自信心极强的村民便会被推举为军事领袖，和选举他为统帅、自愿交给他指挥权，当然，人们同时也保留着等危机过去使解除他职务的权利。

可渐渐地，小村庄发展为城市。有些人工作勤奋，有些人好逸恶劳；有些人交了霉运，可另有些人却靠欺诈手段发了财。于是，整个城市不再由许多财富均等的市民组成。相反，城市的居民变成了一小群富人和一大群穷人。

同时还发生了另一个变化那些困带领人们取得战争胜利而被众人心甘情愿推为“首脑”或“国王”的老式军事统帅从历史舞台上销声匿迹了。他的位置被一群贵族占据。他们是在社会演进的过程中攫取了超额的土地与财产，是赫然得势的富人阶级。

这些贵族享有许多普通自由民享受不到的特权。他们能够到地中海东部的集市去购买最精良的武器。他们拥有大量闲暇时间来操练搏击之术。他们住在防御坚固的大宅子里，并花钱雇佣士兵为他们作战。为决定该由谁来统治城市，他们之间不断发生争吵。在争斗中获胜的贵族于是僭夺王位，其地位超越所有的邻人，并统治着整个城市，直到某一天他被另一个野心勃勃的贵族杀掉或驱逐。

这样一位靠手下士兵保护的国王通常被称为“暴君”。在公元前7到6世纪期间，几乎每一个希腊城邦都由这样一位暴君统治着。顺便提一句，他们中的许多人碰巧也会是特别有才干的。可到头来，这种统治终于发展到让人无法忍受的地步，于是出现了许多革新的尝试。世界上最早的民主制度，便是从这些革新的努力中成长起来的。

公元前7世纪初，雅典人决定废除因袭以久的僭主制度，赋予为数众多的自由民们以发言权，让他们参与政府的管理。这种权利在其亚该亚人的先祖时代就一直存在。他们让一位名叫德拉古的人制定一套法律，以保护穷人免遭富人的侵害。德拉古立即投入工作。很不幸的是，他是职业律师出身，与普通人民的日常生活格格不入。在他看来，一项罪行就是一项罪行，无论轻重，都应受到严厉惩处。等他完成工作后，雅典人发现德拉古法典显得过分严苛了，根本不可能付诸实施。这套新的法律把偷盗一个苹果也定为死罪，照此施行，人们将没有足够的绳子来绞死所有罪犯。

雅典人于是去寻找一位更有同情心的改革者。最终，他们找到了一个做这项工作的最佳人选。他名叫梭伦，来自一个贵族家庭。他曾漫游世界上的各个地方，考察过许多国家的政治体制。经过缜密的研究工作，梭伦给雅典人拿出了一套法典，它极好地体现了作为希腊人的“适度”原则。梭伦尽力在改善农民状况的同时，又小心翼翼地不触犯富人的利益，因为富人作为主要的兵源，对城市是极有用处的。为保护穷人阶级免遭法官们滥用权力的危害（法官总是从贵族阶级中推选出来，因为他们可以不拿薪水），梭伦特别拟订了一项条款，让利益受损的市民有权向一个由30位雅典公民组成的陪审团申述。

最重要的是，梭伦通过法律的形式，迫使每一个普通自由民关注并参与城市的事务。现在，雅典人再不能呆在家里，托辞说，“哦，今天我太忙了。”或者“老天下雨，我最好是别出去。”每一个公民都应该履行其分内的义务，出席市议会的集会，并为城市的繁荣与安全出一份力。在很多时候，这个公民自治的政府效率低下，远远说不上是成功的，有太多的不着边际的空谈充斥其间。为争名夺利，常常发生相互诋毁与中伤的情形。可至少有一点是好的：它教会了希腊人独立自主，依靠自己的力量获得自由。

第十六章 古希腊人的生活

古希腊人是如何生活的

我想你们会问，如果古希腊人总是一听到召唤，就赶去集市讨论城邦的事务，他们怎会有时间来照顾家庭和自己的生意？在这一章，我会给你们解释这个问题。

对于政府的所有事务，希腊的民主制度只承认一类市民拥有参与的权利，那就是自由民。而每一个希腊城市都是由少数生来自由的市民、大量的奴隶和零星的外国人组成的。只在少数时候（通常是发生战争，需要征召兵员时），希腊人才愿意给予他们所谓的“野蛮人”即外国人以公民权。但这种情形纯属例外。公民资格是一个出身问题。你是一个雅典人，因为你的父亲和祖父在你之前就是雅典人。除此而外，无论你是一个多么出色的士兵或商人，只要你的父母不是雅典人，你终其一生都只能是住在雅典的“外国人”。

因此，只要不是由一位“国王”或“暴君”统治时，希腊的各个城市便归这个自由民阶层管理，并为其利益服务。这种体制，如果离开了一个数量六、七倍于自由民的奴隶阶层，根本就无法运转。奴隶为有幸成为自由民的古希腊主人承担了种种繁重劳动，而现代人却不得不为这些养家糊口的工作，付出他们大部分的时间与精力。

奴隶们把整个城市的烹饪、烤面包、制作蜡烛等工作全部承包下来。他们是理发师、木匠、珠宝制作工、小学教师和图书管理员。他们负责看商店、照管工厂。主人们则要么出席公共会议，讨论是战是和的重大问题；要么前往剧院，观赏埃斯库罗斯的最新悲剧；要么聆听对于欧里庇得斯的革命性观念的激烈讨论，因为这位剧作家竟敢对大神宙斯的威严表示怀疑。

事实上，古代的雅典酷似一个现代俱乐部。所有的自由民都是世袭的会员，而所有的奴隶则是世袭的仆人，随时准备听候主人的吩咐。当然，能成为这个组织的会员倒是件很愉快的事情。

不过当我们谈到“奴隶”一词时，我并非说他们就是你在《汤姆叔叔的小屋》里读到过的那种人。当然，每天替人耕田种地的日子确实不舒服，可那些家道中落的自由民们也不得不受人雇佣，在富人的农庄作帮工，他们的生活其实跟奴隶一样悲惨。而且在城市里，许多奴隶甚至比下层自由民更富有。对“万事追求适度”的古希腊人来说，他们宁愿以温和的方式对待奴隶。之后的古罗马人要冷酷得多。罗马人的奴隶不仅如同现代工厂里的机器，没有丝毫的权利，而且常常因微小的过失，便被主人投入鲁栏喂野兽。

古希腊人视奴隶制为一种必要的制度。缺少这种制度，任何城市都不可能成为文明人舒适的家园。

奴隶们也从事像今天由商人和专业人员担任的复杂工作。至于那些占据了母亲大部分时间，并让你父亲下班之后愁眉不展的家务劳动，古希腊人则对之不以为然。他们深谙闲适生活的价值，通过居住在最为简朴的环境里，他们把家务劳动降到了最低的程度。

首先，古希腊人的房屋非常简朴。甚至富人们都居住在土坯的大房子里。现代工人认为是应该享受的那些舒适条件，在他们的屋子里可是一样没有。希腊人的屋子由四面墙和一个屋顶组成，有一扇通向街道的门，但没有窗户。厨房、起居室、卧室环绕着一个露天庭院，庭院里有一座喷泉或是一些小型雕塑，还有几株植物，使整个环境显得宽敞明亮。如果不下雨或者天气不太冷，一家人就生活在庭院里。在院子的一角，有厨师（是奴隶）在烹调食物；在院子的另一角，有家庭教师（也是奴隶）在教孩子们背诵希腊字母和乘法表；在又一个角落，屋子的女主人和裁缝（也是奴隶）在缝补男主人的外套。女主人少有出门，因为在古希腊，一个已婚妇女经常出现在大街上，这被认为是不体面的事情。在紧挨门后的一间小办公室里，男主人正细心查看着农庄监工（也是奴隶）刚刚送过来的帐目。

当晚饭准备好时，全家人便围坐在一起就餐。饭菜很简单，不用多长时间便吃好了。古希腊人似乎把饮食当成一件无法避免的罪恶，不像娱乐，既能打发无聊的时光，又能治情益智。他们主要吃面包，喝葡萄酒，外加少许的肉类和蔬菜。他们只在没有别的饮料可喝时，才饮水，因为他们认为喝水不利于健康。他们喜欢请朋友一起进餐，但在我们现代人宴会上常常出现的胡吃海塞、纵情狂饮的情形，只能令古希腊人感到作呕。他们喜欢在餐桌上聚集一堂，主要是为了更风趣的交谈及品味美酒饮料。不过，他们懂得节制的美德，喝得酩酊大醉是遭人蔑视的行为。

古希腊人餐桌上盛行的简朴之风，同样表现在他们对衣饰的选择上。他们热爱干净，修饰整洁，头发和胡子梳理得有条不紊。他们常常锻炼，比如去体育馆游泳，比如练习田径，好让自己感觉强壮。他们从不追赶亚洲的流行式样，穿那些色彩艳丽、图案古怪的服装。男人们通常着一袭白袍，看上去就像现代身披蓝色披肩的意大利官员一样时髦而有风度。

当然，他们也喜欢自己的妻子戴点珠宝首饰，可他们觉得在公众场合炫耀财富是相当庸俗的行为。所以一旦女人们离家外出，她们都尽量不惹人注目。

简而言之，古希腊的生活不仅节制，而且简朴。椅子、桌子、书籍、房子、马车等等“物件”，总会占据其拥有者大量的时间，最终，它们会使占有它们的人沦为自己的奴隶。他不得不耗神费力去照顾它们，擦拭、打磨、抛光。而古希腊人首先想要的是“自由”，是身体和心灵的双重解放。所以他们将自己的日常需要压缩至最低的程度，以便他们维持精神的真正自由。

第十七章 古希腊的戏剧

人类第一种公共娱乐形式——戏剧的起源

从很早开始，古希腊人便开始采集歌颂其英勇先祖的诗歌。这些诗歌讲述了他们的先祖把皮拉斯基人逐出希腊半岛以及摧毁特洛伊城的丰功伟绩。行吟诗人走村串户，当众朗诵这些诗歌，每个人都出来聆听。可是，作为我们当代日常生活中必不可少的娱乐形式之一的戏剧，却不是起源于这些当众吟诵的史诗。它的起源奇妙无比，因此我想单独用一章的篇幅来给你讲述这个故事。

古希腊人向来喜欢游行。每年他们都会举行盛大游行来赞美与敬奉酒神狄俄尼索斯。希腊人好饮葡萄酒（他们认为水的用处仅止于游泳与航海），因此这位酒神大受欢迎。我想，如果我们这个时代有汽水饮料之神，他也会受到同样的待遇。

希腊人认为这位酒神是住在葡萄园里的，终日与一群名为萨堤罗斯的半人半羊的怪物一起，过着快乐而放纵的生活。因此，参加游行的人们惯常披着羊皮，发出咩咩的叫声，像真正的公羊。在希腊语里，山羊写法为“tragos”，而歌手则拼作“oidos”。由此，学山羊发出咩咩之声的歌手就被称为山羊歌手。这一奇怪的称呼后来演变为现代名词——

“悲剧”（tyagedy）。从戏剧的角度来说，“悲剧”意味着一出结局悲惨的戏，就如同喜剧（原意是歌咏、欢快、幽默之事）以大团圆而收场。

你肯定会问，这些化装成野山羊的歌手们嘈杂的合唱，究竟是如何发展成在世界各剧院上演 2000 年而不衰的高贵悲剧的呢？

山羊歌手和哈姆雷特之间的联系，其实非常简单。我马上就向你说明。

起初，山羊歌手的咩咩合唱很让人着迷，吸引了大批的观众站在街道两旁围观，笑声不断。可没过多久，这种叫声便让人厌烦了。希腊人把沉闷乏味视为与丑陋、疾患同等的罪恶，他们强烈要求合唱队拿出一些更吸引人的东西。后来，一位来自阿提卡地方伊卡里亚村的青年诗人，他想出了一个颇富创意的新点子。他让合唱队的一名成员步出队列，与走在游行队伍前列的首席排箫乐师对话。这位合唱队队员获得了离开行列的特权，他一边说话，一般挥舞双臂，做出种种手势（这意味着，当别的人站在一旁唱颂的时候，他却是在“表演”）。他大声问出许多问题，乐队领队则根据诗人事先写在纸莎草纸上的答案，一一予以回答。

这一粗糙且事先准备好的谈话，就是戏剧里“对白”的前身。它通常是讲述酒神狄俄尼索斯或其他某个神的故事。这种新颖形式一出现，立刻大受群众的欢迎。由此，每一个酒神游行仪式里，便都有了这样一段“表演场面”。过了没多久，“表演”变得比游行本身以及咩咩合唱更重要了。

埃斯库罗斯“是古希腊最成功的“悲剧家”，在其漫长的一生里（公元前 526—455 年），他写了大约 80 部悲剧。他做过一个大胆的创新，为合唱表演引入两名“演员”来取代原来的一名“演员”。其后，京福克勒斯”把演员的数量增为三人。公元前 5 世纪中期，当欧里庇德斯”开始创作他那些让人毛骨悚然的悲剧时，他开始视剧情需要使用演员，想用多少便用多少。当阿里斯托芬写作他嘲笑所有人、所有事。甚至奥林匹斯山众神的著名喜剧时，合唱队已经被降到旁观者的地位。他们列队站在主要角色的身后，当前台的英雄犯下了违反神意的罪行时，他们便齐声高唱，“啊，这是个何等恐怖的世界！”

这种新颖的戏剧娱乐形式当然需要合适的场所。很快，每个希腊城市都拥有了一座剧院。它开凿在附近小山的岩壁旁，观众们坐在木制的长凳上，面向一个宽阔的圆形场地。这个半圆形场地上，就是舞台，演员和合唱队在此表演。他们身后有一座帐篷，供演员们化装之用。他们在此戴上粘土制的大面具，分别代表幸福、欢笑、悲哀、哭泣等等表情。希腊文称帐篷为“skene”，这就是“布景”（scenery）一词的由来。

一旦观赏悲剧成为古希腊人生活的一部分，人们便非常认真地对待它，绝不仅仅为放松心灵而去剧院。一出新戏的上演与一次选举同等重要。一个成功的剧作家获得的荣耀甚至超过一名刚刚凯旋而归的将军。

第十八章 抗击波斯入侵的战争

希腊人成功抵御了亚洲对欧洲的入侵，将波斯人赶回了爱琴海对岸

爱琴海人是职业商人腓尼基人的学生，之后希腊人从爱琴海人那里学会了贸易之道。他们模仿腓尼基人的模式，建起许多殖民地，并广泛使用货币与外国客商交易，成效大大超越了腓尼基人。到公元前 6 世纪，他们已牢牢控制了小亚细亚沿岸，凭借更高的效率他们夺走了腓尼基人的大部分生意。当然，腓尼基人对希腊人的后来居上怀恨在心，不过他们的实力还不够对希腊人发动一场战争。他们不愿冒险，只是将仇恨悄悄埋在心里，等待着报复的机会来临。

在前面的章节里，我已经给你们讲述过波斯帝国崛起的故事。一个来自波斯的默默无闻的游牧部落踏上了四处征伐的路途，他们在短时间内攫取了西亚大部分土地。这些波斯人态度彬彬有礼，做事方式还算文明。他们并不劫掠归顺他们的臣民，只要这些臣民每年进贡一定的赋税就心满意足了。当波斯人挺进到小亚细亚海岸

时，他们坚持要求自底亚地区的希腊殖民地承认波斯国王是他们至高无上的主人，并按国王规定的数额缴税。这些希腊殖民地拒绝了波斯人的无理要求，并向爱琴海对岸的祖国求救。战争的大幕就此徐徐拉开。

如果史书记载得没错，历任的波斯国王一直将希腊的城邦制视为心腹大患。但归顺波斯帝国的诸多民族很可能以这种制度为榜样，以至于反抗波斯的统治。因此，波斯人认为，这种危险的政治制度必须被消灭，让波斯帝国的威严旗帜飘扬在希腊的上空。

当然，隔着爱琴海的汹涌波涛，希腊人拥有一定程度的安全感。可在雅典附近登陆，直捣希腊人的心脏。可此时，雅典的海岸线上已有重兵把守，波斯人只好撤回亚洲。马拉松平原的胜利为希腊赢得了短暂的和平。

此后的8年，波斯人养精蓄锐、虎视眈眈，而希腊人也丝毫不敢懈怠。他们知道，一场暴雨般的攻击将是指日可待的事情，但在如何应对这场危机的问题上，雅典内部发生了分歧。一部分人希望增强陆军的实力，另一部分人认为建立一支强大的海军才是击败波斯人的关键。支持陆军和支持海军的两派分别由阿里斯蒂里司和泰米斯托克利领导，他们彼此攻击，争执不下，而雅典的防御问题就这样徒劳的拖延着。终于，陆军派的阿里斯蒂里司在政治斗争失败后被流放，泰米斯托克利赢得了主动权。他放手大干起来，倾尽人力财力建造战船，并把比雷埃夫斯变成了一个坚不可摧的海军基地。

公元前481年，一支庞大的波斯军队赫然出现在希腊北部省份色萨利地区，希腊半岛再度面临灭顶之灾。在此危急存亡的关头，英勇的军事城邦斯巴达被推为希腊联军的军事领袖。可斯巴达人对北方的战事有些漫不经心，因为他们自己的城邦还未受到攻击。在这样的心态下，他们疏忽了防守从北方通往希腊腹地的要道。

斯巴达国王李奥尼达奉命率一支小军团去防守连接色萨利和希腊南部省份的道路。这条道路位于巍峨的高山与大海之间，易守难攻。李奥尼达指挥勇猛的斯巴达士兵以寡敌众、浴血奋战，成功地阻挡了波斯大军前进的步伐。但一个名叫埃非阿尔蒂斯的叛徒出卖了希腊人，他引导一支波斯军队沿梅里斯附近的小路穿越山隘，深入到李奥尼达的后方，从腹背发起攻击。在温泉关附近（德摩比勒），一场血腥的战役打响了，双方从白天一直拼杀到夜幕降临。李奥尼达和斯巴达士兵全部阵亡，身边躺满了波斯士兵的尸体。

温泉关的失守使波斯大军得以长驱直入，希腊的大部分地区相继陷落。波斯人气势汹汹朝雅典挺进，要报8年前的一箭之仇。他们攻占了雅典卫城，将其夷为平地。雅典人扶老携幼逃往萨拉米岛。这场战争看起来似乎是没有希望了。公元前480年9月20日，泰米斯托克利率领雅典海军，将波斯舰队骗入希腊大陆与萨拉米岛之间的狭窄海面。波斯舰队被迫与雅典海军决战。几个小时后，雅典人摧毁了3/4的波斯舰船，取得决定性胜利。

这样一来，波斯人在德摩比勒地区的大捷就变得毫无意义。失去了海上支援，波斯国王泽克西斯被迫撤退。他打算来年再与希腊人进行最后决战，一举歼灭他们。波斯军队撤至北部的色萨利地区休整，等待第二年春天的来临。

不过这一回，斯巴达人终于意识到事关全体希腊半岛的存亡，必须倾尽全力一搏。为保护城邦的安全，斯巴达人本已修建了一条横跨柯林斯地峡的城墙，在波仙尼亚斯的率领下，他们离开了城墙安全庇护，主动迎战玛尔多纽斯指挥的波斯军队。大战在普拉提亚附近展开，来自12个城邦的约10万希腊军队，向30万波斯军队发起了总攻击。跟马拉松平原发生的战斗一样，希腊重装步兵再度突破了波斯军队的箭阵，彻底击溃了波斯人。巧合的是，在希腊步兵赢得普拉提亚战役的同一天，雅典海军在小亚细亚附近的米卡尔角也摧毁了敌人的舰队。

欧洲与亚洲的第一次较量就这样落下了帷幕。雅典赢得了莫大荣誉，斯巴达也因英勇而驰名。如果这两个城市能够冰释前嫌、携手合作，如果他们愿意忘掉彼此之间的小小嫉妒，他们是能够组成一个强大而统一的希腊的领袖。

事情的发展往往不如人愿；随着胜利的狂欢和携手的热情悄悄流逝，这样的机会也就一去不返了。

第十九章 雅典与斯巴达之战

为争夺希腊半岛的领导权，雅典与斯巴达展开了一场漫长而灾难深重的战争

雅典和斯巴达同属希腊城邦，它们的人民讲同一种语言，但在其它的方面，两个城市则毫无共同点。雅典高高地矗立在平原之上，享受着徐徐而来的清新海风。雅典的人民习惯用孩子般热切好奇的目光，打量这个惬意的世界；而斯巴达坐落在峡谷的底部，高耸的群山环绕四周，成为阻挡外来事物和新鲜思想的天然屏障。雅典是生意繁忙的贸易之邦，是一个开放的大集市；斯巴达却是一座大兵营，人人厉兵秣马，公民的理想都是成为一名优秀的士兵。雅典人喜欢坐在温暖和煦的阳光下，谈论诗歌或聆听哲人智慧的言辞；斯巴达人正好相反，他们从不写下任何一行与文学有关的东西，却熟谙战斗的技巧。事实上，他们喜欢战斗，从内心里渴望战斗。为了战斗，他们宁愿牺牲人类的所有情感。

难怪这些严肃的斯巴达人会对雅典的成功报以满腔的恶意与仇恨。反抗波斯的战争结束后，雅典人将保卫共同家园所焕发的精力，用于和平建设的目标。他们重建了雅典卫城，将其作为祭祀雅典女神的大理石神殿。雅典民主制度的伟大领袖伯里克利派人四处邀请著名的雕塑家、画家和科学家，以重金礼聘他们到雅典工作，好让城市变得更优美，让雅典的年轻一代更有才德。与此同时，伯里克利还时刻警惕着斯巴达的动向，他修筑了连接雅典与海洋的高大城池，使雅典成为当时防卫最坚固、最完备的堡垒。

一段时间里，雅典与斯巴达相安无事。可一件小小的争执却引发了两个希腊城邦间的仇恨。双方兵戎相见、刀戈相向，战火一直持续了 30 年。最终以雅典遭受灾难性的失败而告终。

在战事发生的第三年，一场可怕的瘟疫突袭了雅典。雅典的半数人口死于这场天灾。更为可悲的是，他们英明睿智的领袖伯里克利也在瘟疫中罹难。一位名叫阿尔西比阿德的年轻人大有作为，赢得了公众的欢迎，被选为伯里克利的继任者。他建议对西西里岛上的斯巴达殖民地锡拉库扎进行一次远征。这一计划在阿尔西比阿德的周密指挥下有条不紊地实施起来。雅典人集结起一支远征军，储备了大量的军事物资，只待出发的命令。可不幸的是，阿尔西比阿德卷入了一场街头斗殴，被迫逃亡。继任的将军是一个毫无见识与谋略的莽汉，在他的指挥下，先是海军损失了全部船只，接着陆军又遭到毁灭性打击。少数幸存的雅典士兵被俘后押住锡拉库扎的采石场做苦役，最终死于饥渴。

这次惨败使雅典元气大伤，几乎所有的青年人都在战斗中阵亡。雅典人注定要输掉这场战争。公元前 404 年 4 月，经过长时间无望的困守，雅典投降了。这真是一个黯淡的时刻，防护城市的高大城墙被斯巴达人夷为平地，海军舰只被全部掠走。在其强盛的顶峰，雅典曾征服幅员辽阔的土地，建立起一个以自己为中心的伟大殖民帝国，现在，它在政治军事上已无可奈何地沦落，不复为帝国的中心。但是，那种求知、求真及探索未知的渴望，那种使雅典公民在其繁荣与强盛时期卓越于世的自由精神，却并未随城墙和舰只一起消失，它继续生长在雅典人的心中，甚至变得比以前更为辉煌。

雅典衰落了，它不能再决定希腊半岛的命运。可作为人类第一所大学的发源地，它继续指导着热爱智慧的人们的心灵，其影响远远越出了希腊半岛的狭窄边界，远播世界。

第二十章 亚历山大大帝

马其顿的亚历山大大帝建立了一个希腊式的世界帝国，他的雄心壮志究竟结果如何呢？

当亚该亚人离开他们在多瑙河畔的家园，向南寻找新牧场时，他们曾在马其顿的群山中度过了一段岁月。从此，希腊人一直与他们北部的邻居保持着或多或少的正式关系。在马其顿人这方面，他们也一直关注着希腊半岛上局势的最新进展。

那时，斯巴达和雅典刚结束了他们争夺希腊半岛领导权的战争，马其顿正好由一位名为菲利浦的才智超群的能人统治着。他倾慕希腊的文学与艺术，但对他们在政治事物中的缺乏效率和自制却大为蔑视。看着一个优秀的民族把它的人力和金钱都浪费在毫无成效的争吵之上，这让菲利浦非常恼火。他出兵希腊，使自己成为它的主人，终于解决了这一难题。然后，他便要求新归顺的希腊臣民们加入他策划以久的远征，前往波斯，作为 150 年前对泽克西斯访问希腊的“回访”。

很不幸的是，精心准备的远征还没来得及出发，菲利浦便被谋杀了，为希腊复仇的任务落到了他的儿子亚历山大的身上。亚历山大是伟大的希腊导师、哲学家亚里士多德心爱的学生，精通政治、军事、哲学、艺术，对希腊文化抱有深厚的情感。

公元前 304 年春，亚历山大挥师作别欧洲。7 年之后，他的大军抵过了印度。在漫长的征途中，他消灭了希腊商人的宿敌腓尼基，征服了埃及，被尼罗河谷的人民尊为法老的儿子与继承人。他击败了最后一任波斯国王，推翻了整个波斯帝国。他下令重建巴比伦，并率兵挺进到喜马拉雅山的心脏地带。现在，整个世界都变成了马其顿的行省和属国。然后他停下脚步，推行起另一个更为雄心勃勃的计划。

热爱希腊的亚历山大宣布，新建立的帝国必须置于希腊精神的影响之下。他要求自己的子民学习希腊语，居住在按希腊样式建成的城市里。现在，亚历山大的士兵脱去甲冑，放下刀剑，变成了传播希腊文化的教师。昨天的军营成为了输入希腊文明的和平中心。希腊的风俗习惯和生活方式像席卷世界的洪水，一浪高过一浪。可就在此时，年轻的亚历山大突然遭到热病的袭击，于公元前 323 年死于汉谟拉比国王修筑的旧巴比伦王宫。

之后潮水开始退去，但留下了一片希腊文明的肥沃土壤。凭着孩子气的雄心与愚蠢的自负，亚历山大做出了一项极有价值的贡献。他的帝国在他死后不久便开始土崩瓦解，一批野心勃勃的将军瓜分了世界，可他们仍旧忠实于亚历山大的梦想——建立一个融合希腊文明与亚洲精神的伟大世界。

这些分裂出来的国家一直保持独立，直到罗马人发动远征，将整个西亚和埃及囊括进自己的版图。于是，亚历山大留下的这份奇特的精神遗产（包括部分希腊、部分波斯、部分埃及和部分巴比伦），被新来的罗马征服者照单全收。在接下来的几个世纪里，它牢牢地扎根于罗马的世界，直到今天我们还能感受到它的影响。

有关文明起源的小结

现在我们回过头来看一看，你将发现，文明地区已勾勒出一个半圆型的轮廓。它肇始于埃及，再经由美索不达米亚和爱琴海的岛屿向西，一直抵达整个欧洲大陆。在人类文明史的头 4000 年里，埃及人、巴比伦人、腓尼基人以及大批的闪米特部族（请记住犹太人就是这些闪米特部族之一），都曾高举火炬照亮过世界。现在，他们将文明火炬传递给印欧种族的希腊人，希腊人又将它交给罗马人。他们是地中海东部无可争议的拥有者。而与此同时，闪米特人也正沿北非海岸向西推进，成为了地中海西半部的主人。

这种状况发展下去，其结果可以想见。到历史的某个时刻，人类两大种族——印欧人和闪米特人，为争夺地中海和其它区域的统治权，展开了一场可怕的战争。在这个巨大的竞技场上，诞生出战功卓著的罗马帝国。它将埃及——美索不达米亚——希腊的文明更深广地与欧洲大陆结合起来，奠定了我们现代欧洲社会的精神根基。

我知道，这一切听起来很复杂、很不可思议，但只要你领会了这几条主要的线索，我们其余的历史将变得简明了许多。地图将使我们明白很多文字难以言传的东西。

在此简短的小结之后，让我们回到历史前进的道路，看一看发生在迦太基和罗马之间的著名战争。

第二十一章 罗马和迦太基

迦太基是闪米特种族在非洲北岸的殖民地。为争夺西地中海的统治权，它和意大利西海岸的印欧族罗马人发生了激烈的战争。战争最终以迦太基的灭亡而告终。

富人统治

腓尼基人的小贸易据点卡特·哈斯达特坐落在一座小山之上，俯瞰着一片 90 英里宽的平静海面，这就是分隔欧洲与非洲的阿非利加海。作为商业中心和贸易中转站，再没有比它更理想的地理位置了！它几乎是完美无缺，它发展得太快，变得太富有。当公元前 6 世纪，巴比伦国王尼布甲尼撒摧毁提尔的时候，哈斯达特就与母国割断了一切联系，成为一个独立的国家——迦太基。从那时开始，它便一直是闪米特种族向西方扩展势力的一个重要前沿阵地。

很不幸的是，这座城市从母国那里继承了许多不良习性。它们也是腓尼基人在 1000 年的发展历程中，因之兴也因之亡的一些典型特性。从本质上讲，这座城市无非是一个大商号，由一支强大的海军护卫着。迦太基人是地地道道的商人，除了做生意，他们对生活中很多优美精致的事物毫无兴趣。这座城市、城市附近的乡村

、以及许许多多遥远的殖民地，全都由一个为数不多但权倾一时的富人集团统治着。希腊语中，富人为“ploutos”，因此希腊人把这样一个由富人掌管的政府称为“Plutocracy”（富人统治或财阀统治）。

迦太基就拥有这样一个典型的富人政权。整个国家的真正权力实际操控在 12 个大船主、大商人及大矿场主的手中。他们在密室中集会，商讨国家事务，将共同的祖国视为一个大公司，理应让他们赚取丰厚的利润。不过，他们精力充沛，工作勤奋，以警惕的目光随时注视着周围的事态。

随着岁月不断流逝，迦太基对临近地区的影响力也日渐增强，直到北非的大部分海岸地区。西班牙以及法国的部分地区都成为了它的属地，定期向这个阿非利加海滨的强大城市进贡、缴税、上缴红利。迦太基也因此富甲一方。

当然，这样一个富人政权的存在，总是要经过民众们的同意或默许的。只要它能够保证较多的工作机会及充足的薪水，大多数的市民就感到心满意足，任由那些个“能人”和“精英”们来发号施令，也不会问些令人尴尬的问题来为难政府。可是一旦船只不能出海，也不再有了矿石运进港口来供熔炉冶炼，当码头工人和装卸工人无事可做，终日面对饥肠辘辘的家人，大众中就会怨声四起，就会出现要求召开平民会议的呼声。当迦太基还是一个古代的自治共和国时，这是一个惯例。

为防止平民骚动的发生，富人政府不得不尽力维持整个城市的商业全速运转，不能有丝毫的懈怠。在 500 年的时间里，他们兢兢业业地推进城市的商业扩张，非常成功地做到了这一点。可到了某一天，从意大利西海岸传来了一些谣言，顿时让这些统治迦太基的富人寝食难安。据说，台伯河边的一个毫不起眼的小村子突然崛起，成为意大利中部所有拉丁部落公认的领袖。传言还说，这个村庄名叫罗马，它正打算大建船只，积极谋求与西西里及法国南部地区通商。

迦太基可不能容忍这样的竞争，新兴强权的出现对它就如同梦魇。必须趁羽翼未丰，扼杀掉这个年轻的对手，否则迦太基将威望大跌，失去作为西地中海绝对统治者的地位。经过仔细调查，终于搞清楚了大致的真实情形。

罗马的兴起

长期以来，意大利西海岸一直是被文明之光忽略的地区。在希腊，所有的良港都面朝东方，注视着商业繁忙、生意兴隆的爱琴海岛屿，分享文明与通商的便利。而与此同时，意大利西海岸则一无所有，除地中海冰冷的波涛拍打着荒芜的海岸，再没有任何激动人心的事情发生。这是一片极端贫穷的地区，外国的商人们少有造访。当地的土著居民安静寂寞地生活在绵延的丘陵和遍布沼泽的平原之上，似乎与世隔绝。

这片土地上发生的第一次严重侵略来自北方。在某个日期不详的时刻，一些印欧种族的游牧部落开始从欧洲大陆向南迁移。他们在白雪皑皑的阿尔卑斯群山中蜿蜒前进，发现了翻越山脉的隘口，随即潮水般地涌进亚平宁，延伸到部族的村庄与牲畜遍布于这个形状酷似长靴的半岛。对于这些早期的征服者，我们知之甚少。如果没有一个荷马人曾歌唱过他们的辉煌往昔，他们的战功与远征则难作信史。他们自己对于罗马城建立的记述，则产生于 800 年之后。当时这座小城已经成长为一个大帝国的宏伟中心。这些记述不过是些神话故事，与真实的历史相去甚远。罗慕洛斯和勒莫斯跳过了对方的城墙，但到底谁跳过了谁的墙，我一直记不清楚。它们是有趣的睡前读物，让不肯安睡的孩子们着迷。但说到罗马城建立的真实过程，那无疑是一件乏味而单调的事情。

罗马的起源就像 1000 座美国城市的起源，其发迹首先是由于地处要津，交通便利，四乡八野的人们纷纷来此交易货物、买卖马匹。罗马位于意大利中部平原的中心，台伯河为它提供了直接的出海口。一条贯通半岛南北的大道经过这里，一年四季都能使用，劳顿的旅人正好于此驻足稍憩。沿台伯河岸有 7 座小山，可为居民们用作抵御外敌的避难所。这些凶险的敌人有些来自周围的山地，有些来自地平线外的滨海地区。

住在山地的敌人叫作萨宾人，他们行为粗野，心怀恶意，总希望通过劫掠来维持生活。不过他们很落后，所使用的武器仍然是石斧和木制盾牌，难以匹敌罗马人手中的钢剑。比较而言，滨海地区的人们才是真正危险的敌人。他们被称为伊特拉斯坎人，其来历至今依旧是历史学上的一个不解之谜，无人知晓他们何时定居于意大利西部滨海地区，属于哪个种族，以及是什么原因迫使他们离开了原来的家园？他们留下的碑文随处可见，可由于无人通晓伊特拉斯坎文字，这些书写信息至今不过是一些令人大伤脑筋的神秘图形。

我们能做出的最接近事实的推测是：伊特拉斯坎人最初来自小亚细亚，可能是由于战争，也可能是因为一场大瘟疫，他们不得不离乡背井，到别处去寻找新的栖居之所。不管使他们流浪到意大利的原因为何，伊特拉斯坎人在历史上都担当了非常重要的角色。他们把古代文明的花粉从东方传到了西方，他们教会了来自北方的罗马人文明生活的基本原理，包括建筑术、修建街道、作战、艺术、烹调、医药以及天文。

不过正如希腊人不喜欢他们的爱琴海人导师一样，罗马人也同样憎恨他们的伊特拉斯坎师傅。当希腊商人发现与意大利通商的好处，当第一艘希腊商船满载货物抵达罗马城时，罗马人便迅速摆脱了伊特拉斯坎人。希腊人本是来意大利做生意的，后来却居留下来，担任罗马人的新指导。他们发现这些居住在罗马乡间（被称为拉丁人）的部族非常乐于接受有实用价值的新事物。一旦罗马人意识到可以从书写文字中得到巨大的好处，他们便模仿希腊字母的样子，创造了拉丁文。他们还发现，统一制定的货币与度量方式将大大促进商业的发展，于是他们就毫不犹豫地如法炮制。最终，罗马人不仅咬上了希腊文明的鱼钩，甚至连鱼线和坠子都一古脑地吞了下去。

他们还欢天喜地把希腊的诸神也请进了自己的国家。宙斯移居罗马，新名字叫朱庇特。其余的希腊神接踵而至。不过，罗马的诸神可不像他们那些陪伴希腊人度过一生、走完整条历史长河的表兄妹们那样神采飞扬、喜笑颜开。他们属于国家机构的一分子，每一位神都在努力管理着自己负责的部门。他们面目严肃，神态方圆，谨慎公正地施洒正义。作为回报，他们要求信徒们一丝不苟的顺眼，而罗马人也小心翼翼地献上了他们的服从。不过如古希腊人与奥林匹斯山颠的诸神之间存在着和谐亲密、发自肺腑的神人关系，罗马人和他们的神抵之间则是从未有过。

虽然罗马人与希腊人同属印欧种族，但他们没有模仿希腊人的政治制度。他们不愿靠发表一大堆枯燥的言论和滔滔演讲来治理国家，他们的想象力和表现欲不如希腊人丰富，他们宁肯以一个现实的行动代替一百句无用的言辞。在他们看来，平民大会（“Pleb”，即自由民的集会）往往是一种空谈误国的恶习，无可救药。因此，他们将管理城市的实际事务交由两名执政官负责，并设立一个由一群老年人组成的“元老院”去辅佐他们。遵照习俗并出于现实的考虑，元老们通常选自贵族阶层，可他们的权力同时也受到极其严格的限制。

正如雅典被迫制定解决贫富纠纷的德拉古法典与梭伦法典，当历史进展到一定时期，即公元前5世纪，罗马也发生了贫民和富人之间的类似斗争。最终，自由民的抗争为他们换来了一部成文法典，规定设立一名“保民官”来保护他们免遭贵族法官的迫害。保民官是城市的地方长官，由自由民中选出。当出现政府官员以不公正的行为对待市民时，他有权加以阻止，捍卫自由民的权益。依照罗马法律，执政官有权判处一个人的死刑。可如果案子没有得到最充分的证实，保民官即可介入，挽救这个可怜家伙的性命。

罗马公民权

当我使用“罗马”这个词时，我的意思听起来是指仅仅拥有几千居民的那个小城市，不过，罗马城真正的实力其实蕴藏在城墙之外的广大乡村地区。正是在对这些域外省份的管理上，早期的罗马帝国展示了它令人惊叹的殖民技巧。

在历史的早期，罗马城是意大利中部唯一拥有高大城墙、防御坚固的堡垒。不过，它向来都慷慨好客的敞开城门，为其他不时遭遇外敌人侵的拉丁部落提供紧急避难。长此以往，这些拉丁邻居们开始意识到，与如此强大的朋友发展联系，对自身的安全是大有好处的。因此，他们试图寻找一种合适的模式，来建立与罗马城的攻守同盟。其他国家，比如埃及、巴比伦、腓尼基甚至希腊，它们都曾坚持要那些非我族类的“野蛮人”签定归顺条约，才肯提供必要的保护。可聪明的罗马人没这样做。相反，他们给予“外来者”一个平等的机会，让他们成为“共和国”或共同体的一员。

“你想加入我们，”罗马人说，“那好，尽管来加人吧！我们可以将你视为具有充分权利的罗马公民一样来对待。但作为这种优待的回报，当我们的城市、我们共同的母亲遭遇外敌人侵的危险，需要你拔刀相助时，我们希望你全力为它而战！”

这些“外来者”当然有感于罗马人对他们的慷慨，于是便以无比坚定的忠诚来报答罗马。

在古希腊，每当某座城市遭受攻击的时刻，所有外国居民总是迅速地收拾细软逃之夭夭。他们认为，这里不过是他们临时寄居的场所，仅仅因为不间断地缴纳税款，才得到主人勉为其难的接待，凭什么要冒着生命危

险去保卫对自己不存在丝毫意义的城市呢？相反，一旦敌人兵临罗马城下，所有的拉丁人便会不约而同地拿起刀剑，紧急驰援。因为这是他们共同的母亲正在遭受危难。也许有些人可能居住在 100 英里之外，在其有生之年从未看过罗马的城墙和圣山，但他们仍视之为自己真正的“家园”。

没有什么了不起的失败和灾难能动摇他们对罗马城的深厚情感。公元前 4 世纪初，野蛮的高卢人气势汹汹地闯进意大利。他们在阿里亚河附近击溃了罗马军队，浩浩荡荡地向罗马进军，最终顺利拿下了这座城市。他们料想罗马人会主动找上门来，以屈辱的条件吁求和平。他们悠闲惬意地等待着，等了好久，可什么事情也没发生。过不多久，高卢人突然发现自己陷入了莫名的包围之中，四处遍布充满敌意的眼睛和紧闭的门户，使他们根本无法得到必需的给养。在苦苦支撑 7 个月后，饥饿和身陷异乡的恐慌感在高卢军队中蔓延开来，他们只得狼狈地撤退了。罗马人以平等之心接纳“外来者”的政策不仅在战时获得了巨大成功，也最终造就了它空前绝后的强盛。

最初交锋

从这段对罗马历史的简要描述可以看出，罗马人对于建立一个健全国家的理想与迦太基式的古代世界对于国家的理想，有着多么巨大的差别。罗马人依赖的是一大群“平等公民”之间的和谐而真诚的合作，共同捍卫自己的城市。而迦太基人则沿袭埃及和西亚的旧有模式，要求其属民无条件，因而也是不情愿的服从。当这种要求达不到时，他们便按典型的商人思维，花钱雇佣职业军人为他们作战。

现在你们就能理解，为什么迦太基会惧怕这个聪明而强大的敌人，为什么他们情愿找一些微不足道的借口来挑起战火，伺机将个危险的对手扼杀于羽翼未丰之中！

可作为精明老练的商人，迦太基深知贸然行事往往会适得其反。他们向罗马人提出建议，由各自的城市分别在地图上画一个圆圈，作为自己的“势力范围”，并承诺互不侵犯对方的利益。协议迅速被达成，也同样迅速地被撕毁。土地富饶的西西里岛当时由一个腐败无能的政府统治，无疑正在“期待”着外来入侵者的干预，于是迦太基和罗马不约而同地把自己的军队派往了那里。

随之而来的战争一共持续了 24 年，这就是历史上著名的第一次布匿战争。先是海上的短兵相接。初看起来，训练有素的迦太基海军将毫不费力地摧毁新建不久的罗马舰队。依照沿用已久的海战法，迦太基战船要么猛撞敌人的船只，要么从敌舰的侧面发动猛攻，折断对方的船桨，尔后用密如疾雨的弓箭和火球杀死对方那些惊慌失措、逃生无路的水手。不过，罗马的工程师发明了一种携带吊桥的战船，能够让精于肉搏的罗马士兵顺吊桥冲上对方的船只，迅速地杀死迦太基弓箭手。这样，迦太基海战胜利的好日子就突然到头了。在米拉战役中，罗马人重挫了迦太基舰队。迦太基人被迫求和，西西里就此归入了罗马帝国的版图。

23 年后，两国又发生了新的争端。罗马为开发铜矿占据了撒丁岛，迦太基为寻找白银占领了整个西班牙南部。两大强权突然变成了邻居。罗马人可不喜欢与迦太基人为邻，他们派军队越过比利牛斯山，去监视迦太基军队的一举一动。

战争的舞台已经布置就绪，就差一个小火星来点燃两国之间的第二次战争了。一个孤悬海外的希腊殖民地再度成为战争的导火索。迦太基人围困了西班牙东海岸的萨贡特，于是萨贡特人向罗马求救。与往常一样，罗马人向来是乐于助人的。元老院承诺派遣军队。不过组织远征军花费了一段时间，在此期间，萨贡特陷落，整个城市被迦太基人焚毁。此举大大激怒了罗马人，元老院决定向迦太基宣战。他们派出一支罗马军队越过阿非利加海，在迦太基本土附近登陆。另一支军队则负责牵制占据西班牙的迦太基部队，阻止他们去救援。这是个绝妙的计划，人人都期待着大获全胜，甚至已经有人在谈论战后的狂欢和分享战利品了。不过，诸神却不愿让罗马人如此顺利。

汉尼拔

时间正好是公元前 218 年秋天，负责攻击驻守西班牙的迦太基军队的罗马军团启程离开了意大利，罗马的人们正急切期盼着一个轻松愉快的胜利消息。不过等来的却是另一个可怕的谣言，它们很快便在整个波河平原蔓延开来。先是一些粗野的山民，他们传布了一个匪夷所思的故事。他们讲，几十万棕色人带着一种奇怪的野兽，“每一只都有房子那么大”，突然从比利牛斯山的云朵之中浮现。他们现身的地方是在古格瑞安山隘，几千年前赫尔克里斯曾赶着他的格尔扬公牛途经此地，从西班牙前往希腊。不久，一眼望不到尽头的逃难人群便

涌到了罗马城前，他们个个衣衫槛楼，面有菜色。从他们口中，得知了更多、更具体的细节。哈米尔卡的伟大儿子汉尼拔，统率着9万步兵、9000骑兵及37头威风凛凛的战象，已经跨过了比利牛斯山。他在罗纳河畔击溃了西皮奥将军率领的罗马军队，又指挥军队成功地攀越了10月时节、冰雪覆盖的阿尔卑斯山。之后，他与高卢人会师，击败了正要渡过特拉比河的第二支罗马军队。现在，汉尼拔正在围困普拉森西亚，即一个位于连接罗马与阿尔卑斯山区行省大道上的北方重镇。

元老院大吃一惊，表面却不流露出来，依旧像平常那样冷静而精力充沛地工作着。他们隐瞒罗马军队接连失败的消息，又派遣了两支新装备的军队去阻击汉尼拔。在特拉美诺湖边的狭窄道路上，精于用兵的汉尼拔突然率军杀出，扑向罗马援军。阵脚大乱的罗马军队拼死抵抗，无奈汉尼拔已经占得先机。特拉美诺湖一役，所有的罗马军官和大部分士兵战死沙场。这一回，罗马人再也坐不住了，他们议论纷纷、惊恐不安，只有元老院还在强作镇定。第三支军队被组织起来，交由费边·马克西墨斯统领，并授予他“视拯救国家的需要”，采取行动的全权。

费边深知汉尼拔是一个非常危险的对手。为免于全军覆没，他必须十二万分地小心。况且他手下尽是些未经训练的新兵，这已经是罗马能够征召的最后一批兵员了，根本无法与汉尼拔麾下身经百战的老兵们匹敌。因此，费边小心翼翼回避与汉尼拔发生正面决战。他凭借对地形的熟悉，尾随在汉尼拔身后，烧掉一切可吃的东西，并摧毁道路和桥梁。他还不时袭击迦太基人的小股部队，运用一种最令敌人困扰和痛苦的游击战术，来不断削弱汉尼拔军队的士气。

这样的战术当然不能安慰饱受惊恐折磨的罗马人民。他们躲进罗马的城墙内避难，整日提心吊胆，希望一场大捷来彻底解除恐惧。他们高叫着“行动”。必须采取行动，而且是坚决迅速的行动。在这片一浪高过一浪的“行动”呼声中，一个名为瓦罗的民众英雄，也就是那个在罗马城四处发表激昂的演说、宣称自己将比年老体衰、行动迟缓的费边高明千百倍的家伙赢得了大众的青睐。可怜的费边早就被冠以“延缓者”的绰号，遭到全体罗马人的唾弃，瓦罗在群众的掌声中顺理成章地成为了罗马军队的新任总司令。公元前216年，在康奈战役中，瓦罗指挥的军队遭到了罗马有史以来最为惨重的失败。7万多人被杀，汉尼拔成为了意大利的主宰。

现在汉尼拔可以长驱直入了，他从亚平宁半岛的这一端杀到另一端，如入无人之境。大军所过之处，他都不遗余力地宣称自己是“把人民从罗马重轭下解放出来的救主”，并号召人民加入他反抗罗马的战争。这一次，罗马的明智政策又结出了至为可贵的果实。“解放者”汉尼拔伪装成人民的朋友，可他发现被解放的人民似乎并不领情。他处处遭到人民的反对与抵抗，兼之劳师远征、苦战于敌国，给养和兵员的补充难以为继。汉尼拔当然清楚自己的危险处境，他派信使回迦太基，要求增援装备和士兵。可惜，这两样都是迦太基无法给他的。

就这样，经过多年的不断胜利，汉尼拔发现自己反倒陷入了被征服的国家的包围之中。有段时间，局势似乎有好转的希望。他的兄弟哈士多路巴在西班牙击败了罗马军队，即将越过阿尔卑斯山前来增援汉尼拔。他派信使南下，告之汉尼拔他的到来，让汉尼拔派一支军队到台伯河平原接应。不幸的是，信使落到了罗马人手里，汉尼拔只能徒劳地等待着兄弟的消息。直到有一天，哈士多路巴的头颅被精心装在一个篮子里，滚落到汉尼拔的营帐前，他才知道增援汉尼拔的迦太基军队全军覆没了。

歼灭哈士多路巴后，罗马将军小西皮奥轻而易举地重新占领了西班牙。四年过去，罗马人已经准备好对迦太基发动最后一击了。汉尼拔被紧急召回。他渡过阿非利加海回到故乡，试图组织迦太基城的防御。在公元前202年扎马一役，迦太基军队以失败告终，汉尼拔逃到提尔，再转道前往小亚细亚，尽力游说叙利亚人和马其顿人对抗罗马。他在这些亚洲国家中的煽动所获甚少，却给罗马人制造了一个将战火引向东方和爱琴海世界的借口。

汉尼拔沦为了一名失去家园的逃亡者，被迫从一座城市流亡到另一座城市。心力交瘁和黯淡的前途深深打击着他。他终于明白，自己雄心勃勃的梦想已到尽头。他热爱的祖国迦太基输掉了战争，被迫以屈辱的代价换回和平。迦太基的全部军舰被沉入海底，从此失去了海军；不经罗马人的许可它没有发动战争的权力；它还被罚向罗马支付数额惊人的战争赔款，在未来看不到尽头的岁月来一年年偿还。既然生命失去了希望，公元前190年，汉尼拔服毒自杀了。

40年后，罗马人卷土重来，向迦太基发动了最后的一战。在漫长而艰苦的3年里，这块古代腓尼基殖民地的人民顽强地抵抗着新兴的共和国。最终，饥饿迫使他们投降。围困中幸存下来的少量男人和妇女被胜利者

卖作奴隶，整个城市被付之一炬。仓库、宫殿、兵工厂笼罩在冲天的火焰中，大火整整持续了两个星期。在对乌黑的残垣断壁施以最恶毒的诅咒后，罗马军队班师回朝，去享受他们盛大的庆典去了。

随着迦太基的覆灭，地中海在随后的 1000 年中变成了欧洲的内海。可一当罗马帝国寿终正寝，亚洲便展开了一次试图控制这个内陆海洋的尝试。具体的情形，我在谈到穆罕默德的故事时告诉你。

第二十二章 罗马帝国的兴起

罗马帝国是如何形成的

罗马帝国的产生纯属偶然。没有人策划它，它是自己“形成”的。从未有过一个著名的将军、政客或刺客站出来，说：“朋友们，罗马公民们，我们必须建立一个帝国！大家跟着我，我们将一道征服从赫尔克里斯之门到托罗斯山的所有土地！”

诚然，罗马造就过众多战功卓著的将军和许多杰出的政客及刺客，罗马军队在世界各地所向披靡。但罗马帝国的产生并非出于一个精心策划的构思。普通罗马人都是些非常务实的人们，他们不喜欢探讨关于政府的理论。当某人慷慨激昂地陈辞：“我以为，罗马帝国应该向东扩展……等等”，听众们便会立即离开会场，回到自己的实际事务中去。事实上，罗马攫取越来越多的土地，仅仅是因为环境迫使它必须攫取土地。它的扩张并不是出于野心或贪婪的驱使。罗马人天生愿意作安分守纪的农民，宁愿一辈子呆在家里。不过一旦受到攻击，他们就会奋起自卫。如果敌人正巧来自海外，需要去遥远的国度对他们展开反击。此时，任劳任怨的罗马人便会跨越数千英里艰苦乏味的路程，去打垮这些危险的敌人。当任务完成之后，他们又留下来管理新征服的土地，以免它落入四处游荡的野蛮部族之手，构成对罗马安全的新威胁。这听起来有些复杂，可对现代人来说却是非常简单的道理。今天，你有时也会看到这样的例子。

公元前 203 年，西皮奥率军渡过阿非利加海，将战火烧到非洲。迦太基紧急召回汉尼拔。由于汉尼拔率领的雇佣军士气低落，并不真心为迦太基而战，因此他在扎马附近被击败。罗马人要求他投降，但汉尼拔逃往亚洲的叙利亚和马其顿寻求支持。这些是我在上一章告诉过你们的。

叙利亚和马其顿的统治者（二者都是亚历山大的帝国分裂后的残余）当时正策划远征埃及，企图瓜分富饶的尼罗河谷。埃及国王听闻了风声，急忙向罗马人求援。看样子，一连串富于戏剧性的阴谋与反阴谋即将上演。可是，一贯缺乏想象力的罗马人在大戏还未开演前就粗暴地拉上了帷幕。罗马军团一举摧毁了马其顿人沿用的希腊重装步兵方阵。这场战役发生在公元前 197 年，地点位于色萨利中部的辛诺塞法利平原，也称“狗头山”。

随后，罗马人向半岛南部的阿提卡进军，并通知希腊人，要把他们“从马其顿的重轭下解放出来”。可多年的半奴役生涯，并未使希腊人学得聪明一点，他们把新获得的自由耗费在最无意义事情上。所有的希腊城邦再度陷入无休止的相互争吵中，一如它们在光荣的旧时代的所为。显然，罗马人的政治理解力还达不到这般精妙的程度，他们不喜欢这个民族内的愚蠢争论。起初他们极力容忍，可漫天飞舞的谣言与攻讦终于使务实的罗马人失去了耐性。他们攻入希腊，焚毁柯林斯城以警告其他城邦，并派遣一名总督去统治雅典这个骚动不安的省份。这样，马其顿和希腊变成了保卫罗马东部边疆的缓冲区。

此时，越过赫勒斯蓬特海峡就是叙利亚王国安蒂阿卡斯三世统治着的广袤土地。当其尊贵的客人，汉尼拔将军向他解释人侵意大利、掠夺整个罗马城将是一件轻而易举的事情时，安蒂阿卡斯三世不禁跃跃欲试。

卢修斯·西皮奥，即人侵非洲并在扎马大败汉尼拔及其速太基军队的西皮奥将军的弟弟，被派往小亚细亚。公元前 190 年，他在玛格尼西亚附近摧毁了叙利亚军队。不久后，安蒂阿卡斯被自己的人民私刑处死，小亚细亚随之成为罗马的保护地。

这个小小的城市共和国最终成为了地中海周围大片土地的主人。

第二十三章 罗马帝国的故事

罗马共和国历经数世纪的动乱和革命，终于变成了罗马帝国

奴隶、农民及富人

罗马军队从一连串的辉煌胜利中凯旋，罗马人举行盛大的游行和狂欢来欢迎他们。可惜，这种突然的荣耀，并未让人民的生活变得幸福一些。相反，绵延不绝的征战使农夫们疲于应付国家的兵役，使农事荒芜，毁掉了他们的正常生活。通过战争，那些功勋卓著的将军及他们的亲朋好友掌握了太大的权力。他们以战争之名，行大捞个人利益之实。

古老的罗马共和国崇尚简朴，许多著名人士都过着非常朴素的生活。可如今的共和国却追求奢侈浮华，耻于简朴的物质生活，早把先辈时代流行的崇高的生活准则丢到了九霄云外。罗马变成了一个由富人统治、为富人谋利、被富人享有的地方。这样一来，它便注定要以灾难性的结局而告终的。现在我就将告诉你们。

在短短不到 150 年的时间里，罗马事实上成为了地中海沿岸所有土地的主人。在早期历史中，作为一名战俘，其命运肯定是失去自由，被卖为奴隶。罗马人将战争视为生死存亡的事情，对被征服的敌人毫无怜悯之心。迦太基陷落后，当地的妇女和儿童被捆绑着，与他们的奴隶一起被卖为奴隶。对那些敢于反抗罗马统治的希腊人、马其顿人、西班牙人、叙利亚人，等待他们的是同样的结局。

在 2000 年前，一名奴隶仅仅是机器上的一个零件，正如现代的富人投资工厂一样，而古罗马的富人们（元老院成员、将军、发战争财的商人）则将自己的财富用于购买土地和奴隶。土地来自于新征服的国家，通过购买或直接攫取。奴隶在各地的市场上公开出售，只需选一处价钱最便宜的地方买入就可以。在公元前 3 世纪和 2 世纪的大部分时间里，奴隶的供应一直相当充足。因此，庄园主们可以像牛马一样尽情驱使他们的奴隶，直到他们精疲力竭地倒在田地边死去。而主人们可以去就近的奴隶市场讨价还价，购入新到的柯林斯或迦太基战俘，弥补劳力的损失。

现在，再让我们来看一看普通罗马农民的命运！

他尽心尽力为罗马而战，毫无怨言，因为这是他对祖国应尽的职责。可经过 10 年、15 年或 20 年的漫长兵役后，他回到家乡，发现自家田地里荒草丛生，房屋也毁于战火。他是一个够坚强的男子汉。他想，好吧，这没什么，我可以重新开始生活。于是他拔去杂草，翻耕土地，播种，劳作，耐心等待收成。终于盼到了收获季节，他兴冲冲将谷物、牲畜、家禽运到市场。此时他才发现，大庄园主用奴隶替他们耕种大片土地，其农产品的价格比他预想的低好多。他不得不贱价出售。如此苦苦支撑几年，他终于绝望了，只好抛弃土地，离乡背井，去城市谋生。可在城市，他依然混不饱肚子。不过，他至少可以与几千名命运同样悲惨的人们，分担他的痛苦。他们聚居在大城市郊区肮脏污秽的棚屋里，糟糕的卫生条件使他们极易患病，而一旦染上瘟疫便必死无疑。他们个个心怀不满，怨气冲天。看看吧，他们都曾为祖国而战，可祖国竟如此回报他们！因此，他们很愿意倾听演说家们的煽动言辞。这些野心家别有用心地把这群饿鹰似的人们聚集在自己身旁，很快便成为了国家的严重威胁。

新兴的富人阶级看到这种情形，只是轻描淡写地耸耸肩膀。“我们拥有军队和警察，”富人们争辩道，“他们能使暴徒们保持安静。”随后，他们便躲进自己高墙环绕的舒适别墅，惬意地修花剪草，或是读上几行希腊奴隶为其主子译为优美拉丁文的荷马史诗。

不同类型的改革家

不过在几个贵族世家里，古老共和国时代的质朴品德和无私的服务精神还保持着。科内莉亚是阿非利加将军西皮奥的女儿，她嫁给一位名为格拉古的罗马贵族。她生下两个儿子，一个叫提比略，一个叫盖约斯。长大后，两人都进入了政坛，并努力实施了几项急需的改革措施。提比略·格拉古当选为保民官，他想帮助处于困境自由民。为此，他恢复了两项古代的法律，把个人可以拥有的土地数量限制在一定的范围内。他希望通过此项改革，复兴对国家极有价值的小土地所有者阶层。可他的行动遭到了富人们的仇视，暴发户们称他为“强盗”和“国家公敌”。他们策动街头暴乱，一群暴徒被雇佣来要杀死这位深受爱戴的保民官。一天，当提比略步入公民会议的会场时，暴徒们一拥而上攻击他，将他殴打致死。10 年之后，他的兄弟盖约斯再度尝试改革国家，以抵制势力强大的特权阶层的无理要求。他制定了一部“贫民法”，初衷是想帮助那些失去土地、处于赤贫状态的农民。可事与愿违，这部法律最终却使得大部分罗马公民沦为了乞丐。

盖约斯在帝国的边区为贫民建立起一些居留地，可这些居留地没能吸引到它们想收容的那类人。在盖约斯·格拉古做出更多好意的坏事前，他也被暗杀了。他的追随者要么被杀，要么被流放。这最初的两位改革者属

于贵族绅士，可随后的两位却是截然不同的类型。他们是职业军人，其中一人名为马略，另一位叫苏拉。各自拥有一大群支持者。

苏拉是庄园主的领袖，而马略身为在阿尔卑斯山脚歼灭条顿人和西姆赖特人的那场伟大战役的胜利者，是被剥夺财产的自由民们的英雄。

在公元前 88 年，从亚洲传来一些谣言，让元老院大感不安。据说黑海沿岸的一个国家，国王名为米特拉达特斯，其母亲是希腊人，他正厉兵秣马、大有重建第二个亚历山大帝国的可能。作为其世界远征的开始，米特拉达特斯先是杀光了小亚细亚一带的所有罗马公民，连妇孺都不放过。这样的行为对罗马当然意味着战争。元老院装备了一支军队去征讨这位国王，惩罚他的罪行。但究竟由谁来担任统帅呢？元老院说，“当然由苏拉担任，因为他是执政官。”而民众却说，“我们拥护马略，他应该担任军队总指挥。因为他不仅做过五次执政官，而且他维护我们的利益。”

争执中，拥有财产的最终获胜。苏拉事实上控制了军队。他率军东征，讨伐米特拉达特斯，马略被迫逃到非洲，静待反击的时机。当他听说苏拉率领的军队已抵达亚洲，便返回意大利，纠集了一批不满现状的乌合之众，气势汹汹地朝罗马进军。马略率领着这帮人轻而易举地进入罗马城，用五天五夜的时间来——清洗他在元老院的政治对手。最终，马略让自己顺利当选为执政官，可随即因前两周的过度兴奋而猝死。

接下来的 4 年里，罗马一直处于混乱状态。此时，苏拉打垮了米特拉达特斯，声言已准备好回罗马来了结一些个人恩怨。他确实言出必行。一连好几个星期，他的士兵使劲地屠杀自己的同胞，只要是被怀疑同情民主改革的人他们都不放过。一天，他们抓住一个常常陪同马略出人的年轻人，准备将他吊死。这时有旁人说，“饶了他吧！这孩子还太小。”于是士兵放过了他。这位逃过一劫的年轻人名叫裘利斯·恺撒，我们下面马上会讲到他。

至于苏拉，他当了“独裁官”，意思就是罗马帝国及其全部财产、属地的唯一而至高的统治者。他在位 4 年后退休，安详地死于卧榻。像许多一辈子屠杀自己同胞的罗马人一样，他的晚年悠闲适意，把大部分的时间花在了浇花种菜上。

三人同盟

不过罗马的政治情势并未因苏拉的死去而好转，相反，局势急转直下。苏拉的密友庞培将军再度领军东征，讨伐不断给帝国制造麻烦的米特拉达特斯国王。庞培将这位精力旺盛的反抗者赶入山区，四面包围起来。绝望的米特拉达特斯深知，若成为罗马人的俘虏，等待他命运将是什么。于是他也像多年前穷途末路的汉尼拔一样，服毒自杀了。

庞培继续攻城略地。他打败叙利亚，将其重新置于罗马的统治之下；他摧毁了耶路撒冷，并挥师席卷整个西亚，试图重建一个罗马人的亚历山大帝国。最后在公元 62 年，他返回罗马，随行的 12 艘舰船上满载着被他俘虏的国王、王子和将军。在罗马人为庞培举行的盛大凯旋仪式上，这些曾显赫一时的国王将军们被迫走在队列之中，作为庞培伟大战功的一部分向罗马民众展示。此外，这位将军还向罗马献上了高达 4000 多万的财富。

现在，罗马确实需要一位政治强人来统治。仅仅在几个月前，罗马城险些落入一个一无是处的年轻贵族之手。此人名叫卡梯林，因赌博输光了家产。他妄图发动政变，以便趁火打劫，捞一笔钱来弥补自己的损失。一个颇具公众精神的律师西塞罗察觉了卡梯林的阴谋，及时向元老院告发他。卡梯林被迫逃亡。可危机依然存在，罗马城到处是野心勃勃的年轻人，随时准备着向政府发难。

于是由功勋卓著的庞培将军出面，组织了一个三人同盟来负责处理政府事务。他本人则担任这个三人委员会的领袖。其次是裘利斯·恺撒，因为在做西班牙总督期间获得了良好声望，他坐上了第二把交椅。排在第三位的克拉苏是无足轻重的角色，他的当选完全是因其拥有的惊人财富。因为成功承办罗马军队的战争给养与物资装备，克拉苏大发其财。可还没来得及充分享受他的财富和地位，他便被派遣远征帕提亚，迅速阵亡了。

至于恺撒，他属于三人之中最有能力的一个。他断定，为实现自己更宏大的目标，他需要建立一些辉煌的战功，使自己成为大众崇拜的英雄。于是恺撒出发去征服世界。他越过阿尔卑斯山，征服了现在被称为法国的欧洲荒野。接着，他在莱茵河上架设了一座坚实的木桥，侵入条顿人的土地。最后他搜罗船只，造访英格兰。若不是因为国内局势使他被迫返回意大利，天知道恺撒的远征会打到什么地方。

恺撒之死

在征途中，恺撒突然接到国内的消息，告之庞培已被任命为“终身独裁官”。这意味着恺撒的名字只能被列入“退休军官”的名单，他将失去通向更显赫位置的可能性。雄心勃勃的恺撒当然不喜欢这种情形。想当年，他是跟随马略开始他的军事生涯的。他决定要给元老院和他们的“终身独裁官”一个教训。于是，他率军渡过分隔阿尔卑斯高卢行省和意大利的鲁比康河，向罗马挺进。所过之处，老百姓将他当作“人民之友”来热烈欢迎。他一举攻入罗马，庞培被迫逃到希腊。恺撒率军追击，在法尔萨拉附近击败庞培及其追随者。庞培渡过地中海，逃往埃及。当他登陆后，年轻的埃及国王托勒密命人暗杀了他。几天后，恺撒也抵达埃及，随即发现自己落入了一个阴谋的陷阱。埃及人和仍忠于庞培的罗马驻军联合向他发动攻击。

不过，恺撒很走运。他成功地焚毁了埃及舰队。可不巧的是，大火迸出的火星落在埃及著名的亚历山大图书馆的屋顶上（它正好位于码头边），将这座珍藏着无数古代典籍的建筑付之一炬。摧毁埃及海军后，恺撒回过头来进攻埃及陆军，将惊慌溃逃的士兵赶进尼罗河，托勒密本人也溺水身亡，随即建立了一个以已故国王的姐姐克娄帕特拉为首的新政府。此时又有消息传来，米特拉达特斯的儿子兼继承人法那西斯准备发动战争，为自杀的父亲复仇。恺撒立刻挥师北上，持续作战五昼夜，打败了法那西斯。在给元老院的捷报中，他为世人留下了一句名言，“Veni, vidi, vici”，意思是“我来了，我看见了，我征服了！”

然后恺撒返回埃及，不可救药地坠入情网，拜倒在女王克娄帕特拉魅力非凡的裙下。公元46年，恺撒携克娄帕特拉一起返回罗马，接掌政权。在其辉煌的一生中，恺撒赢得了四次重大战争，四次举行凯旋入城仪式，每次都威风八面地走在游行队伍的最前头。他如愿以偿地成为了人民膜拜的英雄。

恺撒来到元老院，向元老们描述他波澜壮阔的冒险事业。于是感激涕零的元老们任命他为“独裁官”，为期10年。这是致命的一步。

新任独裁官施行了许多有力的措施，来改革危机四伏的国家现状。他让自由民获得了成为元老院成员资格。他恢复罗马古制，给予边疆地区的人民以公民权。他允许“外国人”参与政府，对国家政策施加一定的影响。他改革了某些边远行省的行政管理，以免它们沦为某些贵族世家领地和私有财产。一句话，恺撒做了许多照顾大多数人利益的事情，因而也成为特权阶层的敌人。50个年轻贵族联合策划了一个“拯救共和国”的阴谋。按恺撒从埃及引进的新历，也就是3月15日那天，他步入元老院出席会议，一群年轻贵族蜂拥而上，将他杀害。罗马再一次没有了领袖。

渥大维

有两个人试图延续恺撒的光荣。一个是安东尼，恺撒的前秘书。另一个是渥大维，恺撒的外甥兼地产继承人。渥大维留在罗马，而安东尼去了埃及。似乎罗马将军都有爱江山更爱美女的习惯，安东尼也陷入克娄巴特拉的情网，荒废军政，无以自拔。

渥大维和安东尼两人为争夺罗马统治权爆发了战争。在阿克提翁战役中，渥大维大败安东尼。安东尼自杀，留下克娄帕特拉独自面对敌人。她施展所有的魅力和手段，想使渥大维成为自己征服的第三位罗马人。可这位罗马贵族骄傲无比，根本不为所动。当得悉渥大维打算把自己作为凯旋仪式上展示的战利品时，克娄帕特拉自杀了。托勒密王朝的最后一位继承者死去，埃及变成罗马的一个省。

渥大维是一位很有头脑的年轻人，他没有再犯他著名舅舅的错误。他深知，如果言语过分是会把人吓退的。所以当他返回罗马时，他提出要求的措辞就变得非常节制。他说不想当“独裁官”，只需一个“光荣者”的头衔就完全心满意足了。不过几年后，当元老院授予他“奥古斯都”（神圣、卓越、显赫）称号时，他欣然接受了。又过了几年，街上的市民们开始叫他“恺撒”或“皇帝”，惯于将他视为统帅和总司令的士兵则称他“元首”。就这样，共和国不知不觉变成了帝国，可普通的罗马人竟一点也没意识到。

到公元14年，渥大维作为罗马人民的绝对统治者的地位已不可动摇。他受到神一般的崇拜，他的继承者随之成为真正的“皇帝”，即历史上一个空前强大的帝国的绝对统治者。

事实上，一般罗马百姓对长期的无政府状态和混乱局势早已厌倦。只要新主人给他们一个平静生活的机会，只要不再听到时时传来的街头的暴动喧嚣声，他们才不在乎谁统治他们呢。渥大维给了他的臣民们40年和

平的生活。他没有继续扩张领土的欲望。公元 9 年，他对定居于欧洲西北荒野的条顿人发动了一场战争。结果他的将军尼禄和所有士兵在条顿堡森林全军覆没。从此，罗马人再未打算教化这些野蛮民族。

他们把精力放在堆积如山的国内问题上，试图挽回局面，不过已经为时太晚。两个世纪的国内革命和对外战争使得年轻一代的优秀分子死伤殆尽。战争摧毁了自由农民，使这个阶层归于消亡。由于大量引进奴隶劳动，自由民根本无法与大庄园主竞争。战争还使得城市变成了一个个蜂巢，里面栖居着大量贫苦而肮脏的破产农民。战争滋生出一个庞大的官僚阶层，小吏们拿着少得可怜的薪水，不得不接受贿赂以养家糊口。最遭的是，战争使人民对暴力和流血视若无睹，甚至形成了一种以他人的痛苦为乐的麻木不仁的心理。

从外表上看，公元 1 世纪的罗马帝国无疑是一个辉煌庄严的政治体，疆域辽阔，连亚历山大的帝国都变成它一个微不足道的行省。不过在其辉煌下面，生活着的却是成百上千万穷苦而疲倦的人民，终日劳碌挣扎，像在巨石下孜孜筑巢的蚂蚁。他们辛苦工作的成果为他人享受。他们吃牲畜吃的食物，住牛棚马圈一样的房子。他们在绝望中死去。

斗转星移，到了罗马建国第 753 年。此时，裘利斯·恺撒 渥大维·奥古斯都正住在帕拉坦山的宫殿里，忙于处理国事。

在一个遥远的叙利亚小村庄里，木匠约瑟夫的妻子玛利亚正在悉心照料她的小男孩，一个诞生在伯利恒马槽里的孩子。

这是一个奇妙的世界。

最终，王宫和马槽将要相遇，发生公开的斗争。

而马槽将取得最后的胜利。

第二十四章 拿撒勒人约书亚

拿撒勒人约书亚，也就是希腊人所称的耶稣的故事

罗马建城第 815 年的秋天，即公元 62 年，罗马外科医生埃斯库拉庇俄司·卡尔蒂拉斯写信给正在叙利亚步兵团服役的外甥，全信如下：

我亲爱的外甥：

几天前，我被请去为一个名叫保罗的病人诊病。他是犹太裔的罗马公民，看上去教养良好，仪态优雅。我听说他是因为一桩诉讼案来到这里的。该案由该撒利亚或者某个东地中海地区法庭起诉的，具体地方我不太清楚。人们曾向我形容说，这位保罗是个“野蛮且凶狠”的家伙，曾经四处发表反对人民与违反法律的讲演。可当亲眼看见他的时候，我发现此人才智出众，诚实守信。

我的一位朋友过去曾在小亚细亚的驻军中服役，他告诉我曾听说过一点保罗在以弗所传教的事情，好像他在宣扬一位新上帝。我问我的病人，此说是否属实，还有他是不是真的号召过人民起来反抗我们所敬爱的皇帝陛下的意志？保罗回答说，他所宣讲的国度并不属于这个世界。另外，他还讲了许多奇奇怪怪的言辞，我一点都听不明白。我暗地想，他讲这些胡话大概是由于发高烧的缘故。

可无论如何，他的高尚为人与优雅个性给我留下了极深的印象。听到几天前他在奥斯提亚大道上被人杀害的消息，我觉得非常伤心。所以我写这封信给你。当你下次路过耶路撒冷的时候，我希望你能帮忙了解一些我的朋友保罗的故事，还有他宣讲的那位似乎是他导师的新奇的犹太先知。我们的奴隶们听说了这位所谓的弥赛亚（救世主），一个个都显得异常激动。其中有几人还因为公开谈论这一“新的国度”（不管它是什么意思），被钉上十字架处死。我很希望搞清这些传言的真相。

你忠实的舅舅
埃斯库拉庇俄司·卡尔蒂拉斯

六星期后，外甥格拉丢斯·恩萨，高卢第七步兵团上尉给舅舅口信，全文如下：

亲爱的舅舅：

收到你的来信，我已照你的吩咐去了解情况。

两星期前，我所在的部队被派往耶路撒冷。由于这座城市在上世纪经历了数次革命，战火殃及，老城区的建筑已所剩无几。我们来此已近一个月，明天即将转赴佩德拉地区。据说那里有一些阿拉伯部落在活动，不时劫掠村庄。今天一晚正好用来给你复信，回答你的问题。但千万别奢望我能给出详细的报告。

我和这座城市的大部分老人都交谈过，可很少有人能告诉我确切的信息。几天前，一个商贩来到军营附近。我买了他一些橄榄，顺便跟他闲聊起来。我问他是否知道那位著名的弥赛亚，就是很年轻的时候便被杀死的。他说他记得非常清楚，因为他父亲曾带他去各他（耶路撒冷城外的小山）观看死刑的场面，以便警示他违反法律、沦为犹太人民公敌的人会遭到什么下场。他给了我一个地址，让我去找一个叫约瑟夫的人，因为此人曾经是弥赛亚的好朋友。临了，这位商贩还再三叮嘱说，若想知道得更多，一定要去找这位约瑟夫。

今天上午，我去了约瑟夫家。此人过去是淡水湖边的渔夫，如今已经老态龙钟了。不过他思维清晰，记忆力依然相当健旺。从他那里，我终于了解到在我出生前那个动荡年代所发生的确切情况。

当时在位的是我们伟大而光荣的皇帝提庇留，而担任犹太与撒马利亚地区总督的人名叫彼拉多。约瑟夫对这位彼拉多了解不多。不过看起来他是一个诚实清白的人，在作地方长官期间他留下了正派廉洁的名声。在783或784年（罗马历），约瑟夫记不清具体的时间，彼拉多被派往耶路撒冷处理一场骚乱。据说，一位年轻人（木匠约瑟的儿子）正在策动反对罗马政府的革命。奇怪的是，我们的情报官员向来消息灵通，可对此事却毫不知情。待他们调查过整个事件后，他们报告说，这位年轻木匠的儿子是纯良守法的公民，没有理由控告他。可犹太教的老派领袖们，据约瑟夫说：对这一结果非常不满。由于这位木匠的儿子在希伯莱贫穷大众中广受欢迎，难免使高高在上的祭司们生出嫉恨之心。于是他们向彼拉多揭发说，这个“拿撒勒人”曾公开宣称，无论希腊人、罗马人，还是腓利士人，只要他努力去过正派高尚的生活，他就和一个终其一生研究摩西律法的犹太人一样，都是具有高贵德性的人。起初，彼拉多对这些争议不甚在意。不过，当聚集在庙宇周围的人群威胁要私刑处死耶稣，并杀光他所有的追随者时，他决定将这位木匠的儿子拘留起来，以挽救他的性命。

彼拉多似乎并不理解这场争论的真正实质。当他要求犹太祭司们解释他们对这位木匠的儿子到底有何不满时，祭司们便高叫着，“异端”！“叛徒”！。情绪异常激动。约瑟夫告诉我，最后，彼拉多叫人把约书亚（约书亚是拿撒勒人的名字，不过生活在这一地区的希腊人都把他叫作耶稣）带到面前，单独询问他。他们交谈了好几个小时。彼拉多问到那些所谓的“危险教义”，就是约书亚在加利利海边布道时曾经宣讲过的。可耶稣只是平静地回答说，他从不涉及政治。比起人的肉体，他更为关心的是人的灵魂。他希望所有的人都视旁人为自己的兄弟，敬爱一个唯一的上帝，因为他是所有生灵的父亲。

彼拉多对斯多葛学派和其他希腊哲学家的思想有过很深的造诣，不过他似乎看不出耶稣的言论有什么特别煽动人心的地方。据约瑟夫讲，彼拉多又作了一次努力，以挽救这位仁慈先知的性命。他一直拖延着，避免对耶稣定刑。与此同时，群情激奋的犹太人在祭司们的再三鼓动之下，变得歇斯底里。之前，耶路撒冷已经发生过多次骚乱，可驻扎在附近能随时听候召唤的罗马士兵却为数甚少。人们向该撒利的罗马当局递交报告，控告彼拉多总督“对拿撒勒人的危险教义入了迷，沦为异端的牺牲品”。城市里到处都发生了请愿活动，要求召回彼拉多；撤消他的总督职位，因为他已经变成帝国皇帝的敌人。你知道，我们的政府对驻海外总督有一条严格规定，那就是必须避免与当地属民发生公开冲突。为避免国家陷入内战，彼拉多最终不得不牺牲掉他的囚犯约书亚。约书亚以令人钦敬的尊严态度接受了这种结局，并对所有憎恨他的人施以宽恕。最终，在耶路撒冷群众的狂叫与嘲笑声中，他被钉上十字架处死了。

这就是约瑟夫给我讲的事情。他一边讲，一边涕泗横流，哀恸之情让人颇为不忍。离开时，我递给他一个金币，不过他拒绝收下，还请求我把金币施与比他更贫穷、更需要帮助的人。我也向他问到了你的朋友保罗的事情，不过他了解

不多。保罗似乎原本是一名做帐篷的，后来他放弃了职业，为的是能一心宣讲他那位仁爱宽容的上帝。这位上帝与犹太祭司们一直以来向我们描述的耶和华有着截然不同的性情。后来，保罗游历了小亚细亚和希腊的许多地方，告诉奴隶们，他们全都是同一位仁慈天父的孩子，不论富有或贫穷，只有尽力过诚实的生活，为那些遭难和悲惨的人做善事，就能进入天国，就有幸福的前景在等待他们。

我了解的情况就这么多，希望我的答复能让您满意。就帝国的安全来说，我倒看不出这整个故事有任何危险的地方。不过话说回来，我们罗马人是不可能真正理解生活在这一地区的人民的。我很遗憾他们杀死了你的朋友保罗。真希望此时我能在家里闭门思过。

你忠实的外甥

格拉丢斯·恩萨

第二十五章 罗马帝国的衰亡

罗马帝国的黄昏

古代历史教科书把公元 476 年定为罗马帝国灭亡之年，因为在那一年，末代罗马皇帝被赶下了宝座。不过正如罗马的建立并非朝夕之功，罗马的灭亡也是一个缓慢消亡的过程，以至绝大多数罗马人根本未能觉察到他们热爱的旧世界气数已尽。他们抱怨时局的动荡，喟叹生活之艰难。食品价格奇高，可工人的薪水少得可怜。他们诅咒奸商们囤积居奇的行为。这些人垄断了谷物、羊毛和金币，只管自己牟取暴利。有时遇上一个贪得无厌、横征暴敛的总督，他们也会起来造反。不过总的说起来，在公元头 4 个世纪里，大多数的罗马人依旧过着正常日子。他们照常吃喝（视钱囊的鼓瘪，尽量购买），他们照常爱恨（根据他们各自的性格），他们照常去剧场（只要有免费的角斗士搏击表演）。当然，像所有时代一样，也有不幸的人们饿死。可生活在继续，而人们一点不知道，他们的帝国已注定要灭亡的命运。

他们怎么意识得到迫在眉睫的危险呢？罗马帝国正在处处显示着辉煌繁荣的外景。有宽阔畅通的大道连接各个省份；有帝国警察在勤勉地工作，毫不留情地清除拦路盗贼；边界防御良好，使居住在欧洲北部荒野的蛮族不能越雷池一步；全世界都在向强大的罗马进贡纳税；而且，还有一群精明能干的人们在夜以继日地工作，试图纠正过去的错误，争取使帝国重返共和国早期的幸福岁月。

不过正如我在上一章讲过的，罗马帝国的根基已经锈蚀，造成它衰败的深层原因从未被弄清楚，因此任什么改革都不能挽救其注定灭亡的命运。

从根本上说，罗马首先且一直是一个城邦，跟古希腊的雅典或科林斯并无多大区别。它有足够的力量主宰整个意大利半岛。可要作整个文明世界的统治者，罗马从政治上说是不合格的，从实力上讲是无法承受的。它的年轻人大多数死于常年的战争。它的农民被沉重的军役和赋税拖垮，不是沦为职业乞丐，就是受雇于富有的庄园主，以劳动换取食宿，成为依附于富人们的“农奴”。这些不幸的农民既非奴隶，也不是自由民，他们像树木和牲畜一样，成为他们所侍奉的那块土地上的附属品，终身无法离开。

帝国的荣耀是最高目标。国家意味着一切，普通公民则什么也不是。至于悲惨的奴隶，他们兴奋地倾听保罗宣讲的言辞，接受了那位谦卑的拿撒勒木匠所散布的福音。他们并不反抗自己的主人，相反，他们被教导要温柔顺从，尽力遵照主人的意旨行事。不过，既然眼前的世界无非是一个悲惨的寄身之所，不能有所改进，奴隶们也就全然丧失了对现世的兴趣。他们宁愿“打那美好的仗”，为进入天堂乐土而倾力付出。但他们不愿为罗马帝国打仗，因为那不过是某个野心勃勃的皇帝为渴求更多辉煌的胜利，在努米底亚或帕提亚或苏格兰发动的侵略战争。

这样，一个又一个世纪过去了，情形变得越来越糟。最初几位罗马皇帝还肯保持“领袖”传统，授权部族的头人管住各自的属民。可二、三世纪的罗马皇帝却是些职业军人，变成了地地道道的“兵营皇帝”，其生存全系于他们的保鏢，即所谓禁卫军的忠诚。皇位的轮换如走马灯，你方唱罢我登台，靠着谋杀劈开通向帝王宝座的道路。随后，篡位者又迅速地被谋杀，因为另一个野心家掌握了足够财富，能贿赂禁卫军发动新一轮的政变。

与此同时，野蛮民族正在频频敲击北方边境的大门。由于再没有土生土长的罗马士兵可抵御侵略，只能招募些外国雇佣军去对付来犯者。这些外国雇佣兵可能正巧与他抗击的敌人属于同一种族，不难想见，他们在战斗中很容易产生对敌人的怜悯之情。最后，皇帝决定实验一种新措施，允许一些野蛮部族在帝国境内定居。其他的部族也接踵而至。不过他们很快就怨气冲天，抗议贪婪的罗马税吏夺走他们仅有的一切。当他们呼声未能得到重视，他们便进军罗马，更大声的呼吁，以便得到皇帝陛下的声音。

东罗马帝国

这样的事情常常发生，使得作为帝国首都的罗马变成了一个令人不快的居所。康士坦丁皇帝（公元 23 至 337 年在位）开始寻找一个新首都。他选择了位于欧亚之间的通商门户拜占庭，将其重新命名为君士坦丁堡，把皇宫迁到这里。康士坦丁死后，为更有效率地管理，他的两个儿子便将罗马帝国一分为二。哥哥住在罗马，统治帝国的西部；弟弟留在君士坦丁堡，成为东罗马的主人。

接下来到了公元 4 世纪，可怕的匈奴人造访欧洲。这些神秘的亚洲骑兵在欧洲北部整整驰骋了两个世纪，以杀人流血为职业，祸患四方，直到公元 451 年在法国沙隆的马恩河被彻底击败为止。当匈奴人进军到多瑙河附近，对当地定居的哥特人产生了极大的威胁。为了生存，哥特人被迫侵入罗马境内。瓦伦斯皇帝试图抵御哥特人，在公元 378 年战死于亚特里亚堡。22 年后，同一群西哥特人在国王阿拉里克率领下，向西挺进，袭击了罗马。他们没有大肆劫掠，只是毁坏了几座宫殿。接着来犯的是汪达尔人，他们对这座具有悠久历史传统的城市缺乏敬意，纵火抢劫，造成极大的破坏。接下来是勃艮弟人，然后东哥特人，阿拉曼尼人，法兰克人……，侵略没完没了。罗马最终变成了任何野心家都唾手可得的猎物，只要他能召集一批追随之亡命之徒。

公元 402 年，西罗马皇帝逃往拉维纳。这里是一座海港，城墙高大，防御坚固。就是在这座海滨堡垒，公元 475 年，日尔曼雇佣军的指挥官鄂多萨企图瓜分意大利的土地。于是，他采用温和而有效的手段，将最后一任西罗马帝国皇帝罗慕洛·奥古斯塔斯赶下了宝座，宣布自己是罗马的新主宰。正被国内事务弄得焦头烂额的东罗马皇帝无暇他顾，只得承认这一事实。鄂多萨统治西罗马帝国余下的省份，长达十年之久。

过了几年，东哥特国王西奥多里克率部侵入这个新建立的王国，攻克拉维纳，在鄂多萨自己的餐桌上杀

死了他。西奥多里克在西罗马帝国的废墟上建立起一个哥特王国。这个国家也未能维持多久。到公元 6 世纪，一伙伦巴德人、撒克逊人、斯拉夫人、阿瓦人拼凑起来的乌合之众侵入意大利，摧毁哥特王国，建立了一个以帕维亚为首都的新国家。

连绵的战火，最终使帝国的首都沦为一片无人照管、绝望蔓延的瓦砾。古老的宫殿被强盗们反复洗劫，只剩下空空如也的残垣颓壁。学校被烧毁，老师们被活活饿死。富人被赶出他们的别墅，取而代之的是浑身毛发、散发恶臭的野蛮人。帝国的大道因年旧失修而塌陷，桥梁断绝，早已不堪使用。曾经兴盛的商业贸易停顿了，繁荣的意大利变成了一块死寂之地。世界的文明——历经埃及人、巴比伦人、希腊人、罗马人几千年的辛苦工作所创造的成果，曾把人类的生活提升到他们的远祖不敢梦想的境界，如今却面临在西方大陆上消亡的危险。

当然，远东的君士坦丁堡作为帝国的中心还继续存在了 1000 年。不过它很难被看作是欧洲大陆的一部分。它的兴趣和心思都朝向东方，忘记了自己是欧洲出身。渐渐地，拉丁语让位于希腊语，罗马字母被废弃不用，罗马法律用希腊文重写，并由希腊法官加以解释。东罗马皇帝成为受到神一样崇拜的君主，其情形如同 3000 年前尼罗河谷的底比斯。当拜占庭的传教士想要寻找新的活动领地时，他们便向东行进，把拜占庭文明带到俄罗斯的广阔荒野。

至于西方，已落入了蛮族之手。在大约 12 个世代里，谋杀、战争、纵火、劫掠成为统治世界的原则。只有这一样东西，它使得欧洲文明免于彻底的毁灭，使人们不至重返穴居与茹毛饮血的时代。

这就是教会——由那些千百年来承认是拿撒勒木匠耶稣的追随者的谦卑男女所组成的群体。而这位卑微的拿撒勒人之死，原是为了使光荣的罗马帝国免于发生在叙利亚边境上一个小城市的街头暴乱。

第二十六章 教会的兴起

罗马如何成为基督教世界的中心

新教徒到来

生活在帝国时代的普通罗马知识分子，他们对祖先们世代敬拜的神祇并无多大兴趣。他们每年定期去神庙朝拜几次，不是由于信仰，仅仅是出于对习俗的尊重而已。当人们神情肃穆地列队游行，庆祝某个重大的宗教

节日时，他们只是耐心而宽容的冷眼旁观，少有参与。在他们眼里，罗马人对朱庇特（众神之王）、密涅瓦（智慧女神）、尼普顿（海神）的崇拜是些幼稚可笑的东西，属于共和国初创时期简陋的遗留物。对于一个精研斯多葛学派、伊壁鸠鲁学派和其他伟大雅典哲学家的著作的人来说，它显然不是一个合适的课题。

这种态度使得罗马人对宗教信仰非常宽容。政府规定，所有人民，无论罗马人、侨居罗马的外国人、以及接受罗马统治的希腊人、巴比伦人、犹太人等等，他们都应该对按法律竖立在所有神庙中的皇帝像表示某种形式的敬意。这就像好多美国邮局挂有总统画像，让人们可以行注目礼。但这仅仅是一种形式，并无更深的含义。一般来讲，每一个罗马公民都有权赞颂、崇敬、爱慕他个人喜欢的神。这种宗教宽容的结果就是，罗马各地遍布形形色色、奇奇怪怪的小神庙和小教堂，里面敬拜着源自埃及、非洲、亚洲的各式各样的神祇。

当第一批基督耶稣的信徒们抵达罗马，开始宣讲他们“爱人如己，人人都是兄弟”的新信仰时，没人站出来反对。随后还有些好奇的路人停下脚步，聆听这些传教士新鲜的言辞。作为一个庞大帝国的首都，当时的罗马充斥着五花八门、四处周游的传教士，个个都在传播自己的“神秘之道”。这些自封的传道者一般诉诸人们的理性，向他们大声疾呼，对那些愿意追随自己所宣讲的神的人，允诺金色的未来和无尽的喜悦。

不久之后，聚集在大街上的群众开始发觉，那些所谓的“基督徒”（意为基督耶稣的跟从者或被上帝用膏油涂抹嘱咐的人）宣讲的是一些他们从未听说过的东西。他们似乎根本不关注财富的多少或地位的高贵与否，相反，他们对贫穷、谦卑、顺从等等美德大加赞颂。而罗马之所以成为世界强国，凭借的刚好不是这些品德。在四海升平、战功远播的帝国全盛时期，有人竟来告诉罗马的人民，世俗的成功并不能担保他们永久的幸福，这倒是挺有意思的事情。

更何况，这些传播基督“神秘之道”的传教士还讲到了那些拒绝聆听真神话语的人们，等待他们的命运将悲惨无比，简直让人恐怖。很显然，碰运气可不是什么好的法子。当然，还有罗马的旧神在，他们就住在不远处。不过他们是否有足够的威力来保护他们的老朋友，对抗刚刚从遥远亚洲传到欧洲的新上帝的权威呢？人们开始恐慌，开始怀疑。他们又回到基督徒传教的地方，希望进一步弄清这些教义的条条款款。又过了不久，他们开始与宣传基督福音的男男女女们有了私下的接触，发现他们的为人处事与罗马的僧侣截然不同。他们个个衣衫槛楼、一贫如洗，对奴隶和动物友爱有加。他们从不试图聚敛财富，反倒倾其所有来帮助穷人和病人。他们无私利人的生活榜样触动了许多罗马人，使他们放弃了原有的信仰，加入基督徒组成的小社团。他们在私人住宅的密室或露天田野的某处聚会，罗马的庙宇冷寂了。

教会的成长

一年年过去，传教工作一如既往，基督徒的人数在持续增加。他们推选神父或长老（“Presbyters”，希腊语意为“老年人”）负责保护小社团的利益。每一个行省的所有社团还选出一位主教，作为这一地区的基督教首领。继保罗之后来罗马传教的彼得成为了第一任罗马主教。到某个时候，彼得的继任者（信徒亲切地称呼他“父亲”或“爸爸”）便开始被称为“教皇”了。

教会逐渐成长为罗马帝国之内的一个颇具影响力和权势的机构。基督教义不仅感染着许多对现世绝望的人们，而且还吸引了大量天资聪颖、精明强干的能人。这些人在帝国政府内飞黄腾达无门，却能在拿撒勒导师的跟随者中间施展他们的领导才能。最后，帝国政府不得不引起注意，正视基督教的存在了。正如我前面讲过的，罗马政府原则上允许所有臣民以自己喜欢的方式寻求灵魂的拯救，但政府要求，所有的宗教应该和平共处，遵循“自己生存，也让别人生存”的明智原则。

但基督教社团却拒绝任何宽容与妥协。他们公开宣称他们的上帝，唯独他们的上帝是宇宙与尘世的真正主宰，而所有别的神不过是冒名顶替的骗子。这种说法显得对其他宗教很不公平，帝国警察不得不出面干预此类言行，可基督徒们依然坚持。

不久，更大的冲突产生了。基督徒拒绝施行对罗马皇帝表达敬意的礼仪，他们还拒服帝国的兵役。罗马行政当局威胁要惩罚他们，他们却回答说，我们生存的这个悲惨世界只不过是进入天堂乐土的“过道”，我们宁愿丧失现世的生命，也不愿违背信仰的准则。罗马人对这样的言行大惑不解，偶尔杀死几个敢于反抗的基督徒，但大部分时候都是听之任之。在教会成立的初期，发生过一些私刑处死基督徒的情形，不过这都是暴民们的行为。他们对自己温顺的基督徒邻居胡乱指控，污蔑他们犯下了各种各样离奇古怪的罪行，比如杀人、吃婴儿、散布疾病和瘟疫、出卖国家于危难之际等等。这些罪行出自暴徒们疯狂而阴险的想象力，他们知道基督徒是不会以暴易暴的，因此他们能够轻易地处死基督徒，却不怕招致报复。

与此同时，罗马一直在受到蛮族的侵略。当罗马军队的刀剑无能为力时，基督传教士却挺身上前，向野蛮的条顿人宣讲他们的和平福音。他们都是些不畏死的坚定信仰者，气度沉稳，言之凿凿。讲到拒不悔改的人在地狱的悲惨情形，让条顿人不由自主感到深深的触动。条顿人对古罗马的智慧向来怀有敬意，他们想，这些人既然来自罗马，那他们讲的大有可能是事实。这样，在条顿人和法兰克人聚居的蛮荒之域，基督传教团很快成为一支强大的力量。六个传教士抵得上整整一个罗马军团的威力。罗马皇帝开始意识到，基督教对帝国可能会大有益处。于是在某些行省，基督徒获得了与信仰古老宗教的人们同样的权利。不过发生根本性的变化，还要等到公元4世纪下半叶。

康士坦丁受洗

当时在位的皇帝是康士坦丁，有时他也被称为康士坦丁大帝（天知道人们为什么这样称呼）。此人算得上一个可怕的暴君，不过在那个严酷的年代，一个仁慈温顺的皇帝是很难活下去的。在其漫长坎坷的生涯里，康士坦丁经历了数不清的沉浮变幻。有一回，他几乎到了被敌人击败的边缘。他想，也许该试试这个人人都谈论的亚洲新上帝，看看他到底有多大威力。于是他发誓，如果在即将来临的战役中获胜，他就信仰基督。结果他大败敌军。从此，康士坦丁信服了基督教上帝的权能，接受洗礼作了基督徒。

从那时开始，基督教得到罗马官方的正式承认，这极大地增强了它在罗马的地位。

不过基督徒在罗马的全部人口中依然处于少数，大约只占5%—6%。为赢得最终胜利，使所有群众信仰基督，他们拒绝任何妥协。形形色色的旧神祇必须被摧毁，主宰世界的只能是基督教唯一的上帝。有一段时间，热爱希腊智慧的朱利安皇帝在位，他努力拯救异教的神祇，使它们免于被损毁。不过他不久在征讨波斯的战役中受伤致死。继任的朱维安皇帝重新树立起基督教的绝对权威，古老的异教神庙一个接一个关门大吉。接下来是查士丁尼皇帝，他下令在君士坦丁堡修建著名的圣索菲亚大教堂，把柏拉图创建的历史悠久的雅典学园彻底关闭。

这一历史时刻是古希腊世界的终结。人们可以照自己的想法自由思考，按自己的愿望梦想未来的时代黯然逝去了。当野蛮和愚昧的洪水横扫大地，冲毁旧有的秩序，要指导生活之舟在惊涛骇浪中把握航向，古希腊哲学家的行为准则便显得有些模糊而不可靠了。人们很难再依赖它们作为生活的向导。人们需要一些更积极而明确的东西。这正是教会可以提供的。

基督教的最后胜利

在一个世界摇摇欲坠、万事皆不确定的时代里，只有教会像岩石般坚强屹立，坚持真理和神圣准则，从不因危险和情势的变迁而退缩。这种坚定的勇气不仅赢得了群众的爱慕，也同时让罗马教会安然度过了那些毁灭罗马帝国的灾难。

不过，基督教的最后胜利也有一丝幸运的成分。当公元5世纪，西奥多里克建立的罗马——哥特王国覆灭之后，意大利受到的外来侵略相对减少。继任哥特人统治意大利的伦巴德人、撒克逊人和斯拉夫人，他们属于实力较弱的落后部落。在这种宽松的环境下，罗马的主教们才得以维持他们城市的独立。不久，分散在意大利半岛的诸多残余小国便承认罗马大公（即罗马主教）为他们政治和精神的领袖。

历史的舞台已经准备就绪，期待一位强人的登场了。此人名叫格利高里，在公元590年出现于众人的视野。格利高里属于旧罗马的贵族统治阶层，曾做过“完美者”，即罗马市的市长。之后，他做了僧侣，进而成为主教。最后，他本人很不情愿地（因为他本想作一名传教士，到蛮荒的英格兰向异教徒传播基督的福音）他被拉到圣彼得大教堂，加封为教皇。他仅仅在位14年，不过当他死去时，整个西欧的基督教世界都已正式承认罗马主教，即教皇，为整个基督教会的领袖。

不过，罗马教皇的权威未能朝东方扩展。在君士坦丁堡，东罗马帝国依然延续着罗马的旧传统，将奥古斯都和提庇留的继任者（东罗马皇帝）视为政府的最高统治者和国教领袖。公元1453年，土耳其人经长期围困之后攻陷了君士坦丁堡。最后一位东罗马皇帝康士坦丁·帕利奥洛格在圣索菲亚大教堂的台阶上被土耳其士兵杀死。残存了另外1000年的东罗马帝国终于覆灭了。

几年前，帕利奥洛格的兄长托马斯之女伊公主嫁给俄罗斯的伊凡三世为妻。这样一来，莫斯科大公便顺理成章成为了君士坦丁堡传统的继承人。古老的拜占庭双鹰标志（纪念罗马被分为东罗马和西罗马的日子）延

续到现代俄罗斯的徽章之中，曾经仅仅是俄罗斯首席贵族的大公摇身而为沙皇。他获得了罗马皇帝一样的崇高与威严，凌驾于所有臣民之上。在他面前，无论贵族还是农奴，都是无足轻重的奴隶。

沙皇的宫殿依东方风格而建，这是东罗马皇帝从亚洲和埃及引入的，外形酷似亚历山大大帝的王宫（按他们的自我恭维）。垂死的拜占庭帝国流传给一个不确定世界的这份奇特遗产，以蓬勃的精力在俄罗斯广袤无边的大草原上继续生存，度过了6个漫长的世纪。最后一个佩戴拜占庭双鹰标志皇冠的是沙皇尼古拉二世，可以说，他是在不久前才被杀害的，尸体被扔进一口井里。与他一起死去的还有他的儿子和女儿们。所有他享有的古老特权也一并被废除，教会在俄罗斯的地位又回到了康士坦丁皇帝之前的罗马时代。

不过罗马天主教会的遭遇却截然不同。正如我们在下一章将会看到的，整个基督教世界将面临一个阿拉伯放牧骆驼的先知者的威胁。

第二十七章 穆罕默德

赶骆驼者阿哈默德成为阿拉伯沙漠的先知，为了唯一真主安拉的荣耀，他的追随者几乎征服了整个世界

出生麦地那

自从迦太基和汉尼拔之后，我们再未说起过伟大的闪米特种族。如果你记性不错，你应该还能想起他们的事迹是如何体现在本书讲述古代世界的所有章节的。巴比伦人、亚述人、腓尼基人、犹太人、阿拉米人、迦勒底人，这些统治西亚三四千年的民族都属于闪米特种族。后来，他们被来自东面的印欧语族的波斯人和来自西面的印欧种族的希腊人夹击，终于丧失了统治地位。亚历山大大帝死去100年后，腓尼基人的非洲殖民地迦太基城和罗马共和国展开了争夺地中海统治权的战争。迦太基战败后为罗马人彻底摧毁。此后的800年，罗马人一直是世界之主。

不过到公元7世纪，又一支闪米特部族赫然出现在历史的地平线上，挑战西方世界的权威。他们就是阿拉伯人，游牧在阿拉伯沙漠的天性温和的牧羊人部落。一开始，他们并未流露出任何帝国野心的征兆。后来，他们追随了穆罕默德，听从他的训导，跨上远征的战马。在不到1个世纪里，阿拉伯骑兵已经推进到欧洲的心脏地带，向浑身颤抖、惊慌失措的法兰西农民，宣讲“唯一的真神安拉”的荣耀和“安拉的先知”穆罕默德的信条。

阿哈默德是阿布达拉和阿米娜的儿子，世人皆称他为“穆罕默德”，意思是“该受赞美的人”。他的生平事迹读起来就像《一千零一夜》里的一个故事。穆罕默德生于麦加，原来的职业是赶骆驼行商者。他似乎患过癫痫病，每逢发病便会昏迷不醒。昏迷期间，他做了奇特的梦，听见大天使迦伯列向他说话。这些话后来被记载到圣书《古兰经》里。因为作商队首领，穆罕默德走遍了阿拉伯各地，经常与犹太商贾和基督徒生意人交往。通过和他们的接触，穆罕默德认识到崇拜唯一的上帝是件很有益的事情。当时他的阿拉伯人民还如其几千年前的祖辈一样，敬拜奇怪的石头和树干。在他们的圣城麦加，至今保存着一座方形神殿，其中供奉的黑石等许多器物就属于伏都教崇拜的遗迹。”

穆罕默德决心成为阿拉伯人的摩西。他不能一边赶骆驼，一边当先知。于是，他迎娶了他的雇主查迪雅，一个有钱的寡妇，先使自己获得了经济上的独立。之后，他开始向邻居们布道，称自己就是众人期盼已久的先知，真主安拉派遣他来拯救世界。听罢他的话，邻居们不仅不理睬，反而大加嘲笑。但穆罕默德非常执着，继续向邻居们讲道，终于让他们觉得烦扰了。他们将他视为疯子和令人讨厌的家伙，根本不值得同情，决意要杀死他。穆罕默德获悉了这一阴谋，和他最信任的学生阿布·伯克尔一起，连夜出逃麦地那。这件事情发生在公元622年。它后来成为伊斯兰教历史上最重要的一个日子，即穆斯林纪元——纪念穆罕默德出走麦地那。

圣书《古兰经》

在故乡麦加城，人人都知道穆罕默德是一个赶骆驼者。而在麦地那，他完全是一个陌生人，因此他作为先知的传道事业顺利了许多。不久之后，他身边便聚集起越来越多的追随者，即穆斯林，意为“顺从神旨”的信徒。而“顺从神旨”正是穆罕默德赞美的最高品德。随着事业的发展，穆罕默德积聚了足够的力量，强大到足以对那些敢于嘲笑的他本人和他的神圣使命的邻居开战了。他率领一支麦地那人组成的军队，自己走在前头，浩浩荡荡地穿越沙漠。他的追随者没费多大力气就拿下麦加，并杀死了许多当地居民。这样一来，要让其他人相信穆罕默德真的是一位伟大先知，就变得相当容易了。

从那以后，一直到穆罕默德逝世，他所进行的一切事业都非常顺利。

伊斯兰教的成功有两个主要原因。首先，穆罕默德教导追随者们的教义非常简单明了。信徒们被告知，他们必须热爱宇宙的主宰，仁慈而怜悯的神安拉。他们必须敬奉父母，顺从父母的命令。他们在交往时不得欺诈邻居，要温顺谦卑，对穷人和病人乐善好施。最后，禁止饮用烈酒，在吃用方面不得奢侈浪费。就是这些。伊斯兰教里没有像基督教的“看护羊群的牧人”，即那些需要众人掏腰包供养的教士和主教们。穆斯林的教堂，清真寺，仅仅是巨大的石砌大厅，里面不设桌椅板凳，信徒们可以在此聚集（如果他们自己愿意），阅读和讨论圣书《古兰经》里的某个章节。不过对一般的穆斯林来说，他们的信仰与生俱来，从不觉得伊斯兰教的戒条和规矩对他们是一种身心的束缚。每天五次，他们面朝圣城麦加的方向，念诵简单的祷词。其余时间里，他们把世界交给安拉去管理，以极大的耐心和顺从，接受命运安排给自己的一切。

这样一种对待生活的态度，当然不会鼓励信徒们去发明电动机、修筑铁路或开发新的汽船航线。但它确实给予了每个穆斯林相当程度的内心满足。它使人们心平气和地对待自身、对待自己栖身的这个世界，这当然是件很好的事情。

征服欧洲

穆斯林与基督徒作战取得胜利的第二个原因在于：走上前线与敌人作战的穆斯林士兵为的是信仰的实现。先知穆罕默德曾经许诺，凡是勇敢面对敌人，死于战场的穆斯林，他们可以直接升入天堂。这就使得战场上的猝然死去，比起在这个可悲的世界上漫长而乏味的苦苦生存，让人更情愿接受前者。这种信念使穆斯林与十字军对垒时，占据了极大的心理优势。十字军们长期恐惧于黑暗的地狱，因此宁愿尽可能抓住今生的美好事物，留恋现世的享受。这一点也能解释，为什么到了今天，穆斯林士兵依然可以奋不顾身冲入欧洲人的枪林弹雨，全然不顾被机枪射杀的命运。正因为如此，他们一直是危险而顽强的对手。

将他的宗教大厦整顿就序后，穆罕默德开始享受作为众多阿拉伯部落公认领袖的权力，不过，他的成功往往是剥夺了大量身处逆境的人们的权利才得来的。为赢得富人阶层的好感，穆罕默德特意制定了一些有利于富人的规定，比如他允许信徒娶四个妻子。在那个时代，娶妻的习俗是男子直接从女方父母家购买。娶一房妻子已经是一项花费不菲的投资，娶四个妻子当然是纯粹的奢侈。除非是那些拥有单峰驼和椰枣园的大富之家，普通贪财之人也难以奢望此种享受。伊斯兰教本是为生活在穷荒大漠的劳苦牧人而创立的，可随时势的发展，它逐渐变化到以迎合生活在城市别墅中的富商的需要。这一离其初衷的转变令人遗憾，对穆罕默德的伟大事业也并无好处。至于先知本人，他继续传布安拉的真理，颁布新的行为标准，为事业不辞劳苦。直至在公元 632 年 6 月 7 日，穆罕默德因热病突然辞世。

穆罕默德的继任者被称为哈里发，意为“穆斯林的领袖”。首先继任的是他的岳父阿布·艾克尔，他曾与穆罕默德出生入死，一起经历了创业初期的患难岁月。两年后，阿布·艾克尔死去，由奥马尔继位。在不到十年的时间里，奥马尔率军相继征服了埃及、波斯、腓尼基、叙利亚、巴勒斯坦等地，并定都大马士革，建立起第一个伊斯兰世界帝国。

奥马尔之后，穆罕默德的女儿法蒂玛的丈夫阿里继任哈里发。在一场关于伊斯兰教义的争吵中，阿里被谋杀。自他死后，哈里发成为世袭制度，而原先的宗教领袖们摇身成为一个庞大帝国的统治者。他们在幼发拉底河岸靠近巴比伦遗址的地方修建新都，将其命名为巴格达。他们将阿拉伯牧民组织成威力无比的骑兵兵团，开始出发去远征，向异教世界传播穆罕默德的福音。公元 700 年，穆斯林将军泰里克跨越赫尔克里斯门，到达欧洲海岸的陡峭岩壁。泰里克将此地名命为直布尔，也称泰里克山或直布罗陀。

在 11 年后的泽克勒斯战役中，泰里克击败了西哥特国王率领的军队。之后，穆斯林骑兵继续北上，沿汉尼拔进军罗马的路线，穿越比利牛斯山的山隘。阿奎塔尼亚大公试图在波尔多附近阻击穆斯林军队，但功败垂成。下一个目标就是巴黎，穆斯林骑兵继续向北挺进。不过公元 732 年，就是穆罕默德逝世 100 年后，在图尔和普瓦捷之间发生了一场欧亚大会战，穆斯林军队被击败。在那一天，法兰克人的首领查理·马泰尔（绰号铁锤查理）拯救了欧洲，使基督教世界免遭穆斯林的征服。穆斯林军队被赶出了法兰西，但他们依然占据着西班牙。阿卜德·艾尔·拉赫曼在此建立了科尔多瓦哈里发国，成为欧洲中世纪最伟大的科学和艺术中心。

这个穆斯林王国统治西班牙长达 7 个世纪，历史上也称摩尔王国，因为它的统治者来自摩洛哥的毛里塔尼亚地区。一直到穆斯林在欧洲的最后一个堡垒，格拉纳达于 1492 年陷落之后，哥伦布才得到西班牙皇室的委

任状，授权他进行地理大发现的历史性航行。不久之后，穆斯林又积聚力量，在亚洲和非洲征服了许多土地。到今天，穆罕默德追随者的人数几乎与基督徒一样多。

第二十八章 查理曼大帝

法兰克人的国王查理曼赢得皇冠，试图重温世界帝国的旧梦

普瓦捷战役将欧洲从穆斯林手中拯救出来，但欧洲内部的敌人——随罗马警察的消失而出现的无可救药的混乱状态，却依然存在。它无时无刻地不在威胁着欧洲的安全。的确，北部欧洲那些新近皈依基督信仰的民族，对威望崇高的罗马主教怀有深刻的敬意。但是当可怜的主教大人远眺北方的巍峨群山时，却并无一丝一毫的安全感。天知道又有哪支蛮族部落会突然崛起，在一夜之间跨越阿尔卑斯山，出现在罗马的城门前。这位世界的精神领袖感觉有必要，且非常有必要，寻找一位刀剑锋利、拳头结实的同盟者，以便在危难时刻随时保护教皇陛下的安全。

于是，不仅极其神圣，而且非常务实的教皇们开始苦心积虑，物色起盟友来。很快，教皇将目光投向了一支最有希望的日尔曼部落。这支部落在罗马帝国覆灭之后便一直占据着西北欧洲，史称法兰克人。他们早期的一位国王名叫墨罗维西，在公元 451 年的加泰罗尼亚战役中，他曾帮助罗马人一起击败过纵横欧洲的匈奴人。他的子孙建立起墨罗温王朝，并一点一滴地蚕食罗马帝国的领土。到公元 486 年，国王克洛维斯（古法语中的“路易”）自觉已经积累了足够的实力，可以公开向罗马人叫阵了。不过他的子孙都是些懦弱无能之辈，把国事全部委托给首相，即所谓的“宫廷管家”。

矮子丕平是著名的查理·马泰尔之子，他继任父亲作宫相后，对面临的情势觉得一筹莫展。他的国王是位全心全意侍奉上帝的神学家，对政治漠不关心。丕平于是向教皇大人征求建议，非常务实的教皇回答说，“国家的权力应该归于实际控制它的人。”丕平马上领会了教皇的言下之意，于是劝说墨罗温王朝的最后一位国君蔡尔特里克出家去当僧侣。在征得其他日尔曼部落酋长的同意之后，丕平自立为法兰克国王。不过，仅仅当国王还不能使精明的丕平觉得满意，他还梦想着得到比日尔曼部落酋长更高的荣耀。他精心策划了一个加冕仪式，邀请西北欧的最伟大的传教士博尼费斯为他涂抹膏油，封他为“上帝恩许的国王”。于是，“上帝恩许”这个字眼轻易地溜进了加冕仪式之中，过了几乎 1500 年才把它清除出去。

丕平对教会的善意扶持表示衷心的感谢。他两次远征意大利，与教皇的敌人作战。他从伦巴德人手中夺取了拉维纳及其他几座城市，将它们奉献给神圣的教皇陛下。教皇将这些新征服的领地并入所谓的“教皇国”，一直到半个世纪之前，它还作为一个独立的国家而存在。

丕平死后，罗马教会和埃克斯·拉·夏佩勒或尼姆韦根或英格尔海姆（法兰克国王没有固定的办公地点，总是携大臣和官员们不断从一个地方迁移到另一个地方）之间的关系日益亲密，最终，教皇和国王一起采取了一个将深刻影响欧洲历史的重大行动。

公元 768 年，查理，一般称为卡洛勒斯·玛格纳斯或查理曼，继任为法兰克国王。查理曼征服了德国东部原属撒克逊人的土地，并在欧洲北部大量兴建城镇和教堂。应阿布·艾尔·拉赫曼的敌人之邀，查理曼侵入西班牙，与摩尔人激战。但在比利牛斯山区，他遭到野蛮的巴斯克人的袭击，被迫撤退。就在这关键时刻，布列塔尼亚侯爵罗兰挺身而出，展现出早期法兰克贵族效忠国王的精神。为掩护皇家军队的撤退，罗兰牺牲了自己和他忠诚部属的生命。他的事迹在欧洲广为传唱，成为后代骑士们倾慕与效仿的偶像。

不过，到了公元 8 世纪的最后 10 年，查理曼不得不将其全部精力放到解决欧洲南部的诸多纠纷之上。教皇利奥八世受到一群罗马暴徒的袭击，暴徒们以为他死了，将他的尸体随便扔在大街上。一些好心的路人为教皇包扎伤口，并帮助他逃到查理曼的军营。一支法兰克军队被迅速派出，平定了罗马城的骚乱。利奥八世在法兰克士兵的护卫下回到拉特朗宫，这里从康士坦丁时代开始，便一直是历代教皇的住所。到公元 799 年 12 月，即教皇被袭事件发生后第二年的圣诞节，查理曼当时呆在罗马，正在出席在圣彼得大教堂举行的盛大祈祷仪式。当查理曼念完祷词准备起身之际，教皇把一顶事先准备好的皇冠戴在他头上，宣布他为罗马皇帝，并且以好几百年没有使用过的“奥古斯都”的伟大称号，带领众人向他热烈欢呼。

现在，欧洲北部再度成为罗马帝国的一部分了。不过帝国的至高尊严，此时却为一个只认得简单几个字而从未学会过书写的日尔曼酋长所拥有。不过，他精于作战，在一段时期内恢复了欧洲的和平与秩序。过不多久，甚至连他的对手，君士坦丁堡的东罗马皇帝也写信给这位“亲爱的兄弟”，向他表达亲睦与赞许。

很不幸，这位精明能干的老人死于公元 814 年。查理曼一死，他的儿孙立即为争夺最大份额的帝国遗产，相互攻伐，激战连连。卡罗林王朝的国土被两次瓜分，一次是根据公元 843 年的凡尔登条约，一次是根据公元 870 年在缪士河畔签订的默森条约。后者把整个法兰克王国一分为二。“勇敢者”查理接管了帝国的西半部分，包括旧罗马时代的高卢行省。在这一地区，当地居民的语言早已全盘拉丁化，这就是法兰西这样一个纯属日尔曼民族的国家，用的却是拉丁语的原因。

查理曼的另一个孙子获得了帝国的东半部分，即被日尔曼族人称为“日尔曼尼”的地方。这片蛮荒强悍的土地从来就不属于罗马帝国的辖区。奥古斯都大帝（渥大维）曾试图征服这片“遥远的东方”，不过当公元 9 年他的军队在条顿森林全军覆没后，他再未做过此类尝试。该地区的居民没有受过高度发展的罗马文明的教化，他们使用的是普通的条顿方言。条顿语里，“人民”（People）被称为“thiot”，基督教传教士因此把日尔曼民族使用的语言叫做“大众方言”或“条顿人的语言”（lingua teutisca），“teutisca”一词后来逐渐演变为“Deutsch”，这就是“德意志”（Deutschland）这一称呼的来源。

至于那顶众人觊觎的帝国皇冠，它很快从卡罗林王朝继承者的头上，滚回到意大利平原，成为一些小君主、小权谋家手里的玩物。他们相互争斗，通过屠杀和流血盗得皇冠，戴在头上（不管教皇陛下允许与否），不久便为另一个更强大的邻居夺走。可怜的教皇再度卷入旋涡的中心，被敌人四面包围，被迫向北方发出求救的呼吁，不过这次他没找西法兰克王国的统治者。他的信使翻越阿尔卑斯山，去拜见撒克逊亲王奥托，他是当时日尔曼各部落所公认的最伟大领导者。

奥托和他的日尔曼族人一样，向来对意大利半岛的蔚蓝天空和欢快美丽的人民抱有好感。一听到教皇陛下的召唤，他马上率兵救援。作为对奥托忠心效劳的酬报，教皇利奥八世封他为“皇帝”。从此，查理曼王国的东半部分便成为了“日尔曼民族的神圣罗马帝国”。

这一奇特的政治产物以其顽强的生命力延续了很久，一直到 839 岁的高龄。公元 1801 年，即托马斯·杰斐逊就任美国总统那一年，它被毫不留情地扫进了历史垃圾堆。摧毁这个旧日尔曼帝国的粗野家伙是一位循规蹈矩的公证员的儿子，来自法国科西嘉岛，他靠着在法兰西共和国服役期间的军功而飞黄腾达。他统帅的近卫军团以骁勇善战著称。在其帮助下，这个人成为了欧洲事实上的统治者，不过他还梦想比这更多的东西。他派人从罗马把教皇请来，为他举行加冕仪式。仪式上，教皇只能尴尬地站在一旁，眼巴巴看着这个身材矮小的家伙亲手把帝国皇冠戴在了自己头上，并大声宣布他是查理曼大帝光荣传统的继承人。此人就是著名的拿破仑将军。历史犹如人生，变幻越无常，但是万变不离其宗。

第二十九章 北欧人

为什么 10 世纪的人们会祈祷上帝
保护他们免遭北欧人怒火的侵害

在公元 3 世纪和 4 世纪，中欧的日尔曼部落常常突破罗马帝国的边疆防御，长驱直入去劫掠罗马，靠抢夺当地的民脂民膏为生。到公元 8 世纪，报应终于到来，轮到日尔曼人自己成为“被劫掠”的对象了。他们对这种情形深恶痛绝，可强盗正是他们近亲表兄，即那些居住在丹麦、挪威和瑞典的斯堪的纳维亚人。

至于是什么原因驱使这些勤苦耐劳的水手去从事海盗生涯的，我们目前还搞不清楚。不过当这些北欧人尝到了抢劫的甜头和海盗生活自由自在的乐趣，就再没人能阻止他们。他们常常突然登陆某个坐落在河口附近的法兰克人或弗里西亚人的小村庄，像从天而降的瘟疫，打破小村子的和平安宁。他们杀光所有男人，掠走全部妇女，然后驾着他们的快船风驰而去。当国工或皇帝陛下的大队人马赶到现场时，强盗们早已远走高飞，只剩下了一堆冒着烟的废墟。

在查理曼大帝去世后的混乱岁月里，北欧海盗活动频繁，其行径更加大胆猖獗。他们的海盗船队光顾了欧洲所有的滨海国家，他们的水手沿荷兰、法兰西、英格兰及德国的海岸，建立起一系列独立小国。他们甚至远航到意大利碰运气。这些北欧人异常聪明。他们很快学会讲被征服民族的语言，抛弃了早期维京人（也是海盗）外表肮脏粗野、行为凶残野蛮的不文明习俗。

公元 10 世纪初期，一个叫罗洛的维京人多次侵扰法国海岸地区。当时的法国国王懦弱无能，无法抵御这些来自北方的凶悍强盗。于是，他想出一个法子，准备贿赂他们“做良民”。他允诺，如果他们保证不再骚扰他的其余属地，他就把诺曼底地区奉送给他们。罗洛同意了这笔交易，定居下来作了“诺曼底大公”。

不过，罗洛征服的热情一直延续到他子孙后代的血液中。面朝狭窄的海峡，在不到几小时的航程之外，就是他们能够清楚遥望到的英格兰海岸的白色岩壁和碧绿田野。可怜的英格兰经历了多少不堪回首的困难岁月啊！先是作了 200 年罗马帝国的殖民地。罗马人走后，它又被来自欧洲北部石勒苏益格的两个日尔曼部族，盎格鲁人和撒克逊人征服。随后，丹麦人越海而来，攻占了英格兰的大部分土地，建立起克努特王国。到公元 11 世纪，经过长期的抗争，丹麦人终于被赶走，一个撒克逊人做了国王，他被叫做忏悔者爱德华。他身体不好，看起来活不了多长时间，也没有后裔继承王位。这样的情形对野心勃勃的诺曼底大公当然是非常有利，他悄悄积蓄力量，等待发难的时机。

公元 1066 年，爱德华去世，继承英格兰王位的是威塞克斯亲王哈洛德。诺曼底大公率军渡海，开始了征服英格兰的战争。他在黑斯廷战役中击败了哈洛德，自封为英格兰国王。

你们在上一章已经看见过了，在公元 800 年时，一个日尔曼酋长摇身一变，成为了伟大的罗马帝国皇帝。现在到公元 1066 年，一个北欧海盗的子孙又被承认为英格兰国王。历史上的真人真事如此有趣，远胜过荒诞不经的神话，我们还有什么必要去读神话故事呢？

第三十章 封建制度

欧洲中部受到来自三个方向的敌人威胁，变成了地道的
大兵营。如果没有那些作为职业战士的骑士和封建体制之一
的行政官员，欧洲早已不复存在。

法兰西王国与日耳曼民族

现在，我要讲讲公元 1000 年时欧洲的普遍景况。当时的大多数欧洲人过着悲惨困顿的生活，商业凋敝，农事荒废，关于世界末日即将到来的预言四处流传。人们惶恐不安，纷纷涌到修道院当僧侣。因为迎接末日审判的最为保险的办法，当然是在这一时刻来临时，自己正在虔诚地侍奉上帝。

在一个很久远的年代里，日尔曼部族离开了中亚的群山，向西迁移。凭着人数众多，他们强行敲开罗马帝国的大门，肆意推进，毁灭了庞大的西罗马帝国。东罗马之所以能够幸免，完全得益于他们远离日尔曼民族大迁徙的途径。不过它也变成了昨日黄花，只能在苟延残在西罗马覆灭后的动乱年代（公元六、七世纪是欧洲历史上真正的黑暗年代），日尔曼人接受传教士们耐心的教导，皈依了基督教，承认罗马主教为教皇，也就是世界的精神领袖。到了公元 9 世纪，凭着出色的个人才能，查理曼大帝复兴了罗马帝国的光荣传统，将西欧大部分地区纳入一个统一的国家。可到 10 世纪，这个苦心组织的帝国在查理曼不肖子孙的争权夺利中土崩瓦解。其西半部分成为一个单独的王国——法兰西，其东半部分被称为日尔曼民族的神圣罗马帝国，其境内的各国统治者都声称自己是恺撒和奥古斯都的直接继承人，以获得名正言顺的统治地位。

不过很不幸的是，法兰西国王的权力从没能越出他们皇家居住地的城堡之外，而神圣罗马帝国的皇帝则常常受到实力强大的臣属们出于自身利益的公然挑战。他们的称号皆有名无实。

更增添人民痛苦的是，西欧三角地带一直受到来自三个方向的凶恶敌人的挑战：南面是危险的穆罕默德信徒，他们占领着西班牙；西海岸常常受到北欧海盗的滋扰；而东面除一小段喀尔巴阡山脉可以稍稍阻挡侵略者的马队，其它军事防御形同虚设，只能听任匈奴人、匈牙利人、斯拉夫人和鞑靼人的蹂躏。

罗马时代的升平景象已成为遥远的过去，人们只能在梦中回忆这一去不返的“好日子”。现在欧洲面临的局势是，“要么战斗，要么死”！很自然，人们宁愿拿起武器。出于环境的逼迫，公元 1000 年后的欧洲变成了一个大兵营，人们大声吁求强有力的领导者。可国王和皇帝离得太远，解不了燃眉之急。于是，边疆居民（事实上，公元 1000 年的大部分欧洲地区都属于边疆）必须自救，他们很情愿地服从国王的代表，即由他派出来管理本地地区的行政长官，只有他们才有能力保护属民免遭外敌的侵害。

很快，欧洲中部布满了大大小小的公国、侯国，每一个国家根据不同的情形，分别由一位公爵、伯爵、男爵或主教大人担任统治者。这些公爵、伯爵、男爵们统统宣誓效忠于“封邑”的国王（封邑为“feudum”，这也是封建制（feudal）一词的由来），以战争时期的尽忠服役和平时纳税进贡作为对国王分封土地的回报。不过在那个交通不便、通讯联系不畅的年代，皇帝和国王的权威很难迅速到达他们属地的所有角落，因此这些陛下任命的管理者们享有很大程度的独立性。事实上，在属于自己管辖的土地内，他们僭越了大部分本属于国王的权力。

城堡和骑士

不过要是你以为 11 世纪的普通老百姓反对这种行政体制，那你就大错特错了。他们支持封建制，因为这在当时是一种非常必需且富于实效的政治制度。他们的大人或领主通常住在高大坚固的石头城堡里面，矗立于陡峭的岩壁之上，或者四周环有深险的护城河。城堡就坐落在封地属民们看得见的地方，时时给他们极大的安全感和信心。一俟危险来临，臣民们可以躲进领主城堡的坚固高墙内避难。这也是当时的居民总是尽可能住得接近城堡的原因，而大部分的欧洲城市都起源于靠近封建城堡的地方，也出于同一原因。

还必须指出一点，欧洲中世纪早期的骑士并不仅仅是一名职业战士，他还是那个时代的公务员。他担任社区的法官，裁判刑事案件，处理民间纠纷；他是负责治安的警察首脑，抓捕拦路盗贼，保护四方游走的小贩（他们就是 11 世纪的商人）。他还担当着照看水坝的职责，以免四周的乡野受洪水之患（就像 4000 年前的埃及法老在尼罗河谷的所作所为）。他赞助走村串户的吟诗人，让他们向目不识丁的居民们朗诵赞美大迁徙时代的战争英雄的史诗。另外，他还必须保护辖区内的教堂与修道院。尽管他自己不会读书写字（当时这类事情被认为是缺乏男子气），他却雇佣着一小撮教士为他记帐，并登记发生在所属男爵或公爵领地里的婚姻、死亡、出生等等大事。

到公元 15 世纪，国王们又重新强大起来，能够充分行使他们作为“上帝恩许”之人所应拥有的权力。这样，封建骑士们丧失了原来的独立王国，沦为普通乡绅。他们不再适台时势的需要，很快变成令人讨厌的怪物。但是我想为他们说句公道话，如果没有“封建制度”，欧洲不可能安然度过那个黑暗年代。当然，如同今天存在许许多多的坏人一样，那个时代也同样有许多行为不端的骑士。但总的来讲，十二、十三世纪的硬拳头男爵们大多数是些刻苦耐劳、工作勤奋的行政管理者，为历史的进步事业做出过极有价值的贡献。在那个年代，曾经照亮埃及人、希腊人、罗马人的文化与艺术的火炬，它的光芒已异常微弱，差点就要熄灭。如果没有骑士及他的好朋友僧侣，欧洲文明将整体灭绝，而欧洲人也会回到原始的穴居时代，把历史的进程从茹毛饮血开始，重新走上一遍。

第三十一章 骑士精神

欧洲中世纪的职业战士会尝试建立某种形式的组织，可以相互扶助，维护共同利益。出于这种密切团结的需要，骑士制及骑士精神便从此诞生了。

我们对于骑士制度的起源知之甚少。但随着这一制度的不断发展，它正好给当时混乱无序的社会提供了一种极其需要的东西——一整套明确的行为准则。它多少缓和了那个时代的野蛮习俗，使生活变得比此前 500 年的黑暗时代稍微容易一些，精致一些。想要教化粗野的边疆居民，这并非易事。他们大部分时间在与穆斯林、匈奴人或北欧海盗苦苦作战，挣扎在不是你死就是我亡的残酷环境中。作为基督徒，他们当然对自己的堕落行为深感忏悔。他们每天早晨发誓从善，向上帝许诺要行为仁慈和态度宽容。可不等太阳落山，他们便把诺言抛诸脑后，一口气杀光所有的俘虏。不过进步来自于缓慢而坚持不懈的努力。最终，连最无法无天的骑士都不得不遵守他们所属“阶层”的准则，否则就要自食其果。

这些骑士准则或骑士精神在欧洲各地不尽相同，但它们无一例外地强调“服务精神”和“敬忠职守”。在中世纪，“服务”被视为非常高贵、非常优美的品德。做仆人并无任何丢脸之处，只要你是一个好仆人，对工作勤勤恳恳、毫不懈怠。至于忠诚，当处于一个必须忠实履行许多职责才能维持正常生活的时代，它当然会成为骑士们首屈一指的重要品德。

因此，一个年轻骑士起誓，他将永远做上帝忠实的仆人，同时也将终其一生忠心耿耿侍奉他的国王。此外，他还允诺向那些比自己更穷苦的人们慷慨解囊。他发誓要行为谦卑，言辞适当，永不夸耀自己的功绩。他将与所有的受苦大众做朋友，但穆斯林除外。他们是他一见到就该杀掉的凶险敌人。

究其实质，这些誓词不过是把十诫的内容，以中世纪人民能够理解的语言通俗化地表达出来。围绕着它们，骑士们还发展出一套关于礼貌和行为举止的复杂礼仪。中世纪的骑士努力以亚瑟王的圆桌武士和查理曼大帝的宫廷贵族为榜样，正如普罗旺斯骑士的抒情诗或骑士英雄的史诗向他们述说的那样。他们期望自己勇敢如朗斯洛特，忠诚如罗兰伯爵。不管他们衣着多么简朴甚至褴褛，不管他们是不是囊中羞涩，腹中空空，但他们总是态度尊严，言语优雅，行为有节，保持着骑士的声誉。

这样，骑士团成了一所培养优雅举止的大学校，而礼貌仪态正好是保持社会机器正常运作的润滑剂。骑士精神意味着谦虚有礼，向周围世界展示着如何搭配衣着、如何优雅进餐、如何彬彬有礼地邀女士共舞以及其他成百上千日常生活的礼节。这些东西都有助于使生活变得更有趣，更宜人。

像所有的人类制度一样，骑士制度一旦衰老无用，它便注定了灭亡的命运。

十字军东征带动了商业的复兴。城市一夜之间星罗棋布于欧洲的原野。使用雇佣军作战，便不可能再像下棋那样，以精致的步骤和富于美感的策划来指挥一场战役。骑士变成了纯粹多余的摆设，骑士精神成为了不合时宜的奢侈品。当骑士们献身理想的高尚情操失去其实用价值后，他们本人也沦为某种荒诞可笑的角色。

据说，尊贵的堂吉河德先生是世界上最后一位真正的骑士。自从他去世后，伴他相依为命、勇闯天涯的盔甲和宝剑被相继拍卖，以抵偿他留下的个人债务。不过不知怎么，他的宝剑似乎还落到过许多人之手。在福奇谷的严冬里，华盛顿将军佩带过它。在喀土穆被包围的绝望日子里，戈登将军拒绝抛弃把生命托付给他的人民，勇敢地等待着死亡的命运。当时，这把宝剑是他唯一的武器。

我不太清楚它在刚刚过去的世界大战究竟中发挥了多大作用，但事实证明，它的价值是难以估量的。

第三十二章 教皇与皇帝之争

中世纪人民奇特的双重效忠制度，以及由此引发的教皇与神圣罗马帝国皇帝之间的无尽争斗

孤陋寡闻的中世纪

要想真正理解以往时代的人们，搞清楚他们的行为方式、他们思想动机，是一件异常困难的事情。你每天都能看见的自己的祖父，他仿佛就是一个无论在思想、衣着和行为态度上，都生活在一个不同世界的神秘人物。你难道不是费尽心思地认识他，绞尽脑汁地想要理解他，但往往无功而返吗。我现在给你讲述的，是比你祖父早 25 代的老爷爷们的故事。如果你们不把这一章重读几遍，我想你们是不能真正理解其意义的。

中世纪的普通老百姓生活简朴，平淡无奇的岁月中少有特别的事情发生。即便是一个自由市民，可以随心所欲地来去，他的生活范围也极少超出自己居住的邻区。读物当然少得可怜，除少量的手抄本在极小的范围内流传，根本不存在印刷的书籍。在各个地方，总有一小批勤勉的僧侣在教人读书、写字、学习简单的算术。至于科学、历史和地理，它们早已深埋于古希腊和古罗马的废墟之下，湮灭无闻了。

人们对过去时代的了解，大都来自于他们日常听闻的故事和传奇。这些由父亲讲给儿子的代代相传的故事，能以令人惊奇的准确性保存了历史的主要事实，只在细节上有轻微的出入。2000 多年过去了，印度的母亲们为让淘气的孩子安静下来，依然会吓唬他们说，“再不听话，伊斯坎达尔要来捉你了！”这位伊斯坎达尔不是别人，他就是公元前 330 年率军横扫印度的亚历山大大帝。他的故事经过几千年，依然在印度的大地上流传。

中世纪的人们从未读过任何一本有关罗马历史的教科书。事实上，他们在许多事情上显得非常无知，甚至连现代的小学三年级儿童应该了解的起码知识他们都不具备。但对于罗马帝国，它在你们现代读者看来仅仅是一个空泛的名词，而在他们眼里却不亚于活生生的现实。他们用皮肤和心灵体会到它的存在。他们心甘情愿地

承认教皇是自己的精神领袖，因为教皇住在罗马城，代表着罗马帝国这一深入人心的伟大观念。当查理曼大帝及后来的奥托大帝复兴了“世界帝国”的梦想，创建起神圣罗马帝国，人们打心眼里是觉得欣喜和感激，因为他们心目中的世界本该是这个样子。

强硬的教会

不过，罗马传统存在着两个不同继承人这一事实，却将中世纪虔诚顺服的自由民们推向了尴尬的两难处境。支撑中世纪政治制度的理论明确而简单，即世俗世界的统治者（皇帝）负责照顾臣民们物质方面的利益，而精神世界的统治者（教皇）负责照顾他们的灵魂。

不过在实际执行的时候，这一体系暴露出许多难以克服的毛病。皇帝总是试图插手教会事务，而教皇针锋相对，不断指点皇帝应怎样管理他的国家。继而，他们开始用很不礼貌的语言相互警告，让对方别多管闲事。这样一来二往，双方便免不了要大打出手了。

在此情形下，普通老百姓能怎么办呢？一个好的基督徒是既忠于教皇又服从国王的。可教皇与皇帝成了仇人。作为一个负责任的国民，同时又是一个虔诚的教徒，他到底应该站在哪一边呢？

给出正确的答案真是挺困难的。有时皇帝碰巧是位精力充沛的政治强人，又有充足的财源用来组织一支强大的军队，那他便大可以越过阿尔卑斯山向罗马进军，把教皇的宫殿围个密不透风（这要视需要而定），最终迫使教皇陛下服从帝国的指示，否则就要自食其果。

但更多的情形是教皇方面更强大。于是，这位敢于违抗教旨的皇帝或国王，连同他的全部无罪国民，将被一起开除教籍，逐出教会。这意味着要关闭境内所有教堂，人们不能受洗，也没有神父给垂死之人举行临终忏悔，下地狱将成为必然的事情。一句话，中世纪政府的一半职能都被取消了。

更糟的是，教皇还免除了人们对其君主的效忠宣誓，鼓励他们起来反抗“叛教”的主人。可人们若是真的遵从了教皇陛下的指示，而被近处的国王抓住，等待他们的将是绞刑架。这也不是一件可以闹着玩的事情。

事实上，教皇与皇帝的对抗一旦发生，普通人民的处境将会变得相当艰难。而最倒霉的，莫过于那些生活在公元 11 世纪下半叶的人们。当时的德国国王亨利四世和教皇格利高里七世打了两场不分胜负的战役，非但没解决任何问题，倒使欧洲陷入混乱达 50 年之久。

在 11 世纪中期，教会内部出现了激烈的改革运动。当时，教皇的产生方式还极不正规。对神圣罗马帝国的皇帝来说，他当然希望把一位易于相处、对帝国抱有好感的教士送上教廷的宝座。因此每逢选举教皇的时候，皇帝们总是亲临罗马，运用他们的影响力，为自己的朋友捞取利益。

新教皇格利高里七世与亨利四世

不过到公元 1059 年，情况发生了变化。根据教皇尼古拉二世的命令，成立了一个由罗马附近教区的主教及执事所组成的红衣主教团。这群地位显赫的教会头目被赋予了选举未来教皇的绝对权力。

公元 1073 年，红衣主教团选出了新教皇格利高里七世。此人原名希尔布兰德，出生于托斯卡纳地区的一个极普通人家。他具有超乎常人的野心和旺盛的精力。格利高里深信，教皇的超然权力应该是建立在花岗石般坚固的信念和勇气之上的。在他看来，教皇不仅是基督教会的首脑，而且还应是所有世俗事务的最高上诉法官。教皇既然可以将普通的日尔曼王公提升到皇帝的高位，享有他们从未梦想过的尊严，他当然也有权随意废黜他们。他可以否决任何一项由某位大公、国王或皇帝制定的法律，可要是有人胆敢质疑某项教皇宣布的敕令，那他可得当心了，因为随之而来的惩罚将是迅速而毫不留情的。

格利高里派遣大使到欧洲所有的宫廷，向君主们通告他颁布的新法令，并要求他们适当注意其内容。征服者威廉答应好好听话。但从 6 岁开始便常与臣属打架斗殴的亨利四世是个天生反叛的家伙，他根本打算屈从于教皇的意志。亨利召集了一个德国教区的主教会议，指控格利高里犯下了日光之下的一切罪行，最后以沃尔姆斯宗教会议的名义废黜了教皇。

格利高里的回答是将亨利四世逐出教会，并号召德意志的王公们驱逐这位德行败坏、不配为人君主的国王。日尔曼的贵族们正乐得除掉亨利，自己取而代之，纷纷要求教皇亲自前来奥格斯堡，为他们挑选一位新国王。

格利高里离开罗马，前往北方去惩治自己的对手。亨利四世当然不是白痴，他清楚自己前景可危的处境。此时此刻，国王唯一的出路是不惜一切代价与教皇讲和。时值严冬，亨利也顾不得天寒路险，急匆匆地越过阿尔卑斯山，火速赶往教皇驻脚做短暂休息的卡诺萨城堡。公元1077年1月25日至28日，整整三天，亨利装作一个极度忏悔的虔诚教徒，身穿破烂的僧侣装（但破衣之下藏着一件暖和的毛衣），恭恭敬敬守候在城堡的大门前，请求教皇陛下的宽恕。三天后格利高里终于允许他进入城堡，亲自赦免了他的罪行。

可亨利的忏悔并未持续多久。一旦被废黜的危机过去，平安返回德国后，他又故态复萌，依旧我行我素。教皇再次把亨利逐出教会，而亨利再次召开了德意志主教团会议，废黜了格利高里。不过这一回，当亨利不辞劳苦地翻越阿尔卑斯山时，他带上了一支庞大的军队，雄赳赳走在前头。日尔曼军队包围了罗马城，格利高里被迫退位，最终死于流放地萨勒诺。教皇与国王的第一次流血冲突没能解决任何问题。一俟亨利返回德意志，他们之间的争斗又接着开始了。

中世纪城市的崛起

不久之后，夺取了德意志帝国皇位的霍亨施陶芬家族变得比他们的前任更为独立，更不把教皇放在眼里。格利高里曾经宣称，教皇超越于所有世俗的君主之上，因为末日审判那一天到来时，教皇必须为他所照管的羊群里每一只羊的行为负责，而在上帝眼里，一名国王不过是这个庞大羊群的众多忠实牧羊人之一。

霍亨施陶芬家族的弗里德里希，通常被人称为红胡子巴巴罗萨，他提出了一个理论来反对教皇的理论。他宣称，神圣罗马帝国是经“上帝本人的恩许”，赋予他的先祖掌管的。既然帝国的疆域包括意大利和罗马，他要发动一场正义的战争，以收复这些“失去的行省”。不过在参加第二次十字军东征时，弗里德里希在小亚细亚意外溺死。继承王位的是他的儿子弗里德里希二世。这位年轻人精明强干，风度依然，很小的时候便受过西西里岛穆斯林文明的陶冶。他继续与教皇作对。

教皇指控弗里德里希二世犯下了异端邪说罪。说实话，弗里德里希倒是真的对北方基督教界的粗犷作风、德国骑士的平庸愚笨以及意大利教士之阴险狡诈，怀有深刻而认真的蔑视。不过他保持沉默，投入十字军作战，从异教徒手里夺回了耶路撒冷，并因此被封为圣城之王，即便立下如此辉煌的护教功勋，也没能安慰心情恶劣的教皇们。他们把弗里德里希逐出教会，将他的意大利属地授予安茹的查理，即著名的法王圣路易的兄弟。这当然引发了更多的争端。霍亨施陶芬家族的最后一位继承人，康拉德四世之子康拉德五世，试图夺回自己的意大利属地。但是他的军队被击败，他本人也被处死于那不勒斯。不过20年后，在所谓的西西里晚祷事件中，极不受欢迎的法国人被当地居民统统杀死。流血仍在继续。

教皇与皇帝的争斗无休无止，看来永远没法解决。但过了一段时间，两个仇人慢慢学会了各管各的事情，不再轻易涉足对方的领域。

公元1273年，哈布斯堡的鲁道夫当选为德意志皇帝。他不愿千里迢迢赶去罗马接受加冕。教皇对此没有公开反对，但作为报复，教皇疏远了德意志。这意味着和平，可毕竟来得晚了些。两百年的争斗，使那些本可用于内部建设的宝贵精力，统统浪费在毫无意义的战争上了。

不过凡事有一弊，必有一利。意大利的诸多小城市在教皇与国王之间维持小心谨慎的平衡，悄悄地壮大实力，增强自己的独立地位。当朝拜圣地的伟大运动开始时，面对成千上万吵吵嚷嚷、急于涌向耶路撒冷的十字军战士，它们从容自如地解决了这些人的交通和饮食问题，从中赚取大量金钱。待十字军运动结束，这些大发其财的城市已能用砖石和金子堆起坚固无比的防御，同时违抗教皇和国王，对他们表示淡然和蔑视了。

教会和国家相互争斗，而第三方——中世纪的城市，攫取了胜利的果实。

第三十三章 十字军东征

当土耳其人夺取圣地，亵渎圣灵，并严重阻断了东西方的贸易时，所有内部的争吵便统统被忘记。欧洲人开始了十字军东征。

土耳其的人侵

三个世纪以来，除了守卫欧洲门户的两个国家——西班牙和东罗马帝国，基督徒和穆斯林之间一直保持着基本的和平。在公元 7 世纪，穆罕默德的信徒征服了叙利亚，控制了基督教的圣地。但他们同样把耶稣视为一位伟大的先知（虽然不如穆罕默德伟大），并不阻止前来朝圣的基督徒。在康士坦丁大帝的母亲圣海伦娜于圣基的原址上修建的大教堂里，基督朝圣者被允许自由祈祷。可到了 11 世纪，来自亚洲荒原的一支鞑靼部落，人称塞尔柱人或土耳其人，他们征服了西亚的穆斯林国家，成为基督教圣地的新主人。于是，基督教和伊斯兰教相互妥协的时期就此结束。土耳其人从东罗马帝国手里夺取了小亚细亚的全部地区，使东西方之间的贸易陷入完全的停滞。

东罗马皇帝阿历克西斯平常心思全部放在东方，对西方的基督教邻居少有理会，此时却向欧洲的兄弟们求援。他指出，一旦土耳其人夺取君士坦丁堡，使通向欧洲的大门打开，他们一样将陷入土耳其骑兵的直接威胁之下。

一些意大利城市在小亚细亚和巴勒斯坦沿岸拥有小块的贸易殖民地。由于担心失去自己的财产，便散布一些可怕的故事，绘声绘色地描述土耳其人是何等残暴且如何迫害、屠杀当地基督徒的。听到这些故事，整个欧洲沸腾了起来。

当时在位的是教皇乌尔班二世。此人生于法国的雷姆斯，在格利高里七世受教过的著名的克吕厄修道院接受过教育。他想，现在是应该采取行动的时候了。当时欧洲的状况不仅远不能令人满意，甚至称其糟糕也不为过。由于依然采用原始的农耕方法（自罗马时代一直未曾改进过），欧洲经常处于粮食短缺的危险状态。大量的失业与饥荒蔓延，很容易引起民怨沸腾，最终导致无法收拾的动乱。而西亚自古以来就是丰足的粮仓，养活成百上千万人口，无疑是个理想的移民场所。

于是公元 1095 年，在法国的克莱蒙特会议上，教皇乌尔班二世突然拍案而起，先是痛诉异教徒践踏圣地的种种恐怖行为，接着又娓娓描绘这块流着奶和蜜的圣地自摩西时代以来是如何滋养着万千基督徒的动人图景。最后，他激励法国的骑士们和欧洲的人民鼓起斗志，抛开妻子儿女，去将巴勒斯坦从土耳其人的奴役中解放出来。

不久，一股不可遏止的宗教歇斯底里地席卷了整个欧洲。理性的思想停止了。人们纷纷扔掉铁锤和锯子，冲出商店，义无反顾地踏上最近的道路，前往东方去杀土耳其人。连小孩子也吵着要离家去巴勒斯坦，以他们幼稚的热情和基督徒的虔诚感化土耳其人，呼吁他们悔改。不过在如此的狂热信徒中，90% 的人连看一眼圣地的机会都没有。他们通常身无分文，被迫沿途乞讨或偷盗以维持生计。他们影响大路交通的安全，往往为愤怒的乡民所杀。

发战争财

第一支十字军是由诚实的基督徒、无力履行义务的破产者、穷困潦倒的没落贵族以及逃避法庭制裁的罪犯所组成的乌合之众。他们乱哄哄地、纪律涣散，在半疯癫的隐士彼得和“赤贫者”瓦特的领导下开始了远征。作为惩罚异教徒的第一步，他们把一路上碰见的所有犹太人统统杀掉。他们只勉强前进到匈牙利，然后便全军覆没了。

这次经历给了教会一个深刻的教训：单凭热情是无法解放圣地的。细致的组织工作与良好意愿、勇气一样，都是十字军事业成功必不可少的因素。于是欧洲花费了 1 年时间，训练和装备了 1 支 20 万人的军队，由布隆的戈德弗雷、诺曼底公爵罗伯特、弗兰德斯伯爵罗伯特以及其他几位贵族指挥。这些人都是深谙作战技巧、经验丰富的将领。

公元 1096 年，第二支十字军开始其漫长而徒劳的征程。到达君士坦丁堡后，骑士们神情庄严地向东罗马皇帝举行了宣誓效忠仪式。（正如我已经说过的，传统不会轻易消失，不管如今的东罗马皇帝是如何潦倒、如何无权无势，但依然享有崇高的尊严。）随后他们渡海到亚洲，沿途杀掉所有被俘的穆斯林。他们所向披靡，对耶路撒冷发动了暴风雨般的攻击，并屠杀了该城的所有穆罕默德信徒。最后，他们流着虔诚与感恩的泪水，进军圣墓去赞美伟大的上帝。可不久后，土耳其人的精锐援军赶到，重新夺取了耶路撒冷。作为报复，他们又杀光了所有忠于十字架的信徒。

在接下来的两个世纪里，欧洲人又发动了另外七次东征。十字军战士们逐渐学会了前往亚洲的旅行技巧。陆路行程太艰苦，也太危险。他们情愿先越过阿尔卑斯山，到意大利的威尼斯或热那亚，然后再搭乘海船去东方。精明世故的热那亚人和威尼斯人把这桩运送十字军跨越地中海的服务做成了有厚利可图的大生意。他们索取高额旅费，当十字军战士付不出这个价钱时（他们大部分都囊中羞涩），这些意大利“奸商”便做出大发善心的样子，先允许他们上船，但要“一路工作以抵偿船费”。往往为了偿付从威尼斯到阿克的旅费，十字军战士得答应为船主从事一定量的战斗，用获得的土地还钱。通过这种方法，威尼斯大大增加了它在亚得里亚海沿岸、希腊半岛、塞浦路斯、克里特岛及罗得岛控制的土地，最后，连雅典也成为了一块名符其实的威尼斯殖民地。

向对手学习

当然，这一切都无助于解决棘手的圣地问题。当最初的宗教狂热渐渐退去，一段为时不长的十字军旅程倒变成了每一个出身良好的欧洲青年的通才教育课程。因此，报名去巴勒斯坦服役的候选人总是源源不绝。不过，古老的热情已经不复存在。最初，十字军战士怀着对穆斯林的刻骨仇恨，对东罗马帝国及亚美尼亚的基督徒群众的极大爱心，开始其艰苦的远征，如今却经历了内心的巨变。他们开始憎恨拜占廷的希腊人，因为后者常常欺骗他们，并不时出卖十字架的事业。他们同样憎恨亚美尼亚人以及所有东地中海地区的民族。相反，他们逐渐学会欣赏穆斯林敌人的种种品行，事实证明他们是豪爽公正的对手，值得尊重。

当然，谁也不会把这些情绪公开流露出来。可一旦十字军战士有机会重返故里，他们便可能模仿刚从异教徒敌人那里学来的新奇迷人的优雅举止。与这些雍容优雅的东方敌人相比，欧洲骑士不过是乡下老粗。十字军战士还从东方带回来几种异国的植物种子，比如桃子和菠菜，种进自己的菜园里，不仅可以换换餐桌的口味，还能拿到市场出售。他们抛弃披挂厚重铠甲的粗野习俗，转而模仿伊斯兰教徒及土耳其人的样子，穿起了丝绸或棉制的飘逸长袍。事实上，十字军运动最初是作为惩罚异教徒的宗教远征，到后来却变成了对成百万欧洲青年进行文明启蒙的教育课，其间的沧桑真的是耐人寻味。

从政治和军事观点来看，十字军东征是一场彻底的失败。耶路撒冷及其它小亚细亚的诸多城市失而复得，得而复失。虽然十字军曾在叙利亚、巴勒斯坦及小亚细亚建立起一系列小型的基督教王国，可它们最终一一为土耳其人重新征服。到公元 1244 年，耶路撒冷仍稳稳控制在穆斯林手中，变成了一个完全土耳其化的城市。圣地的状况和公元 1095 年之前相比并未发生任何变化。

不过，欧洲却因十字军运动经历了一场深刻的变革。西方人民得以有机会一瞥东方文明的灿烂与优美。这使得他们不再满足于阴沉乏味的城堡生活，转而寻求更宽广、更富活力的生活。这是教会和封建国家都无法给予他们的。

这种生活，他们在城市里找到了。

第三十四章 中世纪的城市

为什么中世纪的人们会说，“城市的空气是充满自由的空气”。

上帝的安排

中世纪初期是一个拓荒与定居的时代。从中亚群山浩浩荡荡地西迁而来的日尔曼民族，他们原本生活在罗马帝国东北部的森林、高山与沼泽之外的荒野地带。此时，他们强行穿越这道天然的防护屏障，闯进西欧地区的肥沃平原，将大部分土地据为己有。他们天生厌恶安分守己的生活，像历史上所有的拓荒者一样，他们喜欢“在路上”的感觉，宁愿不断迁移。他们精力充沛地砍伐森林，开荒放牧；他们也以同样的精力相互厮杀，割断对手的喉咙。他们中很少有人居住在 城市，因为他们希望保持“自由自在的”生活方式。他们喜欢驱赶着羊群越过劲风拂面的草坡，让山间树林的清新空气充满他们的五脏六腑。当长居旧家已经令人生厌时，他们便毫不犹豫地拔起帐篷，收拾家什，出发去寻找新的牧场。

在不断迁移的路上，弱者被淘汰，只有坚强的战士和跟随她们的男人勇敢进入荒野的女人幸存了下来。就这样，他们发展成一个强健坚韧的种族，具有顽强的生命力。他们对生活中优美细致的东西不甚在意。他们总是在奔波忙碌，没有闲情逸致去玩乐器或写作诗歌。他们精明务实，不喜欢说空话，也不喜欢讨论问题。教士作为村里唯一“有学问的人”（在13世纪中期以前，一个会读能写的男人一般被视为“女人气的男子”），人们都仰赖他解决所有的问题，也就是那些没有直接实用价值的问题。同时，那些日尔曼酋长、法兰克男爵或诺曼底大公们（或者是别的什么头衔和称号的贵族），他们心安理得地占据着自己那份原属罗马帝国的土地，在帝国昔日辉煌的废墟中建立起自己的新世界。这个世界看起来是如此完美，已经完全使他们心满意足了。

他们尽最大的努力来处理好自己的城堡和四野乡村的事务，兢兢业业地工作。他们像任何软弱的“凡人”一样，期望着来世的天堂，对教会的纪律毕恭毕敬。他们对自己的国王或皇帝表现出十足的忠诚，以便和这些距离遥远但向来危险的君主们保持良好的关系。一句话，他们总是尽力把事情做正确、做漂亮，对邻居们公正而又不真正损害自己的利益。

当然，他们有时也感觉到，自己身处的并非一个理想的世界。在这里，大部分人沦为农奴或“长期雇工”。这些人和牛羊同住于牛栏羊圈，自身也和牛羊一样，变成了依附土地的一部分。他们的命运谈不上特别幸福，也算不得异常悲惨。除此之外，还能期望他们怎样呢？主宰着中世纪生活的伟大上帝，他当然毫无疑问是按着尽善尽美的方式来安排世界的。如果凭其不可揣测的智慧，决定这个世界该同时存在骑士和农奴，那么作为教会虔诚的儿女，他们是不应该质疑这种安排的。因此，身为农奴的人们也没什么好抱怨。如果被驱使得太厉害，他们会像饲养不当的牲畜一样默默死去。之后，主人们不过是手忙脚乱地做点事情，稍微改善一下他们的生活状况。还能怎样呢？如果这个世界的进步责任是肩负在农奴和他们的封建领主肩上，那我们现在就有可能如12世纪一样，牙疼了便念一番“啊巴拉卡，达巴拉啊”，靠神秘的咒语抵御肉体的疼痛。不仅如此，如果正好有一位牙医试图用他的“科学”来帮助我们，其结果只能招来我们的憎恶。因为那些邪里邪气的东西多半是来自穆罕默德信徒与异教徒“骗术”，当然是既恶毒又无用处的。

何为进步

当你们长大之后，你们会发现身边有许多人不相信“进步”。他们都是些看上去很有思想的家伙，我担保他们能滔滔不绝地列举出一些我们时代的可怕事实，来向你证明“世界从来如此，毫无变化”。不过我倒是希望，你们不要太受这种论调的蛊惑。你看，我们遥远的先祖几乎花费了100万年，才学会用下肢直立行走。当他们终于能够把动物般的咕咕声发展成可以理解与沟通的语言，又耗费了许许多多多个世纪。书写术——为着未来人类的利益而保存我们思想的技术，缺少了它人类的任何进步都是没有可能的，它的发明不过是在短暂的四千年之前。那种驯服自然力为人类服务的新奇思想，仅仅是在你们祖父的时代才出现的。因此在我看来，我们人类其实是以一种闻所未闻的飞快速度进步着。也许，我们对物质生活的舒适关注得稍微多了一些，但这种趋势在一定的時候必然会扭转。到那时，我们会集中力量去对付那些与身体健康、工资多少、城市下水管道和机械制造无关的问题。

我想提醒你们，千万不要对所谓“古老的好时光”抱有过多的感伤之情。有许多人，他们的眼睛只看到中世纪留下的壮丽教堂和伟大的艺术作品，往往拿它们和我们时代的充斥着噪音的喧嚣和汽车尾气的恶臭的丑陋文明相比较，得出今不如昔的结论。可这仅仅是事情的一个方面。要知道，在富丽宏伟的中世纪教堂边上，无一例外地布满了大量悲惨肮脏的贫民窟。与之相比，连现代最简陋的公寓也堪称豪华奢侈的宫殿。是的，高贵的朗斯洛特和同样高贵的帕尔齐法尔，当这些年轻纯洁的英雄上路去寻找圣杯时，他们当然用不着忍受汽油的臭味。可当时另外有着许许多多的其它臭味，谷仓牛栏的味道，扔到大街上的垃圾腐烂发酵的味道，包围着主教大人宫殿的猪圈的味道，还有那些穿戴祖父传下的衣服和帽子、一辈子没享受过擦肥皂的幸福、也绝少洗澡的人们发出的味道。我不愿意着力描绘出一副大煞风景、十分令人不快的画面。不过当你阅读古代编年史，看到法国国王在华丽高贵的皇宫内悠然眺望窗外，却被巴黎街头拱食的猪群发出的冲天臭气熏得昏倒时，当你看到某本稍稍记载了一些天花和鼠疫横行的惨状的古代手稿时，你才会真正明白“进步”一词绝非现代广告人使用的时髦话。

商业的复兴

不过，如果不是因为城市的存在，过去六百年来进步将是完全不可能的。因此，我将用比其它各章稍长一点的篇幅来谈论这个问题。它太重要了，不可能像对待单纯的政治时间那样，用三四页文字便概括了。

古代的埃及、巴比伦、亚述都是以城市为中心的世界。古希腊则完全是由许多小城邦组成的国家。而腓尼基的历史几乎就是西顿和提尔这两个城市的历史。再看看伟大的罗马帝国，它辽阔的行省无非是罗马这个城市的“腹地”。书写、艺术、科学、天文学、建筑学、文学——这是一个可以无穷开列的名单，它们全都属于城市的产物。

在整整四千年的漫长岁月里，我们称为城市的这个木制蜂房，其间居住着大量像工蜂一样生活劳碌的人群，它一直就是世界的大作坊，它出产商品，推动文明，催化文学与艺术。可随后就到了日尔曼人大迁移的时代。他们灭亡了灿烂一时的罗马帝国，一个劲地焚毁他们并不理解的城市，使欧洲再度成为一块由草原和小村庄构成的土地。在这段黑暗愚昧的岁月，欧洲文明进入了休耕期。

十字军东征为文明的重新播种准备好了适合的土壤。快到收获的季节了，但果实却被自由城市的自由民抢先一步摘走。

我曾经给你们讲过关于城堡与修道院的故事。在它们高大沉重的石墙后面，居住着骑士和他的朋友僧侣，一个负责照顾人们的肉体，一个则悉心看护着人们的灵魂。后来出现了一些手工匠人，屠夫呀、面包师傅呀、制蜡烛工人呀，他们来到靠近城堡的地方住下，一面准备应付领主随叫随到的需要，一面也好在发生危险时就近逃到城堡避难。有时遇上主人心情好，他会允许这些人将自己的房子围上栅栏，看上去像是单门独户的居所。不过，那时他们的生计完全系于威严有加的城堡主人大发善心。当领主外出巡视时，这些工匠跪在路旁，亲吻他高贵的手以示感恩。

之后发生了十字军东征，世界在不知不觉地变化。以前的大迁移驱使人们从欧洲东北移居西部。而十字军运动反过来引导人们从蛮荒原始的欧洲西部，去到高度文明的地中海东南地区接受新知识的洗礼。他们发现，世界并非仅限于他们狭小居室的四壁之内，前进一步才知道海阔天空。他们开始欣赏华美的衣着、更舒适宜人的住房、全新口味的佳肴以及其他许许多多神秘东方出产的新奇物品。当他们返回自己的家园，仍一心想要享用这些稀有商品的供应。于是，背着货囊走村串户的小贩（他们是中世纪唯一的商人），便在原有的商品目录里添加上这些紧俏的新品种。商贩们的生意越做越红火，仅靠人力负载已经不够满足人们的胃口了。于是他们便购置起货车。又雇上几个前十字军战士充当保镖，以防范随这次国际性战争而来的犯罪浪潮。就这么，他们以更为现代的方式、在更大的规模上做起生意来了。不过说老实话，干他们这行也不是那么轻而易举的。每进入一个领主的“神圣”属地，他们都得规规矩矩交纳一次过路费和商品税。还好生意总归是有利润可赚的，商贩们也乐此不疲地继续着他们的贩运。

不久，某些精明能干的商人开始意识到，那些一直从远方采购来的商品其实也可以就近生产的。他们于是腾出家里的一块地方，将它设为生产作坊。这样，他们终止了长年的行商生涯，摇身一变就成了生产产品的制造商。他们出产的商品不仅卖给城堡里的领主和修道院院长享有，并且还能供应给附近的城镇。领主和院长大人们用自己农庄的产品，鸡蛋，葡萄酒，还有在那个时代用作糖的蜂蜜来支付商人的商品。可对遥远小镇的居民来说，这种以物易物的方式就行不通了，他们必须支付现金。这样，制造商和行商手里便慢慢地积蓄起少量的金块，此举完全改变了他们在中世纪社会的地位。

你们可能很难想象一个没有钱币的世界。在一个现代城市里，没有钱你是寸步难行的。从早到晚，你都不带着一个装满小金属圆片的钱包，以便随时付钱。你需要1便士来乘公共汽车，上馆子吃一顿晚餐要花你1美元，吃饱喝足后你看看晚报，又得交给报贩3分钱。不过在中世纪初期，许多人从出生到死去，一辈子都没看见过哪怕一块铸造的钱币。希腊和罗马的金银都深埋在城市的废墟下面。继罗马帝国之后的大迁移的世界完全是一个农业社会。每个农民都种足够的粮食、饲养足够的绵羊和奶牛，完全自给自足，不必仰赖他人。

中世纪的骑士同时也是拥有田产的乡绅，少有出现必须付钱购买某种物品的情形。他们的庄园里能够出产供他和他的家人吃、喝、穿的一切物品。修筑城堡所需的砖块是在最近的河边制造的，大厅的栋梁直接从自己拥有的森林采伐。有少量物品来自国外，但也是拿庄园出产的蜂蜜、鸡蛋、柴捆去交换的。

公爵、市民及钱

可十字军东征却把古老农业社会的陈规打了个天翻地覆。请设想一下，如果希尔德海姆公爵想要去圣地，那他必须跋涉上几千英里的路程。一路上，他不得不支付自己的交通费、伙食费。如果在家，他可以拿田庄里的农产品去给人家。现在可糟了，他总不能载着100打鸡蛋和整车火腿上路，好随时满足某个威尼斯船主或布伦纳山口旅店主的口腹之欲呀！这些绅士们坚持要收现金。因此公爵不得不被迫带上少量的金子去开始旅程

。可他能到哪儿去搞到这些金子呢？他可以从老隆哥巴德人的后裔伦巴德人那里去借。他们悠然惬意地端坐在兑换柜台后面（柜台被称为“banco”，它就是银行“bank”一词的由来），早已经变成职业的放债人了。他们倒很乐意借给公爵大人几百个金币，可为保险起见必须用公爵的庄园作抵押。这样，万一公爵大人在征讨土耳其人时有个三长两短，他们的钱才不至于打了水漂。

这对借钱的人来说是一笔很危险的交易。最终，总是伦巴德人占有了庄园，而骑士却破产了，只好受雇于某个更细心、更有权势的邻居，为他作战。

当然，公爵大人还可以去城镇的犹太人居住区。在那里，他能够以 50%—60% 的利息借到这笔要命的旅费。可它同样是笔很不划算的生意。难道就没有其他的出路了吗？公爵寻思过去，寻思过来。对了，听说城堡附近小镇里的一些居民挺有钱的。他们打小就认识年轻的公爵大人，他们的父辈和老公爵也一直是很好的朋友。这些人是不会提出不合理要求的。于是，大人的文书，一位知书识字、常年为公爵记账的教士，给当地最有名的商人写了一张条子，要求一笔小小的贷款。这可是一件轰动的事情。城镇里有头有面的居民聚集到为附近教堂制作圣餐杯的珠宝商家里讨论这件事。他们当然不好拒绝公爵大人的要求。可收取“利息”也没什么用处。首先，收利息是违背大多数人的宗教原则的；其次，利息也只能以农产品来支付，这些东西大家都绰绰有余，拿来有什么用处呢？

“不过……”，一直专注聆听的裁缝突然开口了。此人成天都静坐在自己的裁缝桌前，看起来挺像个哲学家的。“设想一下，我们何不请公爵大人恩允一件事情，作为我们借给他钱的交换。我们大家不是都喜欢钓鱼吗？可大人偏偏禁止我们在他的小河里钓鱼。如果我们借给他 100 元，作为回报，他给我们签署一张允许我们随意在他拥有的所有河流里钓鱼的保证书，这样做如何？他得到了是他急需的 100 金币，而我们得到鱼，岂不是对大家都有利的交易？”

公爵大人接受这项交易的那天（看起来倒是轻轻松松得到 100 金币的好法子），他不知不觉地签署了自己权力的死亡证书。他的文书拟好协议书，公爵大人盖上自己的印章（因为他不会写自己的名字）。一切万事大吉，公爵怀着满腔的激情去东方对付穆斯林了。两年后，他回到家里，已是囊空如洗。镇民们正在城堡的池塘里钓鱼，一排钓竿悠闲安然地此起彼伏于水边上。此情此景让公爵大为光火，他吩咐管家去把众人赶走。他们很听话地走掉了，可当天晚上，一个商人代表团造访了城堡。他们彬彬有礼，先是祝贺大人平安归来。至于大人被钓鱼的人惹火的事情，他们也深感遗憾。可如果大人还记得的话，是大人亲自恩允他们到池塘垂钓的。接着，裁缝出示了那份有大人盖章的特许状，从大人出发去圣地那天起，它便被细心保管在珠宝商的保险箱里。

这样一来，公爵大人不由得怒上加怒，火上加火。不过，他突然想起自己又急需一笔钱的事情来。在意大利，他往几张文件上签下了自己的大名，它们如今正稳稳呆在著名银行家瓦斯特洛·德·梅迪奇手里。这些文件可是要命的“银行期票”，再有两个月就该到期了，总数目是 340 磅佛兰芒金币。这种情形下，公爵大人不得不极力克制义愤填膺的冲天怒火，免得不小心流露出来。相反，他要求再借一小笔钱。商人们答应回去商量商量。

三天后他们又来到城堡，同意借给公爵钱。能在尊贵的大人困难之际提供小小的帮助，他们真是高兴还来不及呢。不过作为 340 磅金币的回报，大人是否可以给他们再签署一张书面保证（另一张特许状），准许他们建立一个由所有的商人和自由市民选举出来的议会，由议会管理城镇的内部事务而不受城堡方面的干涉？

这一回，公爵大人可是被深深激怒了。可他确实需要那笔钱呀！大人只好答应，签署了特许状。过了一星期，公爵后悔了。他召集自己的士兵，气乎乎地闯进珠宝商的家里，间他要还那张特许状。因为，按公爵的话说，它是狡猾的市民趁着他手头紧张，从他那里诱骗走的。公爵拿走文件，一把火烧掉。市民们安静地站在一旁，什么话也没说。可当下一公爵急需用钱为女儿办嫁妆的时候，他连一个子儿也借不到了。经过在珠宝商家里发生的小小纠纷之后，公爵大人被认为“信用不佳”。大人不得不忍气吞声，低下高贵的头颅，答应做出某些补偿。在公爵大人拿到合同数目的第一笔借款之前，市民们重新握有了所有以前签署的特许状，外加一张新的，允许他们建造一座“市政厅”和一座坚固的塔楼。塔楼将用作保管所有的文件和特许状，以防失火或盗窃，但真正的用意无非是防止公爵大人和他的士兵将来的暴力行为。

在十字军东征之后的几个世纪时间里，这种情形在欧洲各地普遍发生。当然，权力由封建城堡向城市的转移，是一个缓慢而逐渐的过程。时不时的，也发生过一些流血战斗，有几个裁缝和珠宝商被杀，有数座孤零零的城堡被焚毁。不过，这样极端的事件并不多见。几乎是不知不觉的，城镇变得越来越富有，封建领主却越来越穷。为维持自己的排场，开销一直很大，封建主总是被迫拿放宽公民自由的特许权来交换他们急需的现金。城市不断地成长壮大，甚至敢于收留逃跑的农奴。当他们在城墙背后居住若干年后，就获得了新的身份和宝贵

的自由。同时，城市也吸引着附近乡村地区的精力充沛、天性活跃分子，取代了城堡的中心位置，他们为自己新获得的重要地位深感骄傲。沿着几个世纪以来一直进行着鸡蛋、绵羊、蜂蜜、盐等等商品的以货易货交易的古老市场周围，他们新建起教堂和公共建筑，在此聚会、讨论，公然表达他们的权利。他们期望子女们获得比自己更好的生活机遇，便出钱雇佣僧侣到城市来做学校教师。当他们听说有某个巧匠能够在木版上画出美妙的图画，就慷慨地许以重金，请他来把教堂和市政厅的四壁涂满金碧辉煌的圣经图画。

与此同时，年老体衰的公爵大人坐在自己潮湿透风的城堡大厅里，看着这一切欣欣向荣的暴富景象，不由得悔从心生。他想起那倒霉透顶的一天，他稀里糊涂地签署了第一张出卖自己封建特权的许可状。这看起来就像是一个无伤大雅的小小施与，可事情怎么就落到了这个地步呢？大人后悔不迭，但已无计可施。那些保险箱被特许状和文件塞得满满的镇民，如今他们对公爵大人已是不屑一顾。、他们还对

他伸指头呢！他们变成了自由人，已经充分准备好享受他们新获得的权利。要知道，这些权利可是他们额头流汗，经过十几代人的持续斗争才辛苦得来的呀！

第三十五章 中世纪的自治

城市的自由民是如何在本国的皇家议会中维护权利，发出自己的声音的

中产阶级

当人类历史还处于游牧阶段，人们还是四处迁移的游牧民时，所有人都是平等的，人人都对整个社群的福祉和安全享有同等的权利与义务。

不过当他们定居下来，有的人变富，有的人变穷，政府便往往落入富人的掌管之中。因为富人不必为生计而艰苦劳作，能够一心一意投身政治。

在以前的章节里，我已经讲述过这种富人掌握统治权的情形，以及它是如何发生在古埃及、古美索不达米亚、古希腊和古罗马的。当欧洲从罗马帝国的崩溃中恢复过来，再度建立起正常的政治与生活秩序，这种情形在移居西欧的日尔曼部族中同样发生了。西欧世界首先是由一位皇帝来统治的。皇帝的人选一般来自日尔曼民族大罗马帝国中的 7—8 个最重要的国王。从理论上说，皇帝享有许多至高无上的权力，但大部分形同虚设。可以说，皇帝陛下最缺的就是实权。西欧的真正统治者是大大小小的国王，可他们的王位从来岌岌可危，成天忙于应付篡权夺位，分不出闲暇来好好治理自己的国家。至于日常的管理职责，则落入了数以千计的封建诸侯之手。他们的属民要么是自由农民，要么是农奴。当时的城市很少，也就谈不上有中产阶级。

不过在公元 13 世纪期间，历经整整 1000 年的缺席之后，作为商人的中产阶级再度出现在历史的舞台。这个阶级势力的兴盛，如上一章所述，正好意味着封建城堡影响力的衰退。

到目前为止，统治王国的国王还仅仅把目光专注在贵族和主教们的需求之上，不过伴随着十字军东征而成长壮大的贸易与商业的世界现实，则迫使他承认中产阶级的强有力的存在，否则便要承受国库亏空之苦。其实，国王陛下（如果按照他们当初强忍的心愿行事的话）情愿向他们的猪和牛咨询财政问题，也不愿求教于城市的自由民。不过形势所迫，他们也没有办法。他们吞下这粒苦药，因为它镀了亮闪闪的金子。不过，其间也是发生过斗争的。

英国《大宪章》

在英格兰，当狮心王查理不在任时（他去圣地抗击异教徒去了，不过他十字军旅程的大部分时间是在奥地利的监狱里度过的），国家的管理权交到查理的兄弟约翰手里。约翰在带兵打仗的事情上不如查理，但在拙劣治理国家方面，两人倒大有一拼。刚担任摄政王不久，约翰便丧失了诺曼底和大部分的法国属地。这是约翰糟糕的政治生涯的开始。继而，他又竭力使自己卷入和教皇英诺森三世的争吵中。这位教皇是霍亨施陶芬家族著名的敌人，他像两百年前格里高里七世对付德意志国王亨利四世的样子，毫不留情地把约翰逐出教会。待到公元 1213 年，约翰不得不忍气吞声地表示忏悔，求得与教皇和解。其情形和亨利四世在 1077 年所做的如出一辙。

虽然屡战屡败，约翰却一点不惊慌，反倒继续滥用王权。最后，怨气冲天的大臣们再也忍不下去，只好将这位君主禁闭起来，迫使他允诺好好治理国家，并永远不再侵犯臣属们自古拥有的特权。这一事件发生于公元1215年，在靠近伦尼米德村的泰晤士河上一个小岛上。那份由约翰署名的文件被称为“大宪章”。它所包含的内容没什么新意，只是以简单明了的

话语重申了国王古老的职责，并一一例举了他的大臣理应享有的各项权利。它对占当时人口大多数的农民的权利（如果有的话）少有涉及，不过对新兴的商人阶级则允诺了某些保障。它是一份非常重要的宪章，因为它以前所未有的精确言辞，限定了国王享有的权力。不过总的说起来，宪章依旧是一份纯粹中世纪的文件。它并未涉及普通老百姓的利益，除非他们碰巧属于某位大臣的财产，必须保护他们免遭皇室暴政之害，如同男爵的森林和牛应严加看守，以防皇家林务官过分的热心。

不过几年之后，我们开始在陛下的议会上听到截然不同的论调。

“议会”的诞生

无论从天性还是性格倾向上来说，约翰都是一个糟糕的家伙。他刚才庄严承诺要遵守大宪章，但话音未落，他又迅速破坏了其中的每一项条款。不过幸运的是，约翰不久就去世了，由他的儿子亨利三世继位。在重重压力之下，亨利不得不重新承认大宪章。与此同时，他的查理舅舅，忠诚的十字军战士，已经耗尽了国家大笔的金钱。亨利不得不想办法寻求一笔小小的借款，好偿还精明的犹太放债人的债务。可作为皇家顾问的大土地所有者和大主教们却无法为国王提供这笔迫在眉睫的金银。无奈之下，亨利只好下令，征召一些城市的代表来出席他的大议会例会。公元1265年，这些新兴阶级的代表做了自己的初次亮相。不过，他们只被允许作为财政专家出席会议，而不参与对国家事务的一般性讨论。他们的建议也仅限于如何增加税收方面。

不过，这些“平民”代表们逐渐地发挥了自己的影响力，有许多事情都征询他们的意见。最终，这个由贵族、主教和城市代表组成的会议发展成固定的国会，用法语说就是“ou l'on parlait”，意思是“人民说话的地方”，重大的国家事务决定之前都要在此讨论。

不过，这样一个拥有一定执行权的咨询会议并不像普遍认为的那样，是一项源自英国的发明。而这种由“国王和他的议会”共同治理国家的政治制度，也绝非不列颠群岛的专利，你在欧洲各国都能看到这样的情形。在一些国家，比如法国，中世纪后皇权的迅速滋长大限制了“国会”的影响力，把它降为毫无用处的摆设。公元1302年，城市的代表已经被允许出席法国议会，可直到五个世纪之后，这个“国会”才强大到能够维护中产阶级，即所谓的“第三等级”的权利。随后，他们努力工作，拼命想把失去的时间弥补回来。经过法国大革命天翻地覆的动荡，终于彻底取消了国王、神职人员及贵族的特权，使普通人民的代表成为了这片土地的真正统治者。在西班牙，“cortes”（即国王的议会）早在公元12世纪的前半期就已经向平民开放。在德意志帝国，一些重要的城市成功取得了“帝国城市”的地位，帝国议会必须倾听其代表的意见。

当瑞典于1359年召开第一届全国议会时，民众的代表就已赫然列席。在丹麦，公元1314年复兴了古老的全国大会，虽然贵族阶层以牺牲国王和人民的利益，攫取了对国家事务的控制权，但城市的代表从未被完全剥夺权力。

在斯堪的纳维亚半岛的国家，有关代议制政府的故事更为有趣。比如冰岛，负责处理全岛事务的是由所有自由土地所有者组成的大会。它从9世纪开始定期召开，并一直延续了1000年。

在瑞士，不同的自由市民努力捍卫他们的议会，防止邻近地区一些封建主的掠夺，并最终取得了成功。

最后，再来看看低地国家。在荷兰，早在13世纪，许多公国和州郡的议会便允许第三等级的代表出席。到公元16世纪，一些小省份联合起来反抗他们的国王，在“市民议会”的一次庄严会议上，正式废除了国王陛下，并将神职人员驱逐出议会，彻底打破了贵族权力。7个地区一起组成了新的尼德兰联合省共和国，自己享有完全的政府管理和行政权力。在长达两个世纪的时间里，城市议会的代表们自己统治国家，没有国王，没有主教，也没有贵族。城市享有至高无上的地位，而善良的自由民成为了这片土地的主宰者。

第三十六章 中世纪的世界

中世纪的人们是如何看待发生在他们周围的事情

无知的野蛮人

日期是一种非常实用的发明。没有了日期，我们会感到无所适从，仿佛什么都决定不了。不过，我们还必须非常当心，因为日期往往会戏弄我们。它有一种使历史过分精确的天性，但历史并非简单地以年代和日期来划分的。我打个比方，当我谈到中世纪人们的思想和观点时，我的意思并不是说，在公元 476 年 12 月 31 日时，所有的欧洲人突然一起惊呼：“啊，现在罗马帝国灭亡了，我们已经生活在中世纪。这是多么有趣的事情啊！”

你可以在查理曼大帝的法兰克宫廷发现这样的人物，他们在生活习性、言谈举止甚至对生活的看法上，完全像一个罗马人。另一方面，当你长大后，你会发现眼前世界的某些人从未超出穴居的阶段。所有时间、所有年代都是相互重叠的，一代人的思想紧接着另一代人的思想，你中有我，我中有你，无法做截然的区分。不过，要说到研究中世纪许多真正代表人物的思想，让你们了解当时的人们对于人生及生活中许多难题的普遍态度，这项工作还是有可能做到的。

首先，你必须牢记，中世纪的人们从未将自己视为生而自由的公民，可以随自己的心愿来去，并凭借自己的才能或精力或运气来改变自己的命运。正相反，他们统统把自己看作一个总体的一分子，这个体制里面有皇帝和农奴、教皇与异教徒、英雄与恶棍流氓、穷人和富人、乞丐和盗贼，这再正常不过了。他们心甘情愿地接受这种神圣的秩序，从不问问何以如此。在这方面，他们当然和现代人截然不同。现代人勇于质疑既成事实的问题，并且总是千方百计地改善自己的经济与政治条件。

对于生活在 13 世纪的男人和女人们来说，美妙幸福充满着金色光线的天堂，恐怖苦难燃烧着充满恶臭的地狱，它们绝非是一句骗人的空话或模糊难懂的神学言辞。它们是近在眉睫的事实。无论是中世纪的骑士，还是自由民，他们都把一生的大部分时间和精力用来为来世生活做准备。我们现代人是在历经充分劳作与享乐的一生后，以古罗马人和古希腊人特有的平静安详，准备迎接一个充满尊严的死亡。待大限到来之际，我们一边回首自己 60 年的工作与努力，一边带着一切都会好转的心情悠然长眠。

可在中世纪，咧嘴微笑、骨骼格格作响的死神却是人们经常的伴侣。他用恐怖刺耳的琴声惊醒睡梦中的人们；他悄无声息地坐上温暖的餐桌；当人们带着女伴外出散步时，他躲在树林和灌木丛后面向他们发出心怀叵测的微笑。如果你小时候不是听安徒生和格林讲的美丽动人的童话，而是听可怕的令人毛发倒竖的鬼怪故事，你一样也会终其一生，活在对世界末日和最后审判的恐惧之中。这正是发生在中世纪儿童身上的现实情形。他们在一个充满妖魔鬼怪的世界里生活，天使总是昙花一现。有时，对未来的恐惧使他们的心灵充满谦卑和虔诚。可更多的时候，恐惧使他们变得残忍而感伤。他们会先把所攻占的城市中全部的妇女儿童杀掉，然后举着沾满无辜者鲜血的双手，虔诚地前往圣地，祈求仁慈宽厚的上帝赦免他们所有的罪行。是的，他们不仅祈祷，他们还流出痛心的泪水，向上帝承认自己就是最可恶的罪人。但是第二天，他们又会去屠杀整整一营的撒拉森敌人，心中不存一丝半点的怜悯。

当然，十字军是以战争为使命的骑士，他们遵循的是与普通人不尽相同的行为准则。可在这些方面，普通人与他们的主人并无二致。他同样像一匹生性敏感的野马，一个影子或一张纸片都能使他轻易受惊。他能够任劳任怨、忠心耿耿地为人驱使，可当他在狂热的幻想中看见鬼怪时，他会惊吓不已地跑开，做出可怕的事情来。

不过，在评判这些善良的人们时，最好先想一想他们生活的不利环境。他们其实是些没有知识的野蛮人，装出一副彬彬有礼的文雅样子。查理曼大帝和奥托皇帝虽然名义上被称为“罗马皇帝”，可他们和一位真正的罗马皇帝相比，比如奥古斯都或马塞斯·奥瑞留斯，根本不能相提并论。正如刚果皇帝旺巴·旺巴和受过高度教养的瑞典或丹麦统治者之间的天壤之别。他们是生活在罗马帝国辉煌古迹上的野蛮人，古老的文明已经被他们的父亲和祖父们摧毁，使他们没机会接受。他们目不识丁，对那些如今连 12 岁的小孩都耳熟能详的事实，他们却一无所知。他们不得不从一本书上寻求所有的知识。这本书就是《圣经》。而《圣经》中能够把人类历史向好的方向引导的部分，是《新约全书》中那些教导我们爱心、仁慈和宽恕的章节。这是中世纪的人们所不大读到的。至于作为天文学、动物学、植物学、几何学和其他所有学科的指南，《圣经》则是完全不可靠的。

亚里士多德的重现

在 12 世纪，又有一本书被列入了中世纪文库，那就是生活在公元前 4 世纪的希腊哲学家亚里士多德编纂的实用知识大百科全书。为什么基督教会谴责所有其他的希腊哲学家为异端邪说的同时，却愿意把这一崇高的荣誉授予亚历山大大帝的老师亚里士多德？个中的原因，我真的是想不明白。不过除《圣经》以外，亚里士多德被视为唯一值得信赖的导师，他的著作可以放心地交到真正基督徒的手中。

亚里士多德的著作传到欧洲，绕了一个很有趣的圈子。它们先是从希腊传到埃及的亚历山大城。当公元 7 世纪，穆斯林征服埃及时，它们被穆罕默德的信徒从希腊文译成了阿拉伯文。之后，它们随着穆斯林军队来到西班牙。在科尔多瓦的摩尔人的大学里，这位伟大的斯塔吉拉人（亚里士多德的家乡在马其顿的斯塔吉拉地区）的哲学思想得到了普遍的讲授。随后，阿拉伯文的亚里士多德著作，又被越过比利牛斯山前来接受自由教育的基督教学生译为拉丁文。最后，这一辗转漫游了很长路程的哲学名著译本终于在欧洲北部的许多学校露面，成为讲授的教材。其经过具体情形现在还不太清楚，但如此一来却更有趣味了！

手持《圣经》和亚里士多德的大百科全书，中世纪最杰出的人士开始着手解释天地间的万事万物，并分析它们之间的联系是如何体现上帝的伟大意志的。这些所谓的学者或导师，他们确实称得上思想敏锐、才智超群，可问题是，他们的知识完全来源于书本，而非哪怕一丁点实际的观察。如果他们想在课堂上作一番有关鲟鱼或毛虫的讲演，他们就先翻翻《新旧约全书》或者亚里士多德的著作，然后自信满怀地告诉学生们这几本伟大著作对于鲟鱼或毛虫都讲了些什么。他们不会冲出书本，去最近的小河捉一条鲟鱼看看。他们也从不离开图书馆，散步到后院去抓几条毛虫，观察这种奇怪的生物在自己土生土长的巢穴里是如何生活的。即便是艾伯特斯·玛格纳斯或托马斯·阿奎那这样的一流学者，他们也从不问问，巴勒斯坦的鲟鱼和马其顿的毛虫与生活在欧洲的鲟鱼和毛虫是否存在着习性上的差异？

有时很偶然的，一个特别好奇如罗杰·培根式的人物出现在学者们的讨论会上。他拿着古里古怪的放大镜，还有看起来相当滑稽的显微镜，并真的捉了几条鲟鱼和毛虫到讲台上。接着，他开始用自己的古怪玩意儿观察起那些令人反感的生物

来了，还邀请与会的学者们也凑近来看看。他手舞足蹈、唾沫横飞地向他们证明，眼前的鲟鱼和毛虫与《圣经》或亚里士多德谈到过的生物是有区别的。于是，尊贵的学者们纷纷大摇其头，心想培根这家伙走得太远了，多半是被什么东西迷了心窍。如果这时培根竟斗胆宣称，一小时实实在在的观察抵得上对亚里士多德的十年苦研，并且还说那位著名希腊人的著作好虽好，但还是别翻译的为妙，学者们就会真的害怕得不行。他们赶忙去找警察，告诉他们说，“这人对于国家安全可是个莫大的危险！他让我们学希腊文好阅读亚里士多德的原著。他干吗对我们的拉丁——阿拉伯译本心怀不满？我们这么多善良虔诚的信徒几百年来都读这个译本，他们不是一直很满意吗？还有，他竟然对鱼和昆虫的内脏非常着迷！他多半是个存心险恶的巫师，妄图用他的巫术迷惑人们的头脑，把世界的秩序搞乱！”他们说得头头是道，有理有据，把负责捍卫和平秩序的警察也吓住了，赶紧颁布禁令：禁止培根在十年内再写一个字。可怜的培根大受打击，当他恢复研究后，便汲取了一个教训。他开始用一种古怪的密码写书，让自己同时代的人一个字也看不懂。当时，因为教会一直严防人们问出一些可能导致怀疑现存秩序或动摇信仰的问题，所以用这种密码的把戏非常流行。

不过，这种愚民的做法并非出于险恶用心。在那个时代的异端思想搜寻者心里，其实涌动着一种非常善良的感情。他们坚定不移地相信，现世生活不过是为我们在另一个世界的存在做准备。他们深信，了解过多的知识反而使人感到不安，让心灵充满危险的念头，让怀疑的火种在脑中慢慢滋长，结果必定走向毁灭。当一个中世纪的经院教师看到他的学生离开《圣经》和亚里士多德启示的正统思想，走入危险的迷途，想自己独立研究一些东西，他会感到异常不安，就像一位慈母看见年幼的孩子正在走近滚热的火炉。她知道，如果任由孩子触摸火炉，他一定会烫伤手指，因此她必须千方百计地把孩子拉回来，如果情况危急，她不惜使用强力。不过她是真心爱他的孩子，如果他愿意乖乖听话，服从她的命令，她会尽自己的一切力量来为他好。至于中世纪的灵魂捍卫者们，他们的作为和情感一如这位慈母。一方面，他们在与信仰有关的所有事务上要求严格，甚至达到了残酷的程度。另一方面，他们夜以继日地辛勤工作，为他们所看顾的羊群服务，并准备随时伸出援助之手。在当时的社会，成千上万的虔诚男女倾尽全力，努力改善世人的悲惨命运。他们对社会的影响也是随处可见的。

农奴和行会

农奴就是农奴，他的地位是永远无法改变的。不过，中世纪的善良上帝虽然让农奴一生作牛作马，他同时也赋予了这个卑微生命一个不朽的灵魂。他的权利必须受到保护，让他也能像一个善良的基督徒那样生活和死去。当他太老或是太瘦弱，无法再承担繁重的劳役之时，他为之工作的封建领主便负有照顾他的责任。因此，中世纪的农奴虽然生活单

调、沉闷、平庸，可他从来不用为明天担心。他知道自己“安全的”——他不会突然之间失去工作，落得孤苦无依的境地。他的头顶上将永远有一片挡风避雨的屋顶（可能有点漏雨，是的，但毕竟是个屋顶），他将一直有东西糊口，至少不会死于饥饿。

放弃思想和自由

在中世纪社会的各个阶层当中，都普遍存在着这种“稳定”和“安全”之感。城市里，商人和工匠成立起行会，保证每一个成员都能有一份稳定的收入。行会不鼓励那些雄心勃勃，想凭着自己的才能超越同行的家伙。相反，它常常保护“得过且过”的“懒汉”。不过，行会也在整个劳动阶层里建立起一种普遍的满足感和安全感，而这种感觉在我们这个普遍竞争的时代早已不复存在。当某一个富人控制了能买到的全部谷物、肥皂或腌鲱鱼，迫使人们以他规定的价格在他那儿购买商品，我们现代人把这种行为称为“囤积居奇”。而中世纪的人们很熟悉这种行为的危险性，因此由政府出面限制批发和大宗贸易，并规定价格，强迫商人必须按照规定价格出售商品。

中世纪不喜欢竞争。为什么要鼓励竞争呢？那只能使世界充斥着明争暗斗，还有一大群野心勃勃向上爬的投机家。既然末日审判的日子就快来临，到那时尘世的财富将变得毫无意义，坏骑士会被打到地狱的最深处接受烈火的惩罚，而善良的农奴终将进入金光灿灿的天堂。

那么，竞争有什么必要呢？

一句话，中世纪的人们被要求放弃部分思想与行动的自由，以便他们可以从身体和灵魂的贫困中享有更大的安全感。

除少数例外，大多数人都不反对这种安排。他们坚信，自己只不过是这个星球上的短暂过客——他们来到此地，无非是为另一个更幸福、更重要的来生做准备的。他们故意背过身去，不看遍布这个世界的痛苦、邪恶与不义，好不扰乱他们灵魂的平静。他们拉下百叶窗，遮挡住太阳的炫目的光线，好让自己能一心一意地阅读《启示录》中的章节。这些文字正在告诉他们，只有天堂之光才能照亮他们永恒的幸福。面对着大部分尘世的欢乐，他们闭上眼睛，不看、不想、不受诱惑，为的是能够享有就在不远处等待他们的来生的欢乐。他们视现世的生命为一种必须忍受的罪恶，把死亡作为辉煌时刻的开始而大加庆贺。

古希腊人和古罗马人从不为未来担心，他们努力生活与创造，试图就在今生今世、就在这个世界上建立起自己的天堂来。他们做得非常成功，把生命变成了一件极其愉快、极其享乐的事情。当然，享有这些快乐的是那些碰巧没有成为奴隶的自由人。及至中世纪，人们又摆到另一个极端。他们在高不可及的云端之外建立起自己的天堂，把眼前的世界变成了所有人的渊薮，无论你高贵也罢，卑贱也罢、富裕也罢，贫穷也罢、聪明能干也罢，愚蠢麻木也罢，皆不例外。现在，终于到了钟摆朝另一个方向摆动的时候了。具体情形我将在接下来的章节告诉你们。

第三十七章 中世纪的贸易

十字军东征是如何再度使地中海地区变成生意繁忙的贸易中心的？意大利半岛的城市是如何成为欧亚、欧非贸易的集散地的？

威尼斯

在中世纪，意大利半岛的诸多城市率先兴盛起来，取得无与伦比的重要地位，其中有三个原因。首先，从久远的年代开始，意大利便是罗马帝国的中心地区，它有着比欧洲其它地方更多的公路、城镇和学校。

在野蛮人入侵欧洲的年代，他们同样在意大利肆意劫掠、纵火焚烧。不过罗马帝国建成的东西实在太多了，野蛮人竟然毁不过来，所以相对欧洲其它地区来说，意大利幸存下来的文明古迹就要多一些。其次，教皇陛下住在意大利。作为一个庞大政治机构的首脑，他拥有土地、农奴、城堡、森林、河流和监督法律实施的法庭，有着大量的金钱。与威尼斯、热那亚的船主和商人一样，向教皇的权威表达敬意，是必须用金银支付的。在给遥远的罗马城付账之前，欧洲北部和西部的奶牛、鸡蛋、马匹和其他农产品必须被换为实用的现金。这使得意大利成为欧洲相对拥有较多金银的国家。最后，在十字军东征期间，意大利城市成为了运载十字军战士去东方的海运中心，所赚取的利润之高，让人瞠目结舌。

当十字军在东方作战的时候，他们开始依赖东方的商品。及至东征落下帷幕，这些意大利城市就成为了东方商品的集散与转运中心。

在这些城市里面，最著名的当属水城威尼斯。威尼斯是一个建立在海滨沿岸上的城市共和国。在 4 世纪野蛮人入侵的时代，他们的祖先从半岛大陆逃到这里躲避战祸。由于该地四面环海，人们便开始从事食盐的生产。食盐在中世纪是相当紧缺的商品，价格一直昂贵。几百年来，威尼斯一直垄断着这种不可或缺的餐桌调味品（我说食盐必不可少是因为，人们如同羊一样，若是食物中的食盐含量不足，就会生病），利用这种垄断地位，威尼斯人大大增强了其城市的竞争力。有时，他们甚至敢于公然对抗教皇的权威。城市的财富越积越多，人们开始建造船只，用于与东方的贸易。当十字军运动开始后，这些船又被用于运载十字军战士去圣地。如果旅客无法以现金支付高额船费，他们便不得不帮助威尼斯人去攫取土地作为补偿。这样一来，威尼斯在爱琴海、小亚细亚、埃及不断扩张，控制了越来越多的殖民地。

到公元 14 纪末，威尼斯的人口增长到 20 万，成为中世纪欧洲最大的城市。不过，普通人民没有发言权，政府管理成了少数富有家族的私事。他们选出一个参议院和一位公爵，只是名义上的代表，城市真正的统治者著名的 10 人委员会的成员。他们靠一个组织高度严密的私人密探和职业刺客体系来维持政权。所有的市民都受到秘密警察的严密监视，至于那些对肆意弄权、高压专横的公共安全委员会构成威胁的人们，则悄无声息地被清除掉。

佛罗伦萨和美第奇家族

而在佛罗伦萨，你可以发现另一种极端的政府体制，一种充满太多动荡与不安的民主政治。佛罗伦萨地处要津，控制着欧洲北部通往罗马的大道。它把由这种幸运位置赚来的金钱投资在商品制造业上。佛罗伦萨人试图以雅典人为榜样，无论贵族、教士、行会成员，统统热情洋溢地参加到城市事务的讨论之中。这导致了永无休止的骚乱。在佛罗伦萨，人们总是分属不同的政治流派，各个党派激烈相斗。一旦某党派在议会中取得胜利，他们便放逐自己的竞争对手，将其财产充公。经过几个世纪的有组织的暴民统治之后，不可避免的情形发生了。一个权倾一时的家族成为了佛罗伦萨的主宰者，并按古代雅典的“专制暴君”方式，治理着这座城市及附近的乡村地区。这个家族被称为美第奇家族，其祖辈最初是外科医生（在拉丁语中，“美第奇”就是医生的意思，这个家族也以此得名），后来成为了银行家。他们的银行和当铺遍布所有重要的商贸中心城市。直至今天，你还能在美国当铺的招牌上看到三个金球，它就是势力强大的美第奇家族族徽上的图案。这个家族不仅是佛罗伦萨的统治者，而且还和王室联姻，将女儿嫁给法国国王。他们死后所住的陵墓，其奢华气派足以配得上恺撒大帝。

热那亚

另外，还有威尼斯的老对手热那亚。那里的商人专做与非洲突尼斯及黑海沿岸几个谷仓的贸易。除这几个著名城市，意大利半岛上还散布着 200 多个大大小小的城市，每一个都是麻雀虽小五脏俱全的商业机构。它们彼此相争，怀着无休止的仇恨打击对手，因为对手的强大就意味着自己商业利润的减少。

当东方与非洲的货物运达这些意大利集散中心后，它们还必须被转运到欧洲西部和北部去。

热那亚通过海路将货物运抵法国马赛，在此重新装船，运往罗纳河沿岸城市。相应地，这些城市又成为了法国北部和西部地区的零售市场。

威尼斯则通过陆路将商品运往北欧。这条古老的大道经过阿尔卑斯山的布伦纳山口，当年这里也是野蛮人入侵意大利的门户。经因斯布鲁克，威尼斯货物被运抵巴塞尔，再顺莱茵河而下，到达北海地区与英格兰。或者将货物运到由富格尔家族控制的奥格斯堡（该家族既是银行家，又涉足制造业，通过苛扣工人的工资而发

了大财），在他们的照管下，将货物分送到纽伦堡、莱比锡、波罗地海沿岸城市及哥特兰岛上的威斯比。而威斯比又进一步满足波罗地海北部地区的需要，并直接与俄罗斯古老的商业中心诺夫哥罗德城市共和国进行交易。该共和国于 16 世纪中叶毁于伊凡雷帝之手。

国际贸易体系

欧洲西北沿海的小城市也有着各自的有趣故事。在中世纪，鱼的消费量是相当庞大的。由于存在大量的宗教斋戒日，每逢斋戒不得吃肉，人们只好以鱼代替。而对那些住得远离海岸和河流的人们来说，他们只好吃鸡蛋，要么就什么也没吃。不过在 13 世纪初期，一位荷兰渔民发明了一种加工鲱鱼的办法，使得鲱鱼能够被运送到遥远地区，供应当地斋戒日的需要。从此，北海地区的鲱鱼捕捞业兴盛起来，取得重要的商业地位。可好景不长，在 13 世纪的某个时候，这种大有价值的小鱼（出于它们自己的原因）突然从北海迁居到波罗地海，一下子使得这个内海周边的地区大发其财。每逢鲱鱼的捕获期，全欧洲的捕鱼船云集波罗地海捕捞鲱鱼。由于这种鱼每年只有几个月的捕获期（其余时间它们都呆在深海，繁殖大群的小鲱鱼后代），捕捞船如果不想在非捕捞季无所事事，就必须另外找工作。这样，它们便被用作把俄罗斯中部和北部的出产的小麦运到西欧及北欧。回程中，再把威尼斯、热那亚的香料、丝绸、地毯和东方挂毯运到布鲁日、汉堡和不来梅。

从这样简单的商品转运开始，欧洲建立起一个非常重要的国际贸易体系，它从布鲁日、根特这样的制造业城市（在这里，强大的行会与法国国王、英格兰君主发生了激烈斗争，最终建立起一个使雇主和工人都归于破产的劳工专制），一直延伸到俄罗斯北部的诺夫哥罗德共和国。这座城市本来势力强大、生意兴隆，可憎恶商人的伊凡沙皇最终攻占了它，在不到一个月的时间内杀死 6 万居民，并把幸存者全部沦为乞丐。

为免遭海盗、苛捐杂税及各种法律的滋扰，北方城市的

商人们成立了一个保护性联盟，世称“汉萨同盟”。它由 100 多个城市自愿组成，总部设在吕贝克。汉萨同盟不仅拥

有自己的海军，随时在海上巡逻，防备海盗，而且在英格兰和丹麦国王胆敢干涉强大的汉萨同盟商人们的权利时，与之开战，并最终取得了胜利。

我真希望能多有一些时间和篇幅，好好给你们讲述有关这个奇特贸易旅程中的许多美妙故事。这种旅行要跨越山高路险的群山，穿过波涛汹涌的深海，随时处在重重危险的包围之中。因此每一次行程，都无异于一次辉煌的冒险。不过要讲好这些故事，必须写上好几卷书才能完成。另外，我希望我已经讲给你们足够多的有关中世纪的事情，能引起你们的好奇心去找另一些极其出色的著作来深入研读。

正如我一再试图想你们指明的，中世纪是一个进步异常缓慢的时代。身居高位的当权者们相信，“进步”是一个用心险恶的无知的发明，当然不应该受鼓励。并且，由于他们正好占据掌权的位置，他们很容易把自己的意志强加到顺从的农奴和目不识丁的骑士身上。不时的，各个地方都有一些勇敢者站出来，冒险闯进科学的禁区。不过他们的命运往往很悲惨，能够保住性命或者免去 20 年的牢狱之灾，便是相当幸运的了。

在 12 和 13 世纪，国际贸易的滔滔洪水席卷了整个西欧大地，就像 4000 年前的尼罗河水激荡着冲过埃及的山谷。它留下肥沃的土壤，滋生出前所未有的繁荣和财富。繁荣意味着劳碌后的闲暇，而闲暇使得男人与女人们有机会购买手稿、阅读书籍，培养对文学、艺术、音乐的情趣。

随后，世界再度充满了那神圣的好奇心。几万年前，就是这种好奇心使人类突飞猛进地超越了自己的同类远亲，在它们依然过着沉重麻木的动物生活时，人类却创造出文明。此外，再度兴盛的城市（我在前一章里给你们详细描绘过它们的成长和发展），还为那些敢于脱离现存秩序的狭窄领域、进入开阔天地的勇敢者们，提供了一个安全的避风港。

他们动手工作了。他们不再满足于隐居书房、埋首苦读的生活，他们打开书房的窗户，让阳光洪水般涌进落满灰尘的陋室，彻底照亮历经漫长的黑暗年代所集结的蛛网。

于是，他们开始清扫房间，然后再修整花园。

他们走出室外，越过欲坍塌的城墙，来到天高云阔的田野。清新湿润的空气环绕着他们，世界显得如此生动而美好。他们忍不住高声喊道，“这是一个美妙的世界。我很高兴自己活着，活在世界之中。”

在这个时刻，中世纪走到尽头，一个全新的世界开始了。

第三十八章 文艺复兴

人们再一次敢于为他们活着而欢欣鼓舞。他们试图挽救
虽古老却欢快宜人的古希腊、古罗马和古埃及的文明遗迹。
他们对自己取得的成就感到如此自豪，因此称之为文艺复兴，
或文明的再生。

历史日期的危险性

文艺复兴并不是一次政治或宗教的运动。归根结底，它是一种心灵的状态。

文艺复兴时期的人们依然是教会母亲顺服的儿子。他们仍旧是国王、皇帝、公爵统治下的顺民，并不出言抱怨。

不过，他们看待生活的态度彻底转变了。他们开始穿五颜六色的服装，讲丰富多彩的话语，在装饰一新的屋子里过着与过去全然不同的生活。

他们不再一心一意地盼望天国，把所有的思想与精力都集中在等待他们的永生之上。他们开始尝试，就在这个世界上建立起自己的天堂。说实话，他们取得了很大的进展，的确成就非凡。

我经常告诫你们，要警惕历史日期的危险性。人们总是从表面上看待历史日期。他们认为中世纪是一个黑暗和无知的时代。随着时钟“咔哒”一声，文艺复兴就此开始了。于是，城市和宫殿一瞬间被渴望知识的灿烂之光照得透明透亮。

事实上，很难在中世纪和文艺复兴时期之间，划出这样一条截然的界限。13世纪当然是属于中世纪的，所有历史学家都同意这一点。但我想问问，13世纪是否仅仅就是一个充斥着黑暗与停滞的时代呢？显然不是！人民活跃异常，大的国家在建立，大的商业中心在蓬勃发展。在城堡塔楼和市政厅的屋顶之旁，新建的哥特式大教堂的纤细塔尖高高矗立，炫耀着前所未有的辉煌。世界各地都生机勃勃。市政厅里满是高傲显赫的绅士们，他们刚开始意识到自己的力量（来自他们新获得的财富），正为争夺更多的权力与他们的封建领主斗得不可开交。而行会成员们也仿佛突然醒悟到“多数有利”这一重要原则，正在以市政厅为角斗场，与高傲显赫的绅士们决一高下。国王和他的顾问们趁机混水摸鱼，竟捉住了不少滑溜溜、金闪闪的鲈鱼，还当着那些又吃惊、又失望的市议员和行会弟兄的面，架锅生火、加料烹调，大吃大嚼起来。

当长夜降临，灯光昏暗的街道让辩论了一整天政治与经济问题的雄辩家意兴阑珊。为活跃气氛、点染市景，轮到普罗旺斯的抒情歌手和德国的游吟诗人登场了。他们用磁性的声音诉说着他们的故事，用美妙的歌谣歌颂浪漫举止、冒险生涯、英雄主义以及对全天下美女的忠心。与此同时，青年人再也忍受不了蜗牛似的进步，成群涌入大学，由此引出另一番佳话。

“国际精神”

我想说，中世纪是富有“国际精神”的。这听上去可能有点费解，待我慢慢道来。我们现代人大多是讲“民族精神”的，这不难理解。我们分别是美国人、英国人、法国人或意大利人，我们各自说着英语、法语、或意大利语；我们上着英国的、法国的或意大利的大学，除非我们一心想要研读外国才有某项专门学科，我们才会学习另一种语言，去慕尼黑或马德里或莫斯科上学。可在13和14世纪，人们很少宣称自己是英国人或法国人或意大利人。他们会说，“我是谢菲尔德公民，我是波尔多公民，我是热那亚公民。”因为他们全都属于同一个教会，这使得他们彼此之间有一种兄弟情谊。并且，由于当时教养良好的人士都会说拉丁语，他们便掌握着一门国际性语言，避免了愚蠢的语言障碍带来的麻烦。在现代欧洲，随着民族国家的发展，这种语言障碍无处不在，使得弱小国家处于极其不利的地位。

我举一个例子，让我们来看看埃拉斯穆斯。他是一位宣扬宽容和欢笑的伟大导师，其全部作品都写于 16 世纪。他生在荷兰的一个小村庄，可他用了拉丁语写作，全欧洲都是他的读者。如果他活在今日，他大概只能用荷兰语写书。这样一来，能直接看其他语言的便只有 500 万到 600 万人。要想让其余欧洲人和美国人分享他的思想，他的出版商就不得不将其著作译成 20 多种不同的语言。这可要花上一大笔钱。更可能的情形是，出版商怕麻烦或冒投资风险，压根儿就不翻译他的书。

而 600 年前，这种情形根本不会发生。当时，欧洲人口中的大多数依然非常无知，不会读书识字。但对于那些有幸掌握了鹅毛笔这一高超技艺的人们来说，他们全都归属于一个国际文坛。它跨越整个欧洲大陆，不存在国界，也没有语言或国籍的限制。而大学正是这个国际文坛的坚强后盾。不像现代的堡垒或要塞，当时的大学是不存在围墙的。只要哪里有一位教师和一帮学生碰巧凑在一块儿，哪里就是大学的所在地。这是中世纪和文艺复兴时期与我们现代又一个大不相同的地方。如今，要建立一所新大学，其遵循的程序几乎无一例外是这样的：某个富人想为他居住的社区做点善事，或者某个特定的宗教社团出于将它的孩子们置于正当可靠的监督下的考虑，或者国家需要医生、律师、教师一类的专业人才，决定建一所大学。于是，银行户头里先有了一大笔办校资金，它是大学的最初形态。接着，这笔钱被用来大兴土木，修建校舍、实验室和学生宿舍。最后，招聘职业教师，举行入学考试，学生进校，这所大学便走上轨道了。

大学的兴起

不过在中世纪，情形却与现代截然两样。一位聪明人对自己说，“看啊，我已经发现了一个伟大的真理。我必须把自己的知识告诉别人！”这样一当他能到哪里聚集起几个听众，他便开始不辞劳苦、不吝口舌地传布他的思想，活像一个站在肥皂箱上摇唇鼓舌的现代街头演说家。如果他才思敏捷、言语生动，是一位出色的宣传家，人们就围拢来，听他到底讲了些什么。如果他的演说沉闷乏味，人们也仅仅是耸耸肩膀，继续赶路。渐渐地，有一帮青年人开始固定来听这位伟大导师的智慧言辞。他们随身还带了笔记本、一小瓶墨水儿和一支鹅毛笔。一听到仿佛很重要、很睿智的话语，他们便忙不迭地记录下来。某日，天公不作美，老师正讲在兴头上，突然下起雨来。于是，意犹未尽的老师和他的青年学生们一起转移到某个空地下室或者干脆就是“教授”的家，继续讲演。这位学者坐在椅子上，学生们席地围坐。这就是大学的开始。

在中世纪，“Unibersetas（大学）”一词，原意就是一个由老师和学生组成的联合体。“教师”意味着一切，至于他在什么地方、在怎样的房子里执教则无关紧要。

作为例子，我要告诉你们发生在 9 世纪的一件事情。当时，在那不勒斯的萨莱诺小城，有许多医术非常高明的医生。他们吸引了许多有志从医的人们前来求教。于是就产生了延续将近 1000 年的萨莱诺大学（直到 1817 年才关闭）。它主要教授希波克拉底传下来的医学智慧。这位伟大的希腊医生生活在公元前 5 世纪，曾在希腊半岛广施医术，造福于当地人民。

还有阿贝拉德，一位来自布列塔尼的年轻神父。12 世纪初期，他开始在巴黎讲授神学和逻辑学。数千名热切的青年蜂拥到巴黎这座伟大的法国城市，聆听他渊博的学问。有一些不同意阿贝拉德观点的神父也站出来阐述他们的理论。不久之后，巴黎便挤满了一大群吵吵嚷嚷的英国人、法国人和意大利人，甚至有的学生自遥远的瑞典和匈牙利赶来。这样，在一个塞纳河小岛的老教堂附近，诞生了著名的巴黎大学。

在意大利的博洛尼亚城，一名叫格雷西恩的僧侣为那些想了解教会法律的人编纂了一本教科书。于是，许多年轻教士和俗家人纷纷自欧洲各地前来，听格雷西恩阐释他的思想。为保护自己不受该城的地主、小旅店老板和房东老大娘的欺负，这些人组织了一个联合会（即大学），这就是博洛尼亚大学的开始。

后来，巴黎大学的内部发生了争吵，原因我们不太清楚。一群对当局不满的教师带着他们的学生，一起渡过英吉利海峡。最后，他们在泰晤士河畔一个名为牛津的热情好客的小镇，找到了新家。这样，著名的牛津大学成立了。同样的，在 1222 年，博洛尼亚大学发生了分裂。心怀不满的部分教师（同样带着他们的学生）迁移到帕多瓦另起炉灶。从此，这座意大利小城也能拥有一所自己的大学了。就这样，一所所大学在欧洲各地崛起。从西班牙的巴利亚多里德到地处遥远的波兰克拉科夫，从法国的普瓦捷到德国的罗斯托克，到处都能看到它们活跃的身影。

的确，对于我们的时代里那些惯于聆听数学和几何原理的人们来说，这些早期教授们所讲的东西未免有点荒谬可笑。不过，我在这里想强调指出的一点是，中世纪，特别是 13 世纪，并非一个完全停滞不前的时代。

在年轻一代里面，蓬勃的生机和焕发热情四处洋溢。即便仍有些地方出了问题，可他们内心是躁动的，急于求知的。正是在这片不安和躁动中，文艺复兴诞生了。

中世纪最后一位诗人

不过，就在中世纪世界的舞台最后落下帷幕前，还有一个孤独凄凉的身影从台上走过。对于这个人，你需要了解比他的名字更多的东西。他就是但丁，父亲是一位佛罗伦萨律师，属于小有名气的阿里基尔家族的一员。但丁生于 1265 年，在祖辈们生活的佛罗伦萨长大。在他成长的年代，乔托正致力将阿西西的基督教圣人圣方济各的生平事迹，画到圣十字教堂的四壁上。不过在少年但丁上学的路上，他经常会惊骇地看到一滩滩血迹。当时的佛罗伦萨分为两派，教皇的追随者奎尔夫派和支持皇帝的吉伯林派彼此刀戈相向，流血与杀戮延免不休。这些血迹就是恐怖的见证，它们给少年但丁留下了梦魇般的记忆。

当但丁长大以后，他参加了奎尔夫派。原因很简单，他的父亲是奎尔夫派成员。这就像一个美国孩子最后成了民主党或共和党人，仅仅因为他的父亲碰巧是民主党或共和党人。不过数年之后，但丁看到，若再没有一个统一的领导者，意大利将因成千个小城市出于妒意而相互倾轧，最终走向毁灭。于是，他改投了支持皇帝的吉伯林派。

他的目光越过阿尔卑斯山，寻求北方的支持。他希望能有一位强大的皇帝前来整顿意大利混乱的政局，重建统一和秩序。可惜，他的等待成空，梦想化为徒劳。1302 年，吉伯林派在佛罗伦萨的权力斗争中败北，其追随者纷纷被流放。从那时开始，直到 1321 在拉维纳城的古代废墟中孤独死去为止，但丁成了一个无家可归的流浪汉，靠着许多富有的保护人餐桌上的面包果腹。这些人本来将为后人彻底遗忘，仅仅因为他们对一位落魄中的伟大诗人的善心，他们的名字流传了下来。

在长年的流亡生涯中，但丁越来越迫切地感觉到一种需要，他必须为当年自己作为一位政治领袖的种种行为辩护。那时，吉伯林人的灾难还未发生，他还能经常漫步在阿尔诺河的河堤上，怀念着初恋情人贝阿特里斯。虽然她早已嫁为人妻并不幸死去，可但丁仍希望能偶尔抬起头来，在恍惚的空气中，瞥见她美丽可爱的幻影。

但丁的政治雄心彻底以失败告终。虽然他曾满怀赤诚地为生养他的佛罗伦萨效力，可在一个腐败的法庭上，他被无端指控为盗取公共财富，处以终身流放的刑罚。如果他胆敢擅回佛罗伦萨，就将被活活烧死。为了对着自己的良心、对着同时代的人们洗清冤屈，作为诗人的但丁创造出一个幻想的世界，详细叙述了导致他事业失败的种种因素，并描绘了无可救药的贪婪、私欲和仇恨，是如何把自己全心热爱的美丽祖国变成了一个任邪恶自私的暴君们相互争权夺利的战场的。

他向我们叙述了在 1300 年复活节前的那个星期四，他在一片浓密黝黑的森林里迷失方向，而前路又被一只豹子、一只狮子、一只狼阻挡住了。正当他四顾彷徨进退不得的绝望时刻，一个身披白衣的人物从树丛中浮现。他就是古罗马诗人与哲学家维吉尔。圣母玛利亚和初恋情人贝阿特里斯在天上看到了但丁的危险处境，特意派维吉尔来将他引出迷途。随后，维吉尔领着但丁踏上了穿越炼狱和地狱的旅程。曲折的道路将他们引向越来越深的地心，最后到达地狱的最深处，魔鬼撒旦在这里被冻成永恒的冰柱。围绕着撒旦的，是那些最可怕最可恨的罪人、叛徒、说谎者，以及那些用谎言和行骗来欺世盗名的不赦之徒。不过在这两位地狱漫游者到达这个最恐怖之地前，但丁还遇见了许多在佛罗伦萨历史上举足轻重的人物。皇帝们和教皇们，勇猛的骑士和满腹牢骚的高利贷者，他们全都在这里，或者被注定永远受罚（罪孽深重之徒），或者等待离开炼狱前往天堂的赦免之日（罪孽较轻的）。

但丁讲述的是一个奇特而神秘的故事。它是一本手册，满满地书写着 13 世纪的人们所做、所感觉、所害怕、所祈求的一切。而贯穿这一切的，是那个佛罗伦萨的孤独流放者，身后永远拖着他绝望的影子。

新时代的热情者

是啊！当死亡之门即将在这位忧郁的中世纪诗人身后重重关闭之时，生命的大门才刚刚向一位日后将成为文艺复兴先驱者的婴孩敞开。他就是著名热情诗人弗朗西斯科·彼特拉克，意大利阿雷佐小镇的一位公证员的儿子。

彼特拉克的父亲与但丁同属一个政治党派。他同样在吉伯林政变失败后被流放，因此彼特拉克出生在佛罗伦萨之外的地方。在 15 岁的时候，彼特拉克被送到法国的蒙彼利埃学习法律，以便日后像他父亲一样当一名律师。不过这个大男孩儿一点儿不想当律师，他厌恶法律。他真正想作的是一位学者和诗人。正因为他对成为学者和诗人的梦想超过了世界上其他的一切，像所有意志坚强的人们一样，他最终做到了。他开始长途漫游，在弗兰德斯、在莱茵河沿岸的修道院、在巴黎、在列日、最后在罗马，到处抄写古代手稿。随后，他来到沃克鲁兹山区的一个寂静山谷里居住下来，勤奋地从事研究与写作。很快，他的诗歌和学术成果使他声名鹊起，巴黎大学和那不勒斯国王都向他发出邀请，让他去为学生和市民们讲学。在奔赴新工作的中途，他必须路过罗马。作为专门发掘被遗忘的古代罗马作家的编辑者，彼特拉克在罗马城早已家喻户晓。市民们决定授予他至高的荣誉。那一天，在帝国城市的古代广场上，彼特拉克被加冕了诗人的桂冠。

从那时开始，彼特拉克的一生充满着无穷的赞誉和掌声。他描绘人们最乐意听到的事物。人们已厌倦了枯燥乏味的神学辩论，渴望丰富多采的生活。可怜的但丁情愿不厌其烦的穿行于地狱，就让他去好了。但彼特拉克却歌颂爱、歌颂自然、歌颂永远新生的太阳。他绝口不提那些阴郁的事物，它们不过是上一代人的陈词滥调。每当他莅临某座城市，全城的男女老少都蜂拥去迎接他，就像欢迎一位征服世界归来的英雄。如果他碰巧和自己的朋友、讲故事的高手薄伽丘一道，欢迎的场面会更加热烈。两人都是那个时代的代表人物，充满好奇心，愿意接受任何新鲜的东西，并常常一头扎进几乎为人遗忘的图书馆仔细搜寻，看看是否有运气发掘出维吉尔、奥维德、卢克修斯或者其他古代拉丁诗人散佚的手稿。两人都是本分善良的基督徒，谁不是呢？所有人都是好基督徒！但没必要仅仅因为某一天你注定死去，就成天拉长着脸，穿着灰暗的破衣衫示人。生命是美好的，生活是快乐的。人活在这个世界上，就应该追求幸福。你想看到证据吗？好的。拿一把铲子，往地里掘几尺看看！你发现什么了？美丽的古代雕塑，优雅的古花瓶，还有古代建筑的美妙遗迹。所有这些美好的东西全是这个地球上曾存在过的最伟大帝国留给后人的。他们统治全世界整整一千年。他们强壮、富有、英俊（只要看看奥古斯都大帝的半身像就会知道）。当然，他们不是基督徒，永远进不了天堂。最多，他们能在惩罚较轻的炼狱度日，但丁不久前才在那里拜访过他们。

可谁在乎呢？能够在古罗马那样的世界快活一遭，对任何凡人来说已经胜似天堂了。而且不管怎么说，我们在此世的生命只有一次，仅仅因生存的单纯乐趣，我们也应该幸福一点，快活一点。

简而言之，这就是刚刚开始在许多意大利小城洋溢开来的时代精神，遍布在它们狭窄昏暗、弯弯曲曲的大街小巷。

你知道什么是“自行车狂”或者“汽车狂”吗？有人发明了一辆自行车，于是几十万年以来一直凭借缓慢而劳神费力的步行，从一个地方到另一个地方的人们，高兴得快发疯了。现在他们能借助自行车轮之力，轻快迅速地翻山越岭，享受速度的乐趣。后来，一个聪明绝顶的工程师又造出了第一辆汽车。人们再不用脚踩着踏板，蹬呀蹬呀蹬个没完。你只需舒舒服服地坐着，让马达和汽油为你出力。所以，人人都想拥有一辆汽车。每个人开口必口都是罗尔·罗伊斯、廉价福特、化油器、里程表和汽油。探险家们不辞辛苦地深入未知国土的心脏地带，为的是发现新的石油资源。苏门答腊和刚果的热带雨林可以为我们供应橡胶。石油与橡胶一夜之间变成如此宝贵的资源，以至人们为争夺它们不惜刀兵相见。全世界都为汽车而晕头转向，小孩子在学会叫“爸爸”、“妈妈”之前，先学会了说“汽车”。

在 14 世纪，面对重新发现的古罗马世界湮灭已久的美，整个意大利都为之疯狂了，其情其景正如同我们现代人对汽车的狂热。很快，他们对古罗马的热情又感染了整个欧洲。于是，发现一部未知的古代手稿，可以成为人们举行狂欢节的理由。一个写了一本语法书的人，广受欢迎的程度，不亚于现代造出一种新火花塞的工业发明家。人文主义者，即那些致力于研究“人类”与“人性”，而非把时间精力浪费在毫无意义的神学探索上的学者，他们受到的赞誉和崇敬远远高于刚刚征服食人岛凯旋而归的探险英雄们。

在这个文化复兴的过程中，发生了一件大大有利于研究古代哲学家和作家的事情。土耳其人再度发动了对欧洲的进攻。古罗马帝国最后遗迹的首都，君士坦丁堡被重重围困。1393 年，东罗马皇帝曼纽尔·帕莱奥洛古斯派遣特使伊曼纽尔·克里索罗拉斯前往西欧，向西欧人解释拜占廷帝国岌岌可危的处境，并请求他们的支援。可援军永远不会到来。

罗马天主教世界一点不喜欢这些希腊的天主教徒，倒情愿看他们受到邪恶异教徒的惩罚。不过，不管西欧人对拜占廷帝国及其属民的命运有多么漠不关心，但他们对古希腊人却深感兴趣。要知道，连拜占廷这座城市也是古代希腊殖民者于特洛伊战争发生 5 个世纪后，在博斯普鲁斯海峡边建立的。他们很愿意学习希腊语，以便直接研读亚里士多德、荷马及柏拉图的原著。他们学习的愿望极为迫切，可他们没有希腊书籍，没有语法教

材，没有教师，根本不知从何着手。这下好，佛罗伦萨的官员们得知了克里索罗拉斯来访的消息，马上向他发出邀请。城市的居民们“想学希腊语都快想疯了”，阁下是否愿意来教教他们呢？克里索罗拉斯愿意来，真是太好了。于是，欧洲的第一位希腊语教授开始领着几百个求知若渴的热血青年学习希腊字母，阿尔法、贝塔、伽马。这些年轻人都是千辛万苦，甚至沿途乞讨赶到小城阿尔诺的，住着肮脏的马厩或狭窄的阁楼，为的只是学会希腊语，以便进入到索福克勒斯和荷马的伟大世界中去。

最后的狂热

同时，在大学里面，老派的经院教师还在孜孜不倦地教着他们的古老神学和过时的逻辑学，一边阐释《旧约》中隐含的神秘意义，一边讨论希腊——阿拉伯——西班牙——拉丁文本中亚里士多德著作里稀奇古怪的科学。他们先是惊慌恐惧地旁观事态的发展，继而便勃然大怒。这些人简直走得太远了，真是离谱！年轻人竟然一个个都离开正统大学的演讲厅，跑去听某个狂热的“人文主义分子”宣扬他“文明再生”的新理论。

他们跑去找当局告状。他们怨声载道。可是，你能强迫一匹脾气暴烈的野马喝水，你却不能强迫人们对不感兴趣的言辞竖起耳朵。这些老派教师的阵地连连失守，人们都快不理睬他们了。不时地，他们也能赢得几场小胜利。他们和那些从不求得幸福也憎恶别人享受幸福的宗教狂热分子联合作战。

在文艺复兴的中心佛罗伦萨，旧秩序与新生活之间发生了一场可怕的战斗。一个面色阴郁、对美怀有极端憎恨的西班牙多明我派僧侣是中世纪阵营的领导者。他发动了一场堪称英勇的战役。每天，他雷霆般的怒吼回响在玛利亚德费罗大厅宽敞的四壁间，警告着上帝的神圣愤怒。“忏悔吧！”他高喊道，“忏悔你们忘记了上帝！忏悔你们对万事万物感到的欢乐！它们是不圣洁的，衰落的！”他耳里开始听到各种声音，眼中看见燃烧的利剑纷纷划过天际。他向孩子们布道，循循善诱这些尚未被玷污的灵魂，以免他们重蹈他们的父辈走向毁灭的歧途。他组织了一个童子军，全心全意地侍奉伟大的上帝，并自诩为他的先知。在一阵突然的狂热发昏之中，心怀恐惧的佛罗伦萨市民答应改过，忏悔他们对美与欢乐的热爱。他们把自己拥有的书籍、雕塑和油画交出来，运到市场上放成一堆，以狂野的方式举行了一个“虚荣的狂欢节”。人们一边唱着圣歌，一边跳着最不圣洁的舞蹈。与此同时，那位多明我僧侣萨佛纳洛拉则将火把投向堆放的艺术品，将这些珍贵的物品付之一炬。

不过当灰烬冷却，发昏的头脑也清醒下来时，人们开始意识到自己失去了什么。这个可怕的宗教狂热分子竟使得他们亲手摧毁了自己刚开始学会去爱的事物。他们转而反对萨佛纳洛拉，将他关进监狱。萨佛纳洛拉受到严刑折磨，可他拒绝为自己的所作所为忏悔。他是一个诚实的人，一直尽心尽力地过圣洁的生活。他很乐意毁灭那些蓄意与其信仰相违的人。无论他在哪里发现罪恶，消灭这些罪恶便是他义不容辞的责任。在这位教会的忠诚儿子眼里，热爱异教的书籍与异教的美本来就是一种罪恶。不过，萨佛纳洛拉完全孤立无援。他是在为一个已经寿终正寝的时代打一场无望的战争。罗马的教皇甚至从未动一根指头来搭救他。相反，当他“忠实的佛罗伦萨子民”把萨佛纳洛拉拖上绞刑架绞死，并在群众的吼叫欢呼声中焚烧其尸体时，教皇毫无表示地默许了。

这是一个悲惨的结局，但无可避免。如果生在 11 世纪，萨佛纳洛拉将肯定成为一名伟人。可他生在 15 世纪，所以他不幸担当了一项注定失败的事业的领导者。不管好也罢坏也罢，当教皇也成为人文主义者，当梵蒂冈变成了收藏希腊和罗马古代艺术品的重要博物馆，中世纪确实就结束了。

第三十九章 表现的时代

人们开始感到一种将他们新发现的生活乐趣表达出来的内心需要。于是，他们通过诗歌、雕塑、建筑、油画及出版的书籍，表现他们的幸福。

公元 1471 年，一位虔诚的老人死去了。在他 91 年的漫长生命中，有 72 年是在圣阿格尼斯山修道院隐蔽的高墙后度过的。这座修道院坐落在古老的荷兰汉撒市兹勒沃小镇附近，靠近风光秀美的伊塞尔河，是一个非常适合隐居的地方。这位老人被称为托马斯兄弟，因他出生在坎彭村，人们又叫他坎彭的托马斯。在托马斯 12 岁时，他被送到德文特，正是在此地，著名的周游布道者，巴黎、科隆及布拉格大学的优秀毕业生格哈德·格鲁特创建了“共同生活兄弟会”。兄弟会的成员都是一些谦卑的凡人，他们希望能一边从事自己的木匠、

油漆工、石匠等工作，一边效仿早期的基督 12 使徒过简单淳朴的生活。他们设立了一所非常出色的学校，好让贫穷的农家孩子也能受到基督伟大智慧的教诲。就是在这所学校，小托马斯学会了如何拼写拉丁动词，如手抄写古代手稿。学成后，他许下誓言，背上自己的一小包书籍，翻山越岭来到兹沃勒。然后，他欣慰地叹息一声，将那个躁动不安的世界关在了门外。

托马斯生活在一个瘟疫流行、死亡频仍的动荡世界。在中欧的波西米亚，英国宗教改革者约翰·威克利夫的朋友及追随者约翰·胡斯的忠实信徒们，正在准备为他们死去的领袖发动一场可怕的复仇之战。胡斯是根据康斯坦茨会议的命令，被烧死在火刑柱上的。而不久前，正是这个会议允诺为他提供安全保证，请他前往瑞士，面对济济一堂商讨教会改革的教皇、皇帝、23 名红衣主教、33 名大主教和主教、150 名修道院院长以及超过 100 名的王公贵族，讲解他的教义。

在西欧，为将英国人赶出自己的国土，法国人已经进行了将近 100 年的抗战，并且不久前才因圣女贞德的及时出现，避免了彻底败北的命运。可百年战争的尘埃刚落，法兰西王国和勃艮地又开始为争夺西欧的霸主地位，互掐对方的脖子，展开了一场生死较量。

在南方，罗马的教皇正在祈求上天的诅咒，以便降祸给住在法国南方阿维尼翁的另一位教皇。而阿维尼翁的教皇也振振有词，准备对罗马的教皇施以同样的惩罚。在远东，土耳其人攻占了君士坦丁堡，毁灭了罗马帝国的最后遗迹。俄罗斯人则开始踏上最后的远征路，去彻底摧毁他们的鞑靼主人的势力。

可对外部世界发生的这一切，好兄弟托马斯呆在自己简陋而安宁的隐修室里，既毫无耳闻，也无意知晓。有古代手稿和沉思冥想，他已经很满足了。他把自己对上帝的满腔热爱倾注在一本小册子里面，取名为《效仿基督》。除《圣经》外，这本《效仿基督》是被译成语种最多的书籍。它拥有的读者跟研读《圣经》的读者一样众多。它影响了成百上千万人的生活，改变了他们看待世界的观点。写作这本书的人，他最理想的生活方式表现在一个简单淳朴的愿望之中——“他可以平静地坐在一个小角落里，手持一本小书，安详地度过此生。”

好兄弟托马斯代表着中世纪最纯净的理想。在节节胜利的文艺复兴浪潮的四面包围中，在人文主义者高声宣布新时代来临的呐喊声中，中世纪也在积聚力量，准备做最后一搏。修道院进行了改革，僧侣们放弃了追求财富与享乐的恶习。淳朴、坦白、诚实的人们，正努力以自己无可挑剔的虔诚生活为榜样，试图将世人带回正义与归顺上帝意志的道路。但一切都无济于事。新时代带着隆隆的喧嚣从这些善良人们的身旁冲了过去。静心想念的日子已经一去不返。伟大的“表现”时代开始了。

现在，请容许我在这里说明一句，我非常遗憾自己必须用上这么多的“繁词冗句”。说实话，我甚至希望能用一个音节的单词从头至尾地写完这部历史，但这不可能做到。你不可能写一部几何教科书，而不用“弦”、“三角”和“平行六面体”这样的术语。你必须理解这些术语的意思，否则你就学不会数学。在历史里面（并且在生活的各个方面），你最终将不得不学着去理解很多拉丁和希腊起源的深奥词汇。如果这是必须的，那干吗不从现在开始学呢？

当我说文艺复兴时期是一个“表现的时代”，我的意思是：人们已不再仅仅满足于当作台下的听众，让皇帝和教皇告诉他们该做什么、该想什么。如今，他们想成为生活舞台上的表演者。他们希望把自己的思想“表现”出来。

如果有一个像佛罗伦萨的尼科·马基雅维里一样的人，他正好对政治感兴趣，那么他便写一本书“表现”自己，揭示他对何谓一个成功国家和一个富有成效的统治者的思考。另一方面，如果他碰巧喜欢绘画，那他就用图画“表现”自己对美丽线条与鲜活色彩的热爱，于是就出现了乔托、拉斐尔、安吉利科这样一些伟大的名字。

如果这种对色彩和线条的热爱还加上了对机械与水利的兴趣，其结果就是列奥那多·达·芬奇，他一面画着伟大的《蒙娜丽莎》，一面进行自己的热气球和飞行器的实验，并构思着排干伦巴德平原沼泽积水的方法。他在天地间的万事万物里感到了无穷的乐趣，便将它们“表现”于他的散文，他的绘画，甚至他构想的奇特发动机里面。

当一个像米开朗基罗那样拥有巨人般精力的人，觉得画笔和调色板对他强壮有力的双手来说太温柔了，那他就转向建筑和雕塑，从沉重的大理石块中凿出最不可思议的美妙形象，并为圣彼得大教堂绘制蓝图。这是对大教堂所享有的胜利荣耀的最具体“表现”。

就这样，“表现”继续下去。不久之后，整个意大利（很快是一切欧洲）便出现了许许多多勇于“表现”的男人和妇女，他们生活和工作，为的是给我们人类的知识、美与智慧的宝贵积累，加上自己的微薄之力。在德国的梅因兹，约翰·古滕堡刚刚发明出一种出版书籍的新方法。他研究了古代的木刻法，对现行方法加以完善，将单独的字母制在软铅上，然后排列组成单词及整篇的文字。是的，他不久后便在一桩有关印刷术发明权归属的官司中倾家荡产，终死于贫困。可他的发明天赋的“表现”却流传下来，使世人受益。

很快，威尼斯的埃尔达斯、巴黎的埃提安、安特卫普的普拉丁、巴塞尔的伏罗本，这些人使印刷精良的古典著作大行于世，它们有的用古滕堡圣经使用的哥特字母印刷，有的用意大利体，有的用希腊字母，还有的用希伯来字母。

于是，整个世界都成了那些有话要说的人的热情听众。知识只为少数特权阶层垄断的时代宣告结束了。无知和愚昧的最后一个理由——昂贵的书价，也随着哈勒姆的厄尔泽维开始大量印刷廉价通俗读物而一去不返。现在，只需要花上几毛钱，你便能与亚里士多德、柏拉图、维吉尔、贺拉斯及普利尼这些伟大的古代作家和哲学家为伴。人文主义终于使所有人在印刷文字面前取得了自由与平等的地位。

第四十章 地理大发现

既然人们冲破了中世纪的束缚，他们便需要更多的空间去冒险。欧洲在他们的勃勃雄心面前，已经显得太小了。航海大发现的伟大时代终于来临。

危险的航程

对欧洲人来说，十字军东征是一堂旅行基础知识及技巧的教学课。不过在当时，极少有人敢冒险超出经威尼斯至雅法这条为人熟知的路线。在公元 13 世纪，威尼斯商人波罗兄弟曾经长途跋涉，穿越浩瀚的蒙古大沙漠，翻过高耸入云的群山，千辛万苦地到达当时统治中国的蒙古大汗的皇宫。波罗兄弟之一的儿子马可波罗写出一本游记，详细描述了他们长达 20 年的东方漫游与冒险经历，引起欧洲人的极大兴趣。当读到马可波罗对奇特岛国“吉潘古”（“日本”一词的意大利念法）的众多金塔的迷人描绘时，全世界都不禁呆呆地瞪大眼睛、屏住呼吸。有许多人梦想去东方寻找这片铺满黄金的土地，一夜间发财致富。不过由于陆路旅程太遥远，且路途艰险，人们最终只得呆在家里做白日梦而已。

当然，经海路到达东方的可能性一直是存在的。不过在中世纪，航海极不普遍，

也少有人问津，这种状况是有充分的原因的。首先，当时的船只体积非常小。当麦哲伦进行持续好几年的著名环球航行时，他所用的船只还不如现代的一只渡船大。它只能载 20~50 人，船舱狭窄拥挤，舱顶极低，以至不能站直身体。由于厨房设备简陋，且天气稍转恶劣便无法生火，水手们被迫吃烹调不当的粗糙食物。在中世纪，人们已经知道如何腌制鲑鱼和制作鱼干，但罐头食品还未出现。一旦出海，新鲜蔬菜便从菜单上彻底消失了。淡水是装在木桶里储存的，用不上多长时间便会变质腐败，长出许多滑腻腻的物质，喝起来有一种烂木头加铁锈的味道。中世纪的人们对细菌一无所知（13 世纪的一位学识渊博的僧侣罗杰·培根似乎检测过它们的存在，不过他很明智地守住了秘密，未对外界宣布），因此经常喝不洁的淡水，有时会导致全体船员死于伤寒症。事实上，在早期航海家的帆船上，死亡率高得可怕。当 1519 年麦哲伦从塞维利亚出发去做著名的环球航行时，跟随他的共有 200 名船员，可活着回到欧洲的只有区区 18 人。即便到了 17 世纪，西欧与印度支那间的海上贸易已极为活跃，可完成一次从阿姆斯特丹到巴达维亚的往返行程，40% 的死亡率并不是什么大不了的数字。这些不幸的人们大部分死于坏血症，即一种因缺乏新鲜蔬菜所致的疾病。它通常影响患者的牙床，使血液中的毒素加浓，直到他们精力枯竭，停止呼吸。

在这样恶劣的情形下，你很容易理解为什么航海不能吸引当时欧洲人中的优秀分子。像麦哲伦、哥伦布、达·伽马这样的伟大探险者，他们往往是率领着一帮几乎全部由刑满释放人员、未来的杀人犯、失业小偷和在逃犯组成的乌合之众，去进行自己的艰难航程的。

这些航海者的勇气当然应受到我们的敬慕。面对着过惯了现代舒适生活的人们闻所未闻、难以想象的困难，他们毅然投入看似毫无希望的航行。他们的装备极差，船底常常漏水，索具沉重，不便操作。从 13 世纪中期开始，他们获得了某种类似罗盘的仪器（由中国传到阿拉伯，再由十字军带回欧洲），能在海上辨明方向。

可他们的航海地图却极不精确。很多时候，他们只能凭运气和猜测选择路线。如果运气好，过上一两年，他们精疲力竭、满脸菜色地返回欧洲。如果情况相反，他们的白骨就只能遗留在某个荒寂的海滩上，任由风吹日晒。不过，他们是真正的开拓者和冒险家，与命运做赌。生活对于他们来说意味着辉煌的冒险历程。每当他们的眼睛看到一处新海岸线的模糊轮廓，或者他们的船只进入到一片从天地开辟起就人迹不至的新水域，为此所遭受的种种磨难，干渴、饥饿、病痛、创楚，便被统统忘在了脑后。

在此，我真希望这本书能够写 1000 页厚。关于早期地理大发现这一话题，可说的东西实在太多、太迷人了。可惜，写作历史的任务就是给你们一个对于过去时代的真实概括。它应该采用一种类似伦伯朗创作蚀刻画时所通常采用的方法。对那些最重要的事业、最伟大的人物、最富于意义的时刻，应该投以鲜明生动的光线，其余相对次要的，则只需用阴影或几根线条稍做勾画。因此在这一章里面，我只能给你们一个简要的清单，罗列出最重要的航海发现。

葡萄牙人的发现

请一定记住，在 14 和 15 世纪，所有航海家脑子里索回的只有一个念头——快快找到一条舒适安全的航线，通往梦想中的中国、吉潘古海岛（日本）及那些盛产香料的神秘东方群岛。从十字军东征开始，欧洲人逐渐喜欢使用香料。香料变成了一种不可或缺的重要商品。要知道，在冷藏法大规模引入欧洲之前，肉类和鱼都会很快腐烂变质，只有撒上一大把胡椒或豆蔻才可食用。

威尼斯人和热那亚人是地中海的伟大航行者，不过发现与探索大西洋海岸的荣誉后来却落到了葡萄牙人头上。在与摩尔入侵者的长年战斗中，西班牙人和葡萄牙人激发出强烈的爱国热情。这种激情一旦存在，便很容易被转移到新的领域。13 世纪，葡萄牙国王阿尔方索三世征服了位于西班牙半岛西南角的阿尔加维王国，将之并入自己的领地。在接下来的一个世纪里，葡萄牙人在与穆罕默德信徒的战争中渐渐扭转颓势，取得了主动。他们渡过直布罗陀海峡，攻占了阿拉伯城市泰里夫对面的体达城。接着，他们乘胜追击，占领了丹吉尔，并将它作为阿尔加维王国在非洲属地的首府。

现在，葡萄牙人已经准备好，开始其探险事业了。

公元 1415 年，人称“航海家亨利”的亨利王子为大规模探索非洲西北部地区，开始了细致周密的准备工作。葡萄牙的约翰一世娶了同特的约翰的女儿菲利巴，他们生下了具有冒险精神的亨利王子。在亨利对非洲西北地区进行考察之前，这片炎热的荒凉海岸曾留下过详尼基人和古代北欧人的足迹。在他们的记述中，这里是长毛“野人”出没之地。现在我们已知道，这些所谓的“野人”其实就是非洲大猩猩。葡萄牙人的探险工作进展顺利，亨利王子和他的船长们先是发现了观那利群岛。接着，他们重新找到了马德拉岛。一个世纪以前，一艘热那亚商船曾在此短暂逗留。他们还勘察了亚速尔群岛，绘制出详细地图。而此前，葡萄牙人与西班牙人对此群岛只有模糊的了解。他们对非洲西海岸的塞内加尔河河口投去粗粗一瞥，以为它就是尼罗河的对部人海口。最后在 15 世纪中期，他们到达了佛得角（也称绿角）和于巴西至非洲海岸中途的佛得角群岛。

不过，亨利的探险活动并不限于海洋。他是基督骑士团的首领。是自 1312 年圣殿骑士团被教皇克莱门特五世取缔后，葡萄牙人自己继续保留的十字军骑士团。圣殿骑士团被取缔是应法国国王，美男子菲利普的要求而采取的行动。菲利普趁机将自己的圣殿骑士全部烧死在火刑柱上，并夺取了他们的财产和领地。亨利王子利用他的骑士团所属领地的岁入，装备了几支远征队去探索几内亚海岸的撒哈拉沙漠腹地。

总的来说，亨利仍然是一个思想上活在中世纪的人。他耗费了大量时间与金钱去寻找神秘的“普勒斯特·约翰”。关于此人的故事，最早流传于 12 世纪的欧洲。据说，这个叫约翰的基督传教士建立了一个幅员辽阔的帝国，自己当了皇帝。这个神秘国度的具体位置不详，只知道是“落在东方的某处”。300 年来，人们一直在试图寻找“普勒斯特·约翰”及其后人。亨利也加入到找寻者的行列，可徒劳无获。在他死去 30 年后，这个谜才被解开。

公元 1486 年，探险家巴瑟洛缪·迪亚兹试图从海路去寻找“普勒斯特·约翰”的国度，到达了非洲的最南端。最初，他将此地命名为风暴角，因为这片海域的强风阻碍了他继续向东航行。不过他手下的里斯本海员倒比他乐观。他们知道该地的发现对于向东寻找通往印度的航线具有极其重要的意义，因此为之取名“好望角”。

一年之后，佩德洛·德·科维汉姆带着热那亚梅迪奇家族的委托书，从陆路出发去寻找“普勒斯特·约翰”的神秘国度。他渡过地中海，穿越广袤的埃及国土，继续向南方深入。不久后，他抵达亚丁港，于此地换上

海船，驶入波斯湾平静的海面。欧洲人上一次看见这片海水，还是距此 1800 年前的亚历山大大帝时代。科维汉姆造访了印度沿岸的果阿及卡利卡特，在当地听说了许多有关月亮岛（马达加斯加）的传闻。据信，该岛位于印度与非洲的中途。之后，科维汉姆离开印度返回波斯湾，秘密地参观了穆斯林的大本营——麦加与麦地那。随后，他再次渡过红海，终于在 1490 年找到了“普勒斯特·约翰”的国土。其实，它不过是黑人国王尼格斯统治的阿比尼西亚（埃塞俄比亚），其祖先在公元 4 世纪皈依了基督教，比基督传教士辗转到达斯堪的那维亚的时间还早 700 年。

这许许多多的航行使葡萄牙的地理学家和地图绘制者们相信，虽然从朝东的海路抵达印度支那是有可能的，但实行起来绝非易事。于是，引发了一场大争论。一些人赞成从好望角继续向东探索，寻找通向印度支那的航线；另一些人则说，“不，别浪费时间了。我们必须向西越过大西洋，才能找到中国。”

我想在此指出一点。那个时代的最具智慧的人士一般都相信，地球并不像一张扁平的烙饼。相反，它应该是圆的。在公元 2 世纪，伟大的埃及地理学家克劳丢斯·托勒密提出关于宇宙构成的托勒密体系，宣称地球是方的。这一理论满足了中世纪人们的简单需求，因而受到广泛接受。不过到文艺复兴时期，科学家们抛弃了托勒密体系，转而接受波兰数学家哥白尼的学说。通过研究，尼古拉斯·哥白尼认为，有一系列圆形的行星围绕太阳转动，地球就是这些行星中的一颗。然而，因为害怕宗教法庭的迫害，这一伟大的发现被哥白尼本人小心翼翼地保存了 36 年，直到他于 1534 年死去才公开发表。宗教法庭最初建立于 13 世纪，当时主要是为防范法国阿尔比教派和意大利华尔德教派的异端们威胁罗马教皇的绝对权威。其实这些人都是性格温和的异端分子，信仰虔诚，不相信私人财产，宁愿过基督本人那样的贫穷生活。不管宗教法庭有多大的威力，当时的航海专家们普遍相信地球是圆的，无论向东或向西都能到达印度支那和中国。他们正在争论的，只是往哪个方向航行会更好、更容易。

朝西航行的哥伦布

在主张向西航线的人士中，有一位名为克里斯托弗·哥伦布的热那亚水手。哥伦布的父亲是一位羊毛商，他本人曾在帕维亚大学读过一阵书，专攻数学和几何学。后来，他继承了父亲的羊毛生意。可没过多久，我们又发现他在东地中海的希俄斯岛上做商务旅行。从此地，我们听说他乘船去了英格兰，但此行到底是作为羊毛商去北方购买羊毛还是作为一艘商船的船长，我们不得而知。公元 1477 年 2 月，哥伦布造访了冰岛（如果我们一定要相信他本人的话）。但更可能的情形是，他仅仅抵达了法罗群岛。在每年 2 月的时候，此地也是一片冰天雪地，完全有可能被误认为冰岛。哥伦布在这里见到了那些强悍勇敢的北欧人的后裔们，他们 10 世纪就已在格陵兰岛定居。在 11 世纪，他们还第一次看到了美洲。当时利夫船长的船只被狂风刮到美洲的瓦恩兰岛（适宜种葡萄的地方），即拉布拉多沿岸。

至于这些远西地区的殖民地后来结果如何，则无人知悉。利夫的兄弟托尔斯坦因的遗孀后来嫁给了托尔芬·卡尔斯夫内，他于 1003 年建立了以自己的名字为名的美洲殖民地。由于爱斯基摩人的敌意与反抗，该殖民地只维持了 3 年。至于格陵兰岛，从 1440 年起便没有了当地居民的任何消息，很可能所有定居格陵兰的北欧人都死于当时刚刚灭绝了一半挪威人口的黑死病。不管事实的情形为何，关于“远西地区的大片土地”的传闻依然在法罗群岛和冰岛的居民里盛行不衰，哥伦布想必从他们的口里听到了不少类似的消息。从北苏格兰群岛的渔民那里，哥伦布

进一步收集到更多的信息。随后，他前往葡萄牙，娶了一位曾为亨利王子（航海家亨利）工作的船长之女为妻。

从此（1478 年），他将全部的精力投入到寻找通向印度支那的西面航线中。他向葡萄牙和西班牙皇室分别递交了自己拟订的航海计划。当时，葡萄牙人对他们垄断的向东航线正自信十足，哥伦布的计划根本引不起他们的兴趣。在西班牙，阿拉贡的斐迪南大公和卡斯蒂尔的伊莎贝拉于 1469 年成亲。这桩婚姻使阿拉贡和卡斯蒂尔合并为一个统一的西班牙王国。此时，两人正忙于攻打摩尔人在西班牙半岛的最后一个堡垒——格拉纳达，需要把每一个比塞塔都用于战争，因此无力资助哥伦布的冒险计划。

很少有人像这位勇敢的意大利人，为实现自己的想法而拼命奋战，且几度陷入毫无希望的境地而不言放弃。不过有关哥伦布的故事早已耳熟能详，毋须本人在此赘述。1492 年 1 月 2 日，困守格拉纳达的摩尔人终于投降。同年 4 月，哥伦布与西班牙国王及王后签定了合同。于是在 8 月 3 日，一个星期五，哥伦布率领三只小船挥别帕洛斯，开始了向西寻找印度支那和中国的伟大航行。随行的还有 88 名船员，其中有许多是在押罪犯，为寻求免刑而参加远征队。1492 年 10 月 12 日，一个星期五的凌晨两点钟，哥伦布第一次发现了陆地。1493 年 1 月 4 日，哥伦布告别留守拉·纳维戴德要塞的 44 名船员（他们之中无一人生还），踏上返乡之旅。

他于2月中旬到达了亚速尔群岛，那里的葡萄牙人威胁要将他投进监狱。1493年3月15日，船长先生终于回到帕洛斯岛，随后马不停蹄地带着他的印第安人（哥伦布相信他发现的是印度群岛延伸出来的一些岛屿，因此将他带回的土著居民称为红色印第安人）赶往巴塞罗那，去向他忠实的保护人禀报他的航行大获成功，通往金银之国中国和吉潘古（日本）的航线已经畅通，可供至为宽宏大量的国王与王后陛下随意调用。

不过，哥伦布一辈子都没悟出事实的真相。到他生命的晚年，当他在第四次航行中到达南美大陆时，他也许在瞬间怀疑过自己的发现并不是那么回事。不过，他至死还抱着一个坚定的信念，在欧洲和亚洲之间并无一个单独大陆的存在，他已经找到了直接通往中国的路线。

麦哲伦向东

与此同时，葡萄牙人执着于他们的东方航线，运气比西班牙人好多了。1498年，达·伽马成功到达马拉巴海岸，并满载着一船香料安全返回里斯本，引起全欧洲的轰动。1502年，达·伽马旧地重游，对这一航线已经是驾轻就熟。相比之下，探索向西航线的工作却令人沮丧。在1497和1498年，约翰·卡波特和塞巴斯蒂安·卡波特兄弟试图找到通向日本的路径，可他们除了看到纽芬兰岛白雪皑皑的大地和嶙峋突兀的海岸，其它则一无所获。其实早在5个世纪之前，北欧人已经目睹过这一壮观的冰天雪地了。佛罗伦萨人阿美利哥·维斯普奇成为了西班牙的首席领航员，美洲大陆就是以他的名字命名的。他探索了巴西海岸，却根本找不到印度群岛的踪影。

在公元1513年，即哥伦布去世7年后，欧洲的地理学家们才最终了解了新大陆的真相。华斯哥·努涅茨·德·巴尔波沃穿越巴拿马地峡，登上著名的达里安峰，难以置信地看到眼前竟还有一片无穷无尽的辽阔海面。这似乎证明了另一个大洋的存在。

最终在1519年，葡萄牙航海家斐迪南德·麦哲伦率领由5只西班牙船只组成的船队，向西寻找香料群岛（因为向东的路线完全掌握在葡萄牙人手中，他们是不允许竞争的）。麦哲伦穿过非洲与巴西之间的大西洋，继续往南航行，到达了一个狭窄的海峡。它位于巴塔戈尼亚（意为“长着大脚的人们的土地”）的最南端与火岛（一天夜里，船员们看到了岛上燃起的火光，表明岛上有土著居民活动）之间。整整5个星期，麦哲伦的船队遭到狂风和暴风雪的吹袭，随时都可能发生灭顶之灾。恐慌在船队中蔓延开来，船员中发生了哗变。麦哲伦以异常严厉的手段镇压了叛乱，并把两名船员留在荒芜的海岸上“忏悔罪过”。

最后，风暴终于停息，海峡也逐渐变宽。麦哲伦驶入了一个新的大洋。这里风平浪静，阳光普照，麦哲伦称之为太平安宁的海洋，即太平洋。他继续向西航行，有98天没有看见一丝一毫陆地的影子，船员们几乎因饥饿和干渴而悉数灭绝。他们吞噬船舱里大群的老鼠，老鼠吃光了，他们便咀嚼船帆充饥。

1521年3月，他们终于再次看见陆地。麦哲伦将此地命名为“盗匪之地”，因为当地的土著见什么偷什么。接着，他们继续西行，越来越接近他们梦寐以求的香料群岛。

他们又看见了陆地。这是一群孤独岛屿组成的群岛。麦哲伦以其主人查理五世的儿子菲利普二世的名字，为之取名“菲律宾”。不过菲利普二世在历史上并未留下什么光彩愉快的记录，西班牙

“无敌舰队”的全军覆没正是此君的手笔。在菲律宾，麦哲伦一开始受到了友好热情的接待，可当他准备用大炮强迫当地居民信仰基督教时，他受到了猛烈反抗。土著们杀死了麦哲伦和他的许多船长船员。幸存的海员焚毁了残余三艘船只中的一艘，继续向西航行。他们最终抵达摩鹿加，即著名的香料群岛。他们还发现了婆罗洲（今印尼加里曼丹岛），驶抵了蒂多尔岛。在这里，剩余的两艘船中的一艘由于漏水严重，只能连船员一起留在当地。唯一幸免的“维多利亚”号在船长塞巴斯蒂安·德尔·卡诺的率领下，开始穿越印度洋，很遗憾地错过了发现澳大利亚北部海岸的机会（直到17世纪初期，一艘荷兰东印度公司的船只才发现了这片平坦荒芜的土地）。最后，历经千辛万苦，他们终于返回了西班牙。

文明中心的西移

这次环球航行是所有航行中最重要、最著名的一次。它耗时3年，以巨大的金钱和人力损失为代价，最终获得成功。它充分地证明了一个事实，即地球确实是圆的，且哥伦布发现的新土地并不是印度的一部分，而是一个全新的大陆。从此，西班牙和葡萄牙一齐将全部的精力投入到开发他们与印度及美洲的贸易之上。为防止这对竞争对手最终以流血冲突的方式解决争端，教皇亚历山大六世（唯一曾被选为最高教职的天主教异端分子

）被迫以格林威治以西的五十度经线为界，将世界平分为两个部分，即所谓的 1494 年托尔德西亚分界约定。葡萄牙人拥有在这条经线以东地区建立殖民地的权力，而西班牙人获得了经线以西地区。这就是为什么在英国和荷兰殖民者（他们对教皇的决定毫无敬意）于 17 及 18 世纪取得殖民优势之前，除巴西之外的整个南美大陆都是西班牙殖民地，而全部的印度群岛及非洲大部分地区都是葡萄牙殖民地。

当哥伦布发现中国和印度支那的消息传到中世纪的华尔街——威尼斯的利奥尔托时，那里发生了一场大恐慌。股票和债券的价格狂跌了 40%—50%。过了一段时间，当情况表明哥伦布并未真正找到通往中国的海路时，威尼斯商人们才从惊恐中恢复过来。可紧接的达·伽马与麦哲伦的航行证明，向东由海路航行到印度群岛的可能性是实际存在的。这时，中世纪和文艺复兴时期两大著名商业中心——威尼斯与热那亚的统治者才不由得为没听哥伦布的建议而懊悔不已。可为时晚矣！令他们发财致富、令他们骄傲无比的地中海现在成了一片内海，而通往印度和中国的陆路也由于海路的发现被降到了无足轻重的地位。意大利旧日的辉煌行将结束，大西洋开始成为新的贸易与文明中心。从那时一直到现在，大西洋地区一直保持着这种地位。

你可以看看，从文明最早产生开始，它是以多么奇特的方式在前进啊！5000 年前，尼罗河谷的居民开始用文字记录他们的历史。从尼罗河流域，文明转移到幼发拉底河与底格里斯河之间的美索布达米亚。接着，是克里特文明、希腊文明和罗马文明的兴起。地中海这个内陆海变成了全世界的贸易中心，它沿岸的城市成为了艺术、科学、哲学及其它知识的家园。到 16 世纪，文明再次向西转移，使得大西洋沿岸的国家成为了世界的霸主。

有人断言，世界大战和欧洲主要国家间的自杀性战争已经大大降低了大西洋的重要地位。他们期望文明将越过美洲大陆，在太平洋找到新的家园。对此，我暂且保留怀疑。

随着向西航线的发展，船只的体积在逐渐增大，航海家们的知识和视野也在不断开阔。尼罗河和幼发拉底河的平底船被腓尼基人、爱琴海人、希腊人、迦太基人及罗马人的老式帆船所取代。这些老式帆船随后又被葡萄牙人和西班牙人发明了横帆帆船取代。而当英国人和荷兰人驾驶着满帆帆船航行在大洋上时，西班牙人和葡萄牙人的船只又被赶出了海洋。

到今天，文明的发展已经不再单纯依赖于船只了。飞机已在取代并将继续取代帆船和蒸汽船的地位。下一个文明中心将依赖于飞行器与水力的发展。海洋将再次成为小鱼们不受打搅的宁静家园，正如它们与人类最早的祖先共同生活于深海时那样。

第四十一章 佛陀与孔子

佛陀与孔子的思想照耀着东方，他们的教导和榜样依然在影响着这个世界上大多数同行者的行为和思想。

葡萄牙人与西班牙人的地理发现，使得西欧的基督徒与印度及中国的人民发生了密切的接触。当然，西方人早就知道基督教并非世界上唯一的宗教。他们已经见识过跟随穆罕默德的穆斯林和非洲北部那些崇拜木柱、岩头和枯树干的异教部落。不过在印度和中国，基督教征服者们突然发现，这个世界上竟然还存在成百上千万既未听说过耶稣的事迹也不想信从基督教义的人民，因为他们认为自己绵延数千年的宗教比西方的信仰要好得多。由于我讲的是一部关于人类的故事，并不仅仅局限于欧洲人和我们居住的西半球的历史。所以，我想你们应当了解这两个人——佛陀与孔子。要知道，他们的教导和榜样依然在继续影响着这个世界上我们大多数同行者的行为和思想。

在印度，佛陀被尊为最伟大的信仰导师。他的生平事迹很有趣。佛陀生于公元前 6 世纪，出生的地方就望得见白雪皑皑、气势宏伟的喜马拉雅山。400 年前，雅利安民族（这是印欧种族的东方分支对自己的称呼）的第一位伟大领导者查拉斯图特拉（琐罗亚斯德）就是在此地教导他的人民。他让他们将生命视为凶神阿里曼与至高的善神奥尔穆兹德之间的一场持续的斗争。佛陀出生在一个非常高贵的家庭，他的父亲萨多达那是萨基亚斯部落的崇高首领，他的母亲玛哈玛亚也是邻近王国的公主。她在少女时代就出嫁了。可月亮在遥远的喜马拉雅山脊上生起又落下，阴晴圆缺了许多个春秋，他的丈夫还未得到一个儿子来继承他的王位。最终，当玛哈玛亚 50 岁时，她怀孕了，苦日子总算熬到了头。她骄傲地返回家乡，以便当儿子降生时，她正在自己的族人中间。

返回到童年生活的柯利扬，需经过一段漫长的路程。一天晚上，玛哈玛亚正在蓝毗尼一个花园的树荫下小憩，她的儿子就于此刻降生了。他被取名为悉达多，不过我们通常叫他佛陀，意思是“大彻大悟的人”。渐渐地，悉达多长成了一位漂亮英俊的年轻王子。当他年满 19 岁时，他娶了自己的表妹雅苏达拉为妻。婚后的 10 年里，他一直安全地生活在高高的皇室宫墙内，远离人世间的痛苦磨难，安静等待着继承父亲成为萨基亚斯国王的那一天。

不过到他 30 岁那年，悉达多的生活中发生了一些别样的事情。一次，他走出宫门，看见一位年老体衰、精力尽失的老人，虚弱的四肢似乎因无法支撑身体的重负而摇摇欲坠。悉达多指着这位老人问自己的车夫查纳，他为何如此穷苦。查纳回答说，这个世界上有太多的穷人，多一个或少一个都没关系，所以不必在意。年轻的王子深感悲伤，可他没再说什么，继续回到宫中与他的妻子父母一起生活，尽力让自己快乐起来。又过了不久，他第二次离开王宫，坐在马车上看见了一个正受着恶疾折磨的病人。悉达多于是问查纳，为什么这个人应该遭受如此的痛苦？马车夫回答说，世界上的病人太多太多了，这样的事情是无法避免的，所以不必介意。听到这个回答，年轻的王子感觉更加悲伤了，但他还是回到了家人的身边。

几星期过去。一天傍晚，悉达多命令他的马车夫送他去河边洗浴。突然间，他的奔马为一个死人仰躺在路边水沟的恐怖景象所惊，差点冲出道路。养尊处优的王子一生都被父母好好的保护着，从未目睹过如此恐怖的情景，不由得惊骇不已。但查纳告诉他说，不要在意这些微不足道的事情。世界充斥着死人，这是生命的铁律，万物皆有大限来临的时刻。没有什么东西可以不朽，等待我们每一个人的都将是坟墓。

当天晚上，当悉达多回到家时，迎接他的是阵阵悦耳的音乐。原来在他出门期间，他的妻子为他产下了一名男孩。人们欢天喜地，因为王位又有了继承者。他们敲响了许多面鼓，庆祝这一重大的喜事。可悉达多心头沉重，无法分享他们的喜悦。生命的幕布已经在他面前升起了，让他领略到人类生存的种种痛苦与恐惧。死亡与磨难的景象像梦魇一样追逐他，缠绕他，挥之不去。

那天晚上，月明如镜，月色如水。悉达多半夜醒来，开始思考许许多多的事情。在为生存的迷团找到一个解救之道以前，他再也不可能快乐起来。他决定远离自己热爱的亲人，去寻找答案。于是，他悄悄来到妻子的卧房，看了一眼熟睡中的妻子和儿子。随后，他叫醒忠实的仆人查纳，让他跟自己一道出走。两个男人一起走进黑夜之中，一个是为了求得灵魂的平静，一个是要忠心侍奉自己热爱的主人。

当悉达多在人民中间流浪多年的时候，印度社会正经历着一个剧烈变动的时期。印度人的祖先，即印度的土著居民，他们在多年前就被好战的雅利安人（我们的远房表兄）轻而易举地征服。从此，雅利安人成为了几千万性格温和、身材瘦小的棕色居民的统治者和主人。为巩固自己的地位，他们将人口划分为不同等级，并逐步将一套严厉而僵硬的“种姓”制度强加到土著居民的身上。雅利安征服者的子孙属于最高的“种姓”，即武士和贵族阶层。其次是祭司阶层。再往下是农民和商人阶层。而原先的土著居民被划为“贱民”，成为了一个被鄙视被轻贱的奴隶阶层，永远不能指望进入更高的等级。

甚至连人们信仰的宗教也有着等级之分。那些古老的印欧人，在其几千年的流浪生涯中，有过许多奇特的冒险经历。这些事迹被搜集成一本书，名为《吠陀经》。它所用的语言被称为梵文，与欧洲大陆的希腊语、拉丁语、俄语、德语及其他几十种语言都有着密切的联系。三个高等的种姓被允许阅读这部圣书。但作为最低种姓的贱民们连了解其内容都属犯法。如果一个贵族或是僧侣胆敢教一个贱民阅读圣书，等待他的将是严厉的惩罚。

因此，印度人口中的大部分人都过着极其悲惨的生活。由于此世允诺给他们的欢乐少的可怜，他们必然会寻找别的途径去脱离苦海。很多人都通过冥想来世的欢乐来求取些微的安慰。

在印度人的神话里面，婆罗西摩是所有生命的创造者，是生与死的至高统治者。他是完美的最高典范，受到众多印度人的崇拜。因此，效仿婆罗西摩，弃绝对财富和权势的种种欲望，便被许多人视为生活的崇高目的。他们觉得，圣洁的思想比圣洁的行为更加重要。许多人为此走进荒漠，以树叶为食，饿其体肤，通过冥想婆罗西摩的光辉、智慧、善良、仁慈来滋养灵魂。

悉达多经常观察这些孤独的流浪者，看见他们远离城市与乡村的喧嚣去寻找真理，决意以他们为榜样。他脱下随身穿戴的珠宝，连同一封诀别信一起，让一直忠实跟随他的查纳转交给家人。然后，这位王子一个随从都不带，孤身移居沙漠。

不久，他圣洁行为的名声便在山区传播开来。有 5 个年轻人前来拜访他，请求聆听他智慧的言辞。悉达多答应作他们的老师，条件是要他们效仿他的榜样。5 个年轻人答应了，悉达多便领他们到自己修行的山区。他在温迪亚山脉的孤独山峰间，花了 6 年时间将自己掌握的智慧对学生们倾囊相授。不过，当这段修行生活接近尾声之时，他仍感觉自己离完美的境界相差甚远。他所远离的世界依然在诱惑着他，动摇他的修行意志。于是，悉达多让学生们离开他，独自一人坐在一棵菩提树的树根旁，禁食 49 个昼夜，沉思冥想。他的苦修最终获得了回报。到第 50 天的黄昏降临时，婆罗西摩亲自向他忠实的仆人显灵。从那一时刻开始，悉达多便被尊为“佛陀”，即前来人世将人们从不幸的必死生命中解救出来的“大彻大悟者”。

在其生命的最后 45 年里，佛陀一直在恒河附近的山谷里度过，对人们宣讲他谦恭温顺待人的简朴教训。公元前 488 年，佛陀在经历了圆满的一生后去世。此时，他的教义已经在印度大地上广为流传，他本人也受到成百上千万人民的热爱。佛陀并不单单为某个阶级传道，他的信念是对所有人开放的，甚至最低等级的贱民也能宣称自己是佛陀的信徒。

当然，这些教义让贵族、祭司和商人们大为不满。他们想尽一切办法来摧毁这个承认众生平等且许诺给人们一个更幸福的来世生命（投胎转世）的宗教。一有机会，他们便鼓励印度人回归婆罗门教的古老教义，坚持禁食及折磨自己有罪的肉身。不过，佛教非但没被毁灭，反而流传更广了。“大彻大悟者”的信徒们慢慢越过喜马拉雅山，将佛教带进了中国。他们还渡过黄海，向日本人民宣讲佛陀的智慧。他们忠实地遵守其伟大导师的禁止其使用暴力的意愿，从不以暴易暴。到今天，信仰佛教的人比以前任何时候都多，其人数甚至超过了基督徒和穆斯林的总和。

至于中国的古老智者孔子，他的故事要相对简单一些。孔子生于公元前 550 年。在动荡的社会氛围中，他却度过了宁静、恬淡、富于尊严的一生。当时的中国没有一个强有力的中央政府，人们成为盗贼和封建主随意摆布的牺牲品。他们从一个城市窜到另一个城市，肆意劫掠、偷盗、谋杀，将中国富饶的北方平原和中部地区变成了饿殍遍野的荒原。

富于仁爱之心的孔子试图要拯救自己的人民于水火之中。作为一个天性平和的人，他不相信使用暴力，他也不赞成以一大堆法律约束人民的治国方式。他知道，唯一的拯救之道在于改变世道人心。于是，孔子开始着手这件看似毫无希望的工作，努力改善自己聚居在东亚平原上数百万同胞的性格。中国人对宗教向来没有太大热情。他们像许多原始人一样相信鬼怪神灵。但他们没有先知，也不承认“天启真理”的存在。在世界上所有伟大的道德领袖中，孔子大概是唯一一个没有看见过“幻象”，没有宣称过自己是神的使者，没有时不时声称自己听到从上天传来的声音的人。

他仅仅是一个通达理性、仁爱为怀的普通人，宁愿一个人孤独地漫游，用自己忠实的笛子吹出悠远的曲调。他不强求别人的承认。他从未要求过任何人追随他或是崇拜他。他使我们联想起古希腊的智者，特别是斯多葛学派的哲学家。这些人同样相信不求回报的正直生活与正当思考，他们追求的是灵魂的平静和良心的安宁。

孔子是一位非常宽容的人。他曾主动去拜访另一位伟大的道德领袖老子。老子是被称为“道教”的哲学体系的创始人，其教义有些像早期中国版的基督教“金律”。孔子对任何人都不怀仇恨之心，他教给人们温文有度的至高美德。根据孔子的训示，一个真正有价值的人是从不允许自己被任何事情被激怒的，他应当承受命运的磨难而不怨天尤人。因为真正富于智慧的哲人都明白，不管发生了任何事情，它们最终都会以某种方式，变得于人有益。

最初，孔子只有为数很少的几个学生。逐渐地，愿意聆听他教诲的人越来越多。在他去世前不久的公元前 478 年，甚至有几位中国的国王和王子公开承认他们是孔子的信徒。当基督在伯利恒的马槽降生时，孔子的哲学已经成为大部分中国人的思想组成部分，并一直影响他们的生活直至今日。当然，如同其它的宗教一样，孔子的思想也并非以其最初的、纯粹的方式影响着人们。大部分宗教都是与世俱变。基督最初教导人们要谦卑、温顺、弃绝世俗的野心和欲望，可当他在各各地被钉死在十字架上 15 个世纪之后，基督教会的首脑却在耗费成百万的金钱修建豪华宫殿。这与最初伯利恒凄凉的马槽何止天壤之别！

老子以类似金律的思想教导人们。可在不到 3 个世纪后，无知的大众却将他塑造成一位异常可怖的上帝，将他充满智慧的思想掩盖在迷信的垃圾堆下，使普通中国人的生活变成了一长串忧虑、害怕与恐怖的事物。

孔子教导学生孝顺父母的美德。不久，他们对追思死去的父母们的兴趣，便开始超过了他们对于子孙幸福的关注。他们故意背对未来，却极力对过去的无尽黑暗投以深深的注视。这样，祖先崇拜开始成为一种正当的

宗教仪式。为了不惊扰埋葬在阳光充足、土地肥沃的山坡向阳面的祖先，他们宁愿将小麦和水稻种植在土壤贫瘠的山坡阴面，即便明知有可能长不出任何东西也是如此。他们情愿忍受饥荒的痛苦也不愿意亵渎祖先的坟墓。

与此同时，孔子的充满智慧的警句深入到越来越多的东亚人民心中。儒教以其深刻的格言和精辟的观察，给每个中国人的心灵抹上了一层哲学常识的油彩。它影响着他们一生的生活，不管是在烟气腾腾的地下室里的洗衣工，还是居住在高墙深宫之内的管辖广袤地域的统治者。

在 16 世纪，西方世界的狂热但不够文明的基督徒们，第一次与东方的古老教义面面对峙了。早期的西班牙人和葡萄牙人看到宁静平和的佛陀塑像及年高德劭的孔子画像，根本不懂得向这些伟大的先知表示最起码的尊重，只是报以轻描淡写的一笑。他们轻易得出结论，这些奇怪的神祇是恶魔化身，代表着偶像崇拜和异教的旁门左道，不值得基督的真正信徒们的尊敬。而一旦佛陀或孔子的精神阻挠了他们的香料与丝绸贸易，欧洲人便以坚船利炮攻击这些“邪恶的势力”。这样一种思维方式已经生出了恶果。它为我们留下了一份充满敌意的遗产，对我们将来并无任何好处。

第四十二章 宗教改革

最好将人类的进步比作一个钟摆，它不断地向前和向后摆动。人们在文艺复兴时期对艺术与文学的热情及对宗教的淡漠，在随后的宗教改革时期就变成了对艺术与文学的淡漠及对宗教的热情。

探索历史的究竟

你们想必听说过宗教改革。一听到这个名词，你肯定想到的是一群为数不多但勇气十足的清教徒。他们为“宗教信仰的自由”飘洋过海，在新大陆开拓了一番新天地。随着时间的推移，特别是在我们信奉基督教新教的国家里，宗教改革逐渐变成了“争取思想自由”的同义词。马丁·路德被视为这个进步运动的先锋和领袖。不过，历史并非由一连串对于我们光荣祖先的谀美之辞组成的。以德国历史学家朗克的话来说，我们要尽力去探究历史中“究竟发生了什么”？带着这种态度，过去那些似乎是天经地义的历史结论在我们眼里就会变得有所不同了。

在人类的生活中，很少有事情是绝对好或者绝对坏的，世界并不是非黑即白。作为一个诚实的编年史家，他的任务就是要对每一历史事件的所有好和不好的方面予以真实的描述。这件事做起来非常困难，因为我们每个人都有自己个人的偏好与憎恶。不过，我们应当竭力一试，尽量做到公平理性地判断事物，不让自己过分受偏见的影响。

就以我自身的经历为例吧。我在一个新教气氛异常浓厚的新教国家的新教中心长大。在 11 岁以前，我从未见过一个天主教徒。所以当我后来遇见他们，和他们打交道时，我觉得非常不安。事实上，我是有点吓坏了！我很熟悉成千上万的新教徒被西班牙宗教法庭绞死、烧死、甚至五马分尸的故事，那是当时的阿尔巴大公为惩罚信仰路德教派和加尔文教派的荷兰异端们所采取的极端手段。这些恐怖故事在我眼里既真实又切身。它们仿佛就发生在前一天，并且它们完全有可能再度发生！我想象着另一个圣巴瑟洛缪之夜（这天晚上法国天主教徒对新教徒进行了大规模屠杀），瘦小可怜的我穿着睡衣被杀害，我的尸体被扔出窗外，就像高尚的柯利尼将军所遭遇的那样。

很多年后，我到天主教国家生活了一段时间。我发现那儿的人们不仅更温和、更宽容，并且在聪明才智方面丝毫不逊于我以前的新教同胞。更让我吃惊的是，我开始发现宗教改革中天主教徒也有有理的一面，并且他们的理由几乎和新教徒一样充分。不过，那些 16、17 世纪的善良人们，他们实实在在地生活在宗教改革的动荡之中，不可能像我们这样冷静地看问题。他们觉得自己永远正确，而敌人永远邪恶。问题是你要么绞死别人，要么被别人绞死。当然人人都情愿绞死别人。这并非没有人性，也不必为此受罪恶感的折磨。

主角登场

让我们看一眼公元 1500 年的世界，这是一个很容易记住的日期。我们发现，查理五世在这一年降生了。此时，中世纪的封建割据与无序状态逐渐让位于几个高度中央集权的王国。其中最有权势的君主是查理大帝，当时他还是一个襁褓之中的婴孩。查理是西班牙的斐迪南与伊莎贝拉的外孙。他还是哈布斯堡王朝最后一位中世纪骑士马克西米安和妻子勇敢者查理的女儿玛丽的孙子。勇敢者查理即勃艮第大公，他野心勃勃，在成功地击败法国后，为独立的瑞士农民所杀。这样，童年时代的查理便继承了世界地图上最大的一片土地。它们全是在德国、奥地利、荷兰、比利时、意大利及西班牙的父母、祖父母、外祖父母、叔叔、堂兄、姑妈们留给他的，外带他们在亚洲、非洲、美洲拥有的全部殖民地。也许是出于命运的嘲弄，查理出生在根特的那座德国人不久前入侵比利时时用作监狱的弗兰德斯城堡，而作为德意志和西班牙的皇帝，他本人受到的却是弗兰芒人的教育。

由于其父早逝（有人说他是被毒死的，但这种传说从未得到证实），母亲发了疯（她带着装殓丈夫尸体的棺材，在自己的领土上四处旅行），小查理受到姑妈玛格丽特的严厉管教。长大之后，查理成了一个道地的弗兰芒人，被迫统治着德国、意大利、西班牙以及 100 多个大大小小的奇怪民族。他身为天主教会的忠实儿子，却非常反对宗教的不宽容。无论在童年还是成人以后，查理一直是一个懒散怠惰的人。可命运偏偏要惩罚他，让他治理正处在一片宗教狂热和喧嚣中的世界。他不得安宁，永远都在急匆匆地从马德里赶往因斯布鲁克，又从布鲁日奔赴维也纳。他热爱和平宁静，可一生都在打仗。在 55 岁时，我们看见他以极度的仇恨和愚昧，非常厌恶地弃绝了人类。3 年之后，他在精疲力竭与绝望失意中孤独死去。

关于查理皇帝就讲这么多。那当时世界的第二大势力教会又怎么样呢？在中世纪早期，教会致力于征服异教徒，教给他们虔诚与正直生活的好处。可从那时开始，教会逐渐发生了巨大的变化。首先，它变得非常富有了。教皇不再单单是一群卑微基督徒的牧羊人。他住在宽大豪华的宫殿里，身边围绕着一大群艺术家、音乐家和著名文人。他的大小教堂里毫无必要地挂满了崭新的圣像，看上去更像希腊的神抵。他分配在工作 and 赏玩艺术品上的时间极不平衡。教廷事务大概只占用了他 10% 的时间，其余 90% 都花在欣赏古罗马雕塑或新出土的古希腊花瓶、设计新的夏宫、或是出席某出新剧的首演。大主教和红衣主教们争相以教皇为榜样，而主教们又尽力效仿大主教的样子。只有乡村地区的教士依然忠于职守，与世俗世界的邪恶以及异教徒对美与享乐的热爱保持着远远的距离。他们小心翼翼地躲开那些腐化堕落的修道院。那里的僧侣们似乎忘记了谨守淳朴与贫穷的古老誓言，凭着自己的胆子追逐声色之乐，只求别成为公众丑闻中的人物。

最后是一般老百姓。他们的状况比过去好多了，可说是前所未有的。他们富裕了起来，住着比以前宽敞舒适的房子。他们的孩子受到更好的教育，他们的城市更加漂亮整洁，他们手中的火枪让他们能够与老对手强盗诸侯抗衡，使他们不能再随意对他们辛辛苦苦的生意课以重税了。

关于宗教改革的主角们，我就介绍这么多。

北方与南方

现在，让我们来看看文艺复兴对欧洲到底造成了什么影响，然后你就能理解，为什么紧接着学术与文艺的复兴之后，会是新一轮的宗教热忱的勃兴。文艺复兴的浪潮始于意大利，再从此地扩展到法国。可它在西班牙倍受冷落，因为 500 年抗击摩尔人的战争使这里的人们变得心胸狭隘并且充斥着宗教狂热。虽然文艺复兴波及的范围越来越广，可一旦越过阿尔卑斯山，它的性质便发生了某种变化。

北部欧洲的人们生活在完全不同的气候中，他们对待生活的态度与他们的南方邻居截然不同。意大利人喜欢住在户外，享受灿烂的阳光与开阔的天空。他们喜欢高声大笑，放歌纵酒，享受生活的快乐。而德国人、荷兰人、英国人、瑞典人，他们大部分时间呆在室内，静听雨水拍打他们舒适小房间紧闭的窗户。他们不苟言笑，以一丝不苟的严肃态度对待生活中的事物。他们常常想到自己不朽的灵魂，不喜欢拿他们认为是圣洁和神圣的事情开玩笑。他们只是对文艺复兴中“人文”的那部分，比如书籍、关于古代作者的研究、语法以及教材感兴趣。但文艺复兴运动在意大利的主要成果之一，即回归古希腊与古罗马的异教文明，却使他们心中充满恐惧。

然而教皇和红衣主教团几乎全部是由意大利人组成的。他们把教会变成了一个气氛愉快的俱乐部，在此优雅地谈论着艺术、音乐和戏剧，却少有提及信仰的问题。由此，那道横亘在忧郁严肃的北方与高雅文明、但对信仰淡然处之的南方之间的裂痕，开始逐渐扩大。可似乎没人意识到这种气质上的分裂给教会带来的巨大威胁。

另外还有一些原因可以解释，为什么宗教改革运动正好是发生在德国而非荷兰与英国。自古以来，德国人与罗马教会积怨甚深。日尔曼皇帝与教皇之间无休止的争吵和战争给双方都造成了巨大的伤害。在其它的欧洲国家，政权牢牢掌握在一个强有力的国王手中，统治者常常能够保护自己的臣民免遭贪婪教士的迫害。可在德国，一个摇摇欲坠的皇帝名义上统治着一大帮蠢蠢欲动的小封建主，这种政治局面使得善良的自由民更易落入主教和教士们的虎口。文艺复兴时期的教皇们有一个癖好，就是喜欢宏伟豪华的大教堂。而他们手下的高僧们为满足教皇的心愿，便想方设法聚敛钱财。他们敛财的地方多是在德国。德国人觉得他们被搜刮了，遭了骗，当然心里不满。

最后，这里还存在着一个很少为人提及的原因：德国是印刷术的故乡。在北欧，图书价格非常便宜，《圣经》也不再是专门被教士们垄断与解释的神秘手抄本，它成了许多父亲与孩子都懂得这本拉丁文的普通家庭的案头读物。普通人直接阅读《圣经》本来是违反教会法律的，可现在全家人都开始读起来了。他们慢慢发现，原来教士们告诉他们的东西与《圣经》中的原文存在着许多不尽相同之处。这便导致了怀疑。人们开始提出问题。问题一旦存在，要是得不到适当的解答，就会招致更大的麻烦。

微笑着阐明真理

北方的人文主义者开始发动攻击。他们首先朝僧侣公开开火。在内心深处，他们仍然对教皇怀有深深的敬畏，不敢将矛头直接对准这位最神圣的人物。至于那些懒惰无知的僧侣们，那些舒舒服服躲在富的流油的修道院高墙之后的寄生虫们，再难找到比他们更好的嘲弄对象了。

有一点非常奇怪，这场战争的领袖居然是基督教会的忠实儿子。此人名为杰拉德·杰拉德佐，但人们更经常称他“渴望的”埃拉斯穆斯。他本是穷孩子出身，生于荷兰的罗特丹姆。他在德文特的一家拉丁语学校受教育，好兄弟托马斯也是从这所学校毕业的。埃拉斯穆斯后来成为了一名教士，并在一家修道院呆过一段时间。他周游欧洲各地，将自己的旅途见闻写作成书。当埃拉斯穆斯开始其作为一名畅销小手册作家（如果在今天，他会被称为社论作家）的生涯时，全世界都被一本名为《一个无名小辈的来信》的手册里一系列诙谐幽默的匿名书信给逗乐了。这些书信将中世纪晚期僧侣中普遍弥漫的愚蠢与自负暴露在光天化日之下，采用的是一种古怪的德语混合拉丁语的打油诗形式，有点类似于我们现代的五行打油诗。埃拉斯穆斯本人是一位渊博而严谨的学者，精通拉丁语和希腊语。他先是修订了《新约圣经》的希腊原文，再将其译为拉丁文，为我们提供了第一本可靠的拉丁文《新约圣经》。不过和古罗马诗人贺拉斯一样，他也相信什么也不能阻止我们“唇边带着微笑来阐明真理”。

1500年，埃拉斯穆斯去英国拜访了托马斯·摩尔爵士。在逗留英国的几个星期中，他写作了一本妙趣横生的小书，名为《愚人的赞美》。他在书中攻击了僧侣和他们荒谬的追随者们，并且充分运用了世界上最危险的武器——幽默。这本小册子是16世纪的畅销书。它广为流传，几乎在所有的国家里都有译本。它的成功使得人们开始注意埃拉斯穆斯写作的其它宣传宗教改革的书。他要求制止教会滥用权力，并呼吁其他人文主义者与他一道，参与到复兴基督信仰的伟大任务中。

不过这些美妙的计划未能结出任何果实。埃拉斯穆斯的方式太理性，也太宽容，无法取悦那些心急火燎的教会的敌人们。他们期待着一位天性更强悍、更果断的人物来作他们的领袖。

马丁·路德

他来了！他的名字就叫马丁·路德。

路德出身于一个北日尔曼农民家庭，拥有一流的才智和超乎寻常的个人勇气。他曾是奥古斯丁宗教团的修士，后来成为了萨克森地区奥古斯丁宗教团的重要人物。尔后，他到维滕堡神学院担任了大学教授，开始向心不在焉的农家子弟解释《圣经》的道理。教学之余，路德有大量的空闲时间。他将之用到了对《旧约圣经》和《新约圣经》原文的研究之上。不久之后他便发现，教皇和主教们所讲的话与基督本人的训示，存在着巨大的差异。

1511年，路德因公造访了罗马。此时，波吉亚家族的亚历山大六世，这位曾为子女的利益聚敛大量钱财的教皇已经去世。接任他的教皇是朱利叶斯二世。此人在个人品行上无可挑剔，可他却把大部分时间花在打仗

和大兴土木上。他的虔诚并未给头脑严肃的日尔曼神学家路德留下任何印象。路德大失所望地返回维滕堡。但更糟的事情还在后面。

宏伟壮观的圣彼得大教堂建筑计划，是朱利叶斯教皇临终之前托付给他清白无暇的继任者的。可它刚开工不久就已经需要维修了。于 1513 年接任朱利叶斯的亚历山大六世上台伊始，教廷便处于破产的边缘。他不得已恢复了一项古老的做法，以筹得急需的现金。他开始出售“赎罪券”。所谓“赎罪券”就是一张以一定量现金换取的羊皮纸，允诺为罪人缩短他本应呆在炼狱里赎罪的时间。根据中世纪晚期的教义，这样做完全是合理合法的。既然教会有权力赦免那些死前真心忏悔的罪人们的罪行，那他们当然也有权力通过代人们为向圣人祈祷，缩短灵魂必须呆在阴暗的炼狱里洗涤罪恶的时间。

很不幸的是，这些赎罪券必须用现金来购买。不过，它们提供了一条增加收入的轻松途径，何乐而不为呢？况且，实在太穷的人也可以免费领取赎罪券。

事情发生在 1517 年。当时，萨克森地区的赎罪券销售权被全部交到一个名为约翰·特兹尔的多明我会僧侣的手上。约翰兄弟是一位擅长强买强卖的推销员。事实上，他敛财的心情有点过于迫切了。他的商业手法大大激怒了这个日尔曼小公国的虔诚信徒们。而路德是一个异常诚实的人，盛怒之下，他做出了一件莽撞的事情。1517 年 10 月 31 日那天，路德来到萨克森宫廷教堂，将自己事先写好的 95 条宣言（或论点）张贴在教堂的大门上，对销售赎罪券的做法进行了猛烈抨击。这些宣言全部用拉丁文写成，普通老百姓并不能理解。路德不是革命者，他无意挑起一场骚乱。他只是反对赎罪券这一制度，并希望他的神职同事们能了解他的想法。这本是神职人员与教授界人士间的家务事，路德并未打算煽动起世俗老百姓对于教会的偏见。

很不幸的是，在那样一个敏感的时刻，全世界都开始对宗教事务大感兴趣。要想心平气和地讨论任何宗教问题而不上引起严重的思想骚动，这是根本不可能的。在不到两个月的时间里，全欧洲都讨论起这个萨克森僧侣的 95 条宣言来。每一个人都必须选择立场，支持或反对路德。每一个最不见经传的神学人员都必须发表自己的观点。教廷大为震惊，急令这位维滕堡神学教授前往罗马，向他们解释他的观点和行动。路德很聪明地记起了胡斯被处火刑的教训，拒不前往。罗马教会随之开除了他的教籍。当着一大群崇拜与支持者的面，路德焚毁了教皇的敕令。从此刻开始，路德和教皇之间便不可能再有和平。

尽管本人并不情愿，路德成了一大群对罗马教会心怀不满的基督徒的领袖。许多像乌利奇·冯·胡顿这样的德意志爱国者都赶去保护路德。维滕堡、厄尔福特、莱比锡大学的学生们也声言，如果当局试图拘禁路德，他们一定会誓死保护他。萨克森选帝侯向群情激奋的青年们保证，只要路德呆在萨克森的土地，他不会允许任何人加害他。

这些事件都发生在 1520 年。此时，查理五世已年满 20。作为半个世界的统治者，他必须与教皇保持良好的关系。他发布命令，在莱茵河畔的沃尔姆斯召开宗教大会，命令路德出席，并对自己不同寻常的行为做出解释。而路德此时已是日尔曼的民族英雄，他慨然前往。在会议上，路德拒绝收回他写过或说过的任何一句话。他的良心只受上帝的支配，无论活着还是死去，他都必须根据自己的良心行事。

经过审慎的讨论，沃尔姆斯会议宣布路德是上帝与人民的罪人，禁止任何德国人收留他，供给他吃喝，并禁止阅读这个怯懦的异端所写的一切书籍，那怕一个字都不允许。但这位伟大的改革者却平安无事。在大部分德国北方的人民看来，沃尔姆斯敕令是一项极不公正、令人愤怒的文件，应该受到断然地唾弃。为更安全起见，路德被藏匿到维滕堡的萨克森选帝侯的一座城堡里面。在这里，他进一步藐视教廷的权威，将《旧约圣经》和《新约圣经》译成德语，使所有人都有机会亲自阅读与理解上帝的话语。

到这个地步，宗教改革便不可能再是一个仅仅涉及信仰和宗教的事情。那些憎恶现代大教堂之美的人利用这个动荡时期，攻击并毁坏了他们不喜欢的教堂建筑，原因是他们不理解它。穷困潦倒的骑士们为弥补过去的损失，强占了原属修道院的土地。心怀不满的王公贵族利用皇帝不在的机会，趁机扩张自己的势力。饥寒交迫的农民在半疯癫的煽动家的领导下，趁着时局的混乱，袭击领主的城堡，以旧日十字军的疯狂热情，行劫掠、谋杀、焚烧之实。

一场名副其实的骚乱像洪水一般在帝国境内蔓延开来。一些王公改宗新教，当了新教徒（新教徒的意思就是路德所说的“抗议者”），于是对他们辖区内的天主教属民大加迫害。另一些王公依然是天主教徒，便起劲的吊死他们的新教徒人民。1526 年召开的斯贝雅会议试图解决臣民的宗教归顺问题，宣布了一条法令，即“所有臣民必须信奉其领主所属的教派”。这条命令把德国变成了一盘散沙，成百上千个信仰不同的小公国、小侯国相互敌对，彼此征伐，阻碍德国政治上的正常发展长达数百年。

1546年2月，路德去世。他的遗体被安葬在29年前他发出著名的反对赎罪券销售呼吁的同一间教堂里。在不到30年的短短时间，文艺复兴时期的淡漠宗教、追求幽默与欢笑的世界，已完全被宗教改革时期的充斥着讨论、争吵、漫骂、辩论的宗教狂热世界所取代。多年以来，一直由教皇们负责的精神世界帝国突然之间便土崩瓦解了。整个西欧再度成为充满杀戮和血腥的大战场。天主教徒和新教徒为了将各自坚持的某些神学教义发扬光大，在这里展开了难以想象的大厮杀。而在我们现代人眼里，这些神学教义之深奥难解，简直就如同伊特拉斯坎人留下的神秘碑文。

第四十三章 宗教战争

宗教大争论的时代，天主教与新教徒势均力敌
冲突持续了两个世纪。

玄奥的教义

16和17世纪是一个宗教大争论的时代。

今天，如果留意观察，你会发现身边的几乎每个人都在不断地谈论着“生意经”，工资的高低呀，工时的高低呀，罢工呀。因为这些是与我们当今的社会生活息息相关的问题，也是我们时代的人们主要的关注焦点。

可是1600年或1650年的孩子们却不太走运。他们听到的除了“宗教”还是“宗教”，而生活带给我们的其它种种知识和欢乐，他们则少有听闻。他们童稚的小脑袋里充斥着诸如“宿命论”、“化体论”、“自由意志”以及其它上百个类似的生奥字眼，述说着令他们迷惑不解的关于“真正信仰”的观念，无论是属于天主教的，还是新教的。根据其父母的意愿，他们成为了天主教徒、路德派教徒、加尔文派教徒、茨温利派教徒或再洗礼派教徒。他们或者学习路德编纂的“奥古斯堡教理问答”，或者记诵加尔文撰写的“基督教规”，或者念念有词地默祷英国出版的《公众祈祷书》里的“信仰三十九条”，并且俱被告之只有它们才代表“真正的信仰”。

他们对亨利八世的故事耳熟能详。这位多次结婚的英格兰君主把原属教会的财产全部据为己有，还自封为英国教会的最高首脑，窃取了由教皇任命主教与教士的古老权力。当有谁提到可怕的宗教法庭，还有它恐怖的牢房与种种折磨人的刑具，他们晚上肯定噩梦连连。而威胁他们安然入睡的恐怖故事简直层出不穷。比如一群愤怒的荷兰新教徒暴民是如何捉住十几个手无寸铁的老教士，仅仅因为杀死持不同信仰者是一件让他们大感快乐的事情，便把老教士们统统吊死一类的。很不幸的是，对阵的天主教徒与新教徒双方恰恰势均力敌。要不然，冲突本会很快以一方的完全胜利而告终。可它整整蔓延了两个世纪，耗费了近八代人的生命与精力。因为冲突的内容过于复杂，我只能拣重要的细节告诉你。如果你想知道详情，有许多关于宗教改革历史的书，你随便找一本都可以。

异端邪说与宽容品质

伴随着新教徒浩大的宗教改革运动而来的，是天主教会内部的彻底改革。那些身兼业余人文主义者和希腊罗马古董商的教皇们从历史舞台消失了，取而代之的是每天工作20个小时，孜孜不倦地处理手上的神圣职责的严肃教皇。

修道院里一度盛行的寻欢做乐的生活也告一段落。教士和修女们不得不闻鸡起舞，一大早爬起来念诵早课，悉心研究天主的教规，照顾病人，安慰垂死者。宗教法庭睁大眼睛，夜以继日地监视着四周的动静，以防危险教义通过印刷品流传开来。讲到这里，人们通常会提到可怜的伽利略。他有点不够谨慎，竟想凭他可笑的小望远镜解释宇宙，而且还小声咕哝出某些与教会正统观念全然违背的所谓行星运动规律。所以伽利略被关进了牢房。不过出于对教皇、主教及宗教法庭公平起见，我必须在此指出，新教徒同样视科学和医学为危险的敌人。新教徒在把那些自主观察事物的人们当成人类最可怕的敌人方面，其愚昧和不宽容的程度丝毫不亚于天主教徒。

比如加尔文这位伟大的法国宗教改革家，他也是日内瓦地区政治与精神上的专制者。当法国当局试图绞死迈克尔·塞维图斯（西班牙神学家与外科医生（他因为作第一位伟大的解剖学家贝塞留斯的助手而一举成名）的时候，加尔文不仅大力提供协助，而且当塞维图斯设法逃出法国监狱躲到日内瓦避难，加尔文还亲自将这位

杰出的外科医生关进监狱。经漫长的审讯，加尔文竟批准以异端邪说的罪名将他烧死在火刑柱上，全然无视塞维图斯作为著名科学家的事实。

宗教之争就这样愈演愈烈。我们很少有关于这方面的资料和数据，但总的说来，新教徒比天主教徒更早对这场无益的纷争感到厌倦。大部分由于其宗教信仰而被烧死、吊死、砍头的男人和妇女们，他们都是些诚实善良的普通人，却不幸沦为了精力过剩且极端严厉的罗马教会的牺牲品。

因为“宽容”是一种晚些才出现的品质（待你们长大之后，请一定记住这点），甚至我们所谓的“现代社会”的许多人，他们也仅仅是对自己不感兴趣的事物表现出宽容。比如说，他们可以对一个非洲土著居民表达宽容，并不在乎他到底是佛教徒还是伊斯兰教徒。可一旦他们听说身边的原本为共和党人且支持征收高额保护性关税的某邻居，现在居然加入了美国社会党（1901年成立），还赞成废除所有的关税法律，他们的宽容就不见了。于是，他们开始使用与17世纪几乎同样的语言来谴责这位好邻居，如同一个善良的天主教徒或新教徒得知自己向来非常敬爱的好朋友沦为了某种异端邪说的牺牲品，也要用相似的语言加以斥责一样。

直到不久以前，“异端邪说”还被视为一种恐怖的疾病。如今，当我们发现有某个人不重视身体和居所的清洁，使自己和孩子们受到伤寒病或别的可预防疾病的威胁，我们便向卫生部门报告。于是，卫生局的官员召来警察，一起将这个人拘押或迁走，因为他的存在对整个社区的安全构成了威胁。在16与17世纪，一个异端分子，即公开质疑自己所属的天主教或新教赖以存在的那些基本教条的男人或女人，他（她）往往被看成是比伤寒病更可怕的威胁。伤寒可能（确实非常可能）摧毁人的肉体，但异端邪说，在他们看来，毁掉的却是人们本应不朽的灵魂。因此对所有善良而有理性的人们来说，提醒警察留心那些反对现存秩序的异端分子，是他们义不容辞的职责。那些视异端邪说而不顾，没有及时向当局报告的人是有罪的，就如同一个现代人发现自己的房客染上了霍乱或天花，却不电话通知最近的医生一样。

随着你们渐渐长大，你将听说许多有关预防性药物的事情。所谓预防性药物，它们的作用简单说就是，医生们不愿等到人们真正发病，才着手去医治他们。相反，医生们研究人们完全健康时的身体情况及他们饮食起居的环境，清扫垃圾，告诉他们什么该吃什么不该吃，应避免什么不良习惯，教给他们关于保持个人卫生的种种方法，从而消除可能引发疾病的所有因素。他们甚至还不满足仅仅做到这一步。医生们去到学校，教孩子们怎样正确使用牙刷，怎样防止感冒等等。

在16世纪的人们看来，与肉体的疾病相比，威胁灵魂的疾病更为可怖（这是我一直努力向你们说明的一点）。因此他们组织了一套预防精神疾病的严密体系。一旦孩子们长到能够读书识字，他们便被教给真正信仰（并且是“唯一真正”）的种种原则。事实证明，这种做法间接地促进了欧洲人的普遍进步，是一件好事。新教国家里很快就遍布大大小小的学校。虽然这些学校将大量宝贵的时间花在对“教理问答”反复解释上面，但它们也教育除神学之外的其它知识。它们鼓励人们阅读书籍，同时也促进了印刷业的蓬勃繁荣。

耶稣会

与此同时，天主教徒也不甘落后。他们同样将大量时间与精力倾注在教育方面。在这件事情上，罗马天主教会找到了一个价值无量的朋友。教会欣然与新成立不久的耶稣会结成了同盟军。创建耶稣会这一卓越组织的人是一位西班牙士兵。他在经历了一段漫长的冒险生涯和不洁生活之后，皈依了天主教。有许多从前的罪人，他们被救世军感化，意识到自己犯下的种种罪孽，于是将余生全部奉献到帮助与安慰那些比自己更不幸的人们上。像他们一样，这位西班牙士兵也觉得自己有责任为教会服务。

这名西班牙人叫伊格纳提斯·德·洛约拉，生于发现美洲大陆的前一年（1491年）。他在战争中负伤，腿部留下终身残疾。当他在医院治疗时，他看见了圣母和圣子向自己显灵，吩咐他抛弃过去的罪恶生活改过自新。于是，洛约拉决心前往圣地，完成十字军的神圣任务。不过他的耶路撒冷之行向他证明了目前完成这一任务是不可能的。于是他回到欧洲，投入到反对路德派的战斗之中。1534年，洛约拉在巴黎大学的索邦神学院学习。他和另外7名学生一起成立了一个兄弟会。8人相约，他们将永远过圣洁的生活，绝不贪图荣华富贵，坚持追求正义，并且要将他们的身体和灵魂奉献给教会服务。几年之后，这个小型的兄弟会成长为一个正规的组织，而且被教皇保罗三世正式承认为“耶稣会”。

洛约拉以前是一名军人，他相信纪律和对上级命令绝对服从的重要性。事实上，二者成为了耶稣会取得巨大成功的关键因素。耶稣会擅长教育。耶稣会的教师在被允许单独和学生谈话之前，要先受到极其完备的培训

。教师与学生们同吃同住，参加他们的各种游戏活动，悉心看护他们的思想和灵魂。这样的教育方法成果斐然。耶稣会培养出新一代忠心耿耿的天主教徒，使他们像中世纪早期一样严肃认真的对待自己的信仰职责。

不过，精明的耶稣会不是将所有精力都全部花在对穷人的教育上。他们纷纷进入权贵们的宫殿，担任那些未来的皇帝和国王们的私人教师。当我给你们讲 30 年战争时，你们就会明白耶稣会这样做的意义何在。不过，在这股可怕的宗教狂热最后爆发之前，还发生了其它一些重要的事情。

荷兰人的反抗

查理五世死后，德国和奥地利落到了他的兄弟斐迪南德手中。他的其它领地，包括西班牙、荷兰、印度群岛及美洲，则全部由他的儿子菲利普接管。菲利普是查理五世和自己的亲表妹，一位葡萄牙公主所生的儿子。这样近亲结合所生下的孩子很容易行为古怪、精神不正常。菲利普的儿子，不幸的唐·卡洛斯就是一个名副其实的疯子，后来经自己父亲的授意被杀死。菲利普本人倒不疯，不过他对教会的热情却近似一种宗教歇斯底里。他相信自己是上帝指派给人类的救世主之一。因此，要是有谁固执己见，不肯分享陛下大人对上帝的绝对热情，他就会被宣布为人类的敌人，从肉体上予以清除，以免他的坏榜样腐化虔诚的邻居们的灵魂。

当然，当时的西班牙是一个非常富有的国家。新世界所发现的所有金银源源不断地流入卡斯蒂尔和阿拉贡的国库。但是，西班牙也患有一种损害其国力的奇怪的经济病。它的农民们很勤劳，它的妇女们甚至比农民更勤劳。但西班牙的上层阶级却对任何形式的劳动怀有根深蒂固的轻蔑，只愿意加入陆海军或担任政府公职。至于摩尔人，他们一直是兢兢业业、工作异常勤奋的手艺人，但在很早之前他们便被全体逐出了西班牙。这种经济病的结果就是，作为世界金银库的西班牙事实上却异常贫穷，因为它所有的钱都必须拿到海外去交换西班牙人自己不屑于出产的小麦及其它的生活必需品。

菲利普身为 16 世纪最强大国家的统治者，他的财源非常依赖于在荷兰这个忙碌的商业蜂房所征集的税收。可这些不知好歹的弗兰芒人与荷兰人是路德与加尔文教义的忠实追随者。他们不仅清除了当地教堂里的所有偶像和圣像画，还通知教皇说，不再当他们是他们的牧羊人。从今以后，他们将只根据新译《圣经》的教诲和自己的良心行事。

这样一来使菲利普国王非常为难。一方面，他绝对不能容忍他的荷兰臣民的异端行为，另一方面，他又需要他们的金钱。如果他允许荷兰人自由地作新教徒而不采取任何措施来拯救他们的灵魂，这是对上帝的不尽职；如果他把宗教法庭派到荷兰，把敢于反抗的臣民烧死在火刑柱上，他又将失去大笔的财源。

菲利普是一个生性多变，遇事摇摆不定的人。在如何对付荷兰人的事情上，他犹豫了很久。他时而仁慈时而严厉，又是允诺又是威胁，各种手段都尝试过了。可荷兰人依然不知悔改，继续唱着诗篇，一心一意聆听路德派和加尔文派牧师的布道。于是，气急败坏的菲利普将自己的“钢铁汉子”、手段残酷的阿尔巴公爵派往荷兰，去教这些顽固不化的“罪人们”回头是岸。阿尔巴首先将那些留下来的宗教领袖砍头。这些人不够聪明，竟没赶在他到来之前溜走。接着在 1572 年，也就是法国新教领袖在血腥的巴瑟洛缪之夜被悉数赶尽杀绝的那一年，阿尔巴袭击了数座荷兰城市，将城中的居民全部屠杀，以此作为对其它城市的惩戒。次年，他又率军围困了荷兰的制造业中心莱顿城。

同时，北尼德兰的七个小省份联合起来，成立了一个防御性的联盟，即所谓的乌德勒支同盟。它们共同推举曾作过查理五世皇帝私人秘书的德国王子，奥兰治的威廉为其军事领袖和他们的海盗水手的总司令。这些乌合之众曾以“海上乞丐”的绰号而闻名于世。为了挽救莱顿城，“沉默者”威廉挖开防海大堤让海水倒灌，在城市周围形成了一片浅水的内海。然后，他率领着一支由敞口驳船、平底货船组成的奇怪海军，划边推边拉地穿过泥沼，来到莱顿城下。他就以这样奇怪的方式打败了西班牙人。

西班牙国王的无敌军队第一次遭到了如此耻辱的失败。它使整个世界大吃一惊，就像日俄战争中的日本军队在沈阳大败俄国军队时，也着实让我们这代人大吃一惊一样。莱顿城胜利使新教徒的士气大振，重新鼓起了他们对抗西班牙国王的勇气。菲利普只好策划了另一个阴谋来征服反叛的臣民。他雇佣了一个半疯癫的宗教狂热分子去暗杀奥兰治的威廉。可领袖之死并未使北尼德兰的七省人们屈服，反而更加激起了他们的义愤。1581 年，他们在海牙召开了七省代表参加的大议会，庄严地宣布废黜“邪恶的国王菲利普”，并自己承担从古至今只授予给“上帝恩许的国王”的统治权。

这是在人民争取政治自由的斗争史上一个划时代的重大事件。它比英国贵族发动宫廷政变、逼迫国王签署《大宪章》，更远地前进了一大步。这些善良的自由民们认为，“国王与其臣民的关系基于一种默契，双方都应履行某些义务，遵守某些职责。如果其中的一方违背了这份和约，另外一方也有权终止和约的执行。”英王乔治三世的北美属民在 1776 年也得出了类似的结论，不过在他们和他们的统治者之间，毕竟还隔着 3000 英里波涛汹涌的大洋，可七省联盟议会这一庄严的决定（该决定意味着一旦战争失败，他们全部都将面临缓慢而痛苦的死亡），是在听得见西班牙军队的枪声并始终怀着对西班牙无敌舰队的恐惧之中做出的。他们的勇气不得不让人钦佩。

西班牙的没落

有关一支庞大的西班牙舰队将出发去征服荷兰和英国的神秘故事很早便开始流传开来，到新教徒女王伊丽莎白继承天主教的“血腥玛丽”成为英国国王的时候，它已经成为旧话了。年复一年，码头的水手都在满腹恐惧地谈论着它，揣测它会不会真的到来。到 16 世纪 80 年代，谣言变成了事实。据到过里斯本的水手讲，所有西班牙和葡萄牙的船坞里，都在大肆兴造战船。在尼德兰南部（今比利时境内），帕尔马公爵正在集结一支庞大的远征军，一俟西班牙舰队到来，便将他们运往伦敦和阿姆斯特丹。

1586 年，不可一世的西班牙无敌舰队终于扬帆出海，向北方逼进。可弗兰芒海岸的港口都为荷兰舰队重重封锁，英吉利海峡也有不列颠舰队的严密监视。而西班牙人熟悉南方较为平静的海水，不知道如何在北方风暴恶劣的气候下作战。至于无敌舰队是如何先被敌舰攻击，后又遭遇风暴吹袭的详细情形，不用我在这里告诉你们。反正战争的结果是，除几艘绕道爱尔兰的战船得以侥幸逃回，去向西班牙人讲述可怕的战事，其它大部分战船都葬身在北海冰冷的波涛里。

战局从此发生了根本性的转变。轮到英国和荷兰的新教徒把战火引到敌人的国土上了。在 16 世纪结束之前，霍特曼在林斯柯顿（一个曾在葡萄牙船只服役的荷兰人）所写的一本小册子帮助下，终于发现了通往印度和印度群岛的航线。结果成立了著名的荷兰东印度公司，一场争夺西班牙与葡萄牙所属亚非殖民地的战争如火如荼地展开了。

就在这个抢夺海外殖民地的早期阶段，一桩颇有趣味的诉讼案被告到了荷兰法庭。17 世纪初，一位名为范·希姆斯克尔克的荷兰船长在马六甲海峡俘获了一艘葡萄牙船只。希姆斯克尔克曾作为一支探险队的领导，试图找到通往印度群岛的东北航线，结果在新泽勃拉岛附近被封冻的海水围困了整整一个冬天。不过，他本人也因此名声大噪。现在，他的行为惹出了麻烦。你一定记得，教皇曾经将世界分为面积相等的两个部分，一半给了西班牙人，另一半给了葡萄牙人。葡萄牙人理所当然地将环绕他们印度群岛殖民地的水域当成自己的财产。由于当时葡萄牙并未向尼德兰七省联盟宣战，因此他们宣称，希姆斯克尔克作为一家私有贸易公司的船长，无权擅入葡萄牙所属海域并偷盗葡萄牙船只。这是严重的非法行为！于是他们向荷兰的法院提起了诉讼。荷兰东印度公司的经理们聘请了一位名为德·格鲁特（或格鲁西斯）的杰出青年律师为其辩护。在抗辩中，格鲁西斯提出了一个“所有人都可自由出入海洋”的惊人理论。他指出，一旦越出陆上大炮的射程之外，海洋就是（根据格鲁西斯本人的理论），也理应是所有国家的所有船只都可以自由航行的公海”。这一惊世骇俗的理论还是头一回公然在法庭上提出来，随即遭到所有航海界人士的反对。为反击格鲁西斯著名的“公海说”或“开放海洋说”，英国人约翰·塞尔登写出了著名的关于“领海”或“封闭海洋”的论文，认为环绕一个国家的海洋应该归属于这个国家，并且应该是这个国家主权和领土的天然组成部分。我之所以在此提到这个争论，是因为有关的问题并未最后得到解决，并且在上次世界大战中引出了许多复杂难解的情形。

让我们再回到西班牙人与荷兰人、英国人的战争。在不到 20 年的时间里，西班牙人拥有的大部分有价值的殖民地，印度群岛、好望角、锡兰、中国沿岸某些岛屿甚至包括日本，都统统落到了新教徒手里。1621 年，西印度公司宣告成立，随即征服了巴西。它还在北美哈德逊河口建立了一个名为新阿姆斯特丹（今纽约）的要塞，此地是亨利·哈德逊于 1609 年首度发现的。

30 年战争

1618 年，30 年战争爆发。最终，它以 1648 年签定著名的威斯特伐利亚条约而告结束。一个世纪以来迅速积累的宗教仇恨，使这场战争变得难以避免。正如我前面讲过的，它是一场恐怖而血腥的战争。人人卷入战争，人人相互厮杀，直到参战各方彻底精疲力竭，再没力气打下去为止。

在不到一代人的时间里，战争将中欧的许多地区变成了白骨遍地的荒野。饥饿的农民为争夺一匹马的尸体充饥，不得不与更饥饿的野狼相互撕咬。在德国，几乎所有的城镇和村庄毁于战火。西

德地区的帕拉丁奈特被反复纵火劫掠达 28 次之多。开战前德国拥有 1800 万人口，而战后剧减为 400 万。

仇恨是从哈布斯堡王朝的斐迪南德二世当选德意志皇帝后迅速点燃的。斐迪南德本人是耶稣会悉心教育的产儿，一个最虔诚、最顺服的天主教会支持者。年轻时他便发下誓言，要将自己领土上的所有异端分子和异端教派统统铲除。当他掌权之后，斐迪南德尽了自己一切能力来信守诺言。在他当选皇帝两天之前，他的主要竞争对手弗雷德里克，帕拉丁奈特的新教徒选帝侯及英王詹姆斯一世的女婿，成为了波西米亚国王。这直接违反了斐迪南德的意愿。

没多久，哈布斯堡王朝的大军开进波西米亚。面对强大的敌人，年轻的弗雷德里克国王只得徒劳地向英国与荷兰求援。荷兰共和国倒很愿意施以援手，可他们当时正忙于与西班牙的另一支哈布斯堡王族作战，自顾不暇，没法搭救波西米亚人。英国的斯图亚特王朝则更关心如何加强自己在国内的绝对权力，不愿将金钱和士兵浪费在遥远波西米亚的一场无望的战争上。苦苦支撑几个月后，帕拉丁奈特选帝侯被逐出了波西米亚，他的领地也被划归巴伐利亚信奉天主教的王族。而这仅仅是 30 年战争的开始。

接着，哈布斯堡的军队在蒂利及沃伦斯坦将军的指挥下，横扫德国的新教徒聚居区，所向披靡，一直打到波罗地海边上。对丹麦的新教徒国王来说，一个强大的天主教邻居当然意味着严重的威胁。于是，克里斯廷二世试图趁敌人立足未稳之际，先发制人。丹麦军队开进了德国，但不久便被击败了。沃伦斯坦趁胜追击，迫使丹麦求和。最后，波罗地海地区只剩下一个城市还控制在新教徒手中。它就是施特拉尔松。

1630 年初夏，瑞典国王，瓦萨王朝的古斯塔夫·阿道尔丰斯在新教徒的最后一个桥头堡施特拉尔松登陆。古斯塔夫曾因带领国人成功抗击俄国人入侵而一举成名。此人是一位野心勃勃的新教徒君主，一直梦想着将瑞典变成一个伟大的北方帝国的中心。欧洲的新教徒王公们对古斯塔夫大加欢迎，将他视为路德事业的拯救者。古斯塔夫旗开得胜，击败了不久前大肆屠杀马格德堡新教徒居民的蒂利。接着，他率领军队穿越德国中心地区，准备袭击意大利的哈布斯堡王朝属地。由于腹背受到天主教军队的威胁，古斯塔夫突然掉转枪头，在吕茨恩战役中大败哈布斯堡的主力部队。很不幸的是，这位瑞典国王由于脱离自己的部队而丧命。但哈布斯堡的势力已经受到了沉重打击。

斐迪南德是个生性多疑的家伙。一旦战事不利，他马上便开始怀疑自己的手下。在他的授意下，他的军队总司令沃伦斯坦被暗杀。听到这一消息，一直与哈布斯堡王朝怀有宿怨的法国波旁王朝，虽同样信奉天主教，此时却和新教徒的瑞典结为同盟。路易十三的军队侵入德国东部。瑞典将军巴纳与威尔玛的军队、法国的图伦和康代将军的军队，几支军队联合，大肆杀戮、掠夺、焚毁哈布斯堡王族的财产。瑞典人不仅名声大振，顺便也大发横财。他们的邻居丹麦人心生嫉妒，于是新教的丹麦向同为新教的瑞典宣战了。宣战的原因是，瑞典人竟然和天主教的法国合作，而法国的政治领袖，红衣主教黎塞留刚刚才剥夺了胡格诺教徒（即法国的新教徒）在 1598 年南特敕令中保证的公开礼拜的权利。

战争反反复复，仿佛形成了某种惯性。当参战各国于 1648 年签署最终结束战争的威斯特伐利亚条约时，战前的任何问题都未得到解决。天主教国家依然信奉天主教，新教国家仍旧忠实于马丁·路德、加尔文、茨温利等人的教义。瑞士和荷兰的新教徒建立起独立的共和国，并得到其它欧洲国家的承认。法国保留了梅茨、图尔、凡尔登等城市及阿尔萨斯的一部分。神圣罗马帝国虽继续作为一个统一的国家而存在，但已经有名无实，既无人力财力，亦丧失了希望和勇气。

30 年战争教给欧洲诸国一个反面教训，它使天主教徒和新教徒再也不想尝试战争了。这场战争带来的唯一好处即在于此。既然谁也无法消灭谁，那只能和平相处，各管各的事情。当然，这并不意味着宗教狂热与不同信仰间的仇恨从此在这个世界销声匿迹。天主教和新教的争吵尘埃方落，新教内部不同派别的纷争又如火如荼地展开了。在荷兰，围绕何为“宿命论”的真正实质（这是一个非常模糊难解的神学观念，可在你们的曾祖辈眼里，它却是必须搞清楚的重要问题），出现了巨大的意见分歧。两派之间的争吵剧烈升级，最终使得奥登巴维尔特的约翰人头落地。约翰是著名政治家，在荷兰独立的头 20 年，曾为共和国的成功做出过重要贡献，并且在促进东印度公司的发展上也表现出卓越的组织才干。在英国，争吵演变为一场内战。

不过在我为你讲述这场导致历史上第一位欧洲君主被通过法律程序处死的冲突之前，我必须告诉你一些英国此前的历史。在这本书里面，我尽力为你们描述的，只是那些能够使我们更清楚理解当今世界状况的历史事件。如果我未曾提及某些国家，并非出于我私人的好恶。我非常希望能给你们讲讲挪威、瑞士、塞尔维亚或者

中国发生的事情，它们同样非常精彩。可惜这些国家对于欧洲 16、17 世纪的发展不存在重大的影响。我只能满怀敬意地鞠上一躬，略过这些国家。不过，英国的情况就大不相同了。这个岛国的人民在过去 500 年间的所作所为，很大程度上影响了世界历史的进程，其影响遍及世界各个角落。没有对英国历史背景的适当了解，你将无法理解今天报纸上登载的大事。你必须了解，当欧洲大陆的其它国家还处于君主专制的时候，英国为何能独自发展出一个议会制政府？

第四十四章 英国革命

国王的“神授君权”与虽非“神授”却更合理的“议会权力”
相互争斗，结果以国王的灾难性结局而告终

外敌的岛屿

恺撒是西北欧洲的最早探险者。公元前 55 年，他率罗马军队渡过英吉利海峡，征服了尚为蛮荒之地的英国。在随后的 4 个世纪里，英国一直是罗马的一个海外行省。当野蛮的日尔曼人开始威胁罗马，频频犯境，驻守英国的罗马士兵被奉命召回去保卫罗马本土。从此，不列颠成了一个一无政府二无防御的海外孤岛。

当日尔曼北部饥寒交迫的撒克逊部落得知这一消息，他们便马上渡过北海，蜂拥到这个气候温和、土地肥沃的岛屿安家落户。他们建立起一系列独立的盎格鲁——撒克逊王国（因最初的人侵者为盎格鲁人、英格利人、撒克逊人，以此得名），不过这些小国家相互间总是吵个不停，没有一位国王的实力足够强大，能将英格兰统一为一个联合王国。500 多年的漫长岁月里，由于缺乏足够的防御能力，默西亚、诺森伯里、威塞克斯、苏塞克斯、肯特、东盎格利，或其它不管叫什么名字的地方，都频频遭到不同派别的斯堪的那维亚海盗的袭击。最后到 11 世纪，英格兰连同挪威及北日尔曼，一起为甘纽特大帝麾下的大丹麦帝国所吞并。英格兰最后一丝独立的痕迹也消失了。

随着时间推移，丹麦人终于被赶走了。英格兰刚刚获得自由不久，就第四次被外敌征服。新敌人是斯堪的那维亚人的另一系后裔，他们在 10 世纪初期入侵法国，建立起诺曼底公国。从很早开始，诺曼底大公威廉就以嫉妒的目光盯着这个一海之隔的富饶岛屿了。1066 年 10 月，威廉率军渡过海峡。在 10 月 14 日发生的黑斯廷战役中，他势如破竹地摧毁了最后一位盎格鲁——撒克逊国王，威塞克斯的哈洛德率领的疲弱之师，自立为英格兰之主。然而无论威廉本人，还是安如王朝（也称金雀花王朝）的继承人们，他们并未把这个岛国视为自己真正的家园。在他们心里，这片岛屿无非是他们在大陆继承的庞大遗产的附属部分——一块定居着一些落后民族的野蛮殖民地。因此，他们不得不将自己的语言和文明强加给这些岛国居民。不过事易时移，“殖民地”英格兰的发展逐渐超越其“诺曼底祖国”，取得更为重要的地位。

与此同时，法兰西的国王们正不遗余力地试图将他们的诺曼底——英格兰邻居从自己的土地上彻底清除出去。在法国人眼里，诺曼底的王公们只不过是法国国王貌合神离的不听话仆从。经过将近一个世纪的残酷战争，法国人民在圣女贞德的领导下，终于将这些“外国人”逐出了自己的国土。但贞德本人在 1430 年的贡比涅战役中不幸被俘，又由她的勃艮第俘获者转卖给英国士兵，最后作为女巫被烧死在火刑柱上。

都铎王朝

话虽如此，英国人由于从此丧失了在欧洲大陆上的桥头堡，国王们最终不得不扎根海岛，开始一心一意地经营自己的不列颠属地。另外，因为这个岛上酷爱面子的封建贵族们长期纠缠于他们那

些奇特的世仇夙怨（这在中世纪可谓像天花和麻疹一样流行），大部分家世古老的封建主纷纷在所谓的“玫瑰战争”中命丧黄泉。这使得国王们轻而易举地加固了皇室权力。到 15 世纪末期，英格兰已经成为了一个强有力的中央集权国家。统治者是都铎王朝的亨利七世。此人设立的著名的“星法院”曾给国人留下过许多恐怖的回忆，它运用极其严厉的手段镇压了部分幸存的老贵族试图恢复对政府的旧有影响力的尝试。

1509 年，亨利八世接任其父亨利七世为英格兰国王。他统治的时期在英国历史上具有特殊的重要性。从此，英国从一个中世纪的岛国发展壮大成一个现代的国家。

亨利对宗教兴趣寥寥。因为自己的多次离婚，他和教皇发生了许多不愉快。亨利很高兴地利用离婚的机会宣布脱离罗马教廷独立，使英格兰教会成为欧洲第一个名副其实的“国教”。而一直作为世俗统治者的国王本人也欣然担当了自己臣民的宗教领袖。这一和平的改革运动发生在 1534 年，它不仅使都铎王朝得到了长期以来饱受路德派新教徒攻击的英国神职人员的支持，而且还通过充公前修道院财产而大大增强了王室的实力。更令人愉快的是，这一举动还让亨利在商人和手艺人中大放异彩。

这些自豪而富裕的岛国居民，由一道浪急水深的宽阔海峡与欧洲大陆安全地隔开，不免拥有一种与之匹配的优越感。他们不但不喜欢一切“外国的”东西，而且也不愿意由一位意大利主教来统治他们诚实清白的英格兰灵魂。

1547 年，亨利去世，把王位留给年仅 10 岁的幼子。小国王的监护者们对路德的教义大加欣赏，因而尽其所能地赞助新教徒的事业。不过小国王未满 16 岁便不幸夭折，继任王位的是他的姐姐玛丽。玛丽是当时的西班牙国王菲利普二世的妻子，她上台的第一项举措就是把新“国教”的主教们统统烧死。除了忠实于自己的天主教职责，她在其它方面也严格遵循着自己西班牙王室丈夫的榜样行事。这为她赢得了“血腥玛丽”的绰号。

伊丽莎白时代

很幸运的是玛丽于 1558 年死去，由著名的伊丽莎白女王继位。伊丽莎白是亨利八世和他六个妻子中的第二个安娜·博林所生的女儿，但安娜后来因失宠而被亨利斩首。在玛丽执政期间，伊丽莎白曾一度被投进监狱，后由神圣罗马帝国皇帝的亲自请求才侥幸获释。从此，伊丽莎白

变成了一切天主教与西班牙事物的死对头。像她父亲一样，伊丽莎白对宗教异常冷淡，不过她继承了父亲洞察贤明的惊人判断力。在伊丽莎白执政的 45 年间，不仅王宝权力稳固上升，英格兰这个欢乐岛屿的财政和税收也源源增加，国力日趋强盛。在这方面，女王当然得到了拜倒在她王座下的大批杰出男性的有力辅佐。他们争先恐后的群策群力使得伊丽莎白时代成为了英国历史上一个至关重要的时期。不过若要研究其详细情况，你必须专门找一本讲述伊丽莎白时代的书籍来读。

另一方面，伊丽莎白的王位也并非就是万无一失的。她还存在着一个非常危险的对手，即斯图亚特王朝的玛丽。玛丽的母亲是一位法国公爵夫人，父亲是苏格兰贵族。长大之后，她嫁给法国国王法朗西斯二世，后来成为寡妇。她的婆婆是著名的美弟奇家族的凯瑟琳，血腥的圣巴瑟洛缪之夜大屠杀就是由这个险恶的老太婆一手策划的。玛丽的儿子后来还成为了英国斯图亚特王朝的第一位国君。玛丽是一个热情的天主教徒，乐意与一切敌视伊丽莎白女王的人结为朋友。由于缺乏政治智慧且采用极为暴力的手段镇压苏格兰境内的加尔文教徒，玛丽招致了苏格兰人的暴动，自己不得不逃到英国境内避难。在她呆在英国的 18 年里，她未曾有一天停止过策划反对伊丽莎白的阴谋，却从不想想是这个女人慷慨地收留了她。伊丽莎白最终不得不听从了她忠实顾问们的建议，“将那个苏格兰女王斩首”。

1587 年，苏格兰女王的头终于被砍掉，因此引发了一场英国与西班牙之间的战争。不过正如我们上一章讲过的，英国与荷兰的海上联军协力击败了菲利普的“无敌舰队”。原本是为摧毁两个新教国家的狂风，现在却掉转风向，变成了后者的一桩有利可图的冒险事业。

现在，经多年的犹豫不前之后，英国人和荷兰人终于意识到入侵印度和美洲的西属殖民地不仅是他们的正当权力，而且还可当作对西班牙人迫害他们的新教徒同胞的报复。1496 年，英国船队在一位名为乔万尼·卡波特的威尼斯领航员的引导下，首次发现并探测了北美大陆。拉布拉多和纽芬兰岛作为殖民地的可能性虽然微乎其微，但纽芬兰附近的海域却给英国渔船提供了丰富的渔业资源。一年之后的 1497 年，同一位卡波特发现了佛罗里达海岸，为英国建立海外殖民地带来了无穷无尽的机会。

继这些初步的发现之后，接下来便是亨利七世和亨利八世的忙碌年份。由于成堆的国内问题尚待解决，英国一时拿不出钱来进行海外探索。不过到了伊丽莎白治下，国家太平昌盛，斯图亚特的玛丽也被投进监狱，水手们终于可以欣然出海远航，而用不着担心一夜之间家园变色了。当伊丽莎白还是一个小孩时，英国人威洛比就已冒险航过了北角。威洛比手下的船长之一里查德·钱塞勒为找到一条可能通向印度群岛的航路，更是进一步向东深入，抵达了俄国港口阿尔汉格爾，与遥远的莫斯维帝国的神秘统治者建立起外交与商业的联系。在伊丽莎白开始执政的第一年，又有许多人顺这条航线航行。在“联合股份公司”工作的商业投机家们孜孜不倦地工作，为后几个世纪拥有庞大殖民地的贸易公司打下了最初的基础。半是外交家、半是海盗的家伙们，愿意将

全部身家押在一次吉凶未卜的航行上，赌一把自己的运气；走私者将一切能够装上船的东西统统装载上船，以满足他们对金钱的贪婪胃口；商人们以同样满不在乎的心情贩运商品，也贩卖着人口，眼睛里除利润之外再容不下其它的沙子；伊丽莎白的水手们将英格兰的国旗，也将女王陛下的威名，散布到世界的各个角落。在国内，有伟大的莎士比亚在笔耕不辍，以接连不断的新剧目来愉悦女王的视听。英格兰最杰出的头脑和最高明的智慧都紧密结合在女王的不懈努力之中，将亨利八世留下的封建遗产变成了一个现代化的民族国家。

英格兰的“外国人”

1603年，伊丽莎白死于70岁的高龄，詹姆斯一世当上了英国国王。他是亨利七世的曾孙，伊丽莎白的侄子，也是其死对头苏格兰女王玛丽的儿子。承蒙上帝的眷顾，詹姆斯发现自己成为了唯一一个得以逃脱欧洲大陆战祸的国家的统治者。当欧洲的天主教徒和新教徒们正起劲地自相残杀，无望地试图摧毁宗教竞争对手的势力，并建立起自家教义的绝对统治时，英格兰却和和气气地展开了一场“宗教改革”，并未走上路德教徒或洛约拉支持者的极端道路。此举使得这个岛国在即将到来的殖民地争夺战中，抢得了极大的先机。它还保证了英国在国际事务中获得领导地位，一直延续到第一次世界大战结束。甚至连斯图亚特王朝的灾难性冒险，也不能阻止这种历史发展的必然趋势。

继承都铎王朝的斯图亚特王朝是英格兰的“外国人”。他们似乎既不知道也不想弄明白这一事实。都铎王室的成员可以堂而皇之地盗走一匹马，但斯图亚特王朝的成员连看一眼马缰绳，都会引起公众极大的非议。老女王随心所欲地统治着她的子民，还尽享爱戴。但总的说来，她一直在执行着一项使诚实的（或不诚实的）英国商人财源滚滚的政策。因此，感激涕零的人民也回过头对老女王报以来全心全意的支持。有时，国会的一些小权力、小职能会被女王自由地拿走，而这些不法行为都被乐意地忽视了。因为从女王陛下强大而成功的对外政策中，人们将最终收获最大的利益。

从外表看，詹姆斯国王与伊丽莎白女王执行的是相同的政策。可他身上极为缺乏的，是他的前任异常耀眼的个人热情。海外贸易继续受到鼓励。天主教徒也并未因新国王的上台而获得任何新自由。可当西班牙对英国展露谄媚的笑脸，试图重修旧好之时，詹姆斯欣然还以微笑。大部分英国人是不愿意这样做的，不过詹姆斯毕竟是他们的国王，所以他们保持沉默。

“君权神授”与断头台

很快，人民和国王之间又起了其他的摩擦。詹姆斯国王和1625年继承他王位的查理一世一样，他们都坚信自己“神圣的君权”是上帝恩许的，他们可以凭自己的心愿治理国家而不必征询臣民们的意愿。这种观念并不新鲜。教皇们作为某种意义上的罗马帝国皇帝的继承者（或者说将整个世界的已知领土统一于罗马这个单一世界帝国的观念的继承者），他们总是乐于将自己视为“基督的代理人”，并且得到了人们的普遍承认。上帝有权以自己认为合适的方式统治世界，这一点没人质疑。作为自然而然的推论，也很少有人敢于怀疑“基督的副手”们的神圣权力。教皇有权要求人们顺服他，因为他是宇宙的绝对统治者在世间的直接代表，他只对上帝本人负责。

随着路德宗教改革的深入人心，以前赋予教皇们的特权，现在则被许多皈依新教的欧洲世俗统治者接管。身为“国教领袖”，他们坚持自己是所辖领土范围内的“基督的代理人”。国王们权力从此延伸出巨大的一步，可人们依然未提出一丁点怀疑。他们仅仅是接受它，就像生活在当今这个时代的人们，他们不假思索地认为议会制政府是天底下最合理、最正当的政府模式一样。如果就此得出结论：路德教派或加尔文教派对詹姆斯国王大张旗鼓宣扬他的“君权神授”观念表现出特别的义愤，这是不太准确的。诚实忠厚的英格兰岛民不相信国王神圣的君权，肯定还有着其它的原因。

历史上首次听到人民发出明确的否定“君权神授”的声音，是在1581年的荷兰海牙。当时北尼德兰七省联盟的国民议会废黜了他们的合法君主，西班牙的菲利普二世。他们宣布说，“国王破坏了他的协议，因此他也像其它不忠实的公仆一样，被人民解职了。”从那时开始，关于一个国王对其人民应担负有特殊责任的概念，便在北海沿岸国家的人民中开始流传开来。人民现在处于非常有利的地位，因为他们有钱了。中欧地区的贫困人民长期处在其统治者的卫队监视之下，当然不敢讨论这个随时可能把他们关进最近的城堡监狱的问题。可是荷兰和英国的富有商人们，他们掌握着维持强大的陆军与海军的必需资本，并且也懂得如何操纵“银行信用”这一屡试不爽的大威力武器，根本没有这种担忧。他们乐得以自己的钱财所控制的“神圣君权”，来对付任何哈布斯堡王朝、波旁王朝或斯图亚特王朝的“神圣君权”。他们知道自己口袋里的金币和先令足以击败国王

拥有的唯一武器——笨拙无能的封建军队。他们敢于行动，而其他面对这种情况要么是默默忍受困难，要么就是冒上断头台的风险。但荷兰和英国的商人两种情形都不会遭遇。

当斯图亚特王朝开始激怒英格兰人民，宣称自己有权照心意行事而一丁点责任也不必承担，岛国的中产阶级们于是以国会为第一道防线，抗击王室的滥用权力。国王非但拒绝让步，反而解散了国会。在长达 11 年的时间里，查理一世独自统治着国家。他强行征收一些大部分英国人认为是不合法的税收，他随心所欲地管理着不列颠，把国家当成他私人的乡村庄园。他有许多得力的助手，并且我们不得不说，他在坚持自己的信念上也表现出很大的勇气。

很不幸的是，查理不仅未能尽力争取到自己忠实的苏格兰臣民的支持，反而卷入与苏格兰长老会教派的公开争吵当中。虽很不情愿，但为取得他急需的现金来应付战争，查理不得不再度召集国会。会议于 1640 年 4 月召开，议员们愤愤不平，争相做抨击性的发言，最后终于乱成一团。几周后，这个脾气暴躁的国会将被詹姆斯解散。同年 11 月，一个新国会组成了。可这个国会甚至比前一个更不听话。议员们现在已经

明白，必须最终解决的是“神圣君权的政府”还是“国会的政府”这个久悬未决的问题。他们抓住机会攻击国王的主要顾问官，并处死了其中的 6 人。他们强硬地宣布了一项法令，不经他们的同意，国王无权解散国会。最后，在 1641 年 12 月，国会向国王递交了一份“大抗议书”，详细罗列了人民在统治者治下所受的种种痛苦与磨难。

1642 年 1 月，查理悄悄离开了伦敦，希望到乡村地区为自己寻求支持者。双方各组织了一支军队，准备在君主的绝对权力和国会绝对权力之间，决一死战。在这场斗争中，英格兰势力最强的宗教派别，即所谓的清教徒们（这些人属于国教圣公会中的一个派别，宣扬最大限度地净化自己的信念和行为），他们迅速站到了战斗的第一线。这支清教徒组成的“虔诚兵团”由著名的奥利佛·克伦威尔指挥。他们凭着铁一般的军纪及对神圣目标的深信，很快成为了反对派阵营的榜样。查理的军队两次遭到沉重打击。在 1645 年的纳斯比战役失败之后，国王狼狈逃到苏格兰，不久，苏格兰人将他出卖给了英国。

紧接着，苏格兰长老会与英国清教徒之间的矛盾激化，双方展开了一段错综复杂的战争。1648 年 8 月，在普雷斯顿盆地激战三昼夜之后，克伦威尔胜利结束了第二场内战，并攻占了苏格兰首都爱丁堡。与此同时，克伦威尔的士兵们老早就厌倦了国会滔滔不绝的空谈与旷日持久的宗教论争，决定按自己的最初心愿行事。他们冲进国会，驱逐了所有不赞成清教徒教义的议员。由余下的老议员们组成的“尾闾”议会正式指控国王犯下了叛国罪。上议院拒绝坐上审判员席位。于是任命了一个特别审判团，判处国王死刑。1649 年 1 月 30 日，全欧洲都在目睹这个日子。查理一世神情平静地从白厅的一扇窗户走上了断头台。那一天，一个君主国家的人民通过自己选出的代表，处死了一位不能正确理解自己在一个现代国家应处地位的国王。这是历史上的头一次，但绝不是最后一次。

国王查理被处死后的时代通常被称作克伦威尔时代。一开始，克伦威尔只是英格兰非正式的独裁者。1653 年，他被正式推为护国主。在其统治的五年时间里，他继续推行伊丽莎白女王广受欢迎的政策。西班牙再度被视为英格兰的主要敌人，向西班牙人开战变成了一个全国性的神圣议题。

牟利甚巨的海外贸易与岛国商人紧捂的钱袋被置于最优先考虑的地位，宗教上则实行最严格的新教教义，毫无讨论的余地。在维持英格兰的国际地位上，克伦威尔取得了很大的成功。可在社会改革方面，他却是彻头彻尾的失败者。毕竟，世界是由许多人共同组成的，他们的所思所想、所作所为很少会一模一样。从长远来看，这似乎也是一条非常明智的原则。一个仅仅为整个社会中的部分成员谋益、由部分成员统治的政府是不可能长久生存的。在反击国王滥用权力的时

刻，清教徒是一支代表进步的伟大力量。不过作为英格兰的绝对统治者，他们的严苛的信仰原则确实让人难以忍受。

复辟时代

当克伦威尔于 1658 年去世时，他严厉的统治已经使得斯图亚特王朝的复辟成为一件轻松愉快的事情。事实上，流亡王室受到了人们“救世主”般的欢迎。英国人现在发现，清教徒们的虔诚枷锁和查理一世的暴政同样令人窒息。只要斯图亚特王室的接班人愿意忘记他可怜的父亲所一再坚持的“神圣君权”，承认国会在统治国家方面的优先地位，英国人将非常乐意地再度成为效忠国王的好公民。

为成功地达成这样的安排，已经耗费了整整两代人的艰辛尝试。不过斯图亚特王室显然没有从老国王的悲剧中汲取教训，依然难以改掉他们热爱权力的老毛病。1660年，查理二世回国继位。他虽然性格温和，却是个碌碌无为的家伙。他天性的懒惰，畏难好易随随便便的气质，加上能够对所有人撒谎，这使他暂时避免了自己的臣民爆发公开冲突。通过1662年的“统一法案”，他将全体不信奉国教的神职人员清除出各自的教区，从而沉重打击了清教徒势力。1664年，查理二世又通过了所谓的“秘密宗教集会法令”，以流放西印度群岛作为惩罚，试图阻止不信国教者参加秘密宗教集会。这看起来已经有点像在“君权神授”的旧日子的所作所为了。人民开始流露出旧日熟悉的不耐烦迹象，国会也在为国王提供资金的事情上碰到了很大的困难。

由于无法从一个心怀不满的国会搞到钱，查理二世便秘密从他的近邻兼表兄，法国的路易国王那里借款。他以每年20万英镑的代价出卖了他的新教盟友，还暗自得意地嘲笑着国会的那帮傻瓜。

经济上的独立一夜之间使查理国王获得了自信。他曾在自己的天主教亲戚间度过了漫长的流亡岁月，对亲戚们的宗教信仰不免也产生了一种秘密的好感。也许，他能够使迷途的英格兰回到罗马教会的身边。查理颁布了一项“赦罪宣言”，取消了那些压制天主教徒与不信国教者的旧法律。这一行动正好发生在人们纷纷传言查理的弟弟詹姆斯成为了一名天主教徒的时候。大街上的人们难免用狐疑的目光紧张地注视着事态的发展。他们开始畏惧这个教皇策划的又一个可怕阴谋。一股骚动的潜流在岛上悄悄蔓延。不过大部分人还是希望能制止另一场内战的爆发。对他们来说，他们宁愿要王室的压迫与一位信奉天主教的国王。是的，即便这意味着神圣君权重来！可他们更不愿面对新一轮同种族的自相残杀。然而另一群人没这么宽厚，他们属于经常遭受恐惧的不信国教者，可在对待自己的信仰上却深具勇气。领导这群人的是几个才智杰出的贵族，他们不愿意回到绝对王权的旧日子。

在接近10年的时间里，这两大阵营相互对垒。其中之一被称为“辉格”党，代表反抗国王的中产阶级的利益。他们得到这个可笑的名字，是因为在1640年的时候，苏格兰长老会的神职人员带领了一大帮辉格莫人（即马车夫）向爱丁堡进军，去抗议国王。另一派叫“托利”党，“托利”原用于称呼爱尔兰反王室人士，现在用在国王的支持者们身上，颇具讽刺意味。虽然辉格党与托利党互不相让，但双方皆不愿制造一场危机。他们耐心地让查理二世终老天年，安静地死于床上，并且也容忍了信奉天主教的詹姆斯二世于1685年继任他的哥哥当上了英国国王。不过当詹姆斯先是设立一支“常备军”（这支军队将由信奉天主教的法国人指挥），将国家置于外国干涉的严重危险之下；后于1688年颁布第二个“赦罪宣言”，强令在所有国教教堂宣读，他的绝对权力未免越出了一个合理的界限。这条界限是只有那些最受爱戴的统治者在非常特殊的情形下才被允许偶尔超越的，而詹姆斯既不受欢迎，也非情势紧迫。人们开始公开地流露不满。有七位主教拒绝宣读国王的命令，尔后被控以“煽动性诽谤罪”，受到法庭审判。可当陪审团大声宣布被控者“无罪”时，引来公众铺天盖地的掌声与喝彩。

正巧在这个不幸的时刻，詹姆斯（他在第二次婚姻中娶了信奉天主教的摩德纳伊斯特家族的玛丽亚为妻）有了一个儿子。这意味着，日后继承詹姆斯王位的将不是他的新教徒姐姐玛丽或安娜，而是一个天主教孩子。人们的疑心再度滋长。摩德纳伊斯特家族的玛丽亚年岁已大，看上去不象会生儿育女的！这是巨大阴谋的一部分！肯定是某个用心险恶的耶稣会教士将这个身世离奇的婴儿偷偷带进皇宫，好让未来的英国有一位天主教君主。流言纷纷扬扬，越传越离谱。此时，来自辉格和托利两党的7位著名人士联合给詹姆斯的长女玛丽的丈夫，荷兰共和国的首脑威廉三世去信，邀请他来英格兰，接替虽然合法但完全不受欢迎的詹姆斯二世作英国国王。

君主、议会及责任内阁

1688年11月15日，威廉在图尔比登陆。由于不希望让自己的岳父成为另一个殉难者，威廉帮助他安全逃到了法国。1689年1月22日，威廉召开国会会议。同年2月23日，威廉宣布与自己的妻子玛丽一起成为英国国王，终于挽救了这个国家的新教事业。

此时的国会早已不再仅仅是国王的咨询机构，它正好利用这个机会获得更大的权力。先是1628年的旧版《权利请愿书》被从档案室里某个早被遗忘的角落里翻了出来。接着又通过了第二个更严格的《权利法案》，要求英格兰君主必须是信奉国教的人。不仅如此，该法案还进一步宣称，国王没有权力搁置或取消法律，也没有权力允许某些特权阶层不遵守某项法律。它还强调说，“没有国会的同意，国王不得擅自征税，也不得擅自组织军队”。这样，在1689年，英格兰已经获得了其它欧洲国家闻所未闻的自由。

不过，并非仅仅因为这些自由开明的政策，威廉的统治时期才被英国人记忆至今。在他生前，首度采用了一种“责任”内阁的政府体制。当然，没有哪位国王能独自治理国家，即便能力极其出众的君主也需要一些信得过的顾问。都铎王朝就有着自己著名的“大顾问团”，全部由贵族和神职人员组成。不过这个团体慢慢变得过分庞大臃肿了，后来便以一个小型的“枢密院”取而代之。随着时间流逝，由于这些枢密官时常到宫殿的一间内室去觐见国王，商讨治国大计，这种做法渐渐成为一种习惯。因此，他们被称作“内阁成员”。又过了不久，“内阁”这一名词就大行于世了。

与先于他的大部分英国君主一样，威廉也从各个党派中挑选自己的顾问。但随着国会的势力日渐强大，威廉发现当辉格党占据国会的多数时，想在托利党人的帮助下推行自己的政策几乎是不可能的。于是，托利党人被清除出局，由清一色的辉格党人组成整个内阁。过了些年，等到辉格党人在国会失势，国王出于行事方便的考虑，又被迫向托利党的领袖们寻求支持。一直到他 1702 年死去为止，威廉由于一直忙于和法王路易交战，无暇治理国内朝政。事实上，所有重要的国内事务都交给了内阁去处理。1702 年威廉的妻妹安娜继位之后，这种情形依然继续。1714 年安娜去世（她的全部七个子女都很不幸地先她而死），英格兰的王冠落到了詹姆斯一世的外孙女苏菲的儿子，汉诺威家族的乔治一世头上。

作为一位粗俗的君主，乔治从未学过半句英语。英国这套复杂的政治制度如同深奥的迷宫，让他茫然无措。他把所有的事情一股脑地甩给自己的内阁，远远地躲开内阁员们的会议。由于一句话都听不懂，出席这些会议对他不啻于一种折磨。这样，内阁养成了不打搅国王陛下而自行治理英格兰与苏格兰的习惯（1707 年，苏格兰的国会与英国国会合并）。与此同时，乔治则情愿大部分时间都呆在欧洲大陆上，悠哉游哉地打发时间。

在乔治一世和乔治二世统治期间，一系列杰出的辉格党人组成了国王的内阁，其中罗伯特·沃波尔爵士主政长达 21 年。辉格党的领袖们因此被公认为不仅是责任内阁的首脑，而且是把握国会权力的多数党。乔治三世继位后，试图重新控制权力，将政府实际事务从内阁手中夺回，但他的努力带来的灾难性后果使他的继任者们再不敢做类似的尝试。这样从 18 世纪初期开始，英国便拥有了一个代议制政府，由责任内阁成员负责处理国家事务。

事实上，这个政府并不能代表所有社会阶层的利益。全英国拥有选举权的人还不到总人口的 1 / 12。不过，它为现代的议会制政府打下了最初的基础。借助一种平稳而有序的方式，国会剥夺了国王的权力，将它交到一个人数日益增长的广受欢迎的民众代表团手中。此举虽然谈不上给开创了一个太平盛世，但它确实使英国免遭激烈革命的动荡。要知道，在 17、18 世纪的欧洲，革命虽然摧毁了专制王权，但同时也带来了灾难性的流血后果。

第四十五章 权利均衡

路易十四时期，法国的“神圣君权”空前膨胀，只有新出现的“权力均衡”原则制约着国王的勃勃野心。

与上一章的对照，让我告诉你们在英国人民为自由而战的那些年月里，欧洲大陆的法国都发生了些什么。在历史上，恰当时间、恰当国家及恰当人选间的愉快组合是极为少见的。可在法国，路易十四的出现正是这一理想状态的完美实现。不过对欧洲其它地区和人民来说，没有他，大家的日子都会好过一点。

当时，法国是欧洲人口最稠密、国力最兴旺发达的国家。当路易十四登基之时，马札兰与黎塞留这两位伟大的红衣主教刚把古老的法兰西王国整顿成 17 世纪强有力的中央集权国家。而路易十四本人也堪称出类拔萃、才智超群。就拿我们这些 20 世纪的人们来说，不管是否意识到，我们一直生活在太阳王时代辉煌记忆的包围之中。路易十四的宫廷所创造的完美礼仪和高雅谈吐，现在仍然是我们社交生活的基础与最高标准。在外交领域，法语依然作为国际会议的官方语言而常盛不衰。

因为早在 2 个世纪以前，法语在优美措辞与精巧表达方面，就已达到登峰造极的境界。路易十四的剧院至今仍是学习戏剧艺术的典范，在它面前，我们只能自叹天赋鲁钝、才学有限。在太阳王统治时期，法兰西学院（由黎塞留首创）开始在国际学术界占据首屈一指的地位，其它国家则纷纷效仿，以示崇敬之意。如果有足够的篇幅，我们还可以把这张单子无限制地开列下去。就连我们现代的菜单用的都是法语，这绝非偶然。高雅的法式烹调艺术是人类文明的最高表现形式之一，它最初的出现就是为满足这位伟大君主的口腹之娱。总之，路易十四执政的时代是人类历史上一个极其绚丽豪华、温文高雅的时代，至今仍能教给我们许多东西。

很不幸的是，在这副辉煌灿烂的图景背后，还存在着令人沮丧的阴暗面。国际舞台上的大放异彩，往往意味着国内的悲惨与灾难。路易十四的法国也不例外。1643 年，路易继承他的父亲为法国国王，后于 1715 年去世。这一简单的历史事实意味着，法国政府在长达 72 年的时间里由一人独揽大权，几乎跨越了整整两代人的时间。

我们必须充分理解“一人在上”这一概念。在历史上，有许多国家建立过被我们称为“开明专制统治”的高效独裁制度，而路易十四正这一特殊制度的首创者。他并不是那种仅仅扮演君主角色，而把国家事务当成愉快郊游的不负责任的统治者。事实上，开明时代的君主们严谨治国、工作勤奋，远甚于他们的任何臣民。他们日理万机，晚睡早起，在紧紧抓住允许他们任意行事的“神圣君权”的同时，也强烈感受到随之而来的“神圣的职责”。

当然，国王不可能事必躬亲，凭一己之力处理所有的问题。他必须组织一群助手和顾问来辅佐自己。比如一两个将军、三五个外交政策的专家、一小撮精打细算的财政顾问与经济学家。不过这些高级顾问只能向国王提出建议，而后按陛下的意旨行事。他们并无自己的独立意志。对广大老百姓来说，他们的神圣君主事实上就代表着整个国家与政府。祖国的荣耀变成了某个王朝的荣耀，这与我们美国的民主观念是正好对立的。法兰西事实上成为了由波旁王朝所治、为波旁王朝的所享、为波旁王朝所有的国家。

这种君主专制的带来的害处是显而易见的。国王就是一切，“朕即国家”，而国王之外的所有人则化为乌有。年高德劭的老派贵族逐渐退出了政治舞台，被迫放弃他们以前享有的外省管理权。如今，一个手上沾满墨水的皇室小官僚，端坐在远离巴黎的某幢政府建筑绿意盎然的窗后，执行着一百年前由各地封建主自行担负的职责。而那些被剥夺工作的封建主们则迁居巴黎，在路易十四高雅宜人的宫廷尽情娱乐身心、陶冶才艺，过着悠闲而无用的生活。不久之后，他们的庄园便患上了一种非常危险的经济病，即众所周知的“不在地主所有制”。在不到一代人的时间里，原来那个工作勤奋刻苦的封建主阶层消失了，取而代之的是一个游荡在凡尔赛周围的风度翩翩但无所事事的有闲阶级。

当威斯特伐利亚条约签定的时候，路易十四正好 10 岁。这一终结 30 年战争的条约，同时也终结了哈布斯堡王朝在欧洲大陆的统治地位。一个像路易这样才高志远的青年当然会利用这个机会，来使自己的王朝取代从前的哈布斯堡王朝，成为欧洲的新霸主。这是可以想见的。1660 年，路易迎娶了西班牙国王的女儿，玛丽亚·泰里莎。当他半疯癫的岳父，也是哈布斯堡王室西班牙分支的菲利普四世一死，路易马上宣布西班牙属下的荷兰部分（今比利时）为其妻子的嫁妆之一，现归法国所有。这样的无理要求当然会给欧洲和平带来灾难性的后果，因为它威胁及到新教国家的安全。在荷兰七省联盟的外交部长扬·德维特的领导之下，历史上第一个伟大的国家联盟，即荷兰、英国、瑞典的三国同盟于 1664 年宣告成立。不过它并未维持太长的时间。路易十四用金钱和许诺收买了英国的查理国王及瑞典议会，让他们袖手旁观。被盟友们出卖的荷兰只得独自面对危险命运。1672 年，法国军队侵入这个低地国家，势不可挡地朝荷兰腹地挺进。于是，堤防再度开启，法兰西太阳王像以前的西班牙人一样，深陷在荷兰沼泽的淤泥中。1678 年签定的尼姆威根和约不仅没解决什么问题，反而招致了另一场战争。

第二次侵略发生在 1689 至 1697 年间，最终以里斯维克和约宣告收场。但它并未给予路易十四梦寐以求的统治欧洲的地位。虽然路易的老对头扬·德维特不幸死于荷兰暴民之手，可他的继任者威廉三世（荷兰执政，后成为英国国王）继续挫败了路易十四成为欧洲之主的种种努力。

1701 年，西班牙哈布斯堡王族的最后一位国王查理二世一死，一场争夺西班牙王位的战争便如火如荼地展开了。1713 年的乌得勒支和约仍未解决任何问题，但这场战争却使得路易十四濒临财政破产的边缘。在陆战中，法军虽取得了胜利，可英国与荷兰的海上联军使法国最终赢得整场战争的美梦化为泡影。另外，通过这次长期的较量，催生了一个新的国际政治的基本原则：即从今往后，不可能再由一个国家来单独统治整个欧洲及整个世界，任何时候都不可能。

这就是所谓的“权力均衡”原则。它并不是一条成文的法律，但在 3 个世纪里，像自然法则一样得到了各个国家的严格遵守。提出这一观念的人士认为，欧洲在其民族国家不断发展茁壮的阶段，只有当整个大陆的各种矛盾与利益冲突处于绝对平衡的状态，才能存续下去。绝不能允许某个单极的势力或单独的王朝主宰欧洲所有其他的国家。在 30 年战争期间，哈布斯堡王朝就成为了这一法则的牺牲品。不过，他们是不自觉的牺牲者。喧声震天的宗教论争掩盖了潜藏在冲突之下的真正含义，以至于人们并不能好好把握这场战争的实质。不过从那时开始，我们开始看到，对于经济利益的冷酷考虑与算计是如何在所有国际事务中占据压倒一切的重要地位的。我们发现一种新型政治家的诞生，这些精明务实、手持计算尺和现金出纳机的政治家。扬·德维

特是这个新型政治学校的首位成功的倡导者和教师。威廉三世则是它第一名优秀毕业生。而路易十四尽管拥有无比的名望和辉煌，却成为了第一个自觉的受害者。从那个时代开始，还有许多人重蹈他的覆辙。

第四十六章 俄国的兴起

一个关于神秘的莫斯科帝国在欧洲巨大的政治舞台突然崛起的故事

斯拉夫人

你知道，哥伦布发现美洲是在 1492 年。同年的早些时候，一位名为舒纳普斯的提洛尔人攥着几张写满了对他本人的高度赞誉之辞的介绍函，为提洛尔地区大主教率领一支科学远征队，前往蛮荒的东方考察。他本想去到传说中神秘的莫斯科城，但未获成功。当他千辛万苦抵达人们依稀觉得是坐落在欧洲最东边的莫斯科帝国的边界时，他被毫不客气地拒之门外。外国人不许入内，这是当时这个神秘帝国的规矩。舒纳普斯只得掉头前往土耳其异教徒控制下的君士坦丁堡，走马观花地考察一番，以便回去后能给主教大人呈上一份至少有些内容的探险报告。

61 年后，英国的理查德·钱塞勒船长试图找寻通往印度的东北航道，船被疾风刮进北海，阴差阳错地到了德维内河的人海口。他在霍尔莫戈里发现的村落，离 1584 年建立阿尔汉格尔斯克的地点只有几小时的路程。这一回，外国来访者们被邀请到了莫斯科，觐见了统治莫斯科维帝国的大公陛下。当钱塞勒重返英格兰的时候，随身带回了一纸俄罗斯与西方世界第一次签定的通商条约。很快，其它国家纷纷循迹而至，有关这片神奇土地的真相也开始为世人了解。从地理上说，俄国是一片辽阔无际的大平原。横贯其间的乌拉尔山脉低矮平缓，无法构成对入侵者的防御屏障。流淌在这片平原上的大河宽阔而清浅，是游牧民族理想的放牧之地。

当罗马帝国经历着几度兴亡盛衰、云烟过眼之时，早就离开中亚故土的斯拉夫部落正在德涅斯特河与第聂伯河之间的森林与草场漫无目的的往来游荡，寻找水草丰美的放牧之所。希腊人偶尔遇见过这些斯拉夫人，公元三、四世纪的旅行者也曾提到过他们。要不然，他们的行踪也将和 1800 年的内华达印第安人一样，根本不为外界所知。

不幸的是，一条便利的商路纵贯了这个国家，扰乱了这群原始居民和平宁静的游牧生活。该商路是连接北欧与君士坦丁堡的主要道路。它沿波罗地海至涅瓦河口；穿过拉多加湖，顺沃尔霍夫河南下；之后横渡伊尔门湖，溯拉瓦特小河而上；再通过一段短暂的陆路行程至第聂伯河；最后沿第聂伯河直下黑海。

斯堪的纳维亚人最早发现这条路线。在公元 9 世纪的时候，他们开始在俄罗斯北部定居，就像其他北欧人为独立的法国和德国打下了最早根基一样。不过在公元 862 年，有北欧人三兄弟渡过波罗地海，在俄罗斯平原上建立了 3 个小国家。三人里面，一个叫鲁里克的活得最长。他吞并了两位兄弟的国土，在北欧人首次到达该地 20 年后，建立起第一个以基辅为首都的斯拉夫王国。

由于从基辅到黑海只需很短的路程，不久后，一个斯拉夫国家出现的消息便在君士坦丁堡流传开来。这意味着，热切饥渴的基督传教士们又有了一片传播耶稣福音的处女地。他们放手大干起来。拜占廷的僧侣纷纷沿第聂伯河溯流而上，很快深入了俄罗斯腹地。他们发现，这儿的人民居然还崇拜着一些居住在森林、河流及山洞里面的奇怪神祇。于是，僧侣们便给他们讲解耶稣的故事，劝他们皈依。这里确实是传教的好地方，因为罗马教会的人正忙于教化野蛮的条顿人信仰基督，无暇理会遥远的斯拉夫部落，无人竞争的拜占廷传教士们于是毫不费力地收编了他们。这样，俄罗斯人很自然地接受了拜占廷的信仰，接受了拜占廷的文字，并从拜占廷汲取了关于艺术和建筑的最初知识。由于拜占廷帝国（东罗马帝国的遗迹）已经变得非常东方化，失去了它原有的欧洲特点，俄罗斯受其影响，相应地带上了许多东方的痕迹。

蒙古入侵

从政治上讲，这些在辽阔的俄罗斯平原兴起的国家命运多舛，遭遇了许多困难和折磨。按北欧习俗，父亲留下的遗产总是由所有儿子平分。待父亲一死，一个建立时本来就面积不大的国家被分为七八份，而儿子们又循例将自己的财产分给下一代子孙。在此情形下，这些相互竞争的小国总是陷于彼此的争吵与内耗中。于是，

混乱成了当时唯一的秩序。当火光映红东方的地平线，告诉人们一支亚洲蛮族入侵的消息时，局面已变得无可挽回。这些小国实力太弱，又过于分散，面对强大的敌人，根本无法组织起像样的防御或反攻。

正是在 1224 年，鞑靼人的第一次大规模入侵发生了。伟大的成吉思汗在征服中国、布拉哈、塔什干及土耳其斯坦后，终于首度率领蒙古骑兵造访了西方。斯拉夫军队在卡拉卡河附近被彻底击溃，俄国的命运握在了蒙古人的手中。不过正如其从天而降一样，他们突然间又消失了。13 年后，也就是 1237 年，蒙古人重返俄罗斯。在不到 5 年的时间里，他们征服了俄罗斯平原上的每一个角落，成为了这片土地的主宰。直到 1380 年，莫斯科大公德米特里·顿斯科夫在库利科夫平原击败蒙古骑兵，俄罗斯人才再度获得了独立。

算起来，俄罗斯人用了整整 2 个世纪的漫长时间，才将自己从蒙古人的枷锁中解放出来。这是一个多么沉重，多么不堪忍受的枷锁啊！它将斯拉夫农民变成了可悲的奴隶。要想活命，俄罗斯人只能乖乖匍匐在他们肮脏的蒙古主人脚下。这些黄种人端坐在俄罗斯南部草原的帐篷中，朝他们的奴隶吐着唾沫，享受着真正主人的地位。这把枷锁使俄罗斯人民的荣誉感与尊严感荡然无存。它使得饥饿、痛苦、虐待和肉体的责罚成为俄罗斯人的家常便饭。直至每一位俄罗斯人，不管农民还是贵族，变得像一条条精疲力尽的丧家之犬，因常常被打责罚，吓破了胆子，未经主人许可甚至连摇尾乞怜也不敢了。

逃跑是不可能的。鞑靼可汗的骑兵迅疾而无情。无尽延伸的大草原不会给任何人逃到邻近安全地区躲藏的机会。你还没跑出多远，就能听到身后越来越近的蒙古追兵的马蹄声。所以只能默默承受黄种主人决定加诸给他们的任何折磨，否则只有死路一条。当然，欧洲应该出面帮助可怜的斯拉夫人。不过当时的欧洲正忙于自身的家务事，教皇和皇帝吵着开战啦，镇压形形色色的异端分子啦，哪儿能想到正陷于水深火热中的斯拉夫人。他们将斯拉夫人留给命运，迫使他们自己寻求拯救之道。

俄罗斯最终的“救星”来自早年北欧人建立的诸多小国之一。它坐落在大平原的心脏地带，其首都莫斯科建筑在莫斯科河畔一座陡峭的山岩上面。这个小公国靠着时而在必要时讨好鞑靼人，时而在安全限度内对其稍加反抗，于 14 世纪中期确立起自己民族领袖的地位。必须记住一点，鞑靼人完全缺乏建设性的政治才能，仅仅是从事毁灭的“天才”。他们不断征服新土地，主要目的是为了源源不断地得到岁贡。因为必须采用征税的方式，鞑靼人不得不允许旧政治组织的某些残余继续发挥作用。这样，俄罗斯的许多小城蒙大汗之恩存续下来，以便作为征税人，为充实鞑靼可汗的国库而掠夺邻近地区。

沙皇

莫斯科公国以牺牲邻居们的利益为代价，自己发展壮大。最后，它终于积累了足够的实力，可以公开反叛他的鞑靼主子。它确实做得相当成功。莫斯科公国作为俄罗斯独立事业的领袖声望，很快便在仍盼望光明未来的斯拉夫部落中传播开来。他们将莫斯科视为本民族的圣城和中心。公元 1453 年，君士坦丁堡被土耳其人攻陷。10 年之后，在伊凡三世的治理之下，莫斯科向西方发出了一个明确的信号，即斯拉夫民族对拜占廷帝国及君士坦丁堡的罗马帝国传统享有世俗与精神上的双重继承权。一代人之后，在伊凡雷帝统治时期，莫斯科公国的大公已经强大到敢于僭越恺撒的名号，自称沙皇，并要求西方各国的承认。

1598 年，随费奥特尔一世去世，北欧人鲁里克的后裔们所执掌的老莫斯科王朝宣告终结。在接下来的 7 年里，一半鞑靼血统、一半斯拉夫血统的鲍里斯·哥特诺夫成为了新沙皇。他执政的时代决定了俄罗斯人民的未来命运。俄罗斯虽地域辽阔、土地富饶，但整个国家却异常贫穷。这里既无贸易也无工厂。它为数不多的城市若按欧洲标准衡量，实际不过是一些肮脏的村镇。这一个由强有力的中央集权及大量目不识丁的文盲农民所构成的国家。其政府受到斯拉夫、斯堪的纳维亚、拜占廷及鞑靼影响，是一个奇怪的政治混合体。除国家利益，它对其余的一切都漠然视之。为保卫这个国家，政府需要一支军队。为征集税收来供养军队，为士兵发饷，它又需要国家公务员。为向大大小小的公务员支付薪水，它又需要土地。不过在东部和西部的辽阔荒原上，土地是最不愁供应的廉价商品。可若无适当的人力来经营土地、饲养牲畜，土地便毫无价值。因此，旧日的游牧部落被接连剥夺掉一项又一项的权利，最终在 17 世纪初叶，正式沦为了土地的附庸。俄罗斯农民从此不再是自由民，而被迫变成了农奴。一直到 1861 年，他们的命运已悲惨得无以复加，以至纷纷死去时，这个国家地统治者才开始重新考虑他们的命运。

在 17 世纪，这个新兴国家的国上处在不断扩张之中，向东迅速延伸到西伯利亚。随着实力日长，俄罗斯终于成为其它欧洲国家不得不加以正视的一支力量。1613 年，鲍里斯·哥特诺夫去世。俄罗斯贵族从他们自己人中推选出了新沙皇。此人是费奥特尔的儿子，即罗曼诺夫家族的米歇尔，一直住在克里姆林宫外的一所小房子里。

1672 年，米歇尔的曾孙，另一位费奥特尔的儿子彼得出世。当这个孩子长到 10 岁时，他同父异母的姐姐索菲亚继承王位。于是，小彼得被送到帝国首都郊区的外国人聚居地去生活。耳闻目睹身边来来去去的苏格兰酒吧主、荷兰商人、瑞士药剂师、意大利理发匠、法国舞蹈教师和德国小学教员，使这位年轻的王子产生了一种难以磨灭的早年印象。他模糊地感觉到，在遥远而神秘的欧洲，有着一个与俄罗斯截然不同的世界。

当彼得 17 岁时，他突然起事，将姐姐索菲亚赶下王位，自己当了俄罗斯的新统治者。仅仅做一个半野蛮、半东方化民族的沙皇，并不能使彼得觉得满足。他决心要成为一个文明国家的伟大君主。不过，要想把一个拜占廷与鞑靼混合的俄罗斯变成一个强大的欧洲帝国，这绝非一夜之工。它需要一双强有力的手腕和一副睿智清醒的头脑。彼得正好两者兼备。1698 年，将现代欧洲移植到古老俄罗斯体内的高难度手术正式开始施行了。最终，病人存活了下来。但过去 5 年发生的事情（指沙皇俄国的崩溃）向我们表明，它其实一直未能从手术的震惊中真正恢复转来。

第四十七章 俄国与瑞典之争

为了争夺东北欧的霸主地位，俄国与瑞典发生了多次战争

公元 1698 年，沙皇彼得启程前往欧洲，开始了他的第一次西欧之行。他取道柏林，前往当时工商业最发达的荷兰和英格兰。当他还是个小孩子时，彼得在父亲的乡间池塘里用自制的小船划水，曾差点被淹死。对水与生俱来的热情在余生的历程里一直伴随着彼得。在现实中，这种热情通过他执着地为俄罗斯这个内陆国家开辟一条通向广阔海洋的道路而充分表现了出来。

当这位严厉而不受欢迎的青年统治者在海外考察期间，一群聚集在莫斯科的旧习俗拥护者们密谋瓦解他的改革。皇室卫队斯特莱尔茨骑兵团突然发动叛乱，迫使彼得全速赶回国内。他自任最高行政官，将斯特莱尔茨处以绞刑后碎尸万段，并将全团成员统统处死。叛乱的首犯，彼得的姐姐索菲亚被关进了一座修道院。这样一来，彼得凭着毫不留情的铁腕手段大大稳固了自己的统治。1716 年，当彼得第二次前往西欧时，相同的事件再度发生了。这次，带头作乱的是彼得半疯癫的儿子阿利克西斯。彼得被迫又一次匆匆从国外赶回。阿利克西斯被活活打死在囚禁他的牢房里，其余拜占廷传统的旧友们则艰辛跋涉几千英里，被流放到他们的最后目的地——西伯利亚的一座铅矿，在此终老余生。从此，在没有发生过对他不满的暴动。一直到他死去为止，他得以放手推进其改革。

我们很难按编年顺序列出一张沙皇推行改革的清单。他雷厉风行，大刀阔斧，并且不依照任何章法。他火速地颁布各种法令，仅仅是记录下来都很困难。彼得仿佛觉得，在此之前发生的一切事情都是全盘错误的。所以，必须在尽可能快的时间里把整个俄国彻底纠正过来。他的工作确实卓有成效。到死去时，彼得成功地为俄罗斯留下了一支 20 万人的训练有素的陆军和一支拥有 50 只战舰的海军。旧的政府体制在一夜间被清除得干干净净。国家杜马，即老的贵族议会解散，取而代之的是沙皇身边的一个由国家官员组成的咨询委员会，也被称为参议院。

俄罗斯被划分为八大行政区域，即行省。全国各地都在大兴土木，修筑道路，建造城镇。工厂被纷纷设立在最能取悦于陛下的地方，根本不考虑是否接近原材料的产地。多条运河在开挖之中，东部山脉的矿藏也得到了开发。在这片充斥文盲和愚昧的土地上，中小学普遍建立起来，高等教育机构、大学、医院及职业培训学校也如雨后天春笋般出现，为新俄罗斯培养急需的专业技术人才。荷兰造船工程师及来自世界各地的商人和工匠被吸引到俄罗斯定居。印刷厂纷纷设立，不过所有出版的书籍必须由严厉的皇家官员事先审查。一部新法典面世了，对社会各阶级必须担负的责任做出了详尽的规定。民法与刑法体系也被建立起来，并印刷成多册的丛书出版。老式俄罗斯服装被明令取缔，帝国警察手持剪刀，守候在每一个乡村路口，一夜间将长发披肩、胡子满脸的俄罗斯山民变成面容干净、修饰一新的文明西欧人。

在宗教事务上，沙皇绝不容忍旁人分享权力。在欧洲出现过的教皇与皇帝对立的情形，根本不可能发生于彼得大帝的俄罗斯。1721 年，彼得自任俄罗斯教会的首脑。莫斯科大主教一职被废除，宗教会议作为处理国教一切事务的最高权力机构出现在俄罗斯人的宗教生活中。

不过，旧俄罗斯的传统势力在莫斯科还拥有顽固的立足点，必须绕过这一障碍，改革才能取得完全的成效。沙皇决定将政府迁到一个新首都。建设新都的地址被选在波罗地海沿岸不宜人居的沼泽地带。1703 年，彼得开始改造这片土地，40 万农民花费数年时间艰苦施工，为这座凭空而起的帝国城市打好了地基。瑞典人对俄国发动攻击，企图摧毁这座雏形中的城市。恶劣的生活条件，再加上疾病蔓延，使成千上万参与筑城的农民

死去，但工程仍顽强继续着。历经一个个寒暑，一座完全出于人工和个人意志的城市终于在波罗地海边上矗立起来。1712年，它正式被宣布为“帝国首都”。又过了十几年，它已拥有7.5万居民。每年2次，泛滥的涅瓦河水将该城淹没在一片泥浆之中，但彼得无可动摇的坚强意志战胜了大自然。堤坝和运河被修建起来，洪水不再为害城市。当彼得于1725年告别人世时，圣彼得堡已经成为北欧最大、最辉煌的城市。

一个危险对手的突然间崛起当然会使它的邻居们感到极大的不安和压力。从彼得这方面来说，他也长期注视着他的波罗地海对手瑞典王国的一举一动。1654年，30年战争的英雄，瑞典国王古斯塔夫·阿道尔丰斯的独女克里斯蒂娜宣布放弃王位，前往罗马去虔诚侍奉天主。古斯塔夫的一个新教徒侄子（查理十世）从瓦萨王朝末代女王手里继承了王位。在查理十世和查理十一世的精心治理下，新王朝将瑞典王国带向了一个兴旺繁荣的高峰。不过在1697年，查理十一世因病猝死，继承他王位的是年仅15岁的小男孩查理十二世。

这是北欧诸国期待已久的大好机会。在17世纪发生的激烈宗教战争中，瑞典靠牺牲邻居们的利益独自做大。现在是邻邦们上门索债的时候了。大战迅速爆发，一方是俄国、波兰、丹麦、萨克森组成的联盟，另一方是孤军苦战的瑞典。1700年11月，著名的纳尔瓦战役打响。彼得麾下缺乏训练的新军遭到了查理率领的瑞典军队毁灭性的打击。查理是那个年代最伟大的军事天才之一。在击败彼得后，他迅速掉转矛头去迎击其它敌人，不给他们丝毫喘息之机。在接下来的9年里，他长驱直入，一路烧杀砍伐，摧毁了波兰、萨克森、丹麦及波罗地海各省的大量城镇村庄。此时，彼得却在遥远的俄罗斯养精蓄锐，加紧操练他的士兵。

结果在1709年的波尔塔瓦战役中，俄国人一举击溃了精疲力竭的瑞典军队。面对惨败，查理并不气馁。他依然是历史舞台上的一个高度形象化的人物，一个带有浪漫色彩的传奇英雄。不过他劳而无功的复仇行动却把自己的国家一步步引向了毁灭。1718年，查理因意外事故或被刺身亡（具体情形不详）。到1721年签定尼斯特兹城和约时，瑞典除继续保留芬兰外，丧失了此前在波罗地海地区拥有的全部领土。彼得苦心缔造的新俄罗斯帝国终于成为了北欧地区的第一强国。不过，有一个新对手正在悄然崛起之中。它就是德意志地区的普鲁士帝国。

第四十八章 普鲁士的崛起

在日尔曼北部的荒寒地区，一个名为普鲁士的国家突然崛起

普鲁士的历史，是一部欧洲边疆地区的变迁史。早在公元9世纪，查理曼大帝致力将旧有的文明中心从地中海地区向欧洲东北部的荒僻地区转移。他的法兰克士兵依靠武力，使得欧洲的边界一步步向越来越远的东方推移。他们从异教的斯拉夫人和立陶宛人手里夺取了许多土地。这些土地大部分位于波罗地海与喀尔巴阡山之间的平原地带。法兰克人不太经意地管理着这些边远地区，犹如美国在尚未立国前管理它的中西部领土。

边境的勃兰登堡省最初是由查理曼一手设立的，目的是防御野蛮的撒克逊部落袭击他的东部领土。定居在这一地区的斯拉夫人分支——文德人，在10世纪被法兰克人征服。文德人原先的集市勃兰纳博后来成为了以此命名的勃兰登堡省的中心。

在11到14世纪里，一系列贵族家族作为帝国总督管理着这个边境省份。最后在15世纪，霍亨索伦家族异军突起，成为了勃兰登堡选帝侯。他们苦心经营，开始将这个贫瘠荒凉的边疆地区一步步改造成现代世界最精干、管理最有效率的帝国之一。

刚被欧洲列强及美利坚合众国赶下历史舞台的霍亨索伦家族（指第一次世界大战德国战败，霍亨索伦家族的德意志皇帝退位），原本来自德国南部地区，家族出身非常低微。公元12世纪，霍亨索伦家族的弗雷德里克通过一桩幸运的婚姻，爬上了勃兰登堡城守将的职位，迈出了飞黄腾达的第一步。从此，他的子孙们利用一切机会增强自己的势力。经过几个世纪的苦心攀爬与巧取豪夺，霍亨索伦家族居然当上了选帝侯。选帝侯即授予那些有权当选旧日尔曼帝国皇帝的王公贵族们的名号。在宗教改革时期，他们站在了新教徒一边。到17世纪早期，霍亨索伦家族已经成为北日尔曼最有权势的王侯之一。

在悲惨的30年战争期间，新教徒和天主教徒以相同的狂热多次劫掠了勃兰登堡与普鲁士。不过在选帝侯弗雷德里克·威廉的悉心统治下，普鲁士不仅迅速治愈了战争创伤，并且聪明地调动起国内一切经济与智慧的力量，很快建立起一个人尽其材、物尽其用的新国家。

现代普鲁士是一个个人抱负与愿望完全和社会整体利益融为一体的国家。它的创立要归功于弗雷德里克大帝之父，弗雷德里克·威廉一世。此人是一个埋头苦干、节俭勤勉的普鲁士军士，热爱庸俗的酒吧故事及气味

浓烈的荷兰烟草，而对一切华丽服饰和女人气的花边羽毛（特别是来自法国的）怀有深厚的敌意。他只有一个信念，即恪尽职守。他对自己严厉，对下属们的软弱行径也决不宽容，无论此人是将军还是士兵。他和儿子弗雷德里克的关系虽说不上势同水火，但至少也是不融洽的。粗鲁气质的父亲与感情细腻、温文尔雅的儿子格格不入。儿子喜欢法国式的礼仪，热爱文学、哲学、音乐，而这些都成为父亲作为女人气的表现加以严厉申斥。终于，两种迥异的性情间爆发了严重冲突。弗雷德里克试图逃往英国，途中被截回，受到军事法庭的审判。最痛苦的是，弗雷德里克还被逼迫目睹了帮助他出逃的好友被处斩首的全过程。尔后，作为惩罚的一部分，这位年轻王子被遣送到外省某个小要塞，在那里学习日后做一个国王所应掌握的种种治国之道。这也可算是因祸得福。当弗雷德里克于 1740 年登基后，他对于如何治理国家已经成竹在胸。从一个贫家孩子的出生证明，到复杂无比的国家年度预算的细枝末节，他都了如指掌。

作为一名作者，特别是在他写作的《反马基雅维里》一书里面，弗雷德里克对这位古佛罗伦萨历史学家的政治观念表示了反对和轻蔑。马基雅维里曾教导他的王侯学生们：为了国家的利益，在必要的时候完全可以运用撒谎和欺诈的手段。可在弗雷德里克心目中，理想的君主应该是人民的第一公仆。他赞成的是以路易十四为榜样的开明君主专制。不过在现实中，弗雷德里克虽然夜以继日、每天为人民工作长达 20 小时，但他却容不得身边有任何顾问。他的大臣们无非是一些高级书记员。普鲁士是他的个人财产，完全凭他自己的意志施行管理，并且，绝不能容许任何事情干涉国家的利益。

1740 年，奥地利皇帝查理六世去世。老皇帝生前曾用写在一张羊皮纸上的白纸黑字，确立了一项严正的条约，试图保护他唯一的女儿玛丽亚·泰利莎的合法地位。不过，他刚被安葬进哈布斯堡王族的祖坟还没多久，弗雷德里克的普鲁士军队就已浩浩荡荡开向奥地利边境，占领了西里西亚地区。普鲁士宣称，根据某项古老的权力，他们有权占领西里西亚（甚至整个欧洲中部地区），但这些权利无疑是年代久远且令人怀疑的。经过多场激烈的战斗，弗雷德里克完全吞并了西里西亚。有好几次，弗雷德里克面临被击败的边缘，可他在自己新获得的土地上坚持了下来，打退了奥地利军队的所有反击。

全欧洲都为这个新兴强国的突然崛起而深感震惊。在 18 世纪，日尔曼本来是一个已经毁于宗教战争，不被任何人看重的弱小民族。弗雷德里克凭着和彼得大帝相似的意志与精力，使普鲁士赫然屹立在世人面前，让以往的轻蔑一变而为深深的畏惧之情。普鲁士的国内事务被治理得井井有条，臣民们没有丝毫抱怨的理由。以往为赤字所苦的国库现在逐年赢余。古老的酷刑被废除，司法体系正在进一步完善之中。优良的道路，优良的学校，优良的工厂，再加上谨慎清白的细心管理，一切都使人们觉得为国家付出是完全值得的。他们的钱被用在了刀刃上，他们的回报也是切实可见的。

历经几个世纪的风风雨雨，一直被法国、奥地利、瑞典、丹麦及波兰诸国当成争霸战场的德国，在普鲁士光辉榜样的感召之下，终于开始重拾自信。而这一切都应归功于那个身形瘦小、长着鹰钩鼻，成天制服不离身的小老头。他的面容里带着天生的信心与蔑视，对他的邻邦们说了许多滑稽可笑、但着实令人不快的言语。他在 18 世纪的外交领域鼓捣了一连串的鬼把戏，竭尽毁谤造谣之能事而全然罔顾最起码的事实。他要的只是谎言带来的一点点利益。他虽然写下了那本《反马基雅维里》，但他的行动完全是两码事。1786 年，他终于大限到来。朋友们全都离他而去，他也没有子女。他一个人孤独地死去，身边的只有一个仆人和几条狗。他爱这些狗甚于爱人类，用他自己的话说，狗永远知道感恩图报，并且忠实于它们的朋友。

第四十九章 重商主义

那些新兴的民族国家和王朝
是如何使自己发财致富的？

我们已经看见在 16、17 世纪里，那些我们至今生活其中的现代国家是如何发展成形的。它们的起源在各个方面来说都是截然不同的，有的是某个国王精心努力的结果，有的则源于偶然，另有一些则是因有利的地理边界造就的。不过一旦建立起来，它们都无一例外地努力加强自己的内部管理，并试图对国际事务施加最大限度的影响。当然，所有这些都需要花费大量的金钱。中世纪的国家缺乏强有力的中央集权，它们的生存无法依赖于一个富有的国库。国王从皇家领地上取得岁收，而为国王和国家的神圣劳役，则由封建主们自己出钱。在现代的中央集权国家里，情况却要复杂得多。老派且不计酬劳的高尚的骑士精神消失了，取而代之的是国家雇佣的政府官员。要维持陆军、海军和国内的行政管理体系，其花费往往以百万计。随之而来的问题就是——这笔钱该从何而来呢？

在中世纪，黄金和白银是稀有商品。正如我此前给你讲过的，中世纪普通人通常一生都未看见过金币是什么模样，只有居住在大城市的居民才对银币司空见惯。美洲的发现以及随之对秘鲁银矿的开放改变了这一切。

贸易中心从地中海地区转移到大西洋沿岸。老的意大利“商业城市”如热那亚、威尼斯，丧失了它们经济上的重要性。新的“商业国家”兴起了，黄金和白银不再成为普通人眼中的神秘之物。

通过西班牙、葡萄牙、英国、荷兰，贵金属开始源源不断地流入欧洲。16 世纪拥有一批自己的政治经济学研究者，他们提出了一个“国富”理论。在他们看来，这个理论不仅完全正确，并且对他们各自的国家都具有最大利益。他们认为，黄金和白银是实际的财富。因此，国库和银行里拥有最多金银现金的国家便是最富有的国家。而钱可以武装甚至购买军队，因此最富的国家当然就是最强大的国家，可以统治世界。

我们把这种理论称为“重商主义”。它得到了当时欧洲各国毫无保留的接受，就像早期的天主教徒接受奇迹的存在或现在的美国人相信关税的魔力一样。在现实中，重商主义按以下程序操作：为得到最大限度的贵金属储备，一个国家必须在出口贸易上争取尽可能多的赢余。如果你对邻邦的出口超出邻邦对你的出口，它就会欠你的钱，不得不将它的黄金付给你抵偿债务。因此，你获利而它损失。作为这种信念的结果，17 世纪的几乎每一个国家都采取下列经济政策：

- 1、尽可能多地获取大量贵重金属（金、银）
- 2、鼓励对外贸易优先于发展国内贸易
- 3、尽量支持那些将原材料加工成可供出口的制造品的工厂
- 4、鼓励生育，因为工厂需要大量的劳工，而一个农业社会不能提供足够的劳动力。
- 5、国家监督贸易与生产的过程，随时有必要，随时加以干涉。

在 16 世纪，查理五世接受了这种“重商主义”理论（当时还是一种全新的观念），并把它引入到自己统治的欧洲广大地域。英国女王伊丽莎白也效仿这种做法。法国的波旁王朝，尤其路易十四是这一教条的狂热拥护者。他的财政大臣柯尔伯特成为了重商主义的“先知”与指路灯，全欧洲都满怀景仰地寻求他的点拨。

在克伦威尔执政时代，整个对外政策其实就是对重商主义不折不扣地贯彻。它实际上是针对英国的富有对手荷兰而定的。因为承运大部分欧洲日常商品的荷兰船主们具有某种自由贸易的倾向，必须不惜一切代价加以摧毁。

很容易理解，这样一种体系对欧洲的海外殖民地会造成多么大的灾难性的影响。处于重商主义笼罩下的殖民地，无非是黄金、白银、香料的源源不断地出产地，只能为着宗主国的利益而实施开发。亚洲、美洲、非洲的贵金属以及这些热带国家的原材料，完全被碰巧占据它们的欧洲国家所垄断。外人不得进入这些管辖地，也不允许当地人和悬挂外国国旗的商船进行贸易。

毫无疑问，重商主义刺激了某些从未有过制造业的国家的工业发展。它帮助这些国家建起道路，开挖运河，为运输创造更有利的条件。它迫使工人掌握更熟练的技巧，让商人拥有更高的社会地位，同时削弱了贵族地主的势力。

不过在另一方面，它也导致了巨大的灾难。它使得殖民地居民成为了最无耻、最残酷剥削的牺牲品。它使宗主国的普通人民面临更可怕的生存环境。它在很大程度上助长了世界变成一个充满火药味的大兵营，将地球分割成一小块一小块的领土和属地，每一块都只盯着自己的直接利益，随时想方设法要摧毁邻居们的势力，将它们的金银攫为己有。它使得拥有财富成为一件无比重要的事情，将“有钱”变成了每一个普通人至高无上、汲汲以求的德性。经济制度也像外科手术和妇女时装一样随时势变迁。到 19 世纪的时候，重商主义终于被抛弃，人们开始拥护一个开放而竞争的自由经济体系。至少我了解的情况是这样。

第五十章 美国革命

后来者居上

为了讲述方便，我们必须回溯几个世纪，重复一下欧洲各国争夺殖民地战争的早期历史。

在 30 年战争期间及战争结束后，有许多欧洲国家以民族或王朝利益为基础重新构建了起来。这就意味着，那些由本国商人和商船贸易公司的资本所支持起来的统治者，必须为本国商人的利益继续发动战争，在亚洲、非洲、美洲攫取更多的殖民地。

西班牙人和葡萄牙人最早探索了印度洋和太平洋地区。过了 100 多年的时间，英国人和荷兰人才如梦初醒，奋起投入这一利润无穷的竞技场。事实证明，这对后来者反而是一个优势。最初的开创工作不仅艰苦危险，而且耗资甚费，好在已经由别人完成了。更有利的是，早期的航海探险家们由于惯常采用暴力手段，使自己在亚洲、美洲、非洲的土著居民那里变得臭名昭著，难怪迟进一步的英国人和荷兰人会受到朋友甚至救主般的欢迎。但我不能负责任地说，这两个国家就比先到者高尚多少。不过他们首先是商人，他们从不让传教的考虑因素干涉他们正常的生意。总的说来，所有欧洲人在第一次与弱小民族打交道时，往往都表现得异常野蛮。英国人和荷兰人的高明之处在于，他们知道在什么时候适可而止。只要能源源得到香气四溢的胡椒、光灿耀眼的金银和适当的税收，他们倒是很愿意让土著居民随心所欲地生活。

因此，他们没费多大力气便在世界上资源最富饶的地区站稳了脚跟。但这一目的刚刚达到，双方便开始为争夺更多的领地而大打出手了。有一点非常奇怪，争夺殖民地的战争从来不会在殖民地本土上交锋，而总是发生在 3000 英里外的海上，由对阵双方的海军来解决问题。这是古代和现代战争中一个最有趣的规律（也是历史上为数极少的至今仍站得住脚的规律之一），即“控制了海洋的国家最终也能控制陆地”。到目前为止，这条法则依然有效。也许现代飞机的出现能改变这种状况。不过在 18 世纪，作战双方没有飞行器，因此英国海军最终为不列颠帝国赢得了幅员辽阔的美洲、印度及非洲殖民地。

17 世纪发生在英国与荷兰之间的系列战争，现在已经引不起我们多大的兴趣，我不想在此详述。它像所有实力太过悬殊的战争一样，平淡无奇地以强者最终获胜而收场。不过英国与法国（它的另一重要对手）的战争对我们理解这段历史倒更具重要意义。在天下无敌的英国皇家海军最终击败法国舰队之前，双方在北美大陆展开了大大小小的多次前哨战。对于这片辽阔富饶的国土，英国人和法国人同时宣称，已经发现的一切东西及有待被白种人犀利目光发现的更多东西，全部归自己所有。1497 年，卡波特在美洲北部登陆；27 年之后，乔万尼·韦拉扎诺拜访了同一片海岸。卡波特悬挂英国国旗，韦拉扎诺扛着法国国旗。因此，英国和法国都宣布自己是整个北美大陆的主人。

英法北美之争

17 世纪，10 个小规模的英国殖民地在缅因州与卡罗林纳之间建立起来。当时的殖民者通常是一些不信奉英国国教的特殊教派的难民们，譬如 1620 年来到新英格兰的新教徒和 1681 年定居于宾西法尼亚的资格会教徒。他们形成了一些小型拓荒者社区，地点通常位于紧靠海岸的地带。受迫害的人们在此聚集，建立起自己的新家

园，在远离王权监督与干涉的自由空气中，过上了比以往幸福得多的生活。

可另一方面，法国的殖民地却一直是受国王严密控制的皇家属地。法国严格禁止胡格诺教徒或新教徒进入这些殖民地，以防他们向印第安人传播危险有害的新教教义或妨碍诚实的耶稣会传教士的神圣工作。因此，相对于邻居兼对手的法国殖民地来说，英格兰殖民地无疑奠基于更健康、更扎实的基础之上。英国殖民地是岛国中产阶级惯常蓬勃的商业能量的恰当体现，而法国的北美据点里住着的却是一批漂洋过海、千里迢迢来服皇家“苦役”的倒霉蛋。他们日夜思念着巴黎舒适的夜生活，总是争取任何可能的机会快快返回法国。

不过从政治上说，英国殖民地的状况是远远不能令人满意的。在 16 世纪，法国人已经发现了圣劳伦斯河口。从大湖地区，他们又一路向南跋涉，终于达到了密西西比地区，沿墨西哥湾建立起数个要塞。经一个世纪的探索，一条由 60 个法国要塞构成的防线将大西洋沿岸的英国殖民地和幅员辽阔的北美腹地拦腰隔断。

英国颁发给许多殖民公司的、授予它们“从东岸到西岸全部土地”的土地许可证，面临着成为一纸空文的危险。文件上写得非常美妙，但在现实中，大不列颠的领地只能延伸到法兰西要塞前，便嘎然而止了。要突破这条防线当然是有可能的，可这需要花费大量的人力和金钱，并引发一系列可怕的边境战争（当后来战争真的爆发时，英法双方都借助当地印第安部落的武士，残酷谋杀自己的白人邻居）。

只要斯图亚特王朝继续统治着英格兰，英法之间就没有发生战争的危险。为建立自己的君主专制统治，斯图亚特王朝需要波旁王朝的鼎力相助。不过到 1689 年，当最后一位斯图亚特王室成员从不列颠的土地上消失，英国国王换成了路易十四最顽强的敌人——荷兰执政威廉。从此开始，一直到 1763 年签定巴黎条约，英法两国为争夺印度与北美殖民地的所有权展开了长期激战。

正如我此前说过的，英国海军在这些大大小小的战争中总是能不断击败法国海军。法属殖民地被切断了与母国的联系，纷纷落入英国人的手里。到巴黎和约签定时，整个北美大陆变成了英国人的囊中之物。卡蒂兰、尚普林、拉塞里、马奎特等一代代法国探险家辛苦工作的心血全都付之东流了。

独立宣言

在英国人夺取的这大大小小北美土地上，只是很小一部分有人定居。它从美国东海岸的北部一直向南延伸，形成一条窄窄的带子。北部的马萨诸塞生活着 1620 年到达此地的清教徒们（他们在信仰问题上绝不宽容，无论英国的国教还是荷兰的加尔文教义都不能让他们感觉幸福），再往南，是卡罗林纳和弗吉尼亚（一块纯粹为牟取利润而专门种植烟草的地区）。不过有一点必须指出，在这片天高云淡、空气清新的新土地上生活着的拓荒者们，他们与其国内同胞的性情截然不同。在孤独无助的旷野荒原中，他们学会了自力更生和特立独行。他们是一批刻苦耐劳、精力充沛的先驱者的骄傲子孙，血管里流动着坚韧旺盛的生存本能。在那个年代，懒汉和闲人是不会冒着生命危险漂洋过海的。以前在自己的祖国，种种的限制、压抑和迫害使得殖民者们呼吸不到自由空气，使得他们的生活变成了郁郁寡欢的一潭死水，现在，他们决意要做自己的主人，按自己喜欢的方式行事。而英国的统治阶级似乎无法理解这一点。官方对殖民者大为不满，而殖民者们仍时时感到官方的制肘，不免暗暗滋生出对英国政府的怨恨来。

怨恨只能引发更多的矛盾。没有必要在此详述冲突发生的细节，也没有必要再扼腕长叹一次：如果当时在位的是一位比乔治三世聪明一些的国王，或者乔治不是那么放任他的首相——懒散冷漠的诺思勋爵，局面也许是可以挽回的。事实就是，当北美殖民者意识到和平谈判不能解决问题，他们便拿起了武器。因为不愿意做顺民，他们便选择做叛乱分子。这是需要很大勇气的。因为一旦被乔治国王的德国雇佣兵俘获（按当时一个有趣的习俗，条顿王公们经常将整团的士兵出租给出价最高的竞标者），他们将面临死刑的惩罚。英格兰与其北美殖民地之间的战争一共持续了 7 年。在大部分时间里，反叛者似乎完全看不到胜利的希望。有一大批殖民者，特别是城市居民，他们依然效忠于国王。他们倾向于妥协，很乐意发出求和的呼声。但因为华盛顿和他的伟大人格，殖民者们的独立事业才得以坚持下去。

在一小部分勇敢者的强力配合下，华盛顿指挥着他装备奇差但顽强无比的军队，不断地打击国王的势力。一次又一次，他的军队濒临彻底失败的边缘，可他的谋略总能在最后关头扭转战局。他的士兵总是饥肠辘辘，得不到足够的给养。冬天缺少鞋和大衣，被迫蜷缩在寒风刺骨的壕沟里，瑟瑟发抖。不过他们对自己领袖的信心毫不动摇，一直坚持到最后胜利的来临。

不过，除了华盛顿指挥的一系列精彩战役以及去欧洲游说法国政府和阿姆斯特丹银行家的本杰明·富兰克林所取得的外交胜利，还有发生在革命初期的更为有趣的事情。当时，来自不同殖民地的代表们齐聚费城，共商革命大计。那是独立战争发生的第一年，整船整船的战争物资正从不列颠群岛源源抵达，北美沿海地带的大部分重要城镇都还控制在英国人手中。在此危急的时刻，只有那些真正深信其事业的正义性的人们，才有勇气走在一起，接受于 1776 年 6 月和 7 月做出那个历史性的决定。

1776 年 6 月，来自弗吉尼亚的理查德·亨利·李向大陆会议提议：“这些联合起来的殖民地是并且有权是自由而独立的州。它们理应解除对英国王室的全部效忠，因而它们与大不列颠帝国间的一切政治联系也不复存在。”

这项提案由马萨诸塞的约翰·亚当斯附议，于 7 月 2 日正式实施。1776 年 7 月 4 日，大陆会议正式发表了《独立宣言》。该宣言出自托马斯·杰斐逊的手笔。他为人严谨，精通政治学，擅长政府管理，注定将成为美国名垂青史的著名总统之一。

《独立宣言》发表的消息传到欧洲后，接踵而至的是殖民地人民的最终胜利及 1787 年通过的著名宪法（美国的第一部成文宪法）的消息。这一连串的事件引起欧洲人极大的震动与关注。在欧洲，高度中央集权的王朝制度随 17 世纪的宗教战争建立起来后，此时已达到了它权力的顶峰。国王的一处处宫殿越建越大，显出不可一世的宏伟与豪华，可陛下的城市却被迅速滋生的贫民窟所包围。这些贫民窟中的人们生活在绝望与无助之中，已经显露出动乱的征兆。而上等阶层——贵族与职业人员，也开始怀疑现存社会的经济和政治制度。北美殖民者的胜利正好向他们表明了，一些在几天前看起来还是不可能的事情，其实是完全可能做到的。

根据一位诗人的说法，揭开莱克星顿战役的枪声“响彻了全球”。这当然有些夸张。至少中国人、日本人、俄罗斯人（更别提澳大利亚人和夏威夷人，他们刚刚为库克船长重新发现，但不久就因库克制造了麻烦而杀

死了他）根本就没听见。不过，这枪声确实越过了大西洋，正好落在欧洲不满现状的火药桶中。它在法国引起了惊天动地的大爆炸，深深震动了从彼得堡到马德里的整个欧洲，把旧的国家制度与外交政策埋葬在民主的砖块之下。

第五十一章 法国大革命

伟大的法国革命向世界宣示了自由、平等、博爱的原则

“简单生活”的乐趣

当我们谈到“革命”时，我们最好先解释一下“革命”一词所包含的意义。根据一位伟大的俄国作家的说法（俄国人对这方面是深有体会的），革命就是“在短短数年之内，迅猛地推翻过去几个世纪以来根深蒂固的旧制度。这些制度一度曾显得那么天经地义、那么不可动摇，甚至连最激进的改革者也不敢摇动笔杆去攻击它们。然而经过一次革命，那些迄今为止构成一个国家旧有的社会、宗教、政治与经济的根基，在短时期内便土崩瓦解了。”

在18世纪，当古老的文明开始腐朽变质，法国就发生了这样一场革命。经过路易十四长达72年的专制统治，法国国王成为了一切，甚至国家本身。以前曾为封建国家忠实服务的贵族阶层现在被解除了所有职责，整天无所事事，最终沦为凡尔赛宫廷浮华生活的点缀品。

可是，这个18世纪的法国却一直靠着天文数字的金钱来维持开销。这笔钱完全来自于形形色色的税收。不幸的是，法国国王的权势又无法强大到使贵族和神职人员也分担税收的地步。这样一来，巨大的税务负担便完全落到了这个国家的农业人口身上。当时的法国农民住在透风漏雨的茅屋棚户里，过着困顿劳苦的生活。随着与庄园主们过往的密切联系一去不返，他们现在成为了冷酷无能的土地代理人的牺牲品，生存环境每况愈下。好收成只是意味着更多的赋税，自己一点好处也留不下。他们还有什么理由要辛勤劳作，去榨干身体的最后一分劳力呢？因此，他们便大着胆子，荒废农事。

这样，我们便看到以下画面：一位法国君主在一片空虚的浮华装饰中，穿过皇宫里一间接一间的宏伟大厅，身后习惯性地尾随着一群趋炎附势、想为自己谋个好差事的阿谀吹捧的贵族。所有这些人全部靠盘剥生活惨如牲畜的农民生活。这是一副令人非常不快的图景，没有一丝一毫的夸张。我们必须记住，所谓的“天朝旧制”从来都存在阴暗的另一面，这是难以避免的。一个与贵族阶层有着密切关系的富裕的中产阶级（通常的联姻方法是某个富有银行家的女儿嫁给某个穷男爵的儿子），再加上一个吸纳了全法兰西所有魅力人物的宫廷，他们齐力将优雅精致的生活艺术带向了前所未有的高峰。翩翩仪态和风情万种的社交谈话成为了上层社会最流行的时尚。由于这个国家最杰出的头脑没机会在政治经济的问题上施展才华，他们便只能悠闲度日，把时间耗费在最抽象的空谈之上。这显然是浪费资源。

由于思想方式和个人行为方面的时尚如时装一样容易走向极端，很自然的，那个年代最矫揉造作的“社会精英”们会对他们想象中的“简单生活”也派生出极大的兴趣来。于是，法国（及其殖民地与属国）的绝对拥有者与无可质疑的主人——法国国王与王后，再加上一大群溜须拍马的廷臣们，他们穿上挤奶女工和牧童的服装，住进一些滑稽可笑的乡村小屋里，像健康淳朴的古希腊人一样嬉戏游乐，充分体验“简单生活”的乐趣。簇拥在国王与王后周围的，有宫廷弄臣的长袖善舞与诙谐滑稽，有宫廷乐师演奏的轻快活泼的小步舞曲，有宫廷理发师精心设计的昂贵而造作的新奇发型。最后纯粹出于无所事事和极端的烦闷，这个绕着凡尔赛宫（路易十四为逃避喧嚣嘈杂的巴黎而在市郊修建的一所大“舞台”）旋转的小圈子里的人们开始一个劲地谈论起那些与他们的生活距离最远、最无关的话题来，如同一个挨饿的人只知道谈论面包和美食、一个饱食终日的人只关心哲学一样。

“社会批评”的焰火

当勇气十足的老哲学家、剧作家、历史家、小说家及所有宗教与政治暴君的危险敌人伏尔泰开始在他的《风俗论》里掷出批判的炸弹，抨击法兰西现存秩序里的一切东西，整个法国都为之鼓掌叫好。由于观众太多、太踊跃，伏尔泰的戏剧只能在仅售站票的戏院里上演。当让·雅克·卢梭点染着热爱自然的感伤油彩，为他的当代同胞描绘出一幅原始先民如何生活于纯真和快乐之中的美妙画面（像对儿童一样，卢梭对原始人的生活也毫无了解，可他却被认为自然与儿童教育方面的权威），所有法国人都倾心不已。于是在这片“朕即国家”

的土地上，人们带着同样的饥渴捧读卢梭的《社会契约论》，并为他“重返主权在民，而国王仅仅是人民公仆的幸福时代”的呼吁，流下感动而辛酸的热泪。

伟大的孟德斯鸠也出版了他的《波斯人信札》。在这本书里，两个思维敏锐、观察力非凡的波斯旅行者揭开了当代法国社会黑白颠倒的实质，并嘲笑了上至国王下至陛下的 600 个糕点师傅在内的一切事物。这本小册子很快风行起来，在短时间内连出四版，并为孟德斯鸠下一本著作《论法的精神》招来了成千上万的读者。书中，一位虚构的男爵将优秀的英国政治制度与法国的现行体制进行了细致比较，大力宣扬以行政、立法、司法三权分立的进步制度取代法国的绝对君主专制。当巴黎出版商布雷东宣布，他将邀请狄德罗、德朗贝尔、蒂尔戈及其他一系列杰出作者，合作编写一本“包罗所有新思想、新科学、新知识”的百科全书，来自公众的反应相当热烈。22 年过后，当 28 卷本百科全书的最后一卷也付诸发行时，警察方面姗姗来迟的干预已无法压制公众对此书的热，情。它对整个法国社会所做的重要但异常危险的评论，已经广泛地传布开来。

在这里，我想给你们一个小小的告诫，当你阅读某本描写法国大革命的小说或观看某部有关的戏剧和电影时，你会很容易得到一个印象：即这次革命完全是一帮来自巴黎贫民窟的乌合之众们所为。不过事实并非如此。虽然革命的舞台上通常站满了乌合之众的身影，但他们通常是在那些中产阶级专业分子的鼓动与领导下发起冲锋的。这些人将饥渴盲目的大众用作他们威力无比的盟军。然而，引发革命的基本思想最初是由少数几个拥有杰出智慧的人物提出的。一开始，他们被引荐到旧贵族们迷人的客厅，为腻烦透顶的女士先生们展示智慧与奇思异想的火花，作为新鲜的娱乐。这些赏心说目但危险无比的客人们玩起了“社会批评”的焰火，几粒火星不小心从与这座大房子一样老旧腐朽的地板裂缝里掉了下去，不幸落到了堆满陈谷子烂芝麻的地下室，引起了火苗。这时，惊起了一片救火的呼声。房主尽管对世上的一切事物都倍感兴趣，可就是没学会如何管理他的产业。由于他不懂得如何扑灭火头，所以火势蔓延开来，导致整座建筑都被吞噬在熊熊大火之中。这就是我们所说的法国大革命。

为叙述的方便，我们可以将法国革命分为两个阶段。从 1789 到 1791 年，是人们还或多或少努力为法国引入君主立宪制度的阶段。这种尝试最终失败了，部分是因为国王本人的愚蠢和缺乏诚信，部分是由于局势的发展已经无人能够控制。

从 1792 到 1799 年，出现了一个共和国和第一次尝试建立一个民主政制的努力。不过，法国大革命最后以暴力的形式爆发出来，这是多年的骚动和许多真心实意的改革尝试统统付诸流水的结果。

理论教授、生意人和讨巧家

当法国背负起 40 亿法郎的巨额债务，国库总是空空如也、面临倒闭的边缘，并且再没有一项新的税目可以用来增加收入，连好国王路易（他是一位灵巧的锁匠和优秀猎手，可极其缺乏政治才华）也模糊地感觉到，应该是做点什么来补救的时候了。于是，他召见了蒂尔戈，任命他为自己的首席财政大臣。安尼·罗伯特·雅克·蒂尔戈也就是人们常说的德·奥尔纳男爵。他刚刚 60 出头，是一个正处于迅速消失之中的贵族精英阶层的杰出代表人物。作为一名成功的外省总督兼能力出众的业余政治经济学家，他确实用尽了自己的一切力量来挽救危局。不幸的是，他无法创造奇迹。由于再不可能从衣衫槛楼、面有菜色的农民身上榨取更多的税收，因此必须让从未出过一个子儿的贵族与神职人员也为国家财政尽一点必要的义务了。不过，此举也使得蒂尔戈沦为了凡尔赛宫最招厌憎的人物。更糟的是，可怜的财政大臣还不得不面对皇后玛丽·安东奈特的敌意。这位女士对任何胆敢在她的听力范围内提到“节俭”这个可恶字眼的人们，都一一报以冷若冰霜的怒容。很快，蒂尔戈便为自己赢得了“不切实际的幻想家”和“理论教授”的绰号，自己的官位当然也岌岌可危。1776 年，他被迫辞去了财政大臣的职务。

紧接“理论教授”的，是一个讲求实际的生意人。这位工作勤勉、任劳任怨的瑞士人名为内克尔，通过做粮食投机生意以及与人合伙创办一家国际银行而大发横财。他野心勃勃的妻子赶鸭子上架，硬把他推上这个他力所不及的政府宝座，以便为她的宝贝女儿谋取更好的攀爬之阶。后来，他的女儿真的嫁给了瑞士驻巴黎大使德·斯特勒男爵，成为 19 世纪初期文化界的风云人物。

和蒂尔戈一样，内克尔带着极大的热情投入了工作。1781 年，他递交了一份关于法国财政状况的详细回顾。可路易十六除了被这份复杂的报告弄得满头雾水外，便再未能明白更多的事情。他刚刚派遣了一支军队去北美，帮助当地的殖民者反抗他们共同的敌人——英国。事实证明，这次远征耗资之巨超出所有人的意料。国王要求内克尔搞到急需的资金。可是他非但没捧着大把现金来觐见陛下，反倒呈上了另一份充斥着更多统计和

数字的枯燥报告。更有甚者，他居然也开始用起“必要的节俭”之类的讨厌字眼来了，这意味着他作为财政大臣的日子也所剩无几了。1781年，他因“工作无能”被国王解职。

在“理论教授”和讲求实际的“生意人”相继下台后，接着登场的是一位伶俐讨巧、极其使人愉快的人物。他向所有人许诺，只要他们信任他无懈可击的完美政策，他保证每月付给每个人百分之百的回报。此君就是查理·亚历山大·德·卡洛纳，一个一心只想飞黄腾达的官员。他靠着自己的工厂和不择手段的撒谎欺瞒，在仕途上混得一帆风顺。他发现国家已经债台高筑，可他是一个聪明人，不愿意得罪人。于是，他发明了一个简便迅速的补救办法：借新债还旧债，拆东墙补西墙。这个做法并不新鲜，可它带来的立竿见影的后果却无疑是灾难性的。在不到三年的短短时间内，又有8亿法郎添加到法国的总债务上。可这位魅力非凡的财政大臣似乎从不知道担心为何物。他彬彬有礼笑容可掬，总是在国王与可爱的王后陛下的每一项开支要求上欣然签上自己的大名。要知道，王后年轻时在维也纳便养成了花钱大手大脚的脾气，此时此刻要她节俭是不太现实的。

最后，甚至连对国王一直忠心耿耿的巴黎议会（一个高级的司法机构而非立法机构）也无法坐视局势发展下去，决定要做点事情了。而卡洛纳还一心想再借八千万法郎的外债。那个一个特别糟糕的年景，粮食歉收，饥饿与悲惨的生活在法国的乡村地区蔓延。如果再不采取明智的措施，法国将完全破产。国王一如既往地局势的严重性浑然不觉。征询人民代表的意见难道不是一个好主意吗？自从1614年被取消以来，全国性的三级会议就从来没召开过。不过，以路易十六典型的优柔寡断，他拒绝走得太远。

为平息公众的不满，路易十六在1787年召开了一个知名人士的集会。这仅仅意味着全国的显贵们齐聚一堂，在绝不触犯封建地主和神职人员的免税特权的前提下，讨论该做什么，能做点什么？要指望这个社会阶层为属于另一些社会阶层的悲苦同胞们的利益，做出政治和经济上的自杀行为，这显然是不现实的。最后，与会的127名知名人士断然拒绝放弃他们的任何一项古老特权。于是大街上饥肠辘辘的群众便要求重新任命他们信任的内克尔做财政大臣。显贵们说“不”，街头的人们就开始砸碎玻璃并做出其它种种不象样的事情来。知名人士逃跑了，卡洛纳随之也被解职。

红衣主教洛梅尼·德·布里昂纳，一个平庸无奇的家伙，被任命为新的财政大臣。迫于饥饿民众的暴动威胁，路易十六只得同意“尽量可行地”迅速召开三级会议。这一含糊其辞的允诺当然不能使任何人满意。

三级会议

近一个世纪以来，法国从没出现过这么饥谨难熬的严冬。庄稼要么被洪水冲毁，要么完全冻死在地里。普罗旺斯省的所有橄榄树几乎死绝了。虽然有私人救济在试图尽一点微薄之力，可面对1800万嗷嗷待哺的饥民，这点救济实在是杯水车薪。全国各地都发生了哄抢粮食和面包的骚乱。在一代人之前，这些骚动本来可以靠军队的武力镇压下去。但是，新的哲学思想现在已经结出硕果。人们开始意识到，靠枪杆来对付饥饿的肠胃，将是完全无效的。况且，士兵们同样来自于群众，他们对于国王的忠诚是否继续可靠呢？在此危急关头，国王必须做出明确的决断，来挽回民众对国王的信心。可路易再次犹豫不决。

在外省的许多地区，新思想的追随者们纷纷建立起一些独立的共和国。在忠实的中产阶级中间，也此起彼伏地响起了“没有代表权便拒不交税”的呼声（这一口号是14世纪前由北美殖民者首先喊出的）。法兰西面临全国性大混乱的边缘。为缓和民众的不满，挽回王室声誉，政府出人意料地突然取消了以往异常严厉的出版审查制度。一时间，一股铺天盖地的印刷品的洪流席卷了法国。每一个人，不管地位高低，都在批评别人或被别人批评。超过2000种形形色色的小册子被一齐抛到市面上。洛梅尼·德·布里昂纳在一片斥责与叫骂声中黯然下台。内克尔被紧急召回，重任财政大臣，尽其可能地安抚这场全国性的精神骚动。消息传出之后，巴黎股市暴涨了30%。在普遍的乐观情绪下，人民暂缓了对专制王权的最后判决。1789年5月，三级会议即将召开，全法兰西最杰出的头脑将汇聚一堂，这肯定能迅速解决所有问题，将古老的法兰西王国重新建设成健康幸福的乐园。

有一种普遍的思想认为，人民的集体智慧能够解决所有的难题。这种看法不仅是错误的，而且往往引来灾难性的结局。特别在一段极其关键的时间里，它反而束缚了所有个人能力的发挥。内克尔不仅未能将政府权力牢牢控制在自己手里，反而让一切顺其自然。此后，在关于何为改造旧王国的最佳方案上，又爆发了一场激烈的论争。在法国各地，警察的权力被大大削弱了。巴黎郊区的居民们在职业煽动家的领导之下，开始意识到自己的力量。他们公然扮演起在动荡不安的岁月本属于自己的角色来——革命的领袖们在不能通过立法途径达到目的时所运用的野蛮暴力。

作为对农民和中产阶级的让步之举，内克尔同意他们在三级会议里获得双倍名额的代表权。关于这一问题，西厄耶神甫写作了一本著名的小册子《何为第三等级？》。他最终得出的结论是，第三等级（对中产阶级的另一称呼）应该代表着一切。他们过去什么也不是，现在则希望获得应有的地位。他的书表达了当时关心国家利益的大多数人们的情感。

最后，选举在难以想象的混乱状态下开始了。待到结果公布，一共有 308 名神职人员代表、285 名贵族代表和 621 名第三等级代表将要收拾行装，前往凡尔赛宫。不过，第三等级还将携带额外的行李，即被称为“纪要”的长篇报告，内容写的是他们的选民所申诉的种种抱怨与冤情。舞台终于准备就绪，为拯救古老法国的最后一幕大戏即将开场上演了。

1789 年 5 月 5 日，三级会议在凡尔赛宫召开。国王情绪很不好，常常想发脾气。神职人员和贵族们也公开放出话来，说他们不愿意放弃任何一项神圣的权力。国王命令三个等级的代表在不同的房间里开会，讨论他们各自的冤苦。第三等级的代表们拒绝执行陛下的旨意。1789 年 6 月 20 日，他们在一个网球场（为这个非法会议所匆忙布置的会场）庄严宣誓。他们坚持要求所有三个等级，神职人员、贵族和第三等级应该在一起开会，并将他们的决定通知了陛下。国王最终屈服了。

作为“国民会议”，三级会议开始讨论法兰西王国的国家体制。国王大发雷霆，可旋即又犹豫不决。他宣称宁死也不会放弃自己的绝对君权。随后，他便出去打猎了，把对国家大事的所有烦恼焦虑统统抛掷脑后。等陛下满载着猎物归来，他又让步了。按照陛下的神圣习惯，他总是喜欢选择错误的时间用错误的方法来做一件正确的事情。当人民吵吵嚷嚷，提出 A 要求，国王对他们严加斥责，不给他们任何好果子吃。之后，当陛下的宫殿被一大群喧声震天的穷人包围，国王便投降了，答应给人民要求的東西。不过此时，人民提出的已经是 A 要求加上 B 要求。这样为时已晚的情形一演再演。当陛下正准备屈服于自己热爱的人民，向同意 A 要求及 B 要求的文件上签上自己的大名时，人民又不乐意了。他们威胁说，除非陛下答应 A 要求加 B 要求加 C 要求，否则便杀死他全家。就这样，人民的要求从一个单词开始，一项项增加，直到写满整页白纸，直到陛下糊里糊涂地上了断头台。

雅各宾党与国王之死

很不幸的是，习惯于缓慢行动的陛下总是比情势的发展落后半拍。他从来不能意识到这一点。一直当他将自己高贵的头颅搁放在断头机上，他仍觉得自己是一个饱受迫害与虐待的人。他倾尽自己可怜而有限的能力，来关爱自己的臣民，可这些家伙回报他的却是天底下最不公平、最没良心的对待。他至死也不明白自己错在哪里？

我经常告诫你们，对历史追问“假如”，那是毫无意义的。我们也许能够随随便便地说，“假如”路易十六是一个精力充沛一些、心肠狠毒一些的人，那么法国的君主专制也许会继续生存下去。但国王并不仅仅是孤身一人。“即便”他拥有拿破仑般的冷酷无情、横扫千军的力量，在那个急风暴雨的年代，他的生涯也很可能因其妻子的行为而被断送。王后玛丽·安东奈特是奥地利皇太后玛利亚·特利莎的女儿。她的身上综合了在那个时代最专制的中世纪宫廷长大的年轻姑娘所具有全部美德与恶习。她的行动常常使路易的处境雪上加霜。

面对三级会议的威胁，玛丽·安东奈特决定采取行动，策划了一个反革命阴谋。内克尔被突然解职，忠于国王的军队也收到秘令，开始向巴黎开拔。当消息传开，愤怒的人民开始猛攻巴士底狱。1789 年 6 月 14 日，起义的人们捣毁了这座熟悉且倍遭憎恨的政治犯监狱。它曾经是君主专制暴政的一个象征，但现在只是用作关押小偷和轻微刑事犯的城市拘押所。许多贵族预感形势不妙，纷纷出逃国外。但国王和平常一样若无其事。在巴士底狱被攻占那天，他优哉游哉地去皇家林苑打了一天猎，最后载着了几头猎获的母鹿，心满意足地回到了凡尔赛。

8 月 4 日，国民议会开始投入运转。在巴黎群众的强烈呼声之下，国民议会废除了王室、贵族及神职人员的一切特权。8 月 27 日，发表了著名的《人权宣言》，即第一部法国宪法的序言。到目前为止，局面还在控制之中，但王室依然未能从中汲取教训。人民普遍怀疑，国王会再次密谋，妄图阻挠这些改革措施。结果在 10 月 5 日，巴黎发生了第二次暴动。震动波及到凡尔赛，一直到人们将国王带回巴黎市内的宫殿，骚乱才稍微平息下来。人们不放心路易呆在凡尔赛，他们要求能随时监视他，以便控制他与在维也纳、马德里及欧洲其它王室亲戚们的秘密联系。

与此同时，国民会议在米拉波的领导下，开始整顿混乱的局势。米拉波是一位贵族，后来成为了第三等级的领袖。不幸的是，没等他能够挽救国王的地位，他便于 1791 年 4 月 2 日去世了。他的死使路易开始真正为自己的性命担忧起来。6 月 21 日傍晚，国王悄然出逃。不过国民自卫军从一枚硬币的头像上辨认出了他，在瓦雷内村附近将他的马车截住。路易被灰溜溜地送回了巴黎。

1791 年 9 月，法国第一部宪法通过，完成使命的国民议会成员便各自回家了。1791 年 10 月 1 日，立法会议召开，继续国民议会未竟的工作。在这群新聚集起来的立法会议代表中，有许多是激进的革命党人。其中最大胆、最为人知的一个派别是雅各宾党，因其常常在古老的雅各宾修道院举行政治聚会而得名。这些年轻人（他们中的大部分属于专业人员）喜欢发表慷慨激昂、充满暴力色彩的演说。当报纸将这些演说传到柏林与维也纳，普鲁士国王和奥地利皇帝便决定采取行动，以拯救他们的好兄弟、好姐妹们的性命。当时，列强们正忙于瓜分波兰。那里的不同政治派别相互倾轧，自相残杀，使整个国家成为了一块任何人都可以分一杯羹的肥肉。不过在争夺波兰之余，欧洲的国王和皇帝们还是设法派出了一支军队去入侵法国，试图解救路易十六。

于是，整个法国突然陷入了一股普遍的恐慌之中。多年饥饿与痛苦所累积的仇恨，此时达到了可怕的高峰。巴黎的民众对国王居住的杜伊勒里宫发动了猛攻。忠于王室的瑞士卫队拼死保卫他们的主子，可一生犹豫不决的路易此时又临阵退缩了。当冲击王宫的人潮正要开始退却，国王却发出了“停止射击”的命令。灌饱了廉价酒精民众，趁着血液里的酒精的作用，在震天的喧嚣声中冲进王宫，将瑞士卫队的士兵斩尽杀绝。随后，他们在会议大厅里捉住了路易，立即剥夺了他的王位，将他关进了丹普尔老城堡。昔日高高在上的国王如今沦为阶下囚。

奥地利和普鲁士军队在继续推进。恐慌变成了歇斯底里，使善良的男人女人们变成了凶残的野兽。1792 年 9 月的第 1 个星期，民众冲进监狱，杀死了所有的在押囚犯。政府听任暴民们为所欲为，不加一点点干涉。由丹东领导的雅各宾党人心里都非常清楚，这场危机要么以革命的彻底胜利告终，要么以为首者的人头落地收场。只有采取最极端、最野蛮的方式，才能拯救自己的性命于危局之中。1792 年 9 月对日，立法会议闭会，成立起一个新的国民公会。其成员几乎全部是激进的革命者。路易被正式控以最高叛国罪，在国民公会面前受到审判。他被判罪名成立，并以 361 票对 360 票的表决结果（决定路易命运的额外 1 票，是由他的表兄奥尔良公爵所投）判处死刑。1793 年 1 月 21 日，路易平静而不失尊严地走上了断头台。他至死也没了解导致所有这些流血与骚乱的原因。他太高傲，也不屑于向旁人请教。

随后，雅各宾党将矛头转向国民公会中一个较温和的派别——吉伦特党人。其成员大部分来自于南部的吉伦特地区，他们也因此得名。一个特别革命法庭成立起来，21 名领头的吉伦特党人被判处死刑，其余成员纷纷被迫自杀。他们都是一些诚实能干的人，只是过于理性、过于温和，难以在恐怖的岁月中苟全性命。

1793 年 10 月，雅各宾党人宣布“在和平恢复以前”，暂停宪法的实施。由丹东和罗伯斯庇尔领导的一个小型“公安委员会”接管了一切权力。基督信仰与公元旧历被废除。一个“理性的时代”（托马斯·潘恩在美国革命期间曾大力宣扬的）带着它的“革命恐怖”，终于莅临人世。在 1 年多的时间里，善良的、邪恶的、中立的人们被大批屠杀，死于“革命恐怖”的人数平均高达每天 70—80 人。

国王的专制统治被彻底摧毁了，取而代之的是少数人的暴政。他们对民主怀着如此深厚的热爱，以至不能不杀死那些与他们观点相悖的人。法兰西被变成了一所屠宰场。人人自危，相互猜疑。几名老国民议会的成员自知将成为断头台的下一批候选者。出于纯粹的恐惧，他们最终联合起来反抗已经将自己的大部分同伴处死的罗伯斯庇尔。这位“唯一真正的民主战士”试图自杀，但没能成功。人们草草包扎好他受伤的下颚，将他拖上了断头台。1794 年 6 月 27 日（根据奇特的革命新历，这一天是第 2 年的热月 9 日），恐怖统治宣告结束，全巴黎市民如释重负地欢欣舞蹈。

不过，法兰西所面临的危险形势使政府必须控制在少数几个强有力的人物手中，直到革命的诸多敌人被彻底驱逐出法国的本土。当衣衫槛楼、饥肠始铤的革命军队在莱茵、意大利、比利时、埃及等各条战线浴血奋战，击败大革命的每一个凶险敌人时，一个由五人组成的督政府成立起来。他们统治了法国四年。之后，大权转移到一个名为拿破仑·波拿巴的天才将军手里，他在 1799 年担任了法国的“第一执政”。此后的 15 年，古老的欧洲大陆变成了一个前所未有的政治实验的实验室。

第五十二章 拿破仑

野心是他的动力

拿破仑生于 1769 年，是卡洛·玛利亚·波拿巴的第三个儿子。老卡洛身为科西嘉岛阿佳肖克市的一位诚实的公证员，名声向来不错。他娶了个好妻子，叫莱蒂西亚·拉莫莉诺。事实上，拿破仑并非法国公民，而是一个地道的意大利人。他所出生的科西嘉岛曾先后是古希腊、迦太基及古罗马帝国在地中海的殖民地。多年来，科西嘉人为争取独立而顽强奋战。一开始，他们努力想摆脱热那亚人的统治，不过 18 世纪中期以后，他们斗争的对象变成了法国。法国曾在科西嘉人反抗热那亚的战斗中慨然施以援手，后来为了自己的利益又将该岛据为己有。

在头 20 年的生涯中，年轻的拿破仑是一位坚定的科西嘉爱国者——科西嘉的“辛·费纳”成员之一，一心期盼着将自己热爱的祖国从法国令人痛恨的枷锁中解放出来。不过法国大革命出人意料地满足了科西嘉人的种种诉求，因此在布里纳军事学院接受完良好的军官训练后，拿破仑逐渐将自己的精力转移到为收养他的国家服务之上。尽管他法语说得很笨拙，既未学会正确的拼写，也始终去不掉口音里浓浓的意大利腔，但他最终成为了一名法国人。直到有一天，他终于变成了一切法兰西优秀德行的最高表率。一直到今天，他仍然被视为高卢天才的象征。

拿破仑是那种典型的一夜成名、平步青云的伟人。他的全部政治与军事生涯加起来还不到 20 年。可就是在这段短短的时间里，他指挥的战争、赢得的胜利、征战的路程、征服的土地、牺牲的人命、推行的革命，不仅将欧洲大地搅得天翻地覆，也大大地超越了历史上的任何人，连伟大的亚历山大大帝和成吉思汗也不能与他比肩。

拿破仑身材矮小，早年健康状况不佳。他相貌平平，乍见之下难以给人留下深刻的印象。一直到他辉煌的高峰，每当不得不出席某些盛大的社交场合，他的仪态举止仍显得非常笨拙。他没有高贵的门第、显赫的出身或家庭留下的大笔财富可以沾光。他白手起家，完全凭着自己的努力向上爬。在其青年时代的大部分岁月里，他穷困潦倒，常常吃了上顿没下顿，被迫为搞到几块额外的硬币而煞费苦心。

他在文学方面天分寥寥。有一次参加里昂学院举办的有奖作文竞赛，他的文章在 16 名候选人中排名第 15 位，即倒数第 2。不过凭着对自己的命运和辉煌前程的不可动摇的信念，他克服了这一切出身、外貌及天资上的困难。野心是他生命中的主要动力。他对自我的坚强信念、他对签署在信件上以及在他匆匆建起的宫殿里的大小装饰物上反复出现的那个大写字母“N”的崇拜、他要使“拿破仑”成为世界上仅次于上帝的重要名字的绝对意志，这些强烈的欲望加在一起，将他带上了历史上从未有人达到过的荣誉的峰顶。

从不感恩的天才

当他还是一个领半饷的陆军中尉时，年轻的波拿巴就非常喜欢古希腊历史学家普卢塔克所写的《名人传》。不过，他从未打算追赶这些古代英雄们所树立的崇高的德行标准。他似乎完全缺乏使人类有别于兽类的那些深思熟虑、为他人着想的细腻情感。很难精确断言他一生中是不是还爱过除自己之外的任何别人。他对母亲倒是温文有礼。不过莱蒂西亚本身就具有高贵女性的风度与做派。并且像所有意大利母亲一样，她很懂得如何管治自己的一大群孩子，从而赢得他们应有的尊重。有几年时间，拿破仑确实爱过他美丽的克里奥尔妻子约瑟芬。约瑟芬的父亲是马提尼克的一名法国官员，丈夫为德·博阿尔纳斯子爵。博阿尔纳斯在指挥一次对普鲁士军队的战役失败后，被罗伯斯庇尔处死，约瑟芬便成了寡妇，后来得以嫁给拿破仑。不过因约瑟芬不能给当上皇帝的拿破仑陛下留下子嗣，拿破仑便决然和她离婚，另娶了奥地利皇帝的年轻貌美的女儿。在拿破仑眼里，这次婚姻是一桩不错的政治交易。

在作为一个炮兵连指挥官围攻土伦的著名战役中，年轻的拿破仑一举成名。战斗之暇，拿破仑还悉心研究了马基雅维里的著作。他显然听从了这位佛罗伦萨政治家的建议。在此后的政治生涯中，如果违背承诺对他有利时，他就毫不犹豫地食言。在他的个人字典里，从来找不到“感恩图报”这个字眼。不过很公平的，他也从不指望别人对他感恩。他完全漠视人类的痛苦。在 1798 年的埃及战役中，他本来答应留战俘们一条性命，但旋即将他们全部处死。在叙利亚，当他发现不可能将伤兵们运上船只时，便默许手下人用氯仿将他们悄悄杀死。他命令一个怀有偏见的军事法庭判处昂西恩公爵死刑，在完全没有法律根据情况下将他枪杀，唯一的理由就是“必须给波旁王朝一个警告”。他下令将那些为祖国独立而战的被俘德国军官就地枪决，毫不怜悯他们反抗的高尚动机。当蒂罗尔英雄安德烈斯·霍费尔经过英勇抵抗，最终落入法军之手时，拿破仑竟将他当成普通的叛徒处死了。

简而言之，当我们真正研究拿破仑的性格时，我们就能理解到为什么那些焦虑的英国母亲在驱赶孩子们入睡时会说，“如果你们再不听话，专拿小孩当早餐的波拿巴就要来捉你们了”！无论对这位奇特的暴君说上多少令人不快的坏话，仿佛都没个尽头。比如他可以极度仔细地监管军队的所有部门，却唯独忽略了医疗服务；

比如因为不能忍受士兵们发出的汗臭，他一个劲往身上喷洒科隆香水，以至于将自己的制服都毁了等等等等。这样的坏事甚至可以没完没了的说下去，但说过之后，我不得不承认自己怀有某种潜伏的怀疑之情。

现在，我舒舒服服坐在一张堆满书本的写字台旁，一只眼睛留心着打字机，另一只眼睛盯着我的爱猫利科丽丝——它正在跟我的复写纸较劲儿。此时此刻，我正在写着，拿破仑皇帝是一个至为可鄙的人物。不过，如果这时我碰巧往窗外的第七大道望去，假如大街上熙来攘往的载重卡车和小汽车的车水马龙嘎然而止，随着一阵威武雄沉的鼓声，我看见一个小个子穿着他破旧磨损的绿色军装，骑着白马走在纽约的大街上。那么、那么天知道会发生什么！可我担心，我多半会不顾一切地抛下我的书本、我的猫、我的公寓以及我所有的一切东西，去追随他，一直跟他到任何他领我去的地方。我自己的祖父就这样做了，老天知道他并非生来就是一个英雄。成百万人们的祖父也跟着这个骑白马的小个子走了。他们不能得到任何回报，他们也不希求任何回报。他们欢天喜地、斗志昂扬地追随这个科西嘉人，为他浴血奋战，缺胳膊少腿，甚至丢掉性命也在所不惜。他们将他们带到离家数千英里的地方，让他们冒着俄国人、英国人、西班牙人、意大利人、奥地利人的漫天炮火冲锋陷阵，在死亡中痛苦挣扎时双眼仍平静凝视着天空。

假如你要我对此做出解释，我确实无言以对。我只能猜出其中的一个原因——拿破仑是一位最伟大的演员，而整个欧洲大陆都是他施展才华的舞台。无论在任何时候、任何情形下，他总能精确地做出最能打动观众的姿态，他总能说出最能触动听众的言辞。无论是在埃及的荒漠，站在狮身人面像和金字塔前，还是在露水润湿的意大利草原上对着士兵们演讲，他的姿态、他的言语都一样富有感染力。无论在怎样的困境，他都是控制者，牢牢把握着局势。甚至到了自己生命的尽头，他已经沦为大西洋无尽波涛中一个岩石荒岛上的流放者，一个任凭庸俗可憎的英国总督摆布的垂死病人，拿破仑依然把持着舞台的中心。

滑铁卢惨败之后，除为数很少几个可靠的朋友，再没人见过这位伟大的皇帝。欧洲人都知道他被流放到圣赫拿岛上，他们知道有一支英国警卫部队夜以继日地严密看守着他。他们还知道另有一支英国舰队在严密监视着在朗伍德农场看守皇帝的那支警卫部队。不过，无论朋友还是敌人，他们都无法忘记他的形象。当疾病与绝望最终夺去他的生命，他平

静的双眼仍然注视着整个世界。即便到了今天，他在法国人的生活中，依然像一百年前那样是一股强大的力量。那时，人们哪怕仅仅看一眼这个面色灰黄的小个子，就会出于兴奋或恐惧，而昏倒过去。他在神圣的克里姆林宫喂养过他的马匹，他对教皇和世上最有权势的大人物们颐指气使，就像对待自己的仆役。

莫斯科大火与滑铁卢

即便只对他的生涯勾勒一个简单的提纲，就需要好几卷书的容量。要想讲清楚他对法国所做的巨大政治变革、他颁布的后来为大多数欧洲国家采纳的新法典、以及他在公众场台的数不胜数的积极作为，写几千页都嫌不够。不过，我能用几句话来解释清楚，为什么

他的前半生如此成功而最后十年却一败涂地。从 1789 到 1804 年，拿破仑是法国革命的伟大领导者。他之所以能够一一将奥地利、意大利、英国、俄国打得溃不成军，原因在于他和他的士兵们那时都是“自由、平等、博爱”这些民主新信仰的热切传道者，是王室贵族的敌人，是人民大众的朋友。

可是在 1804 年，拿破仑自封为法兰西的世袭皇帝，派人请教皇庇护七世来为他加冕，正如法兰克人的查理曼大帝在公元 800 年请利奥三世为他加冕，做了日尔曼皇帝。这一情景有着无尽的诱惑反复出现在拿破仑眼前，使他渴望着重温旧梦。

一旦坐上了王位，原来的革命首领摇身一变，成为哈布斯堡君主的失败翻版。拿破仑忘记了他的精神之母——雅各宾政治俱乐部。他非但不再是被压迫人民的保护者，反而变成了一切压迫者、一切暴君的首领。他的行刑队时刻都磨刀霍霍，准备枪杀那些胆敢违抗皇帝的神圣意志的人们。当神圣罗马帝国忧伤的遗迹于 1806 年被扫进历史的垃圾堆，当古罗马荣耀的最后残余被一个意大利农民的孙子彻底摧毁，没有人为它一掬同情之泪。可当拿破仑的军队入侵西班牙，逼迫西班牙人民承认一个他们鄙视厌恶的国王，并大肆屠杀仍然忠于旧主的马德里市民时，公众舆论便开始反对过去那个马伦戈、奥斯特利茨及其它上百场战役的伟大英雄了。这时，只是到了这时，当拿破仑从革命的英雄变成旧制度所有邪恶品行的化身时，英国才得以播种迅速扩散的仇恨的种子，使所有诚实正直的人民变成法兰西新皇帝的敌人。

当英国的报纸开始报道法国大革命阴森恐怖的某些细节时，英国人便 对之深感厌恶。在一个世纪前的查理一世统治时期，他们也曾发动过自己的“光荣革命”。可相对于法国革命翻天覆地的动荡，英国的革命不过

是一次郊游般简单轻松的事件。在普通的英国老百姓眼里，雅各宾党人不啻于杀人不眨眼的魔头，而拿破仑更是群魔之首，人人得而诛之。从 1798 年开始，英国舰队便牢牢封锁了法国港口，破坏了拿破仑经埃及入侵印度的计划，使他在经历尼罗河沿岸一系列辉煌胜利之后，不得不面对一次屈辱的大撤退。最后到 1805 年，英国人终于等来了战胜拿破仑的胜机。

在西班牙西南海岸靠近特拉法尔角的地方，内尔森将军彻底摧毁了拿破仑的舰队，使法国海军一蹶不振。拿破仑从此被困在了陆地。即便如此，如果他能把握时局，接受欧洲列强提出的不失颜面的和平条件，拿破仑仍然可以舒服地坐稳自己的欧洲霸主的位子。可惜拿破仑被自身的荣耀冲昏了头脑，他不能容忍任何对手，不允许任何人与他平起平坐。于是，他把仇恨转向了俄罗斯，那片有着源源不竭的炮灰的神秘广大的国土。

只要俄罗斯还处在凯瑟琳女皇半疯癫的儿子保罗一世的统治之下，拿破仑就懂得该怎么对付俄国。可是保罗的脾气变得越来越难以捉摸，以至被激怒的臣属们被迫谋杀了他，免得所有人都被流放到西伯利亚的铅矿。继任保罗的是他的儿子亚历山大沙皇。亚历山大并未分享父亲对这位法国篡位者的好感，而是将他视为人类的公敌与永远的和平破坏者。他是一位虔诚的人，相信自己是上帝挑选的解放者，负有将世界从邪恶的科西嘉诅咒中解脱出来的责任。他毅然加入了普鲁士、英格兰、奥地利组成的反拿破仑同盟，却惨遭败绩。他尝试了五次，五次都以失败告终。1812 年，他再度辱骂了拿破仑，气得这位法国皇帝两眼发黑，发誓要打到莫斯科去签定城下之盟。于是，从西班牙、德国、荷兰、意大利等广大的欧洲地域，一支支不情愿的部队被迫向遥远的北方开拔，去为伟大皇帝受伤的尊严进行以牙还牙的报复。

接下来的故事现在已经尽人皆知。经过两个月漫长而艰苦的进军，拿破仑终于抵达了俄罗斯的首都，并在神圣的克里姆林宫建立起他的司令部。可他攻占的只是一座空城。1812 年 9 月 15 日深夜，莫斯科突然发出冲天的火光。大火一直燃烧了 4 个昼夜，到第 5 日傍晚，拿破仑不得不下达了撤退的命令。两星期之后，大雪纷纷扬扬地地下起来，厚厚的积雪覆盖了森林和原野。法军在雪片和泥泞中艰难跋涉，直到 11 月 26 日才抵达别列齐纳河。这时，俄军开始了猛烈的反击。哥萨克骑兵团团包围了溃不成军的“皇帝的军队”，痛加砍杀。法军损失惨重，直到 12 月中旬，才有第一批衣衫褴褛、军容不整的幸存者出现在德国东部的城市。

随后，即将发生反叛的谣言如火如荼地传播开来。“是时候了，”欧洲人说道，“把我们从无法忍受的法兰西枷锁下解放出来的日子已经到了！”他们纷纷将一支支在法国间谍无所不在的监视下精心隐藏好的滑膛枪拿出来，做好了战斗的准备。不过未等他们搞清楚到底发生了什么事情，拿破仑带着一支生力军返回了。原来皇帝陛下离开了溃败的军队，乘坐自己的轻便雪橇，秘密奔回了巴黎。他发出最后的征召军队的命令，以便保卫神圣的法兰西领土免遭外国的入侵。

一大批 16、17 岁的孩子跟随着他去东边迎击反法联军。1813 年 10 月 16、17、18 日，恐怖的莱比锡战役打响了。整整 3 天，身穿绿色军服和蓝色军服的两大帮男孩殊死拼杀，直到鲜血染红了埃尔斯特河水。10 月 17 日下午，源源不断涌来的俄国后备部队突破了法军的防线，拿破仑丢下部队逃跑了。

他返回巴黎，宣布让位于他的幼子。但反法联军坚持由已故的路易十六的弟弟路易十八继承法国的王位。在哥萨克骑兵和普鲁士枪骑兵的前呼后拥之下，两眼无神的波旁王子胜利地进入了巴黎。

至于拿破仑，他成了地中海厄尔巴小岛上的君主。他在那里将他的马童们组织成一支微型军队，在棋盘上演练一场场战役。

《两个掷弹兵》

不过当拿破仑离开法国，法国人就开始缅怀过去，意识到他们失去了多么宝贵的东西。在过去 20 年，尽管付出了高昂的代价，可那毕竟是一个充满了光荣与梦想的年代。那时的巴黎是世界之都，是辉煌的中心，而失去了拿破仑，法国和巴黎便成了二流的平庸之地。肥胖的波旁国王在流放期间不学无术、毫无长进，很快便使巴黎人对他的懒惰与庸俗望而生厌了。

1815 年 3 月 1 日，反法同盟的代表们正准备着手清理被大革命搞乱的欧洲版图时，拿破仑却突然在戛纳登陆了。在不到一星期的时间里，法国军队抛弃了波旁王室，纷纷前往南方去向他们的“小个子”表示效忠。拿破仑直奔巴黎，于 3 月 21 日抵达。这一次，他变得谨慎多了，发出求和的呼吁，可盟军坚持要用战争来回答他。整个欧洲都起来反对这个“背信弃义的科西嘉人”。皇帝迅速挥师北上，力争在敌人们集结起来之前将他们各个击破。不过如今的拿破仑已经不复当年之勇。他不时患病，动不动就感觉疲劳。当他本应打起十二分

的精神，指挥他的先头部队发动奇袭时，他却躺下睡觉了。另外，他也失去了许多对他忠心耿耿的老将军，他们都先他而去了。

6月初，他的军队进入比利时。同月16日，他击败了布吕歇尔率领的普鲁士军队。不过一名下属的将军并未遵照命令，将退却中的普鲁士部队彻底歼灭。

两天后，拿破仑在滑铁卢与惠灵顿统率的军队遭遇。到下午2点钟，法军看起来似乎即将赢得战役的胜利。3点钟的时候，一股烟尘出现在东方的地平线上。拿破仑以为那是自己的骑兵部队，此时他们应该击败了英国军队，前来接应他。到4点的时候，他才搞清楚真正的情形。原来是老布吕歇尔咆哮怒骂，驱赶着精疲力竭的部队投入战斗。此举打乱了拿破仑卫队的阵脚，他已经再没有剩下的预备部队了。他吩咐部下尽可能保住性命，自己又一次首先逃跑了。

他第二次让位于他的儿子。到他逃离厄尔巴岛刚好100天的时候，他再次离岸而去。他打算去美国。在1803年，仅仅为了一首歌，他将法国殖民地圣路易斯安那（当时正处于被英国占领的危险之中）卖给了年轻的美利坚合众国。所以他说，“美国人会感激我，他们会给我一小片土地和一座栖身的房子，让我在那里平静地安度晚年。”可强大的英国舰队监视着所有的法国港口。夹在盟国的陆军和英国的海军之间，拿破仑进退维谷，别无选择。普鲁士人打算枪毙他。看起来，英国人可能会稍微大度一点。拿破仑在罗什福特焦急等待着，期望局势能有所转机。最终，在滑铁卢战役1个月后，拿破仑收到了法国新政府的命令，限他24小时内离开法国的土地。这位永远的悲剧英雄只好给英国摄政王（国王乔治三世精神失常被关进了疯人院）写信，告之陛下他准备“将自己像狄密斯托克斯一样交到敌人手上，希望在对手的欢迎壁炉旁找到一块温暖的地方……”。

6月15日，拿破仑登上英国战舰“贝勒罗丰”号，将自己的佩剑交给霍瑟姆海军上将。在普利茅斯港，他被转送到“诺森伯兰”号上，开往他最后的流放地——圣赫拿岛。在这里，他度过了生命中的最后7个年头。他试着撰写自己的回忆录，他和看守人员争吵，他不断地沉入对往昔的回忆之中。非常奇怪的是，他又回到了（至少在他的想象中）他原来出发的地方。他忆起自己为革命艰难作战的岁月。他试图说服自己相信，他一直都是“自由、平等、博爱”这些伟大原则的真正朋友，它们由那些衣衫槛楼的国民议会的士兵们传到了整个世界。他只是喜欢讲述自己作为总司令和首席执政的生涯，很少提及帝国。有时，他会想起他的儿子赖希施坦特公爵，他热爱的小鹰。现在，“小鹰”住在维也纳，被他的哈布斯堡表兄们当成一名不闻的“穷亲戚”勉强接待。想当初，这些表兄们的父辈只要一听到拿破仑的名字，就会吓得浑身战抖。当临终之际，他正带领着他的军队走向胜利。他发出一生中的最后一道命令，让米歇尔·内率领卫队出击。然后，他永远停止了呼吸。

不过，如果你想为他的奇特一生寻求解释，如果你真希望弄清楚为何一个人能仅凭其超人的意志如此之久地统治如此之多的人，请你一定不要去阅读他的传记。这些书的作者要么对他满怀厌憎，要么是热爱他到无以复加的崇拜者。你也许能从这些书籍中了解到许多事实。可比起僵硬的历史事实，有时候，你更需要去“感觉历史”。在你有机会听到那首名为《两个掷弹兵》的歌曲之前，千万别去读那些形形色色的书籍。这首歌的歌词是由生活在拿破仑时代的伟大德国诗人海涅创作的，曲作者是著名的音乐家舒曼。当拿破仑去维也纳朝见他的奥地利岳父时，舒曼曾站在很近的地方，亲眼目睹过这位德国的敌人。这下你清楚了，这首歌是出自两位有充分理由憎恨这位暴君的艺术家的手。

去听听这首歌吧！听完之后闭上眼睛回味片刻，然后你也许能体会到1000本历史书都不能告诉你的东西。

第五十三章 神圣同盟

当拿破仑最终被流放圣赫拿岛，那些屡战屡败于这位“可恶的科西嘉人”手下的欧洲统治者便齐聚维也纳，试图消除法国大革命带来的多项变革。

华尔兹与小步舞

欧洲各国的皇帝国王、公爵首相、特命全权大臣以及一般的大使总督主教们，还有紧随他们身后的大群秘书、仆役和听差，他们的工作日程曾因可怕的科西嘉人的突然重返（如今，他只能整日在圣赫拿岛的烈日下昏昏欲睡了）而被粗暴打断。现在，他们纷纷返回自己的工作岗位。为适当地庆祝胜利，举行了各种晚餐会、花

园酒会和舞会。在舞会上，追逐潮流的人士跳起了令人吃惊的新式“华尔兹”舞，引起了那些仍在怀念小步舞时代的女士先生的窃窃非议。

在整整一代人的时间里，他们处于惶恐不安的引退状态。当危险终于过去，谈起革命期间所遭受的种种痛苦与磨难，他们不免洋洋洒洒、振振有辞，有着满腹的苦水想要倾吐。他们期望捞回损失在可恶的雅各宾党人手里的每一个子儿。这些不值一提的野蛮革命者居然敢处死上帝所封的国王，还自作主张地废除假发，拿巴黎贫民窟的破烂马裤来取代凡尔赛宫廷式样优雅的短裤。

你们一定会觉得滑稽，因为我竟会提到这样一些琐细无聊的小事。不过，著名的维也纳会议就是由一长串荒唐可笑的议程构成的。有关“短裤与长裤”的问题吸引了与会代表们长达数月之久的兴趣，相形之下，萨克森的未来安排或西班牙问题的最终解决方案反倒成了无甚紧要的细枝末节。普鲁士国王陛下走得最远，他特意定制了一条短裤，以便向公众显示陛下对一切革命事物的极度蔑视。

另一位德国君主在表现他对革命的仇恨方面也不甘落后。他严正颁布了一条敕令：凡是在那位法国篡位者统治期间缴纳过税款的属民，必须重新向自己的合法统治者缴纳这些税款。因为当他们在遭受科西嘉魔王的无情摆布时，他们的国王正在遥远的角落里默默地爱着他们。就这样，维也纳会议上的荒唐事情一件接着一件。直到有人气得喘不过气来，疾呼道：“看在上帝的份上，老百姓为什么不抗议、不反抗呢？”是啊，为什么不反抗呢？因为人民已经被战争和革命弄得精疲力竭。他们完全绝望了，根本不在乎下一步会发生什么，或者由谁在哪里及如何统治他们。只要能得到和平，就谢天谢地了。战争、革命、改革这些字眼已经耗尽了他们的全部精力，使他们感到疲惫和厌倦。

上世纪 80 年代，人人都曾围着自由之树欢舞。王公们热情拥抱他们的厨子，公爵夫人拉着她们的仆役跳起了卡马尼奥拉舞（法国革命期间流行的舞蹈）。他们真诚的相信，一个自由、平等、博爱的新纪元已经降临这个充满邪恶的人世，一切将重新开始。不过伴随新纪元而来的，是造访他们客厅的革命委员，以及跟随他身后的十几个衣衫褴褛、饥肠辘辘的士兵。他们占满了客厅的沙发，坐在主人的餐桌前大吃大喝。等造访已毕，革命委员返回巴黎向政府报告，“被解放国家”的人民是如何热情接受法国人民奉献给友好邻居们的自由宪法时，他们还顺手牵走了主人家传的银制餐具。

当他们听说有一个叫“波拿巴”或“邦拿巴”的青年军官将枪口对准暴民，镇压了巴黎发生的最后一阵革命骚乱，他们不免长长地舒了一口气。为了安宁，牺牲一点自由、平等、博爱也是可以接受的。可没过多久，这位“波拿巴”或“邦拿巴”就成了法兰西共和国三位执政官之一，后来又作了唯一的执政，最后终于变成法兰西皇帝。由于他比此前的任何统治者都更为强大、更有效率，他的手难免伸的很长，管得过宽，毫不怜悯地压迫着他可怜的属民们。他强征他们的男孩子入伍，他把他们漂亮的女儿嫁给手下的将军，他夺走他们的油画古董去充实私藏。他将欧洲变成一个大兵营，牺牲掉整整一代青年人的性命。

现在，他终于被送到大西洋里的圣赫拿孤岛。人们（除了少数职业军人）只剩一个愿望：让他们不受打扰地安静过日子。曾几何时，他们被允许自治，选举自己的市长、市议员和法官，可这套体制在实践中却惨告失败。新统治者不仅毫无经验，且言行放肆，在旧伤之上，又添了许多新创。出于纯粹的绝望，人们转向旧制度的代理人。他们说，“你们像过去一样统治我们吧。告诉我们欠你多少钱，我们照单全付。其它的请高抬贵手，我们正忙于修复自由时期的创伤。”

操纵维也纳会议的大人物们，他们当然会尽力满足人们期求和平、安宁的渴望。会议的主要成果是神圣同盟的缔结。它使警察机构变成国家事务的主要力量。对那些胆敢对国家政策提出任何批评的人士，动辄施以最严厉的惩罚。

欧洲终于得到了和平，然而笼罩在墓地之上的死气沉沉的和平。

维也纳三巨头

出席维也纳会议的三位重要人物分别是俄国的亚历山大沙皇、代表奥地利哈布斯堡家族的梅特涅首相及前奥顿地区主教塔莱朗。在历次法国政府危机四伏的动荡中，塔莱朗完全凭自己的精明狡猾，奇迹般地生存了下来。现在他代表法国来到奥地利首都，试图尽可能地挽救遭拿破仑涂炭的千疮百孔的法国。就像打油诗里描写的快活青年对旁人的白眼浑然不觉，塔莱朗这位不速之客闯到了宴会上开心地吃喝说笑，仿佛他真是被邀请的

上宾。事实上，他做得非常成功。不久之后，他便大摇大摆地坐上了主位，用他妙趣横生的故事为嘉宾们助兴，以自己的迷人风度赢得了大家伙儿的好感。

在他抵达维也纳的前一天，塔莱朗了解到盟国已分裂成两个敌对的阵营。一方是妄图吞并波兰的俄国和想要占领萨克森的普鲁士；另一方是想制止兼并的奥地利与英国。但无论让普鲁士还是俄国获得主宰欧洲的霸主地位，都会有损于英奥两国的利益。塔莱朗凭借高超的外交手腕和骑墙做法，游刃于两派之间。由于他的努力，法国人民得以免遭其他欧洲人在王室手下所受的十年压迫。他在会议上争辩道，法国人民的作为其实是毫无选择的，是“科西嘉恶魔”强迫他们按自己的旨意行事。现在篡位者已一去不返，路易十八登上了王位。塔莱朗请求说，“给他一次机会吧！”而盟国正乐于看到一位合法君主端坐在革命国家的王位上，便慨然让步了。波旁王朝终于得到机会，并加以过于充分的利用，以至 15 年后被再度赶下台。

维也纳三巨头中的另一位是奥地利首相梅特涅，哈布斯堡外交政策的首席制定者，全名文策尔·洛塔尔·梅特涅——温斯堡亲王。正如其名所显示的，他是一位大庄园主，风度翩翩的漂亮绅士，家财亿万且能干异常。不过，他属于与城市和农庄里挥汗如雨的平民大众相隔一千英里的那个封闭社会的产儿。青年时代，梅特涅曾在斯特拉斯堡大学求学，正值法国大革命的爆发。斯特拉斯堡是《马赛曲》的诞生地，雅各宾党人的活动中心。在梅特涅的忧伤记忆里，青年时代愉快的社交生活被粗暴打断了，一大群才能平平的市民被突然召去从事他们并不胜任的工作，暴民们通宵欢庆以谋杀无辜生命所换来的新自由的曙光。可梅特涅却没能看到人民大众的真挚热情，他也没看到当妇女和儿童将面包和水塞给衣衫槛楼的国民自卫军，目送他们穿过城市，去前线为法兰西祖国光荣献身时，他们眼里所闪烁的希望和神采。

大革命的一切给这位年轻的奥地利人留下的只是满心厌恶。它太野蛮，太不文明。如果真的需要一场战斗，那也应该由穿着漂亮制服的年轻人，骑上装配精致鞍具的高头大马，冲过田野去体面的厮杀。可将整个国家变成一个发散恶臭的军营，把流浪汉一夜之间提拔为将军，这不仅愚蠢，而且邪恶。他常常会对在数不清的奥地利大小公爵们轮流提供的小型晚餐会上遇到的法国外交官说，“看看吧，你们那些精致的思想都带来了什么？你们喊着要自由、平等、博爱，可最终得到的是拿破仑。如果你们不胡思乱想，满足现行制度，你们的情况会比现在好多少啊！”随后，他就会阐述自己那套关于“维持稳定”的政见。他竭力宣扬重返大革命前旧制度的正常状态，那时人人幸福，也没人胡说什么“天赋人权或人人生而平等”。他的态度是真诚的。他意志坚强、才能卓越，极善说服他人，因此他也成了一切革命思想最危险的敌人。梅特涅一直活到 1859 年，他亲眼目睹了 1848 年的欧洲革命将自己苦心炮制的政策扫进历史垃圾堆，遭到彻底的失败。突然间，他发现自己变成了全欧洲最招憎恨的家伙，好几次面临被愤怒的市民私刑处死的危险。不过直到生命的尽头，他依然认为自己做的都是正确有益的事情。

他一直相信，比之危险的自由，人民宁愿要和平。他则尽己所能将最符合人民利益的东西赐予了他们。公正地看，我们不得不说他所全力构建的世界和平是相当成功的。列强们有 40 年时间没自相残杀，紧掐对方的脖子。直到 1854 年，俄国、英国、法国、意大利、土耳其为争夺克里米亚爆发了一场大战，和平局面才被打破。这么长的和平时期至少在欧洲大陆上是创纪录的。

这个“华尔兹”会议上的第三位英雄是亚历山大皇帝。他是在其祖母，著名的凯瑟琳女王的宫中长大的。除了这位精明的老妇人教给他将俄罗斯的荣耀视为生命中最重要的事情，他还有一位瑞士籍的私人教师，一位伏尔泰和卢梭的狂热崇拜者。教师极力向他的幼小心灵灌输热爱全人类的思想。这样，待亚历山大长大后，他的身上奇怪地混合了自私的暴君与感伤的革命者两种气质，使他常常陷于自我冲突的痛苦之中。在他疯癫的父亲保罗一世在位期间，亚历山大倍受屈辱。他被迫亲眼目睹了拿破仑战场上的大屠杀，俄军凄惨的溃败。后来他时来运转，他的军队为盟国赢得了胜利。俄罗斯从荒僻的边陲之国摇身而为欧洲的救世主，这个伟大民族的沙皇也被奉为神明。人们指望他医治世间的所有创伤。

可亚历山大本人却不够聪明。他不像塔莱朗和梅特涅那样深谙人性，对外交这一奇妙的游戏，也玩得不够精熟。当然，亚历山大爱慕虚荣（在某些情形下谁又能不爱呢），喜欢群众的掌声与欢呼。很快，他便成为维也纳会议主要的“焦点和吸引力的源泉”，而梅特涅、塔莱朗、卡斯雷尔（精明干练的英国代表）则悄悄绕桌而坐，一边惬意地呷着匈牙利甜酒，一边决定着具体该做的事情。他们需要俄国，因此对亚历山大毕恭毕敬。不过亚历山大本人越少参与实质性工作，他们就越高兴。他们甚至对亚历山大提出的组织“神圣同盟”的计划大加赞同，好让他全心投入，自己则可以放手处理紧急的事情。

亚历山大喜欢社交，经常出席各种各样的晚会，会见形形色色的人物。在这些场合，沙皇显得既轻松又快乐。不过他的性格中还有截然不同的另一面。他努力想忘掉某些难以忘却的事情。801 年 3 月 23 日夜，他焦急地坐在彼得堡圣米歇尔宫的一间房间里，等待着他父亲退位的消息。可保罗拒绝签署那些喝得醉醺醺的官员

强塞到他桌前的文件。官员们一怒之下，用围巾缠住老沙皇的脖子，将他活活勒死了。随后他们下楼去告诉亚历山大，他已经成为了所有俄罗斯国土的皇帝。

亚历山大生性敏感，这个恐怖夜晚的记忆一直纠缠在他脑海，挥之不去。他曾经在法国哲学家们的伟大思想中受过熏陶，这些人相信的不是上帝而是人类的理性。不过，单单理性并不足以解脱处于心灵困境中的沙皇。他开始出现幻听幻视，感觉到形形色色的形象和声音从他身边飘过。他试图找到一条途径，使自己不安的良心平静下来。他变得异常虔诚，对神秘主义发生了兴趣。神秘主义即对神秘和未知世界的奇特崇拜和热爱，它的渊源与底比斯、巴比伦的神庙一样久远。

神秘的女先知

大革命期间过度膨胀、过度焦灼的情感以一种奇怪的方式影响了人们的性格。经历了 20 年恐惧与焦虑折磨的男男女女，都变得有些神经兮兮。每听到门铃声响，他们会惊跳起来。因为这响声可能意味着，他们唯一的儿子“光荣战死”了。革命期间所大肆宣扬的“兄弟之爱”或“自由”等等观念，在饱受痛苦煎熬的农民耳里，无非是一些意义空洞的口号。他们愿抓住任何能救其脱离苦海的东西，使他们重拾面对生活的勇气。在痛苦与悲伤中，他们轻易让一大帮骗子得了手。这些人伪装成先知的样子，四处传播他们从《启示录》的某些晦涩章节里挖出来的新奇教义。

1814 年，已多次占卜问灵的亚历山大听说了一个新的女先知的事情。据说她预言世界末日即将到来，正敦促人们及早悔悟。此人就是冯·克吕德纳男爵夫人。这位俄国女人的丈夫是保罗沙皇时代的一名外交官。有关她的年龄和声誉，议论纷纷，可都不确定。听说她把丈夫的钱财挥霍一空，还因种种桃色事件，使他颜面尽失。她过着异常轻佻放荡的生活，最终身心崩溃，一度处于精神失常的状态。后来，因目睹一位朋友的突然死亡，她皈依了宗教，从此厌弃了生活中的一切快乐。她向一位鞋匠忏悔自己从前的罪恶。这位鞋匠是一位虔诚的摩拉维亚兄弟会成员，也是被 1415 年的康斯坦斯宗教会议处以火刑的老宗教改革家胡斯的信徒。

接下来的十年，克吕德纳呆在德国，一心一意地从事劝说王公贵族们“皈依”宗教的工作。感化欧洲的救世主亚历山大皇帝，使他认识到自己犯下的错误，这是男爵夫人平生最大的志愿。而亚历山大正处忧伤之中，任何能给他一线慰藉的人，他都乐意听听他们的开解。会面很快被安排妥了。1815 年 6 月 4 日傍晚，男爵夫人被带进沙皇的营帐。她第一眼看见这位大人物时，他正在读自己随身携带的《圣经》。我们搞不清楚男爵夫人究竟对亚历山大说了些什么。可当她三小时后离开时，陛下满面泪容，发誓说“他的灵魂终于得到了安宁”。从那天开始，男爵夫人便成了沙皇忠实的伙伴及灵魂的导师。她随他去巴黎，然后又到维也纳。当亚历山大不出席舞会的时候，他就参加克吕德纳夫人的祈祷会。

你也许会问，我为什么要如此详细地给你们讲述这个离奇的故事？难道 19 世纪的种种社会变革不比一个精神失衡的女人的生涯更具重要性吗？忘掉这个女人不是更好吗？当然是这样的。不过这个世界上已经有够多的历史书，它们能精确而详尽地告诉你那些历史大事。而我希望你们从历史中了解到比一连串的历史事实稍微多一些的东西。我要你们带着一颗毫无偏见的心灵去接近历史、触摸历史，绝不要仅仅满足于“何时何地发生了什么”这样简单的陈述。去发掘隐藏在每个行为下面的动机，而后你对世界的了解就会更上一层楼，你也将更有可能去帮助别人。归根结底，这才是唯一真正令人满意的生活方式。

两个不幸男女的共同作品

我不希望你把“神圣同盟”仅仅视为 1815 年签署，现在勉强保存在国家档案馆中早被废弃和遗忘的一纸空文。它也许已被遗忘，可它绝非对我们今天的生活毫无影响。神圣同盟直接导致了门罗主义的产生，而门罗主义与普通美国人的生活有着显著的关联。所以，我希望你们了解这一文件如何碰巧出现，以及隐藏在这一重申基督教对责任的忠诚奉献的宣言背后的真实动机。

一个是遭受了可怕精神打击，试图抚平灵魂不安的不幸男子，另一个是虚度半生，容颜尽毁，只能靠自命为一种新奇教义的先知来满足虚荣心与欲望的野心勃勃的女人，他们俩的古怪结合造就了“神圣同盟”。它是两个不幸男女的共同作品。这些细节并不是什么天大的秘密，如今才由我泄

露出来的。像卡斯雷尔、梅特涅、塔莱朗这等清醒理智的人物，他们当然知道这位多愁善感的男爵夫人能力有限。梅特涅可以轻而易举地把她打发回德国，给神通广大的帝国警察局首脑写一纸便条就能解决问题。

可法国、英国、奥地利正需要俄罗斯的善意，他们不敢触怒亚历山大。他们容忍这位愚蠢的老女人，因为他们不得不克制自己的脾气。虽然他们全都认为神圣同盟是纯粹的胡说八道，甚至不值得为它浪费纸张，可当沙皇向他们朗诵以《圣经》为基础创作的《人类皆兄弟》的潦草初稿时，他们只能耐心地倾听。这是创建神圣同盟试图达到的目的，签字国必须申明“在管理各自国家的事务，及处理与别国政府的外交关系时，应以神圣宗教的诫条，即基督的公正、仁慈、和平为唯一指导。这不仅适用于个人，且应对各国的议会产生直接的影响，并作为加强人类制度，改进人类缺陷的唯一途径，体现在政府行动的各个步骤中。”尔后，他们还相互承诺，将保持联合，“本着一种真正牢不可破的兄弟关系，彼此以同胞相待，在任何情况、任何地点相互施以援手。”等等等等。

最后，虽一个字也没读懂，奥地利皇帝还是在“神圣同盟”誓约上签署了自己的大名。法国的波旁王室也签了字，时势使它非常需要拿破仑旧敌的友谊。普鲁士国王也加入了，他迫切希望亚历山大支持他的“大普鲁士”计划。当然，受俄国摆布的所有欧洲小国都签了字，它们别无选择。英国拒绝签字，因为卡斯雷尔认为该条约不过是一些空话。教皇没有签字，他对一个希腊东正教徒和一个新教徒来插手他的事务感到甚为愤恨。土耳其苏丹当然没签，因为他对盟约上说的东西一无所知。

而欧洲的老百姓不久后就不得不正视这一条约的存在。隐藏在神圣同盟一大堆空洞词句背后的，是梅特涅纠集起来的五国盟军。这些军队可不是闹着玩儿的。他们的存在无疑在警告世人，欧洲的和平是不容所谓的自由主义者搅扰的。这些自由主义者被视为乔装打扮的雅各宾党，他们唯一的目的是使欧洲重返大革命的动乱年代。欧洲人对1812、1813、1814和1815年的伟大解放战争的热情开始慢慢消逝，随之而来的是对幸福生活的真诚企盼。在战争中首当其冲的士兵也希望和平，他们变成了和平的宣讲者。

不过，人们并不需要神圣同盟和列强会议赐予他们的那种和平。他们惊呼自己被欺骗，被出卖了。可他们小心翼翼，以免自己的话传到秘密警察的耳里。对革命的反动是成功的。策划这一反动的人真诚相信其作为有益于人类福祉。可动机虽然良好，一样难以忍受。它不仅制造了大量不必要的痛苦，而且大大阻碍了政治改革的正常进程。

第五十四章 强大的反动势力

他们以压制新思想来维持一个不被打扰的和平世界，他们使秘密警察成为最有权势的国家机构，不久，所有国家的监狱都人满为患。那些宣称老百姓有权按自己心意进行自治的人们受到迫害。

清扫法兰西“祸水”

要完全清除拿破仑洪水所带来的祸害几乎是不可能的。古老的防线被一扫而空，历经几十朝代的宫殿被毁坏到无法居住的程度。其它的王宫则以不幸邻居的损失为代价，拼命扩张地盘，好把革命时期的损失找补回来。革命的洪水退去之后，留下许多形形色色、奇奇怪怪的革命教义的残余，强行清除它们势必给整个社会带来风险。不过维也纳会议的政治工程师们将自己的力量发挥到极限，以下是他们取得的种种“成就”。

多年以来，法国一直是世界和平的“祸害”。人们不免对这个国家有些本能的恐惧感。虽然波旁王朝借塔莱朗之口，允诺以后好好治理国家，但“百日政变”却教给欧洲国家，一旦拿破仑第二次脱逃将会出现什么可怕的情况。于是它们开始未雨绸缪，防患于未然。荷兰共和国被改为王国，比利时变成了这个新尼德兰王国的一部分（由于比利时没有参加16世纪荷兰人争取独立的战争，它一直属于哈布斯堡王朝的领地之一，开始由西班牙统治，后又归属奥地利）。无论是新教徒控制的北方，还是天主教徒主导的南方，没人需要这种人为的联合，但也没人提出反对意见。它似乎有利于欧洲的和平，那就勉强接受吧，这就是当时的主要考虑！

波兰人对未来怀有极大的憧憬，因为他们的亚当·查多伊斯基王子不仅身为亚历山大沙皇的密友，而且在整个反拿破仑战争及维也纳会议期间一直担任沙皇的常务顾问。他们有理由期望很多东西。但波兰被划为俄国的半独立属地，由亚历山大出任国王。这种解决办法引起波兰人民极大的义愤，导致了后来的三次革命。

丹麦一直追随拿破仑，是他最忠诚的盟友。相应地，它也受到了极为严厉的惩罚。七年前，一支英国舰队驶到了卡特加特附近海域，在没有宣战或发出任何警告的情况下，炮轰了哥本哈根，并掠走所有丹麦军舰，以

免它们为拿破仑所用。维也纳会议则采取了进一步的惩罚措施。它将挪威从丹麦划出（前者从 1397 年的卡尔麦条约签署，一直与丹麦联合），将它交给瑞典的查尔斯十四世，作为他背叛拿破仑的奖赏。想当初，还是拿破仑帮助查尔斯走上王位的。非常离奇的是，这位瑞典国王原是一名法国将军，本名贝纳道特。他作为拿破仑的副官长来到瑞典，当霍伦斯坦一戈多普王朝的末代统治者去世，身后未留下子嗣，好客的瑞典人就请贝纳道特登上了王位。从 1815 至 1844 年，他尽心尽力统治着这个收养他的国家（尽管他从未学会瑞典语）。他是个聪明人，治国有方，赢得了他的瑞典子民和挪威子民的共同尊重。可 he 也不能将两种截然不同的历史与天性调和起来。这两个斯堪的纳维亚国家的联合体是一个无法挽救的失败。1905 年，挪威以一种最平和和有序的方式，建立起一个独立的王国，而瑞典也乐得祝愿挪威“前途顺利”，明智地让它走自己的道路。

意大利人自文艺复兴以来一直饱受入侵者的躁路，他们对波拿巴将军寄予厚望。可作了皇帝的拿破仑却让他们大失所望。非但没有一个统一的新意大利出现在望眼欲穿的人民眼前，它反而被划分为一系列小公国、公爵领地、小共和国及教皇国。教皇国在整个意大利半岛（除那不勒斯外）治理得最为糟糕，人们生活极其悲惨。维也纳会议废除了几个拿破仑建立的小共和国，在它们的地域上恢复老的公国建制，分别奖赏给哈布斯堡家族几个有功的男女。

可怜的西班人发动过反抗拿破仑的伟大民族起义，为效忠他们的国王牺牲了宝贵的鲜血。可当维也纳会议允许国王陛下返回其领地时，西班牙人等来的却是严厉的惩罚。斐迪南七世是一位心胸邪恶的暴君，他流亡生活的最后 4 年是在拿破仑的监狱中度过的。为打发坐牢时光，他给自己心爱的守护圣像编织了一件又一件外套。而他庆祝自己回归的方式却是恢复残酷的宗教法庭和刑房，两者本是在革命期间被废除掉的。此人是一个令人厌恶的家伙，不但其人民，连他的 4 个妻子也同样鄙视他。可神圣同盟却坚持要维护他的合法王位，正直的西班牙人民为清除邪恶的暴君及建立一个立宪王国的所有努力，最后都以屠杀和流血而告终。

自 1807 年王室成员逃到巴西的殖民地，葡萄牙便一直处于没有国王的状态。在 1808 至 1814 的半岛战争期间，该国一直被惠灵顿的军队用作后勤补给基地。1815 年后，葡萄牙继续做了几年英国的行省，直到布拉同扎王室重返王位。一位布拉同扎成员被留在里约热内卢当了巴西皇帝，这是美洲大陆唯一的帝国，居然维持了好多年，直到 1889 年巴西建立共和国时才寿终正寝。

在东欧，并未采取任何措施来改善斯拉夫人和希腊人的悲惨处境，他们依然是土耳其苏丹的属民。1804 年，一位叫布兰克·乔治（卡拉乔戈维奇王朝的奠基人）的塞尔维亚猪倌发动反抗土耳其人的起义，被敌人击败，最后被他自以为是朋友的另一塞尔维亚领袖杀害。杀害他的人名为米洛歇·奥布伦诺维奇，后来成为塞尔维亚奥布伦诺维奇王朝的创始人。这样，土耳其人得以继续在巴尔干半岛横行无忌，理所应当当地作着主人。

希腊人丧失独立已经整整 2000 年了。他们先后受到过马其顿人、罗马人、威尼斯人、土耳其人的奴役。现在，他们寄希望于自己的同胞，科俘人卡波德·伊斯特里亚。他跟波兰的查多伊斯基同为亚历山大最亲密的私人朋友，也许他能希腊人争取点什么。可惜维也纳会议对希腊人的要求根本不感兴趣，它满脑子想着的只是如何让所有“合法”的君主，不管是基督教的、伊斯兰教的或其它教的，分别保住各自的王位。因此，希腊人什么也没盼到。

日尔曼的笑柄

维也纳会议犯下的最后的、也可能是最大的错误，就是对德国问题的处理。宗教改革和 30 年战争不仅完全摧毁了这个国家的繁荣与财富，而且将它变成了一盘毫无希望的政治散沙。它分裂成两三个王国、四五个大公国、许多个公爵领地以及数百个侯爵领地、男爵领地、选帝侯领地、自由市和自由村，由一些只在歌舞喜剧里才能见到的千奇百怪的统治者分别治理着。弗雷德里克大帝为改变这一状态，创立了强大的普鲁士，但这个国家在他死后便衰落了。

拿破仑虽然满足了大多数德意志小国的独立愿望，但总数 300 多个的国家里，只有 52 个存续到了 1806 年。在争取独立的伟大斗争期间，许多年轻的德国士兵都梦想着建立一个统一而强大的新祖国。可没有强有力的领导，就不可能有统一。谁能担当这个领导者的角色呢？

在讲德语的地区一共有 5 个王国。其中两个是奥地利与普鲁士，他们各自拥有上帝恩许的神圣国王。而其它 3 个国家，巴伐利亚、萨克森和维腾堡的国王却是拿破仑恩许的。由于他们一度都做过法兰西皇帝陛下的忠实走狗，在其他德国人眼里，他们的爱国信誉不免要大打折扣。

维也纳会议建立了一个由 38 个主权国家组成的新日尔曼同盟，将其置于前奥地利国王，现在的奥地利皇帝陛下的领导之下。这种临时性的解决方案不能让任何人满意。确实，一次日尔曼大会在古老的加冕典礼的城市法兰克福召开了，目的是讨论“共同政策及重大事务”。可 38 名分别体现 38 种不同利益的代表们济济一堂，做出任何决定都需要全票通过（一项曾在上个世纪毁掉强大波兰帝国的荒唐的国会程序）。这使得本次著名的日尔曼大会很快沦为了欧洲人的笑柄，使这个古老帝国的治国政策变得越来越像我们上世纪四五十年代的中美洲邻居。

这对于为民族理想牺牲一切的德国人来说，无疑是一个巨大的侮辱。可维也纳会议是不屑于考虑“属民”的个人情感的。它很快停止了有关德国问题的争论。

密探时代

有人反对吗？当然有。当最初对拿破仑的仇恨情感平息下来，当人们对反拿破仑战争的巨大热情开始退却，当人们开始充分意识到借“维护和平与稳定”之名所行的种种罪恶，他们便开始低声抱怨了。他们甚至威胁要进行公开的反抗。可他们能做什么呢？他们只不过是手无寸铁的平民，完全处于无权无位的弱势。何况，他们正面对着世界上前所未有的最残酷无情且极富效率的警察体系，处处受到严密监控，只好任人摆布了。

维也纳会议的参与者们真诚地相信，“法国大革命的思想是导致前拿破仑皇帝犯下篡位罪行的根源”。他们觉得将所谓“法国思想”的追随者们消灭干净，是顺应天意民心的神圣之举。就像宗教战争时的西班牙国王菲利普二世一边无情地烧死新教徒或绞杀摩尔人，一边觉得他的残酷作为只不过是服从自己良心的召唤。在 16 世纪初期，教皇拥有随心所欲统治自己属民的神圣权利，任何不承认这种权利的人都会被视为“异端”，诛杀他是所有忠诚市民的应尽责任。而到了 19 世纪初的欧洲大陆，轮到那些不相信国王有权按自己及首相认为合适的方式统治他的属民的人变成了“异端”，所有忠实的市民都有责任向最近的警察局检举他，让他受到应有的惩罚。

有一点必须指出，1815 年的欧洲统治者们已经从拿破仑那里学到了“统治效率”的技巧，因此他们干起反异端工作时，比 1517 年做得漂亮多了。1815 至 1860 年是一个属于政治密探的“伟大”时代。间谍无处不在。他们出入王公贵族的宫殿，他们深入到最下层的低级客店。他们透过钥匙孔窥探内阁会议的进程，他们偷听在市政公园透气、散步的人们的闲谈。他们警戒着海关和边境，以免任何不持有正式护照的不法分子渗入。他们检查所有的包裹行李，严防每一本可能带有危害“法兰西思想”的书籍流入皇帝陛下的领土。他们和大学生一起坐在演讲大厅，任何胆敢对现存秩序提出质疑的教授，马上便会大祸临头。他们悄悄跟在上教堂的儿童身后盯梢，免得他们逃学。

密探们的许多工作都得到了教士的大力协助。在大革命期间，教会的损失异常惨重。它的财产被没收充公，一些教士被杀害。更有甚者，当公安委员会于 1793 年 10 月废除对上帝礼拜仪式时，受伏尔泰、卢梭和其他法国哲学家无神论思想熏陶的那代年轻人，竟然围着“理性的祭坛”欢歌笑语。教士与贵族们一起度过了漫长的流亡生涯。现在，他们随盟军士兵一起重归故里，带着一种报复的心情积极投入了工作。

甚至连耶稣会也于 1814 年回来了，继续他们教育年轻一代献身上帝的工作。在反击教会敌人的战斗中，它做得非常成功。在世界的各个角落，耶稣会的“教区”纷纷建立起来，向当地人传播天主教的福音。不过它们很快发展成一个正式的贸易公司，并不断干涉当地政府的内部事务。在葡萄牙伟大的改革家、首相马奎斯·德·庞博尔执政时期，耶稣会曾一度被逐出葡萄牙领土。但在 1773 年，应欧洲主要天主教国家的要求，教皇克莱门特十四世取消了这项禁令。现在，他们回到了工作中，循循善诱地对商人们的儿女讲解“顺从”和“热爱合法君主”的道理，以免他们将来遇上玛丽·安东奈特被送上断头台这类情形时，会发出窃窃的笑声。

在普鲁士这样的新教国家里面，情形也好不了多少。1812 年的伟大爱国领袖们，还有号召对篡位者发起神圣反抗的诗人作家们，他们如今被贴上了“煽动家”的标签，成了威胁现存秩序的危险分子。他们的住房被搜查，他们的信件受到检查，他们必须每隔一段时间到警察局报到一次，汇报自己的所作所为。普鲁士教官把冲天的怒火发泄到年轻一代身上，极其严厉地管教他们。在古老的瓦特堡，当一群青年学生以一种喧闹却无害的方式庆祝宗教改革三百周年时，普鲁士当局竟将其视为一场迫在眉睫的革命的前兆。当一名诚实却不够机灵的神学院学生卤莽地杀死了一个被派到德国执行任务的俄国间谍，普鲁士各大学立即被置于警察的监管之下，并且不经任何形式的审讯，教授们便纷纷被投入监狱或遭到解雇。

当然，俄国在实施这些反革命行动方面做得更过分，也更荒谬。亚历山大已经从他突发的虔诚狂热中解脱出来，逐渐患上了慢性忧郁症。他终于明白了自己有限的力量，意识到他在维也纳会议上沦为了梅特涅和克吕德纳男爵夫人的牺牲品。他变得日益讨厌西方，开始变成一位名符其实的俄罗斯统治者。而俄罗斯的真正利益其实存在于那个曾经给斯拉夫人上过最初一课的圣城君士坦丁堡。随着年龄日长，亚历山大工作越发努力，他取得的成就也越少。当他端坐于自己的书房时，他的大臣们正努力将整个俄罗斯变成一个刺刀林立的兵营。

这绝非一副美妙的画面。也许，我该缩短对这个大反动时期的描述。但是，如果能让你们对这个时期产生彻底的了解，那也是一件好事。要知道，这种阻碍历史进步、扭转历史时钟的尝试，已经不是第一次了，但结果无非是螳臂挡车。

第五十五章 民族独立

不过，民族独立的热情如此强大，难以用反动的方式摧毁。南美洲人首先揭竿而起，反抗维也纳会议的反动措施。紧随其后的是希腊人、比利时人、西班牙人及其他许多欧洲弱小民族，为 19 世纪谱写了许多独立战争的篇章。

民族情感

假设我们说，“如果维也纳会议采取了这样那样的措施，而非采用那样这样的措施，那 19 世纪的欧洲历史就会是另一个样子。”也许吧，但这样说是毫无意义的。要知道，参加维也纳会议的是一群刚刚经历了法国大革命，对过去 20 年的恐怖与持续不断的战乱记忆犹新的人们。他们聚集在一起的目的就是确保欧洲的“和平与稳定”，他们认为这正是人民需要和向往的。他们是我们所说的“反动人士”。他们真心认为人民大众是管理不好自己的。他们朝着一个似乎最能保证欧洲长治久安的方向，重新安排了欧洲地图。虽然他们最终失败了，但并非出于任何有恶意的用心。总的说来，他们都属于旧式外交学校毕业的老派人物，念念不忘自己青年时代和平安宁的幸福生活，因此盼望着重回“过去的好时光”。可他们没有意识到，许多革命思想已经在欧洲人民心中牢牢地扎下根来。这是一个不幸，但还算不上罪恶。不过法国革命将一件事情不仅教给了欧洲，同时也教给了美洲，那就是人民拥有“民族自决”的权利。

拿破仑从未敬畏过任何事，也没有尊重过任何人。所以在对待民族感情和爱国热忱方面，他显得极端地冷酷无情。可在革命早期，一些革命将领却宣扬过一种新信条——“民族并不受政治区划的限制，与圆颅骨或阔鼻梁也没多大关系。民族是一种发自内心和灵魂的感情。”因此当他们向法国儿童宣讲法兰西的伟大时，他们也鼓励西班牙人、荷兰人、意大利人做同样的事情。不久之后，这些卢梭的信徒、深信原始人的优越天性的人们便开始向过去挖掘，穿过封建城堡的废墟，发现他们伟大种族最久远的尸骨。而他们则自愧为这些伟大祖先的孱弱子孙。

19 世纪上半期是一个考古发现的伟大时代。世界各地的历史学家都忙着出版中世纪的散佚篇章和中世纪初期的编年史。在每一个国家，历史发现的结果往往都引发出阵阵对古老祖国的新生的自豪感。这些感情的萌生大部分是基于对历史事实的错误解释。不过在现实政治中，事实的真实与否并不重要，重要的是人们愿不愿意相信它是真的。而在大多数国家，国王和人民都坚信其伟大祖先的至高荣耀。

可维也纳会议无视人们的情感。大人物们以几个王朝的最大利益为出发点，重新划分了欧洲版图，并且将“民族感情”与其它危险的“法国革命教义”一道，统统列入了禁书目录。

不过历史对于所有会议都一视同仁地予以无情嘲弄。出于某种原因（它可能是一条历史法则，但至今仍未引起历史学家的足够重视），“民族”对于人类社会的稳步发展似乎是必需的。任何阻挡这股潮流的尝试，最终都将像梅特涅试图阻止人们自由思考一样，以惨败收场。

南美革命和门罗宣言

有意思的是，民族独立的大火是从远离欧洲的南美开始点燃的。在漫长的拿破仑战争期间，西班牙人无暇他顾，南美大陆的西属殖民地经历了一段相对独立的时期。当西班牙国王沦为拿破仑的阶下囚，南美殖民地人民依然效忠于他，而拒绝承认 1808 年被其兄任命为西班牙新国王的约瑟夫·波拿巴。

事实上，唯一深受法国大革命影响、发生剧烈动荡的南美殖民地是哥伦布首航到达的海地岛。1791 年，出于一阵突发的博爱与兄弟之情，法国国民公会宣布给予海地的黑人兄弟此前只为他们的白种主人享有的一切权利。可他们的后悔与他们的冲动来得一样快。法国人很快又宣布收回先前的承诺，这导致了海地黑人领袖杜桑维尔与拿破仑的内弟勒克莱尔将军之间多年的残酷战争。1801 年，杜桑维尔应邀和勒克莱尔见面，商讨论和条件。法国人郑重向他保证，决不利用和谈的机会害他。杜桑维尔相信了白人，结果被带上一艘法国军舰，不久便死于一所法国的监狱。可海地黑人最终赢得了独立，并建立起自己的共和国。这样，当第一位伟大的南美爱国者试图将自己的国家从西班牙的枷锁中解放出来，海地黑人给予了他极大的帮助。

西蒙·玻利瓦尔 1783 年生于委内瑞拉的加拉加斯城，曾在西班牙接受教育。在大革命时代，他到访过巴黎，亲眼目睹了当时革命政府的运作状况。在美国逗留一段时间后，玻利瓦尔返回家乡。当时，委内瑞拉人民对母国西班牙的不满情绪正如野火般蔓延，争取民族独立的反抗斗争此起彼伏。1811 年，委内瑞拉正式宣布脱离西班牙独立，玻利瓦尔也成为革命将领之一。不到两个月，起义失败了，玻利瓦尔不得不出逃他乡。

在接下来的 5 年里，玻利瓦尔独力领导着这项岌岌可危、似乎注定无法成功的事业。他将自己的全部财产捐献给革命。不过，若非得到海地总统的大力支持，他的最后一次远征是不可能获得胜利的。从委内瑞拉，争取独立的起义烈火迅速蔓延到整个南美大陆，使西班牙殖民者疲于应付。很显然，西班牙是不可能凭一己之力将所有反叛一一镇压的，必须紧急救助于神圣同盟。

这一形势使英国深感担忧。如今，英格兰船队已取代荷兰人，成为全世界最主要的海上承运商。他们正急切期望着从南美人的独立浪潮中牟取暴利。因此，英国人希望美国出面干涉神圣同盟的行动。可是美国参议院并没有这样的计划，就是在众议院里，也有许多人不赞成插手西班牙的事务。

正在此时，英国内阁发生人事变动。辉格党被踢出局，由托利党人上台组阁。精明干练、善使外交手腕的乔治·坎宁担任了国务大臣。他发出暗示，如果美国政府愿意出面反对“神圣同盟”镇压西属南美殖民地起义的计划，那么英国将非常乐于以自己的全部海上力量支援美国。这样，在 1823 年 12 月 2 日，门罗总统对国会发表了著名的宣言：“美国将把神圣同盟一方在西半球的任何扩张企图，视为对自身和平与安全的威胁。”他还进一步警告说，“美国政府将把神圣同盟这样的举动看作是对美国不友好行为的具体表现”。四周以后，英国报章刊载了“门罗主义”的全文，这就迫使神圣同盟的成员们在帮助西班牙与得罪美国之间做出抉择。

梅特涅退缩了。从个人来说，他倒很乐意冒触怒美国的危险（自 1812 年失败的美英战争后，美国的陆海军一直不被重视），不过坎宁满含威胁的态度以及欧洲大陆自身存在的麻烦使他不得不谨慎从事。于是，拟议中的远征被无限期搁置了，南美及墨西哥最终获得了独立。

拜伦的希腊

至于在欧洲大陆，骚动来得迅猛而激烈。1820 年，神圣同盟派遣法国军队进入西班牙，充当和平警察的角色。不久之后，当意大利“烧炭党”（由烧炭工人组织的秘密会社）为统一的意大利大做宣传，并最终发动了一场反抗那不勒斯统治者斐迪南的起义时，奥地利军队又被派驻意大利，执行同样的“和平”使命。

俄罗斯也传来了坏消息。亚历山大沙皇的去世引发了圣彼得堡的一场革命。因为起义发生在十二月，所以也被称为“十二月党人起义”。这场短暂的流血斗争最后导致大批优秀的俄罗斯爱国者被绞杀或流放西伯利亚。他们只不过不满于亚历山大晚年的反动统治，希望在俄罗斯建立一个立宪政府。

更糟糕的情况接踵而至。在艾刻斯拉夏佩依、在特波洛、在莱巴赫，最后在维罗纳，梅特涅召开了一系列会议，试图得到欧洲各宫廷继续支持其政策的保证。各国的代表们一如既往地准时到达这些风景宜人的海滨胜地（它们是奥地利首相度夏避暑的常地），共商“稳定”欧洲的大计。他们一如既往地承诺全力镇压起义，可每个人对能够取得成功都心中没底。人民的情绪开始变得越来越骚动不宁，尤其是在法国，国王的处境岌岌可危。

不过，真正的麻烦是从巴尔干半岛开始的，这里自古以来就是蛮族入侵西欧的门户。起义最先发生在摩尔达维亚。该地原为古罗马达契亚行省，于公元3世纪脱离了帝国。从那时开始，摩尔达维亚就成了一块如阿特兰蒂斯洲（传说大西洋中一块沉没的大陆）一般的“失落的国土”。当地人民仍旧讲古罗马语言，自命罗马人，将他们的国家也称为罗马尼亚。1821年，一位年轻的希腊人亚历山大·易普息兰梯王子发动了一场反抗土耳其人的起义。他告诉自己的追随者，俄国国会支持他们的斗争。不过梅特涅的特急信使不久便风尘仆仆地奔行于前往圣彼得堡的大道，为俄罗斯统治者捎去了首相先生的信息。沙皇完全为奥地利人关于维护“和平与稳定”的观点所说服，最终拒绝对罗马尼亚人施以援手。易普息兰梯被迫逃亡奥地利，沦为奥地利监狱的囚徒达7年之久。

在1821这个多事之秋，希腊也发生了针对土耳其人的暴乱。从1815年开始，一个秘密的希腊爱国者团体便一直在筹备起义。他们出其不意地在摩里亚（古伯罗奔尼撒）扯起独立大旗，将当地的土耳其驻军驱逐了出去。土耳其人以惯常的方式进行报复。他们逮捕了君士坦丁堡的希腊大主教，并在1821年复活节那天，将这位许多希腊和俄罗斯人心目中的教皇处以绞刑。被同时处死的还有多位东正教主教。为以牙还牙，希腊人屠杀了摩里亚首府特里波利的所有穆斯林。而土耳其人也不甘示弱地袭击了希俄斯岛，杀死2.5万名东正教徒，并将4.5万人卖到亚洲与埃及去作奴隶。

希腊人向欧洲各国宫廷发出了求援的呼声。可梅特涅却大说希腊人的坏话，称他们是“自食其果”（我并非使用双关语，而是直接引用首相殿下对俄国沙皇所说的话，“暴乱的烈火应该任其在文明的范围外自生自灭”）。欧洲通往希腊的边界被关闭，阻止各国的志愿者前往援救为自由而战的希腊人民。应土耳其的要求，一支埃及部队登陆摩里亚。不久之后，土耳其的旗帜又飘扬在古雅典要塞特里波利的上空。埃及军队以“土耳其方式”维持着当地的治安，而梅特涅密切注视着局势地发展，静待这一“扰乱欧洲和平的举动”变成陈年往事的那一天。

可英国人又一次打乱了梅特涅的如意算盘。英格兰最伟大之处并不在于它庞大的殖民地、它令人羡慕的财富或者它天下无敌的海军，而是它为数众多的独立市民以及他们心中暗藏的英雄主义情结。英国人向来遵纪守法，因为他们懂得尊重他人的权利是文明社会与野蛮社会区别的标志。不过，他们却不承认别人有权干涉自己的思想自由。如果他们认为在某件事情上政府做错了，他们便毫不犹豫

地站出来，大声说出自己的观点。而他们所指责的政府也懂得尊重他的自由表达的权力，并会全力保护他们免遭大众的迫害。自苏格拉底时代开始，大众便喜欢迫害那些在思想、智慧及勇气上超越他们的杰出个人。只要世界上存在着某项正义的事业，无论相距多遥远，无论多势单力孤，总会有一群英国人成为这项事业的热切支持者。总的来说，英国人民与生活在其他国家的人民没什么两样。他们紧盯手边的事务，为日常生计忙个不停，很少将时间和精力浪费在不切实际的“娱乐性冒险”上。不过对那些敢于抛下一切去为亚洲或非洲的卑贱人民而战的“古怪”邻居，他们却会抱以相当的敬慕。若这个邻居不幸战死异乡，他们会为他举行庄严盛大的葬礼，并以他为榜样教育自己的孩子们勇气与骑士精神的真谛。

甚至神圣同盟无所不在的密探也动摇不了这种根深蒂固的民族特性。1824年，伟大的拜伦勋爵扬起帆船的风帆，驶往南方去援助希腊人民。这位年轻的英国富家子弟曾以自己的诗歌打动过全欧洲的男男女女，使他们一掬同情的热泪。三个月后，消息传遍全欧洲：他们的英雄死在了迈索隆吉这最后一块希腊营地。诗人英雄式的死亡唤醒了欧洲人的激情与想象力。在所有欧洲国家，人们都自发成立了援助希腊人的团体。美国革命的老英雄拉斐特在法国为希腊人的事业四处奔走呼吁。巴伐利亚国王派遣了数百名官兵去希腊。钱物和补给源源不断地运到迈索隆吉，支援正在那里挨饿的起义者。

在英国，约翰·坎宁挫败神圣同盟干涉南美革命的企图后，当上了英国首相。现在，他看到了打击梅特涅的又一次良机。英国与俄罗斯的舰队早在地中海待命。政府不敢继续压制人民支援希腊起义者的热情，派出了军舰。法国自十字军东征后便一直自诩为基督教信仰的捍卫者，它的舰队也不甘落后地出现在希腊海面。1827年10月20日，英、俄、法三国的军舰袭击了纳瓦里诺湾的土耳其舰队，将之彻底摧毁。在欧洲，从来没有哪场战役的消息受到过如此热烈的公众欢迎。西欧和俄国人民在国内深受压抑的自由渴望，通过在想象中参与希腊人民的起义事业，得到了极大的安慰。1829年，希腊和欧洲人民的努力得到了回报。希腊正式宣布独立，而梅特涅反动的“稳定”政策又一次破产了。

如果我试图在短短一章里向你们详述发生在各国的民族独立斗争，这肯定是不可能的。关于这一主题，已经出版过大量优秀的书籍。我之所以用一定篇幅来描述希腊人民的起义，因为面对维也纳会议苦心经营来的“维持欧洲稳定”的反动阵营，它是第一次成功的突防。虽然压迫的堡垒依然存在，虽然梅特涅等人还在继续发号施令，但终结的日子已经不远了。

还得第 18 年

在法国，波旁王朝完全无视文明战争理应遵循的规则和法律，大力推行着令人窒息的警察统治。乍看上去，这套体系几乎达到了牢不可破的地步。当路易十八于 1824 年去世时，可怜的法国人民已经饱受了 9 年“和平生活”的折磨。事实证明，屈辱的“和平”甚至比帝国时代的 10 年战争还要悲惨。现在路易消失了，继位的是他的兄弟查理十世。

路易所属的著名的波旁家族，他们尽管不学无术，可记仇心却大得出奇。路易永远记得他兄弟被送上断头台的消息传到哈姆的那天早晨，他既恐惧又悲愤。这一幕一直萦绕在他的记忆里，时时提醒他：一个不能认清形势的君主会遭到如何下场。可查理却正好相反，他是一个在未满 20 岁时就已欠下 5000 万巨债的花花公子，不仅记不住任何教训，而且最终也不打算有所长进。当他一接替哥哥做了法国国王，他迅速建立起一个“为教士所治、为教士所有、为教士所享”的新政府（这一评论是由并非激进自由主义者的惠灵顿公爵做出的，查理的胡作非为可见一斑）。可以说，他的统治方式甚至使最敬重既成法律和秩序的友人也深感厌恶。当查理试图压制敢于批评政府的

自由派报纸，并解散了支持新闻界的国会时，他的日子已经所剩无几了。

1830 年 7 月 27 日夜，巴黎爆发了一场革命。同月 30 日，国王逃往海岸，乘船去英国。一出“15 年的著名闹剧”就以这样狼狈的方式草草收场了。波旁家族从此被彻底赶下了法国王位。他们的愚蠢实在无可救药。此时，法国本可重新建立一个共和制政府，但这样的行动是梅特涅不能容忍的。

欧洲的形势已经到了危险的边缘。一簇反叛的火花越出法国边境，点燃了另一个充满民族矛盾的火药桶。维也纳会议强行将荷兰与比利时合并，可这个新尼德兰王国从一开始就是一大败笔。比利时人与荷兰人少有共同之处，他们的国王奥兰治的威廉（“沉默者威廉”的一个叔叔的后裔）虽然也算个工作刻苦、为政勤奋的统治者，可他太缺乏必要的策略与灵活性，不能使两个心怀怨意的民族和睦相处。法国爆发革命后，大批逃难的天主教士涌入比利时，身为新教徒的威廉无论想做点什么来缓解局势，都会立即被众多激愤的臣民指为“争取天主教自由”的新一次企图，受到众口同声的拦阻。8 月 25 日，布鲁塞尔爆发了反对荷兰当局的群众暴动。两个月后，比利时正式宣布独立，推举维多利亚女王的舅舅，即科堡的利奥波德为他们的新国王。两个本不该合在一起的国家就此分道扬镳。不过自此之后，它们倒能像体面的邻居一样，彼此和睦相处。

在那个年代，欧洲只有几条里程不长的铁路，消息的传播还很缓慢。不过当法国和比利时革命者取得成功的消息到达波兰，立刻引发了波兰人与他们的俄国统治者之间的激烈摩擦，并最终导致了一场可怕的战争。一年之后，战争以俄国人的彻底胜利而告终。他们以臭名昭著的俄国方式，“重建了维斯图拉河沿岸地区的秩序”。尼古拉一世于 1825 年继任他的哥哥亚历山大成为俄国沙皇，他坚信自己的家族拥有统治波兰的神圣权利。成千上万逃到西欧的波兰难民以亲身的磨难证明了，神圣同盟的“兄弟之情”在神圣沙皇那里不只是一纸空文。

意大利同样进入了一个多事之秋。帕尔马女公爵玛丽·路易丝曾经是拿破仑的妻子，不过当滑铁卢战败之后，她离弃了他。在一阵突发的革命浪潮中，她被赶出了自己的国家。而在教皇国，情绪激昂的人民尝试建立一个共和国。可当奥地利军队开进了罗马城后，一切依然照旧。梅特涅继续端坐在哈布斯堡王朝的外交大臣官邸——普拉茨宫，秘密警察重返工作岗位，“和平”被紧紧地维护着。又过了 18 年后，人们才再度发动了一场更为成功的革命，彻底将欧洲从维也纳会议的可恶遗产中解放出来。

欧洲革命的风向标

率先举事的又是法国。法国是欧洲的革命风向标，任何起义的征兆都首先由此地显露出来。继任查理十世担任法国国王的是路易·菲利普，著名的奥尔良公爵的儿子。奥尔良公爵支持雅各宾党，曾对其表兄国王的死刑判决，投下了至关重要的赞成票。他在早期的法国大革命中扮演过重要角色，博得了“平等的菲利普”这一绰号。最终，当罗伯斯庇尔打算纯洁革命阵营，肃清所有“叛徒”（这是他对所有持不同意见者的称呼）时，奥尔良公爵被处死，他的儿子也被迫逃离革命军队。从此，年轻的路易·菲利普浪迹四方，在瑞士当过中学教师，还花过好几年时间致力于探索美国的“远西”地区。拿破仑垮台后，菲利普回到巴黎。比起愚不可及的波旁表兄们，他显得聪明多了。他是一个生活简朴的人，常常腋下夹一把红雨伞，去巴黎的公园散步。像天底下

所有的好父亲一样，他的身后总是跟着一大群欢天喜地的小孩子。可惜法国已经过了需要国王的时代，但路易·菲利普却始终未能理解这一点。直到1848年2月24日清晨，一大帮群众吵吵嚷嚷地涌进杜伊勒里宫，粗鲁地赶走了菲利普陛下，宣布法兰西为共和国。

当巴黎发生革命的消息传到维也纳，梅特涅漫不经心地评论说，这只不过是“1793年闹剧”的重演。其结果无非是迫使盟军再度进驻巴黎，终止这场烦人的“革命演出”。可仅仅只过去了两个星期，他自己的奥地利首都也爆发了公开的起义。梅特涅躲开愤怒的民众，从普拉茨宫的后门悄悄溜走了。奥皇斐迪南被迫赋予臣民们一部宪法。它包含的大部分内容都是梅特涅在过去33年里尽心竭力加以压制的那些革命原则。

这一次，全欧洲都感觉到了革命的震动。匈牙利毅然宣布独立，在路易斯·科苏特的领导下，展开了反抗哈布斯堡王朝的战争。这场势力悬殊的斗争持续了一年多。最后，沙皇尼古拉一世的军队越过喀尔巴阡山，镇压了起义者，终于使匈牙利保全了君主统治。随后，哈布斯堡王室设立起一个特别军事法庭，绞死了大部分他们无法在公开战场上击败的匈牙利爱国者。

至于意大利，西西里岛赶走了自己的波旁国王，宣布脱离那不勒斯独立。在教皇国，首相罗西被谋杀，教皇仓皇出逃。第二年，教皇率领着一支法国军队重返自己的国土。从此，法军不得不一直留在罗马，防范臣民们随时可能对陛下发动的袭击。直到1870年普法战争爆发的时候，这支军队被紧急召回去对付普鲁士人，而罗马最终成为了意大利的首都。在半岛北部，米兰和威尼斯在撒丁国王阿尔伯特的大力支持下，起而反抗自己的奥地利主子。可老拉德茨基率领着一支强大的奥地利军队挺进波河平原，在库拉多扎和诺瓦拉两地击败了撒丁军队。阿尔伯特被迫让位给儿子维克多·伊曼纽尔。几年之后，伊曼纽尔终于成为了一个统一的意大利王国的第一任国王。

在德国，1848年欧洲革命的震波引发了一场声势浩大的全国性示威。人们高声吁求政治统一，建立一个议会制政府。巴伐利亚国王由于将大量的时间与金钱浪费在一位伪装成西班牙舞蹈家的爱尔兰女士身上（该女士名为洛拉·蒙特茨，死后葬在纽约的波特公墓），最终被一群愤怒的大学生赶下了台。在普鲁士，尊贵的国王被迫站在街头巷中的战死难者的灵柩前，向这些不幸的抗议者脱帽致哀，并承诺组建一个立宪制政府。1849年3月，来自全德各地区的550名代表聚集在古老的法兰克福，召开国会大会，代表们推举普鲁士国王弗雷德里克·威廉作统一的德意志德国的皇帝。

可不久之后，风向仿佛又转了。昏庸无能的奥地利皇帝斐迪南让位给他的侄子弗朗西斯·约瑟夫。训练有素的奥地利军队依然忠实于他们的战争主子。刽子手们忙个不停，一个劲地往革命者脖子上勒着绞索。哈布斯堡家族素来有一种奇特的偷鸡摸狗的天性，他们再度站稳脚跟，并迅速增强了自己控制东西欧局势的能力。他们以精明圆滑的外交手腕大玩国家间的政治游戏，利用其它日尔曼国家的嫉妒心，阻止了普鲁士国王升任帝国的皇帝。在其接连失败的漫长磨难中，哈布斯堡家族学会了忍耐的价值。他们懂得如何静待时机。当政治上极不成熟的自由主义者们正起劲地大谈特谈，深深陶醉于自己激昂动人的演讲时，奥地利人却在悄悄调兵遣将，准备着致命的一击。最终，他们突然解散了法兰克福国会，重建起虚有其表的旧日尔曼联盟，因为它正是苦心积虑的维也纳会议试图强加给整个德意志世界的。

在出席这个奇特国会的一大群不谙世事的爱国者中，有一位心机深沉的普鲁士乡绅。他不动声色地观察着整个吵吵嚷嚷的会议，自己少有说话，但把一切熟记在心。此人名为俾斯麦。他是一位厌恶空谈，崇尚行动的强人。他深知（其实每一个热爱行动的人都知道），滔滔的演说最终成就不了任何事情。他有着自己独特的爱国方式。俾斯麦属于那种老式外交学校的毕业生，高明且世故。他不仅能在外交上轻易蒙骗对手，就是在散步、喝酒、骑马方面，也同样远胜他们。

俾斯麦坚信，要想德意志成功跻身欧洲列强之林，必须由一个统一而强大的日尔曼国家来取代目前许多小国组成的松散联盟。出于根深蒂固的封建效忠思想，他支持自己服务的霍亨索伦家族，而非昏聩平庸的哈布斯堡家族，做这个新德国的统治者。为达到这一目的，他必须首先清除奥地利对德意志世界的强大影响力。于是，他开始为施行这一痛苦的外科手术，进行着必要的准备。

拿破仑三世的无能

与此同时，意大利已经成功地解决了自己的问题，摆脱其深受憎恨的奥地利主子。意大利的统一工程是由三位杰出人士携手完成的。他们分别是加富尔、马志尼和加里波第。三人之中，加富尔这位配戴钢丝边近视眼镜的建筑工程师扮演的是一位思想缜密的政治领航员角色。为躲避奥地利警察无所不在的追捕，马志尼在欧洲

各国的阴暗阁楼里度过了大部分岁月。他充分发挥个人的演讲才华，出任激发民众热情的首席煽动家。而加里波第和他那群穿红衬衣的粗鲁骑士们则负责唤起意大利人狂放的想象力与形象感。

马志尼与加里波第本是共和制政府的忠实信徒，可加福尔主张君主立宪。由于两个同伴都承认加福尔在把握政治方向上高人一筹的能力，他们便牺牲为自己热爱的祖国谋取更大幸福的雄心，接受加福尔更为现实的主张。

就像海斯麦支持他所效忠的霍亨索伦家族一样，加福尔倾向于意大利的撒丁王族。他以极大的耐心和高明的手腕，一步步引诱撒丁国王，直至陛下最终能担当起领导整个意大利民族的重责。欧洲其它地区的动荡局势为加福尔的伟大计划助上了一臂之力。其中，为意大利统一贡献最多的，莫过于它最信任的（常常也是最不可信任的）老邻居法国。

在这个总是骚动不安的国家里，1852年10月，执政的共和政府突然却不出意料地垮台了。前荷兰国王路易·波拿巴的儿子，那位伟大叔叔（拿破仑）的小侄子拿破仑三世重建起帝国，并自封为“得到上帝恩许和人民拥戴的”皇帝。

这位年轻人曾在德国接受教育，因此他的法语中带着一股刺耳的条顿腔，如同他威风一世的拿破仑叔叔一生都未摆脱自己著名的意大利口音一样。他竭力运用着拿破仑的声望和传统，来稳固自己的地位。不过他树敌太多，对能否顺利戴上已经准备就序的王冠，心中不免缺乏自信。诚然，他赢得了英国维多利亚女王的好感。可女王毕竟是一位不够出色且极易被奉承话打动的老好人，想讨她的欢心算不上一件难事。至于其他的欧洲君主，他们总是以一种令人屈辱的高傲态度面对满脸谄笑的法国皇帝。他们夜以继日、朝思暮想的无非是如何设计出一些有创意的新方法，来表现他们对这位一夜暴发的“好兄弟”的深刻蔑视。

因此，拿破仑三世不得不寻找一个打破敌意的办法，无论通过施恩还是加威。他知道，对于“荣誉”的渴望仍深深驻留在法国人心间。既然他无论如何都得为自己的王位赌上一把，那不如进行一场豪赌，将整个帝国的命运押上去。恰值此时，俄国对土耳其发动的攻击为他找到了借口。在随之而来的克里米亚战争中，法国与英国站在土耳其苏丹一边，共同对抗俄国的沙皇。这是一桩代价高昂、但所得甚微的冒险，无论对俄国、英国、法国，都谈不上收获了多少荣耀或尊严。

不过克里米亚战争还是做了一件好事。它使得撒丁国王有机会自愿站在了胜利者一边。当战争结束后，加福尔便能够堂而皇之地向英法两国索取回报。

在充分利用国际局势，使撒丁王国得到欧洲列强更多的重视之后，聪明的意大利人加福尔在1859年6月又挑起了一场与奥地利的战争。他以有争议的萨伏伊地区和确实属于意大利的尼斯城作为交换条件，换取了拿破仑三世的支持。法意联军接连在马戈塔和索尔费里诺击败了奥地利军队，几个前奥地利省份及公国被并入了统一的意大利王国。佛罗伦萨成为了这个新意大利的首都。到1870年，驻守在罗马的那支法国军队被紧急召回去对付普鲁士人。他们前脚刚离开，意大利人后脚就踏进了这座永恒的名城。撒丁王族随之入住了老奎里纳宫——一位古代教皇在康士坦丁大帝浴室的废墟上修建起来的行宫。

于是，教皇只好渡过台伯河，躲进了梵蒂冈的高墙大院之中。自那位古代教皇于1377年从流放地阿维尼翁返回之后，这里便一直是他的不少继任者的居所。教皇陛下大声抗议意大利人公开抢夺其领地的专横行为，并向那些同情他的忠诚天主教徒们发出了许许多多的吁告信。但是，应和他的人为数很少，并且还在不断减少之中。因为人们普遍得出了一个认识：一旦教皇从世俗的国家事务中解脱出来，他便能将更多的时间与精力放在解决困扰当代人的精神问题上。摆脱欧洲政客们琐细的纷争，教皇反而获得了一种新的尊严，这明显对教会事业大有帮助。从此，罗马天主教会成为了一股推进社会与信仰进步的国际力量，并且能够比大多数新教教派更为明智地估量当代社会所面临的种种经济问题。

维也纳会议将整个意大利半岛变为一个奥地利省份的企图就这样流产了。

俾斯麦“三部曲”

不过德国问题依然悬而未决，时时带来新的动荡。事实证明，它是所有问题中最棘手的一个。1848年革命的失败导致了大规模的人口迁移，大批精力充沛、思维活跃的德国人都流失了。这些年轻人移民去美国、巴西亚非的新兴殖民地重新开始生活。他们未竟的事业由另一批气质截然不同的德国人接手过来。

继全德国会垮台及自由主义者建立一个统一国家的努力失败之后，在法兰克福，又召开了一个新议会。其中代表普鲁士利益的是我们在前几页里讲到过的冯·奥托·俾斯麦。现在，他已获得了普鲁士国王的充分信任。这是他大展宏图所需的一切条件，至于普鲁士议会或人民的意见，他根本不放在心上。他曾亲眼目睹过自由主义者的失败，深知若想摆脱奥地利的干扰，必须发动一场战争。于是，他悄悄着手加强普鲁士的军队。州议会被他的高压手段激怒，拒绝向他提供必要的资金，可俾斯麦根本不屑讨论这个问题。他抛开议会自行其事，用普鲁士皮尔斯家族及国王提供的金钱来扩军备战。随后，他开始四处寻找一项用以激发所有德国人爱国热情的民族事业。他终于找到了。

在德国北部有两个公国，石勒苏益格与荷尔施泰因。它们自中世纪起便是麻烦不断的是非之地。两个国家都住着一定量的丹麦人和一定量的德国人，虽然一直由丹麦国王统治，可又不属于丹麦的领土。这种奇怪的情形导致了无穷无尽的纷争。我不是故意在此提出这个早被遗忘的问题，最近签署的凡尔赛和约似乎已彻底解决了它。不过在当时，荷尔施泰因的德国人高声抱怨丹麦人的虐待，而石勒苏益格的丹麦人则拼命维护他们的丹麦传统。一时间，整个欧洲都在谈论这个话题。当德国男声合唱团和体操协会还在倾听“被遗弃兄弟”的催人泪下的演说，当许多内阁大臣还在试图调查当地究竟发生了什么时，普鲁士已经动员它的军队去“收复失去的国土”。作为日尔曼联盟的传统领袖，奥地利当然不允许普鲁士在如此重大的问题上单独行动。哈布斯堡的士兵也被调动起来，和普鲁士军队一道杀入了丹麦的国土。丹麦人进行了异常顽强的抵抗，无奈势单力孤。奥德联军最终占领了石勒苏益格与荷尔施泰因。

随后，俾斯麦开始着手他大德意志计划的第二个步骤。他利用分赃战利品的机会，挑起与奥地利的激烈争吵。哈布斯堡家族一头扎进了俾斯麦设好的陷阱。俾斯麦及其将军们缔造的新型普鲁士军队侵入波希米亚，在不到六个星期的时间里，最后一支战斗力尚存的奥地利军队也在萨多瓦和柯尼格拉茨全军覆没了。通向维也纳的大道从此敞开，只待普军进入。不过俾斯麦不想把事情做得太过分，他在欧洲政治舞台的驰骋亟需一位新朋友的相助。他向战败的哈布斯堡家族开出非常体面的议和方案，让他们放弃日尔曼联盟的领袖角色。不过对那些帮助奥地利的德意志小国，俾斯麦一点没有心慈手软。他一日气将它们全部并入了普鲁士。这样，大部分的德意志北方小国组成了一个新的组织，即所谓的北日尔曼联盟。得胜的普鲁士当仁不让地成为了德意志民族的非正式领袖。

面对俾斯麦一连串疾如闪电的扩张与吞并，欧洲人吃惊得喘不过气来。英国显得漠不关心，但法国人却流露出满意之意。拿破仑三世对人民的控制已经出现松动的迹象。克里米亚战争耗资巨大，伤亡惨重，可什么也没捞到。

1863年，拿破仑三世进行了第二次冒险行动。他派出军队，试图将一位名为马克西米安的奥地利大公强加给墨西哥人民做他们的皇帝。可当美国内战以北方的胜利而告终，拿破仑先前的努力便全部付之东流了。华盛顿政府迫使法军撤除墨西哥，使墨西哥人有机会肃清敌人，最终枪毙了不受欢迎的外国皇帝。

面对糟糕的局势，拿破仑三世必须再找机会为自己的皇冠涂上一层荣耀的油彩，才能稳定国人的情绪。北日尔曼联盟正蒸蒸日上，看来用不了几年，便会成为法兰西的危险对手。因此，法国皇帝觉得发动一场对德战争于其王朝是大有好处的。于是他开始寻找开战的借口，在饱受革命之苦的西班牙，正好出现了一个机会。

当时，西班牙王位碰巧空缺，正期待着继承人。本来，王位先被许给了一支信奉天主教的霍亨索伦家族旁系。由于法国的反对，霍亨索伦们便礼貌地放弃了。不过此时的拿破仑三世已显出患病的迹象，深受他的漂亮妻子欧仁妮·德·蒙蒂纳的枕边风影响。欧仁妮是一位西班牙绅士的爱女，其祖父威廉·基尔克帕特里克是驻盛产葡萄的马拉加的一位美国领事。尽管天性聪明，可像当时大多数西班牙妇女一样，她接受的教育极其糟糕。她完全受到一帮宗教顾问的摆布，而这些人对普鲁士的新教徒国王深为憎恶。“要大胆”，皇后对她的丈夫如是说道，可她却省略了这句著名的普鲁士格言的后半句。它告诫英雄们，“要大胆，但绝不要莽撞”。对自己的军队深有信心的拿破仑三世写信给普鲁士国王，要求国王向他保证，“国王本人绝不允许再有一位霍亨索伦王族的候选人角逐西班牙王位”。由于霍亨索伦家族刚刚放弃了这一荣耀，提出这一要求完全是多余的，俾斯麦如此照会了法国政府。可拿破仑三世仍不甘心。

时间是1870年，威廉国王正在埃姆斯的渡假地游泳。一天，一位法国外交官觐见了国王，试图旧话重提。可国王愉快地回答说，今天天气真好，西班牙问题已经解决了，对这个议题没必要浪费更多的口舌。作为一种例行公事，这次会面的谈话被整理成报告，通过电报发给负责外交事务的俾斯麦。为普鲁士和法国新闻界的方便，俾斯麦对这则消息进行了“编辑加工”。许多人指责他的行为。但俾斯麦托辞说，自古以来，修改官方消息一直是任何文明政府的权利。当这则经过“编辑”的电报发表之后，柏林的善良人们觉得他们留着白胡须

的可敬国王受到了矮小自负的法国外交官的无理取闹，而巴黎的好人们同样怒气冲天，认为他们彬彬有礼的外交使节竟在一名普鲁士皇家走狗面前碰了一鼻子灰。

这样，双方不约而同地选择了战争。在不到两个月的时间内，拿破仑三世和他的大部分士兵做了德国人的俘虏。法兰西第二帝国羞耻地垮台了，随之建立的第三共和国号召人民做好准备，打一场抵御德国入侵者的巴黎保卫战。巴黎坚守了漫长的五个月。在该城陷落的十天前，普鲁士国王在巴黎近郊的凡尔赛宫——它由德国人最危险的敌人路易十四所建，正式宣布登上德意志皇帝的宝座。一阵轰天齐鸣的枪炮声告诉饥饿难耐的巴黎市民，一个新的日尔曼帝国取代了以前老旧弱小的条顿国家联盟。强大的现代德国出现在了欧洲的政治舞台上。

以这种粗鲁草率的方式，德国问题最终获得了解决。到 1871 年末，即著名的维也纳会议召开 56 年之后，它所精心建构的全部政治工程已经被彻底消除。梅特涅、亚历山大、塔莱朗本想赐予欧洲人一个持久稳固的和平，可他们所采用的方法却招致了无穷无尽的战争。紧随 18 世纪的“神圣兄弟之情”而来的，是一个激烈的民族主义时代，它的影响所及至今还没有结束。

第五十六章 机器的时代

当欧洲人为民族独立奋力抗争时，他们所生活的世界也因科学技术的一系列发明而彻底改变。18 世纪发明的老式的笨重蒸汽机成为了人类最忠实、最勤恳的仆役。

以前的时代

人类最大的恩人死于 50 多万年以前。他是一种低眉毛、凹眼睛，长着沉重的下颚和虎牙般坚利牙齿的长毛动物。如果出现在一个现代科学家的聚会上，他这副尊容肯定不雅观。可我敢担保，科学家们会争先恐后地围上去，敬他为自己的主人。因为他曾用石块砸开坚果，也曾用长棍撬起巨石。他发明了人类最早的工具——锤子和撬杠。他对人类福祉所做的贡献远超过此后的任何人，也远超过与人类共享这个地球的任何动物。

从那时开始，人类就通过使用更多的工具来便利自己的生活。当世界上第一只轮子（用一棵老树制成的圆盘）在公元前 10 万年发明出来的时候，它所引起的轰动肯定不亚于几年前飞行器的问世。

在华盛顿，有一个故事讲的是一位上世纪 30 年代初的专利局长。他建议取消专利局，因为“一切可能发明的东西都已被发明出来”。当第一张风帆升起在木筏上，人们无须划桨、撑篙或拉纤便能从一个地方去到另一个地方的时候，史前世界的人们一定也产生过与这位专利局长类似的想法。

事实上，人类历史中最有趣的章节之一，就是有关于人们如何想尽办法让别人或别的东西替他工作，自己则悠享着闲暇的乐趣，坐在草地上晒太阳、去大岩石上画画、或者耐心地将小狼小虎训练成温顺讨巧的宠物。

当然在最早的年代，奴役一个弱小的同类，逼迫他去做那些令人不快的苦累活，这是很容易办到的事情。古希腊人、古罗马人和我们一样，拥有一个聪明的头脑，可他们却未能造出有趣的机械，原因之一就是由于奴隶制的普遍存在。当能够去最近便的市场，以最低价格买到所需的全部奴隶时，你怎能指望一个伟大的数学家会把时间耗费在线绳、滑轮、齿轮等乱糟糟的什物上，而把自己的屋子弄得烟雾腾腾、闹闹哄哄？

在中世纪，虽废除了奴隶制，代之以较为温和的农奴制，但行会不赞成使用机器，它认为此举会导致大批行会兄弟丢掉饭碗。另外，中世纪的人们对大批量生产商品不感兴趣。裁缝、屠户和木匠只为满足他们所在小社区的直接生活需要而工作。他们不想与同行们竞争，也不愿出产超出社区需求的商品。

机器的动力

到文艺复兴时期，教会对科学探索的偏见已经不能像以往一样严格强加给世人了。许多人开始投身数学、天文学、物理学及化学的研究。在 30 年战争开始的前两年，苏格兰人约翰·内皮尔出版了一本小册子，论述对数这一新发现。在战争期间，莱比锡的戈特弗雷德·莱布尼茨完善了微积分体系。在结束 30 年战争的威斯特伐利亚条约签定的前 8 年，伟大的英国自然科学家牛顿降生，而意大利天文学家加利略于同年去世。随着

30 年战争将中欧地区化为一片废墟，当地突然兴起一股“炼金术”热潮。炼金术是一门源于中世纪的伪科学，人们希望通过它将普通金属变成黄金。这当然是不可能的。可当炼金术士们躲在自己诡秘阴暗的实验室里孜孜操劳时，他们碰巧也产生出一些新想法。这为他们的继任者化学家们的日后工作，提供了极大的帮助。

所有这些人的工作合在一起，为世界打下了一个坚实的科学基础，使复杂机器的发明成为可能。许多精于实干的人们充分利用这一机会。在中世纪，人们已经开始用木头制作为数不多的几种必要的机器。可木头极易磨损。铁是一种好得多的材料，可在整个欧洲，只有英格兰出产铁矿。于是，英格兰兴起了冶炼业。熔化铁需要高温猛火。最初，人们用木材作燃料。可随着英格兰的森林被砍伐殆尽，人们开始使用“石炭”（史前森林的化石，即煤）。你知道，煤必须从很深的地面下挖出来，运送到冶炼炉。并且，矿坑必须保持干燥，防止渗水。

这是当时亟待解决的两大难题。最初，人们可以用马拉煤，可解决抽水的问题不得不使用特别的机器。好几个发明家为这个难题奔忙起来。他们都知道可以借助蒸汽作新机器的动力。有关“蒸汽机”的构想由来已久。生活在公元前 1 世纪的英雄亚历山大，他曾向我们描述过几种蒸汽推动的机器。文艺复兴时期的人们设想“蒸汽战车”。与牛顿同时代的渥斯特侯爵在他的一本发明手册里，为人们详细讲述过一种蒸汽机。在不久之后的 1698 年，伦敦的托马斯·萨弗里为他发明的一种抽水机申请了专利。与此同时，荷兰人克里斯琴·海更斯正在设法完善一种发动机，其内部用火药引发连续不断地爆炸，类似我们今天用汽油内燃机来驱动汽车引擎。

欧洲各地，人们纷纷致力于“蒸汽机”这一迷人构想。法国人丹尼斯·帕平曾是海更斯的密友兼助手，他先后在几个国家进行过蒸汽机实验。他发明出蒸汽推动的小货车和小蹊轮。可正当他雄心勃勃，准备驾着自己的小蒸汽船试航时，船员工会却担心这种新“怪物”的出现会抢走船员们的生计，于是向政府提出了控告。帕平的小船被没收了。他倾尽全部家产从事发明，最后穷困潦倒地死于伦敦。不过当他去世时，另一位名为托马斯·纽科曼的机械迷正在潜心研究一种气泵。50 年之后，一位格拉斯哥机器制造者詹姆斯·瓦特改进了纽科曼的发明，于 1777 年向全世界推出了第一台真正具有实用价值的蒸汽机。

社会的变革

不过就在人们争相研制“热力机”那几个世纪里，世界政治局势发生了翻天覆地的变化。英国人取代荷兰人，成为海上贸易的新霸主和主要的承运商。他们开拓了许多新殖民地，将当地出产的原材料运回英格兰加工，然后将制成品出口到全世界的各个角落。在十七世纪，北美乔治亚和卡罗莱纳的人们开始种植一种出产奇特毛状物质的新灌木，即所谓的“棉毛”（棉花）。当这种棉毛采摘下来，便被运往英国，由兰卡郡的人们织成布匹。起初，这些布匹由工人们在家手工织成。不久后，纺织工艺有了大的改进。1730 年，约翰·凯发明出“飞梭”。1770 年，詹姆斯·哈格里夫斯为他发明的“纺纱机”申请了专利。一位名为伊利·惠特尼的美国人发明了轧花机，它能够自动将棉花脱粒，大大提高了加工效率。而以前采用手工脱粒的时候，一个工人每天才能分拣一磅棉花。最后，理查德·阿克赖特和埃德蒙·卡特赖特发明了水力推动的大型纺织机。到 18 世纪 80 年代，当法兰西三级会议召开，代表们忙于讨论那些将彻底变革欧洲政治秩序的重大议题时，人们将瓦特发明的蒸汽机装在了阿克赖特的纺织机上，用蒸汽机的动力来带动纺织机工作。这一看似不起眼的创举引起经济与社会生活的重大变革，在世界范围内深刻改变了人与人之间的关系。

蒸汽机车与汽船

一旦固定式蒸汽机取得成功后，发明家们马上将注意力转向利用机械装置推动车、船的问题上。瓦特本人曾推出过“蒸汽机车”的研制计划，不过没等他来得及完善这一设想，1804 年，一辆由理查德·特里维西克制造的火车便载着 20 吨货物在威尔士矿区的佩尼达兰奔驰起来。

与此同时，一位名为罗伯特·福尔顿的美国珠宝商兼肖像画家正在巴黎四处活动。他试图说服拿破仑采用他的“鸚鵡螺号”潜水艇以及他发明的汽船，这样法兰西海军便能一举摧毁英格兰的海上霸权。

福尔顿的“汽船”设想并不新鲜，它肯定抄袭了康涅狄格州机械天才约翰·菲奇的创意。早在 1787 年，菲奇建造的小巧汽船便在德拉维尔河上进行了首航。可拿破仑和他的科学顾问们根本不相信这种自动力汽船的可能性。虽然装配着苏格兰引擎的小船正喷着烟雾在塞纳河上欢畅来去，可皇帝陛下竟未加留意，以至忽略了利用这一威力无比的武器。要知道，也许它能为他报特拉法尔海战的一箭之仇呢！

失望之余，福尔顿回到美国。他是一名精于实际的商人，很快便和罗伯特·利文斯顿合伙组织起一家颇为成功的汽船公司。利文斯顿是《独立宣言》的签字人之一，当福尔顿在巴黎推销其发明时，他正担任当时的美国驻法大使。合伙公司的第一条汽船“克勒蒙特”号装配着英国的博尔顿与瓦特制造的引擎，于 1807 年开通了纽约与奥尔巴尼的定期航班。不久后，它便垄断了纽约州所有水域的航运业务。

至于可怜的约翰·菲奇，他本来是最早将“蒸汽船”用于商业运营的，最后却悲惨地死去。当他建造第五条螺旋桨汽船不幸被毁时，菲奇已经落到囊中空空、一贫如洗的境地。他的健康也每况愈下。邻居们无情地嘲笑他，就像 100 年后人们嘲笑兰利教授制造的滑稽飞行器。菲奇一直希望为自己的国家开辟一条通往中西部大河的捷径，可他的同胞们却更情愿乘平底渡船或徒步旅行。1798 年，菲奇于极端绝望之中，服毒自杀了。

20 年过去，载重 1850 吨的“萨瓦拉”号汽船以每小时 6 节（“毛里塔里亚”号只比它快 3 倍）的速度从萨瓦纳到达利物浦，创造了 25 天横渡大西洋的新纪录。此时此刻，公众的嘲笑声终于平息。在对新事物的巨大热情中，他们又将发明的荣誉安放在错误的人头上。

六年后，英国人乔治·斯蒂文森制造出著名的“移动式引擎”。多年以来，他一直致力于研制一种将原煤从矿区运往冶炼炉和棉花加工厂的机车。现在，他的发明不仅使煤价下跌 70%，还使得曼彻斯特与利物浦之间第一条客运线路的开通变为现实。终于，人们能够以闻所未闻的每小时 15 英里的高速，呼啸着从一个城市奔向另一个城市。几十年过后，火车速度提高到每小时 20 英里。今天，任何一部运转良好的廉价福特（上世纪 80 年代的戴勒姆及内瓦莎小型车的直系后裔）都能将这些“喷气的比利”远远抛在身后。

电的发现与应用

当工程师们正专心致志地琢磨着他们的“热力机”时，另一群搞“纯科学”的科学家们（就是那些每天花 14 个小时研究“理论性”科学现象的人们，没有他们，任何机器的进步都不可能）正沿着一条新线索的指引，深入到大自然最秘密与最核心的领域。

2000 年前，许多希腊与罗马哲学家（最著名的有梅里塔斯的泰勒斯及普林尼，公元 79 年爆发的维苏威火山淹没了罗马古城庞培和赫库兰尼姆，亲临现场观察的普林尼也不幸罹难）已经察觉到一个奇特的现象：用羊毛摩擦过的琥珀能吸附小片的稻草和羽毛碎屑。中世纪的经院学者们对此神秘的“电”力现象兴趣寥寥，研究因此中断。可文艺复兴后不久，英国女王伊丽莎白一的私人医生威廉·吉尔伯特便写出他那篇著名的论文，探讨磁的特性及表现。在 30 年战争期间，玛格德堡市长及气泵的发明者奥托·冯·格里克造出了世界上第一台电动机。在随后的一个世纪里，大批科学家投入对电的研究。1795 年，至少有三名教授发明了著名的“莱顿瓶”。与此同时，世界闻名的美国天才本杰明·富兰克林继本杰明·托马斯（他因同情英国而逃离新罕布什尔，后被称为朗福德伯爵）之后，将注意力转向这一领域。他发现闪电与电火花属于同一性质的放电现象。此后，到忙碌而成果累累的一生走到尽头，富兰克林一直在对电进行研究。随后出现的是伏特和他的“电堆”，还有伽瓦尼、戴伊、丹麦教授汉斯·克里斯琴·奥斯特、安培、阿拉果、法拉第等耳熟能详的名字。他们终其一生，勤奋不懈地探索着电的真正特性。

这些人不计回报地将自己的发现公之于世。萨缪尔·摩尔斯（像福尔顿一样最初是艺术家）认为，他能利用这种新发现的电流，将信息从一个城市传递到另一个城市。他准备采用铜线和他发明的小机器来达成目标。人们对他的想法嗤之以鼻。摩尔斯不得不自己掏钱做实验，很快便花光了所有积蓄。人们对他的嘲笑声更猛烈了。摩尔斯请求国会提供帮助，一个特别财务委员会答应为他提供所需的资金。但是，满脑子政治经的议员们对摩尔斯的天才想法既不理解也无兴致，他不得不苦苦等上 12 年，才最终拿到一小笔国会拨款。随后，他在纽约和巴尔的摩之间建造了一条“电报线”。1837 年，在纽约大学一个人头涌动的讲演厅里，摩尔斯第一次成功地演示了“电报”。1844 年 5 月 24 日，人类历史上第一个长途电报从华盛顿发至巴尔的摩。今天，整个世界布满林林总总的电报线，我们将消息从欧洲发到亚洲只需短短几秒钟的时间。23 年后，亚历山大·格拉汉姆·贝尔利用电流原理发明了电话。又过去半个世纪，意大利人马可尼更进一步，发明出一套完全不依赖老式线路的无线通信系统。

当新英格兰人摩尔斯为他的“电报”奔忙之际，约克郡人米切尔·法拉第制造出第一台“发电机”。这台不起眼的小机器完工于 1831 年，当时的欧洲还处在将维也纳会议的美梦彻底颠覆的法国七月革命的巨大震撼之中，没人留意到这项改变世界的发明。第一台发电机不断改进，到今天，它已能为我们提供热力、照明（你知道，爱迪生于 1878 年发明的小白炽灯泡就是在同世纪四五十年代英国及法国的实验基础上改进而来的）和

开动各种机器的动力。如果我的推想没错，那么电动机将很快彻底取代热力机，就如同更高等、更完善的史前动物取代他们生存效率低下的邻居们一样。

就个人而言（本人对机械一窍不通），我将非常乐于见到这种情形的发生。因为电机由水力驱动，是人类清洁而健康的忠仆。可反观作为 18 世纪最大奇迹的“热力机”，它原本喧闹且肮脏，让我们的地球竖满无数荒谬可笑的大烟囱，没日没夜地倾吐着滚滚的灰尘与煤烟。并且，为源源不断地用煤来满足其贪得无厌的胃口，成千上万的人们不得不费尽艰辛、冒着生命危险向矿坑深处挖掘。这种情景并不美妙。

如果我不是一名必须坚守事实的历史家，而是可以随意挥洒想象力的小说家，我将会描写把最后一部蒸汽机车送进自然历史博物馆，置于恐龙、飞龙及其它已灭绝动物的骨架旁的动人情景。这将是令人倍感愉快的一天。

第五十七章 社会革命

不过，新机器造价昂贵，只有富人们才买得起。旧日在小作坊里独立劳作的木匠和鞋匠们被迫出卖劳动，接受大机器拥有者的雇佣。虽然他们挣的钱比过去更多，可他们同时也失去了昔日的自由生活。他们不喜欢这种状况。

机器带来的变革

以前，世界上的工作都是由端坐在屋前小作坊里的独立劳动者们完成的。他们拥有工具，可以由着性子打骂自己的学徒。只要不违反行会的规定，他们通常能随心所欲地经营业务。他们过着简朴的生活，每天必须工作很长时间才能维持生计。不过他们是自己主人。如果他们某天一早醒来，发现这是一个适合钓鱼的好天气，他们便出外钓鱼。没人对他们说“不许去”。

可是，机器的使用改变了这一切。事实上，机器无非是放大的工具。一辆以每分钟 1 英里的速度载着你飞驰的火车其实就是一双快腿，一台把沉重铁板砸平的气锤也不过是一副力气出众的铁拳。

可尽管我们每个人都能拥有一双好腿、一副好拳，可一辆火车、一台气锤或一个棉花工厂却是贵得要命的机械，他们不是个人能够拥有的。通常，它们由一伙人各出一定的金额购买，然后按投资的比例分享他们的铁路或棉纺厂赚取的利润。因此，当机器改进到可以实际使用并赢利时，这些大型工具的生产商便开始寻找能够以现金支付的买主。

在中世纪初期，土地是代表财富的唯一形式，因此只有贵族才被视为有钱人。可正如我在前面章节告诉你们的，由于当时采用古老的以物易物的制度，以奶牛交换马、以鸡蛋交换蜂蜜，所以贵族们手中的金银并无多大的用处。到十字军东征时期，城市的自由民们从东西方间再度复兴的贸易中聚敛了大量财富，成为贵族与骑士们的重要对手。

法国大革命彻底摧毁贵族的财富，极大提高了中产阶级（即所谓的“布尔乔亚”）的地位。紧随大革命而来的动荡年月为许多中产阶级人士提供了发财致富的好机会，使他们积累了超过自己在世上应得份额的财富。教会的地产被国民公会没收一空，并悉数拍卖。其中的贿赂数额高得惊人。土地投机商窃取了几千平方英里的价值不菲的土地。在拿破仑战争期间，他们利用自己的资本囤积谷物和军火，牟取巨额暴利。到机器时代，他们拥有的财富已经远远超出他们日常生活所需，能够自己开设工厂，并雇佣男女工人为他们操纵机器。

此举导致数十万人的生活发生了急剧的变化。在短短几年内，许多城市的人口成倍增长。以前作为市民们真正“家园”的市中心，如今被粗糙而简陋的建筑团团包围。这里就是那些每天在工厂工作 11 到 13 个小时的工人们下班后的栖息地，当一听到汽笛响起，他们又得从这里赶紧奔回工厂。

在广大的乡村地区，人们纷纷传说着去城里挣大钱的消息。于是，习惯野外生活的农家子弟们蜂拥到城市。他们在那些通风不畅、满布烟尘污垢的早期车间里苦苦挣扎，昔日健康的身体迅速垮掉，最后不是在医院奄奄一息就是在贫民院里悲惨死去。

当然，从农村到工厂的转变，并非是在毫无反抗的情形下完成的。既然一台机器能抵 100 个人的工作，那因此失业的其余 99 人肯定会心怀怨恨。袭击工厂、焚烧机器的情形时有发生。可早在 17 世纪，保险公司就已出现。作为一条原则，厂主们的损失通常总能得到充分的弥补。

经济观念的变革

不久后，更新更先进的机器再度安装就绪，工厂四周围上了高墙，暴乱随之停止了。在这个充满蒸汽与钢铁的新世界里，古老的行会根本无法生存。随着它们如恐龙般接连消失，工人们试图组织新式的工会。可厂主们凭借他们的财富，能对各国的政要施加更大的影响力。他们借助立法机关，通过了禁止组织工会的法律，借口是它妨碍了工人們的“行动自由”。

请一定不要以为，通过这些法律的国会议员们全是些用心险恶的暴君。他们是大革命时代的忠实儿子。这是一个人人谈论“自由”的时代，人们甚至常常因邻居们不够“热爱自由”而杀死他们。既然“自由”是人类的最高德行，那就不应由工会来决定会员该工作多长时间、该索取多少报酬。必须保证工人们能随时“在市场上自由地出售自己的劳动力”，而雇主们也能同样“自由地”经营他们的工厂。由国家控制全社会工业生产的“重商主义”时代已告终结。新的“自由经济”观念认为，国家应该袖手旁观，让商业按自己的发展规律运行。

18 世纪下半叶不仅是一个知识与政治的怀疑时代，而且旧有的经济观念也被更顺应时势的新观念所取代。在法国革命发生的前几年，路易十六的屡遭挫折的财政大臣蒂尔戈曾宣告过“自由经济”的新教义。他生活在一个被过多繁文褥节、过多规章制度、过多大小官僚所苦的国家，深知其中的弊病。“取消这些政府监管”，蒂尔戈写道，“让人民按自己的心意去做，而一切都会顺利运转的。”不久之后，他著名的“自由经济”理论便成为当时的经济学家们热烈呼喊的口号。

在同时期的英国，亚当·斯密正在写作那本大部头的《国富论》，为“自由”和“贸易的天然权利”发出新一轮呼吁。30 年后，当拿破仑倒台，欧洲的反动势力欣然聚首维也纳时，那个在政治上被拒绝赋予人民的自由，却在经济生活中强加给了欧洲老百姓。

正如我在本章开头提到的，事实证明，机器的普遍使用对国家大有好处，使社会财富迅速增长。机器甚至使英国凭一己之力就能负担反拿破仑战争的庞大费用。资本家（那些出钱购买机器的人们）赚取了难以想象的利润。他们的野心逐渐滋长，从而对政治产生出兴趣。他们试图与迄今仍控制着大多数欧洲政府的土地贵族们比斗一番。

在英国，国会议员依然按照 1265 年的皇家法令选举产生，大批新兴的工业中心在议会中竟没有代表。1832 年，资本家们设法通过了修正法案，改革选举制度，使工厂主阶级获得了对立法机构的更大影响力。不过，此举也引发了成百万工人的强烈不满，因为政府中根本就没有他们的声音。工人们发动了争取选举权的运动。他们将自己的要求写在一份文件上，即日后广为人知的“大宪章”。有关这份宪章的争论日益激烈，到 1848 年欧洲革命爆发时还未停息。由于害怕爆发一场新的雅各宾党流血革命，英国政府召回年逾八旬的惠灵顿公爵指挥军队，并开始征召志愿军。伦敦处于被封锁的状态，为镇压即将到来的革命做好了准备。

最终，宪章运动因其领导者的无能而自行夭折了，未有发生暴力革命。新兴的富裕工厂主阶级（我不喜欢鼓吹新社会秩序的信徒们滥用的“资产阶级”一词）逐渐加强控制政府的权力，大城市的工业生活环境继续蚕食着广大的牧场和麦地，将它们变为阴暗拥挤的贫民窟。在每个欧洲城市走向现代化的路途中，无不伴随着这些贫民窟的凄凉注视。

第五十八章 奴隶解放

机器的普遍使用并未如亲眼见证铁路取代驿车的那一代人所预言的，带来一个幸福与繁荣的新世纪。人们提出了几项补救办法，可收效甚微。

奴隶解放的社会背景

1831 年，就在第一个修正法案通过前夕，英国杰出的立法家，当代最富实效的政治改革家杰里米·本瑟姆在给一位朋友的信中写道，“要想自己过得舒适就必须让别人过得舒适，要让别人过得舒适就必须表现出对他们的热爱，要想表现出对他们的热爱就必须真正去爱他们。”杰里米是一位诚实的人，他说出了自己认为是真实的东西。他的观点得到了许多国人的赞同。他们觉得有责任使那些不幸的邻居们也得到幸福，准备倾尽全力去帮助他们。是啊，到必须采取行动的时候了！

“自由经济”（蒂尔戈的“自由竞争”）的理想在那个工业力量仍被中世纪的条条框框束缚住手脚的时代，本是必要的。可将“行为自由”视为经济生活的最高准则，导致了非常可怕的情形。工厂的工时长短仅以工人们的体力为限。只要一位女工仍能坐在纺织机前，未因疲劳而晕过去，厂主便可以要求她继续工作。五、六岁的儿童被送到棉纺厂劳动，以免他们遭遇街头的危险或沾染上游手好闲的习性。政府通过了一项法律，强迫穷人的子女去工厂做工，否则将用铁链锁在机器上以示惩罚。作为辛苦劳动的回报，他们可以得到足够的粗食劣菜和猪圈般的过夜之所。常常，他们因极度劳累而在工作时打起吨来。为让他们保持清醒，监工们拿着鞭子四处巡视，遇到有必要让他们打起精神来干活时，便抽打他们的指关节。当然，这样的恶劣环境造成了成千上万儿童的死亡。这是非常可悲的事情。而雇主也是人，当然有着人人都有的同情心，他们也真诚地希望能取消“童工”制度。可既然人是“自由”的，儿童们同样也可以“自由”地工作。并且，如果琼斯先生的工厂不用五、六岁的童工，他的竞争对手斯通先生就会将多余的小男孩统统招到自己的工厂，琼斯先生便会遭到破产的打击。因此，在国会颁布法令禁止所有雇主使用童工之前，琼斯先生是不可能单枪匹马地停用童工的。

可如今的国会已不再是老派土地贵族们（他们倨傲地打量着暴发户厂主们，以公开的蔑视之情回敬他们满满当当的钱袋）的天下了，而转由来自工业中心的代表们把持。只要法律仍然禁止工人组织工会，情形便不可能出现丝毫好转。当然，那个时代的智者与道德家们并非对种种可怕的情景视若无睹，他们只是没有办法。机器以令人震惊的速度征服了世界，要让它真正变成人类的仆而非主宰，还需要漫长的时间和许多高尚男女们的共同努力。

欧洲的废奴运动

很奇怪的是，对这个遍布世界各国的野蛮雇佣制度发起的第一次冲击，为的倒是非洲和美洲的黑奴。奴隶制最初是由西班牙人引入美洲大陆的。当时，他们曾尝试过用印第安人作田庄和矿山的劳工。可一旦脱离了野外的自由生活，印第安人便一个接一个地病倒死去。为使印第安人免遭整体灭绝的危险，一位好心的传教士建议从非洲运送黑人来做工。黑人身强体健，经得起恶劣的待遇。并且，与白人的朝夕相处还可以给他们一个认识基督的机会，使他们能够拯救自己的灵魂。因此，无论从哪方面考虑，这对仁慈的白人和他们无知愚昧的黑人兄弟来说，都是一个不错的安排。可随着机器的大规模使用，棉花的需求量日益增长，黑人们被迫比以往更辛苦地劳动。像可怜印第安人一样，他们开始纷纷惨死在监工的虐待之下。

有关这些残暴行径的消息传回欧洲，在许多国家激起了废奴运动。在英国，威廉·维尔伯福斯和卡扎里·麦考利（他的儿子是一位伟大的历史学家，读过他的英国史，你就能体会到历史原可以写得如此妙趣横生）组织起一个禁止奴隶制度的团体。首先，他们设法通过一项法律，使“奴隶贸易”变成非法。接着在 1840 年后，所有英属殖民地都杜绝了奴隶制的存在。在法国，1848 年革命使各属地的奴隶制成为历史。葡萄牙人于 1858 年通过了一项法律，承诺在 20 年内给予所有奴隶自由。荷兰在 1863 年正式废除了奴隶制。同年，沙皇亚历山大二世也将被强行剥夺了两个多世纪的自由归还了他的农奴。

美国的南北战争

在美国，奴隶问题引发严重危机，并最终导致了一场漫长艰苦的内战。虽然《独立宣言》开宗明义，写下了“人人生而平等一的原则，可这条原则对那些长着黑色皮肤、在南部各州种植园内做牛做马的人们却是个例外。随时间推移，北方人对奴隶制的反感与日俱增，而南方人则声称，若取消奴隶劳动，他们便难以继续维持棉花种植业。将近半个世纪的时间里，众议院和参议院一直为此问题在激烈争论着。

北方坚持自己的观点，南方毫不退让。当情况发展到无法妥协时，南方各州便威胁要退出联邦。这是美利坚合众国历史上一个异常危险的时刻，有许多事情都可能发生，而它们之所以并未发生，主要归功于一个异常杰出且富于仁爱之心的伟人。

1860年11月6日，自学成才的伊利诺斯州律师亚伯拉罕·林肯当选美国总统。林肯属于强烈反对奴隶制的共和党人，深明人类奴役的罪恶性。他精明的常识告诉他，北美大陆绝对容不下两个敌对国家的存在。当南方的一些州退出合众国，组织起“美国南部联盟”时，林肯毅然接受了挑战。北方各州开始征召志愿军，几十万热血青年响应政府号召，应征入伍。随之而来残酷战争一直持续了4年。南方战争准备充分。南军在李将军和杰克逊将军的出色指挥下，不断击败北军。尔后，新英格兰与西部的雄厚工业实力开始发挥决定性影响。一位籍籍无名的北方军官一鸣惊人，成为了这场伟大废奴战争中的查理·马特尔。此人就是格兰特将军。他向南军发起了暴雨般地持续攻势，不给对手的丝毫喘息之机。在他的重拳之下，南方苦心经营的防线接二连三地土崩瓦解。1863年初，林肯发表了《解放奴隶宣言》，使所有奴隶重获自由。1865年4月，李将军率最后一支骁勇善战的南军在阿波马克托斯向格兰特投降。几天后，林肯总统在剧院被一名疯子刺杀。不过他的事业已经完成。除仍在西班牙统治之下的古巴以外，奴隶制在文明世界的各个角落都不复存在了。

新思想的尝试

可正当黑人们享受着日益增长的自由时，欧洲的“自由”工人却在“自由经济”的束缚下喘息。事实上，工人大众（即所谓的无产阶级）在极其悲惨的处境中竟没有整体灭绝，这在许多当代作家和观察家眼里不啻于一个奇迹。他们住着贫民窟肮脏阴暗的房子，吃着难以下咽的粗劣食物。他们接受一丁点儿仅能应付工作的教育。一旦发生死亡或意外事故，他们的家人将失去所有依靠。可是酿酒业（凭借它们对立法机构施加的极大影响力）却在一个劲地向他们提供源源不断地廉价威

士忌和杜松子酒，鼓励他们借酒消愁。

从上世纪三四十年代开始发生的巨大进步，并非出于一人之力。两代人的杰出智慧被凝聚起来，投入到将世界从机器的突然君临所造成的灾难性后果里解救出来的努力中。他们并不想摧毁整个资本主义体系。这样做无疑是愚蠢的，因为对部分人积累的财富，若合理运用，完全能使它有益于全人类。不过，对那种认为在拥有产业和财富、可以随意将工厂关闭而不致挨饿的厂主与不计工资多少都必须接受工作、否则便面临全家受饿的劳工之间能存在真正平等的观点，他们也是竭力加以反对的。

他们努力引进了一系列法律，规范工人与工厂主的关系。各国的改革者不断地取得了胜利。到今天，大多数劳动者已能得到充分的保护：他们的工作时间被减至平均每天8小时的上佳水平；他们的子女被送进学校接受教育，不再像以前一样去矿坑和梳棉车间做工了。

然而，有些人面对黑烟滚滚的高大烟囱，倾听火车夜以继日地轰鸣，看着被各种剩余物资塞满的仓库，不禁陷入了沉思。他们想问问，这种巨大的能量究竟要把人类引向何方，它的终极目的到底是为了什么？他们记得，人类曾经在完全没有贸易和工业竞争的环境中生活了几十万年。难道就不能改变现存秩序，取消那种以人类幸福为代价而追逐利润的竞争制度吗？

这种观念——即对一个更美好世界的模糊憧憬，在许多国家都有产生。在英国，拥有多家纺织厂的罗伯特·欧文建立起一个所谓的“社会主义社区”，并取得了初步成功。不过当欧文死后，他的“新拉纳克”社区的繁荣便就此告终。法国新闻记者路易斯·布兰克也曾尝试在全法国组织“社会主义车间”，可效果很不理想。事实上，越来越多的社会主义知识分子开始认识到，仅凭在常规的工业社会之外组织与世隔绝的小社团，是永远不可能取得成功的。在提出切实可行的补救措施之前，有必要先研究支撑整个工业体系和资本主义社会运行的基本规律。

继罗伯特·欧文、路易斯·布兰克、弗朗西斯·傅立叶这些实用社会主义者之后，是卡尔·马克思和弗里德里希·恩格斯这样的理论社会主义研究家。两人之中，马克思名气更大。他是一位杰出的学者，曾与家人长期定居德国。马克思在听说欧文与布兰克所做的社会实验后，开始对劳动、工资及失业等问题产生出浓厚的兴趣。可他的自由主义思想遭到了德国警察当局的仇视，他被迫逃往布鲁塞尔，后辗转到伦敦，在那里做了《纽约论坛报》的一名记者，过着贫穷拮据的生活。

当时，很少有人对他的经济学著作予以足够重视。不过在1864年，马克思组织了第一个国际劳工联合组织。三年之后，他又出版了著名的《资本论》第一卷。马克思认为，人类的全部历史就是“有产者”与“无产者”之间的漫长斗争史。机器的引进及大规模使用创造出一个新的社会阶级，即资本家。他们利用自己的剩余财富购买工具，再雇佣工人进行劳动以创造更多的财富，再用这些财富修建更多的工厂，如此循环，永无尽头。同时，据马克思的观点，第三等级（资产阶级）将越来越富，而第四等级（无产阶级）将越来越穷。因此他

大胆预言，这种资本的恶性循环发展到某一天，世界的所有财富将被一个人占有，而其他人都将沦为他的雇工，仰仗他大发善心过活。

为防止这种情况的发生，马克思号召所有国家的工人联合起来，为争取一系列政治经济措施而斗争。在 1848 年，即最后一场伟大的欧洲革命发生那一年所发表的《共产党宣言》中，马克思曾详细列举了这些措施。

这些观点当然受到官方的深恶痛绝。许多国家（尤其是普鲁士）制定了严厉的法律，来对付社会主义者。它们授命警察驱散社会主义者的集会，逮捕演说分子。可迫害与镇压并不能带来丝毫益处。对一桩势单力孤的事业来说，殉道者反而会成为最好的宣传。在欧洲各地，信仰社会主义的人数越来越多。而且不久人们便清楚了，社会主义者并不打算发动一场暴力革命，不过是利用他们在各国议会里日渐成长的势力来促进劳工阶级的利益。社会主义者甚至担任起内阁大臣，与进步的天主教徒及新教徒一起合作，共同消除工业革命所带来的危害，把由机器的引进和财富的增长所带来的利润更合理地加以分配。

第五十九章 科学的时代

然而，世界还经历了一场比政治和工业革命更深刻、更重大的变革。在饱受长期迫害之后，科学家们终于赢得了行动的自由。现在，他们试图探索那些制约宇宙的基本规律。

对科学的偏见

埃及人、巴比伦人、迦勒底人、希腊人、罗马人，他们都曾对早期科学的模糊观念及科学研究做出过自己的一份贡献。可公元 4 世纪的大迁移摧毁了环地中海地区的古代世界，随之兴起的基督教排斥人类的肉体而重视灵魂，将科学视为人类妄自尊大的表现之一。因为教会认为它试图窥探属于全能上帝领域内的神圣事物，与《圣经》宣告的七重死罪具有密切的联系。

文艺复兴在有限的程度上打破了中世纪的偏见之墙。然而，在 16 世纪初期取代文艺复兴的宗教改革运动对“新文明”的理想却抱以敌意。科学家们如果胆敢逾越《圣经》所划下的狭隘界线，他们将再度面临极刑的威胁。

我们的世界充斥着伟大将军的塑像，他们跃马扬鞭，率领欢呼的士兵们奔向辉煌的胜利。可在不少地方，也矗立着一些沉静而不起眼的大理石碑，默默宣示着某位科学家在此找到了长眠之地。1000 年之后，我们可能会以截然不同的方式面对这个问题。那一代幸福的孩子们将懂得尊重科学家惊人的勇气和难以想象的献身精神。他们是抽象知识领域的先驱和拓荒者，而正是这些抽象知识使我们的现代世界变成了活生生的现实。

这些科学先驱中的许多人饱受贫困、蔑视和侮辱。他们住在破旧的阁楼，死于阴暗的地牢。他们不敢把名字印在著作的封面上，也不敢在有生之年公开自己的研究结果。常常，他们不得不将手稿偷运到阿姆斯特丹或哈勒姆的某家地下印刷所去秘密出版。他们暴露在教会的敌意面前，无论天主教徒还是新教徒都不会对他们怀有丝毫同情。布道者永无休止地以他们为攻击的主题，并号召教区民众以暴力去对付这些“异端分子”。

他们也能这里那里地找到几处避难所。在最具宽容精神的荷兰，虽然普通市民对这些神秘的科学研究好感寥寥，但他们不愿去干涉别人的思想自由。于是，荷兰成了自由思想者的一个小型庇护所，法国、英国、德国的哲学家、数学家及物理学家们纷纷来到这里，享受短暂假期，呼吸一下自由的空气。

在此前的章节里，我已经告诉过你 13 世纪最杰出的天才罗杰·培根如何被迫长年禁笔的事情，以免教会当局再找他的麻烦。500 年过后，伟大的哲学《百科全书》的编写者们仍然处于法国宪兵不间断监视之下。又过去半个世纪，达尔文因大胆地质疑《圣经》所描述的创世故事，被所有的布道坛谴责为人类的公敌。甚至到今天，对那些冒险进入未知科学领域的人们的迫害仍未完全停止。就在我写作关于科学的这一章时，布莱恩先生正在对群众大力宣讲“达尔文主义的威胁”，并提醒听众们去反击这位伟大的英国博物学家的谬误。

不过，这些统统是旁支末节。该做的工作最后还是完成了。科学发现与发明创造的最终利益，到头来依然为同一群大众所分享，虽然正是他们将这些具有远见卓识的人们视为不切实际的理想主义者。

科学逐渐被认可

在 17 世纪，科学家们纷纷将注视的目光投向辽远的星空，研究我们身处的行星与太阳系的关系。即便如此，教会仍然不赞同这种不正当的好奇心。第一个证明太阳是宇宙中心的哥白尼直到临死前才敢发表他的著作。伽利略一生中的大部分时间生活在教会的密切监视之下，但他坚持不懈地透过自己的小望远镜观察星空，为伊萨克·牛顿提供了大量的观察数据。当这位英国数学家日后发现存在于所有落体身上的、被称为“万有引力定律”的有趣习性时，伽利略的观察对他可是大有帮助。

这一定律的发现至少在一段时期内穷尽了人们对天空的兴趣，他们开始转而研究地球。17 世纪中期，安东尼·范·利文霍克发明了便于操作的显微镜，这使得人们有机会研究导致人类患上多种疾病的“微”生物，为“细菌学”打下了坚实的基础。多亏有这门科学，在 19 世纪的最后 40 年里，人们陆续发现多种引起疾病的微生物，使这个世界上存在的许多疾患得以消除。显微镜还使得地理学家能够仔细研究不同的岩石和从地层深处挖掘出来的化石（史前动植物的遗体）。这些研究证明，地球的历史比“创世纪”所描述的要久远得多。1830 年，查理·莱尔爵士出版了他的《地质学原理》。它否认了《圣经》讲述的创世故事，并对地球缓慢的发展过程做出了一番远为有趣的描述。

与此同时，拉普拉斯正在研究一种有关宇宙形成的新学说，它认为地球不过是生出行星系的浩瀚星云中的一块小斑点而已。此外，还有邦森与基希霍夫在透过分光镜观测我们的好邻居太阳的化学构成，而首先注意到它表面的奇异斑点（太阳耀斑）的是老伽利略。

同时，在与天主教和新教国家的神职当局进行过一场艰苦卓绝的斗争后，解剖学家与生理学家最终获得了解剖尸体的许可。他们终于能够以对于我们的身体器官及特性的正确知识来赶走中世纪江湖医生的胡猜臆测了。

自人类开始仰望星空，思索为什么星星会呆在天上，几十万年的时间缓慢逝去。而在不到一代人的时间里（从 1810 到 1840），科学的各学科所取得的进步超过了此前几十万年的总和。对于那些在旧式教育下长大的人们来说，这肯定是一个非常可悲的年代。我们可以理解他们对拉马克和达尔文等人怀有的恨意。虽然此二人并未明确宣告，人类是“猴子的后裔”（我们的祖父辈惯常将其当成人身攻击来痛加控诉），可他们确实暗示了骄傲的人类是由长长的一系列祖先进化而来，其家族的源头可以追溯到我们行星的最早居民——水母。

主宰 19 世纪的兴旺发达的中产阶级建立起自己充满尊严的世界。他们欣然使用着煤气、电灯，以及伟大科学发现所带来的全部实用成果。可那些纯粹的研究者，那些致力于“科学理论”（没有这些理论任何进步都不可能取得）的人们却饱受怀疑。直到前不久，他们的贡献才最终被承认。今天，以往将财富捐献出来修建教堂的富人们开始捐资修建大型实验室。在这些寂静的战场里面，一些沉默寡言的人们正在与人类隐蔽的敌人进行着殊死搏斗。时常，他们为未来的人们能享受到更幸福健康的生活，甚至牺牲掉了自己的生命。

事实上，许多曾被认作是“上帝所为”而无法治愈的疾病，现在已被证明仅仅是出于我们自身的无知与疏忽。今天的每一个儿童都知道，只要注意喝清洁的饮水，就能避免感染伤寒。可医生们是在历经多年努力之后，才使得人们相信这一简单事实。对口腔细菌的研究，使我们有可能预防蛀牙。如果非拔掉一颗坏牙不可，我们无非是深吸一口长气，然后高高兴兴去找牙医。1846 年，美国报纸报道了利用“乙醚”进行无痛手术的新闻，欧洲的好人们不禁对这一消息大摇其头。在他们看来，人类居然试图逃脱所有生物都必须承受的“疼痛”，此举近乎对上帝意志的公然违背。此后又经过了多年，在外科手术中使用乙醚和氯仿才被普遍接受。

可追求进步的战役毕竟打赢了。偏见之墙上的裂口越来越大。随着时间的流逝，古代的愚昧之石终于土崩瓦解，一个新的、更幸福的社会制度的追求者们冲出了包围圈。可突然之间，他们发现自己面前又横亘着一道新的障碍。在旧时代的废墟中，另一座反动堡垒矗立了起来。为摧毁这最后一道防线，成百万的人们在未来的日子里献出了自己的生命。

第六十章 艺术

艺术的源起

若一个婴孩身体十分健康，他吃饱睡足后，就会哼哼出一首小曲，向世界宣示他是多么幸福。在成人耳里，这些哼哼声毫无意义。它听起来像是“咕嘟，咕嘟，咕咕咕咕……”。可对婴儿来说，这就是完美的音乐，是他对艺术的最初贡献。

一旦他（或她）长大一点，能够坐起身子，捏泥饼的时代便开始了。这些泥饼当然引不起成人多大的兴趣。这个世界上有成百上千万的婴孩，他们同时在捏成百上千万的泥饼。可对小宝贝们说来，这代表他们迈向艺术的欢乐王国的又一次尝试。现在，小婴孩变成雕塑家了。

到三、四岁的时候，小孩的双手开始服从脑子的使唤，他便成了一名画家。快乐的妈妈给他一盒彩色画笔，不久之后，每一张纸片上便布满了奇怪的笔划，有的歪歪斜斜，有的弯弯曲曲，分别代表房子呀、马呀、可怕的海战呀，等等。

可没过多久，这种尽情“创作”的幸福时期便告一段落。学校生活开始了，孩子们的大部分时间被功课填得满满的。生活的事情，更准确地说是“谋生”的事情，变成了每个小男孩小女孩生命中的头等大事。在背诵乘法表和学习法语不规则动词的过去时之余，孩子们很少有时间来从事“艺术”，除非这种不求现实回报，仅仅出于纯粹的快乐而创造某种东西的欲望非常强烈。等待这孩子长大成人后，他会完全忘掉自己生命的头5年是主要献身于艺术的。

民族的经历跟小孩子相似。当穴居人逃脱了漫长冰川纪的种种致命危险，将家园整顿就绪，他便开始创作一些自己觉得美丽的东西，虽然这些东西对他与丛林猛兽的搏斗并无什么实际的帮助。他在岩洞四壁画上许多他捕猎过的大象和鹿的图案，他还把石头砍削成自己觉得最迷人的女人的粗糙形象。

当埃及人、巴比伦人、波斯人以及其它东方民族沿尼罗河和幼法拉底河两岸建立起自己的小国，他们便开始为他们的国王修筑华美的宫殿，为他们的夫人打制亮丽的首饰，并种植奇花异草、用五彩斑斓的色彩来装点他们的花园。

我们的祖先是来自遥远中亚草原的游牧民族，也是热爱自由生活的猎人与战士。他们谱写过许多歌谣来赞颂部族领袖伟大业绩，还发明了一种诗歌形式，一直流传至今。1000年后，当他们在希腊安身立足，建立起自己的“城邦”，他们又修建古朴庄严的神庙、制作雕塑、创作悲剧和喜剧，并发展一切他们能想出的艺术形式，以此来表达心中的欢乐和悲伤。

罗马人和他们的迦太基对手一样，由于过分忙于治理其它民族与经商赚钱，对“既无用处又无利润”的精神冒险不感兴趣。尽管他们征服过大半个世界，修筑了无以计数的道路桥梁，可他们的艺术却是整个从希腊照搬过来的。他们创造出几种实用的建筑形式，满足了当时的实际需要。不过，他们的雕塑，他们的历史，他们的镶嵌工艺，他们的诗歌，统统是希腊原作的拉丁翻版。如若缺乏那种模糊而难以定义的、世人称之为“个性”的素质，便不可能产生出好的艺术。而罗马世界正好是不相信“个性”的。帝国需要的是训练有素的士兵和精明高效的商人，像写作诗歌或画画这些玩意儿只好留给外国人去做了。

随后是“黑暗时期”的来临。野蛮的日尔曼部族就像闯进西欧瓷器店的一头狂暴的公牛。他不理解的东西对他毫无用处。拿1921年的标准来讲，他拿起印着漂亮封面女郎的通俗杂志爱不释手，反倒将自己继承的伦勃朗名画随手扔进了垃圾箱。不久，他的见识增长了一些，想弥补自己几年前造成的损失。可垃圾箱已经不见踪影，伦勃朗的名画再也找不回来。

中世纪宗教艺术

不过到这个时期，他自己从东方带来的艺术得到发展，成长为非常优美的“中世纪艺术”，补偿了他过去的无知与疏忽。至少就欧洲北部来说，所谓的“中世纪艺术”主要是一种日尔曼精神的产品，少有借用希腊和拉丁艺术，与埃及和亚述的古老艺术形式则完全无关，更不用提印度和中国了（对于那个时代的人们来说，二者是根本不存在的）。事实上，北方日尔曼民族极少受他们南方邻居们的影响，以至他们自己发展的建筑完全不被意大利人理解，受到十足而彻底的蔑视。

你们肯定听说过“哥特式”这个词。你多半会把它与一座细细的尖顶直插云霄的美丽古教堂的画面联系起来。可这个词的真正含义到底是什么呢？

它其实意味着“不文明的”、“野蛮的”东西——某种出自“不开化的哥特人”之手的事物。在南方人眼里，哥特人是一个粗野的落后民族，对古典艺术的既定规则毫无崇敬之心。他们只知道造起一些“恐怖的现代建筑”去满足自己的低级趣味，而根本看不见古罗马广场和雅典卫城所树立的崇高典范。

可在好多个世纪里，这种歌特式建筑形式却是艺术真情的最高表现，一直激励着整个北部欧洲大陆的人民。读过前面的章节，你一定记得中世纪晚期的人们是如何生活的。他们是“城市”的“市民”，而在古拉丁语里，“城市”即“部落”的意思。事实上，这些住在其高大城墙与宽深护城河之内的善良自由民们是名副其实的部落成员，凭借着整个城市的互助制度，有难同当，有福共享。

在古希腊和古罗马的城市，庙宇坐落在市场上，那里是市民生活的中心。在中世纪，教堂，即上帝之屋，成了新的中心。我们现代的新教徒仅仅每周去一次教堂，呆上几小时，我们很难体会中世纪的教堂对一个社区的重要意义。那时，当你出生还不到一星期，便被送到教堂受洗。在儿童时代，你常常去教堂听讲《圣经》中的神圣故事。后来你成了这所教堂的会众。假如你足够有钱，你便为自己建一座小教堂，里面供奉自己家族的守护圣人。作为当时最神圣的建筑，教堂在所有白天及大部分夜晚都对公众开放。从某种意义上讲，它类似一个现代的俱乐部，为市内的所有居民享用。你很可能在教堂与自己心爱的姑娘一见钟情，她日后做了你的新娘，在高高的祭坛前与你誓约相守终身。最后，当你走到生命的终点，你会被安葬在这座熟悉建筑的石块下。你的孩子、孩子的孩子会不断走过你的坟墓，直到末日审判来临的那天。

由于中世纪教堂不仅仅是“上帝之屋”，还是一切日常生活的真正中心，因此它的式样应当不同于此前所有的人工建筑物。埃及人、希腊人、罗马人的神庙仅仅是一个供奉地方性神祇的殿堂，并且祭司们也不需要奥塞西斯、宙斯或朱底特的塑像前布道，因此用不着能容纳大量公众的内部空间。在古代地中海地区，各民族的一切宗教活动都在露天举行。可阴湿寒冷的欧洲北部，天气总是恶劣，大部分宗教活动因而必须在教堂的屋顶下进行。

在许多个世纪里，建筑师们孜孜探索着如何建造空间足够大的建筑物的问题。罗马的建筑传统告诉他们，要砌沉重的石墙，必须配以小窗，以免墙体承受不住自身重量而垮塌。可到了12世纪，十字军东征开始之后，欧洲的建筑师们见识到穆斯林建筑师造出的清真寺穹顶。受此启发，他们构想出一种新风格，使欧洲人第一次有机会造出适合当时频繁的宗教生活所需的那种建筑。稍后，他们在被意大利人轻蔑地指为“歌特式”或“野蛮的”建筑的基础上，进一步发展这种奇特的风格。他们发明出一种由“肋骨”支撑的拱顶。可这样一个拱顶如果太重的话，很容易压垮墙壁，个中的道理就如同一张儿童摇椅坐上了一个300磅重的大胖子，肯定会被压垮。为解决这一难题，一些法国建筑师开始用“扶垛”加固墙体。扶垛不过是砌在边上的大堆石块，以支持撑住屋顶的墙体。后来，为进一步保证屋顶的安全，建筑师们又发明了所谓的“飞垛”来支撑屋脊。

这种新的建筑法允许开大窗户。在12世纪，玻璃还是非常珍稀的奢侈品，私人建筑少有安装玻璃窗，有时连贵族们的城堡也四壁洞开。这就是当时的房子里面穿堂风长年不断，而人们在室内也和室外一样穿毛皮衣服的原因。

幸运的是，古地中海人民熟悉的制作彩色玻璃的工艺并未完全失传，此时又复

兴起来。不久之后，歌特式教堂的窗户上便出现了用小块鲜艳的彩色玻璃拼成的《圣经》故事，以长长的铅框固定起来。

就这样，明亮辉煌的上帝新屋里，挤满了如饥似渴的信众。使信仰显得“真切动人”的技艺，于此达到了无人能及的高峰。为打造这“上帝之屋”和“人间天堂”，人们不吝代价，不惜工夫，力求让它尽善尽美。雕塑家们自罗马帝国毁灭后便长期处于失业状态，此时又小心谨慎地重返工作。正门、廊柱、扶垛与飞檐上，满满地刻着上帝和圣人们的形象。绣工们也尽心投入工作，绣出华丽的挂毯装饰教堂四壁。珠宝匠更是贡献自己的绝艺来装点祭坛，使它当得起人们最虔诚的崇拜。画家们也倾力以赴。可因为找不到适当的作画材料，这些可怜的人们只能扼腕长叹。

这又引出了一段故事。

在基督教初创时期，罗马人用小块彩色玻璃拼成图案，以此装点他们的庙宇房屋的墙和地。可这种镶嵌工艺掌握起来异常困难，同时使画家们难以表达自己的情感。所有尝试过用彩色积木进行创作的儿童，都体会过与这些画家相同的感受。因此，镶嵌工艺在中世纪便失传了，只在俄罗斯一地保存下来。在君士坦丁堡陷落后

，拜占廷的镶嵌画家纷纷逃往俄罗斯避难，得以继续用彩色玻璃装饰东正教堂的四壁，直到布尔什维克革命后不再有新教堂投入修建为止。

绘画的黄金时代

当然，中世纪的画师们可以用熟石膏水调制颜料，在教堂墙上做画。这种“新鲜石膏”画法（通常称为“湿壁画法”）在数个世纪里非常流行。到今天，它就像手稿中的微型风景画一样罕见。几百个现代城市画家中，恐怕只有一两个能够成功调制这种颜料。可在中世纪，没有别的更好的调配材料，画家们成为湿壁画工是别无选择的事情。这种调料法存在着一个致命的缺陷。往往用不了几年，要么石膏从墙壁上脱落，要么湿气浸损了画面，就像湿气会浸损我们的墙纸一样。人们试验了各种各样的介质来取代石膏水。他们尝试过用酒、醋、蜂蜜、粘蛋青等来调制颜料，可是效果都不令人满意。试验一直持续了 1000 多年。中世纪画家能够很成功地在羊皮纸上做画，可一旦要在大块的木料或石块上做画，颜料就会发粘，这使他们一筹莫展。

在 15 世纪上半叶，这一困扰画家们多年的难题终于被南尼德兰地区的扬·范艾克与胡伯特·范艾克攻克。这对著名的弗兰芒兄弟将颜料调以特制的油，使他们能够在木料、帆布、石头或其它任何材质的底版上做画。

不过此时，中世纪初期的宗教热情已成为过眼云烟。富裕的城市自由民接替主教大人们，成为了艺术的新思主。由于艺术通常为谋生服务，于是此时的艺术家们开始为这些世俗的雇主工作，给国王们、大公们、富裕的银行家们绘制肖像。没用多长时间，新的油画法风靡整个欧洲。几乎每个国家都兴起了一个特定的画派，以它们创作的肖像画和风景画反映当地人民独有的艺术趣味。

比如在西班牙，有贝拉斯克斯在描绘宫廷小丑、皇家挂毯厂的纺织女工及其它关于国王和宫廷的形形色色的人物与主题。在荷兰，伦勃朗、弗朗斯·海尔斯及弗美尔却在描画商人家中的仓房、他邋邋不堪的妻子与健康肥胖的孩子，还有给他带来巨大财富的船只。意大利则是另一番气象。由于教皇陛下是艺术最主要的保护人，米开朗基罗和柯雷乔仍在全力刻画着圣母与圣人的形象。在贵族有钱有势的英格兰和国王高于一切的法国，艺术家们则倾心描绘着担任政府要职的高官显贵和与陛下过从甚密的可爱女士们。

戏剧与音乐

因教会的衰微及一个新社会阶级的崛起给绘画带来的巨大变化，同时也反映在其它所有形式的艺

术中。印刷术的发明，使得作家们有可能通过为大众写作而赢取极大的声名。不过，有钱买得起新书的，并非那种整夜闲坐在家或望着天花板发呆的人。发财致富的市民们需要娱乐。中世纪的区区几个游吟诗人已经不能满足对人们消遣的巨大胃口。从早期希腊城邦迄今，2000 多年过去了，职业剧作家终于再次找到了用武之地。在中世纪，戏剧仅仅是某些宗教庆典的捧场角色。13 和 14 世纪的悲剧讲的都是耶稣的受难故事。可在 16 世纪，世俗的剧场终于出现。诚然，在最开始，职业剧作家和演员们的地位并不高。威廉·莎士比亚曾被视为某种类马戏班成员的角色，以他的悲剧和喜剧给邻人逗乐解闷。不过当这位大师于 1616 年去世时，他开始赢得国人的敬重，而戏剧演员也不再是必须受警察监视的可疑角色了。

与莎士比亚同时代的还有洛佩·德·维加。这位创作力非凡的西班牙人一生中共写出了 400 部宗教剧和超过 1800 部的世俗剧，是一位受到教皇称许的高贵人物。一个世纪之后，法国人莫里哀不可思议的喜剧才华竟为他赢得了路易十四的友谊。

从此，戏剧日益受到群众的热爱。今天，“剧院”已经成为任何一座治理有条的城市必不可少的风景之一，而电影中的“默剧”已经深入到最不起眼的小乡村。

然而，还有一种最受欢迎的艺术，那就是音乐。大部分古老的艺术形式都需要大量的技巧训练才能掌握。想要我们笨拙的双手听从大脑的使唤，将脑海中的形象

准确再现于画布或大理石上，这需要年复一年的苦工。为学习如何表演或怎样写出一部好小说，有些人甚至花费了一生的时间。对作为接受者的公众来说，要想欣赏绘画、小说或雕塑的精妙，同样需要接受大量的训练。可只要不是聋子，几乎任何人都能跟唱某支曲子，或从音乐里享受到一定的乐趣。中世纪的人们虽能听到少量

音乐，可它们全是宗教音乐。圣歌必须严格遵守一定的节奏与和声法则，很快便令人感到单调。另外，圣歌也不适合在大街和集市上唱颂。

文艺复兴改变了这一情况。音乐再度成为人们的知心朋友，陪着他们一起欢乐，一起忧伤。

埃及人、巴比伦人及古代犹太人都曾是伟大的音乐爱好者。他们甚至能将不同的乐器组合成正规的乐队。可希腊人对这些野蛮的异域噪音大皱眉头。他们喜欢聆听别人朗诵荷马或品达的庄严诗歌。朗诵中，他们允许用里拉（古希腊的一种竖琴，所有弦乐器里最简陋的一种）伴奏，不过这也仅仅是在不致激起众怒的情况下才敢使用。可罗马人正相反，他们喜欢在晚餐和聚会中伴以管弦乐。他们发明出我们沿用至今（当然经过了改进）的大部分乐器。早期的教会鄙视罗马音乐，因为它带有太多刚被摧毁的异教世界的邪恶气息。由全体教徒颂唱的几首圣歌，这便是三、四世纪的所有主教们音乐忍耐力的极限。由于教徒们在没有乐器伴奏的情况下，容易唱得非常之走调，因此教会特许使用风琴伴奏。这是一种公元 2 世纪的发明，由一组排箫和一对风箱构成。

接下来是大迁徙时代。最后一批罗马音乐家要么死于兵荒，要么沦为走村串巷的流浪艺人，在大街上表演，像现代渡船上的竖琴手一样讨几个小钱为生。到中世纪晚期，一个更世俗化的文明在城市里复兴了，这导致了对音乐家的新需求。一些如羊角号一类的乐器，本来是用作战争和狩猎中的讯号联络的，此时经过改进，已经能奏出舞厅或宴会厅里的心旷神怡的乐音。有一种在弓上绷马鬃毛为弦的老式吉他，它是所有弦乐器里面最古老的一种，其历史可以追溯到古代埃及和亚述。到中世纪晚期，这种六弦乐器发展成我们现代的四弦小提琴，并在 18 世纪的斯特拉迪瓦利及其他意大利小提琴制作家里，达到完美境界。

最后，现代钢琴终于出现了。它是所有乐器里流传最广的一种，曾跟随热爱音乐的人们进入丛林荒野或格陵兰的冰天雪地。所有键盘乐器的始祖本来是风琴。当风琴乐手演奏时，需要另一个人在旁拉动风箱（好在这项工作如今已由电力来完成）。因此，当时的音乐家试图找到一种简便而不

受环境影响的乐器，帮助他们培训众多教堂的唱诗班学生。到伟大的 11 世纪，阿雷佐（诗人彼特拉克的诞生地）的一个名为奎多的本尼迪克派僧侣发明了乐音注释体系，一直沿用至今。就在同一世纪的某一时期，当人们对音乐的兴趣日益增长，第一件键弦合一的乐器诞生了。它发出的叮叮当当的声音，想必和现代每一家玩具店出售的儿童钢琴的声音相似。在维也纳，中世纪的流浪音乐家们（他们曾被划为骗子和打牌作弊一类的人）于 1288 年组织了第一个独立的音乐家行会。小小的一弦琴被改进成现代斯坦威钢琴的直接前身，当时通称为“击弦古钢琴”（因为它配有琴键）。它从奥地利传入意大利，于此被改进成“斯皮内特”，即小型竖式钢琴。其得名源自它的发明者——威尼斯人乔万尼·斯皮内蒂。最后，在 18 世纪的 1709 至 1720 年间，巴尔托洛梅·克里斯托福里发明出一种能同时奏出强音（piano）和弱音（forte）的钢琴。这种乐器几经改进就变成了我们的现代钢琴。

这样，世界上第一次有了一种能在几年内掌握的便于演奏的乐器。它不像竖琴和提琴一样需要不断调音，而且拥有比中世纪的大号、单簧管、长号和双簧管更悦耳动人的音色。如同留声机使成百上千万的人们迷上音乐一样，早期钢琴的出现使音乐知识在更广的社会圈子里普及。音乐家从四处流浪的“行吟诗人”，摇身而为社区中倍受尊敬的成员。后来，音乐被引入到戏剧演出中，由此诞生出我们的现代歌剧。最初，只有少数非常富有的王公贵族才请得起“歌剧团”，可随着人们对这一娱乐的兴趣日渐增加，许多城市纷纷建起自己的歌剧院。先是意大利人，后是德国人的歌剧使所有公众在剧院分享到无尽的乐趣，只有少数极为严格的基督教教派仍对这一新艺术抱有深刻的怀疑态度，认为歌剧造成的过分欢乐有损灵魂的健康。

到 18 世纪中期，欧洲的音乐生活蓬勃热烈。此时，产生了一位最伟大的音乐家。他名叫约翰·塞巴斯蒂安·巴赫，是莱比锡市托马斯教堂的一位淳朴的风琴师。他为各种乐器创作的许多音乐，从喜剧歌曲、流行舞曲到最庄严的圣歌和赞美诗，为我们全部的现代音乐奠定了基础。当他于 1750 年去世时，莫扎特继承他的事业。他创作出充满纯粹欢乐的乐曲，常常让我们联想起由节奏与和声织就的美丽花边。接着是路德维西·冯·贝多芬，一个充满悲剧性的伟人。他给我们带来现代交响乐，却无缘亲耳聆听自己最伟大的作品，因为贫困岁月的一场感冒导致了他的两耳失聪。

贝多芬亲历了法国大革命时代。满怀着对一个新的辉煌时代的憧憬，他把一首自己创作的交响乐献给拿破仑。可当贝多芬于 1827 年告别人世时，昔日叱咤风云的拿破仑已垂垂病死，令人热血沸腾的法国大革命早成过眼云烟。而蒸汽机平地惊雷般地降临人间，使整个世界充满着一种与《第三交响乐》所营造的梦境全然不同的声音。

事实上，蒸汽、钢铁、煤和大工厂构成的世界新秩序根本不需要油画、雕塑、诗歌及音乐。旧日的艺术保护人，中世纪与 17、18 世纪的主”教们、王公们、商人们已经一去不返。工业世界的新贵们忙于挣钱，受过的教育又少，根本没有心思去理会蚀刻画、奏鸣曲或象牙雕刻品这类东西，更别提那些专注于创造这些东西而对社会毫无实际用处的人们了。车间里的工人们整日淹没在机器的轰鸣中，到头来也丧失了对他们的农民祖先发明的长笛或提琴乐曲的鉴赏力。艺术沦为新工业时代饱受白眼的继子，与现实生活彻底隔离了。幸存下来的一些绘画，无非是在博物馆里苟延残喘。音乐则变成一小撮“批评家”的专利，他们将它带离普通人的家庭，送进虚有其表的音乐厅。

可尽管非常缓慢，艺术还是逐渐找回了自己。人们终于开始意识到，伦勃朗、贝多芬和罗丹才是本民族真正的先知与领袖，而一个缺少了艺术和欢乐的世界，就如同一所失去儿童呀呀笑声的托儿所。

第六十一章 殖民扩张与战争

叙述历史的原则

如果早知写一部世界历史如此困难，我是不会贸然接受这项工作的。当然，任何人若具备足够的耐心与勤奋，乐意花上五、六年时间泡在图书馆充满霉味和尘土的书堆里面，他都能编出一本大部头的历史书，并巨细无遗地搜罗进在每个世纪、每块土地上发生的重大事件。可这并非本书的宗旨。出版商希望出版一部富于节奏感的历史，其中的故事在精神抖擞地跃进而不是蜗牛般的缓慢爬行。现在，当这本书行将完成时，我发现有些章节生动流畅，有些章节却如同在逝去岁月的枯燥沙漠里艰难跋涉，时而毫无进展，时而过分沉溺于行动与传奇的爵士乐。我不喜欢这样。我建议毁掉整部手稿，从头写过，可出版商不同意。

作为解决难题的第二个方法，我将打出的手稿带给几位仁慈的朋友，请他们阅读之后，帮忙提一些有益的建议。可这种经历同样令人失望。每个人都有自己的偏见、喜好与至爱。他们全都想知道，为什么我竟敢在某处删掉他们最喜欢的国家、最崇敬的政治家、抑或是最倾心的罪犯。对他们中的某些人来说，拿破仑和成吉思汗是应该受到最高赞美的伟人。而在我看来，二者比起乔治·华盛顿、居斯塔夫·瓦萨、汉谟拉比、林肯及其他十几个人物远为逊色。这些人更有理由被大书特书一番，可限于篇幅，我只能寥寥几笔带过。至于成吉思汗，我只承认他是大规模屠杀方面的天才，因此我不打算为他做更多的宣传。

“到目前为止你干得很棒，”另一个批评家说道，“不过你考虑到清教徒问题吗？我们正在庆祝他们抵达普利茅斯 300 周年。他们应该占更多的篇幅。”我的回答是，如果我写的是一部美国史，那么清教徒肯定会占据头 12 章的一半篇幅。可本书是一部“人类的历史”，而清教徒登陆普利茅斯的事件直到好几个世纪以后才获得了国际性的重要地位。并且，美利坚合众国最初是由 13 个州而非单单一个州组建的；并且，美国头 20 年历史中那些最杰出的人物大多来自弗吉尼亚、宾西法尼亚、尼维斯岛，而非来自马萨诸塞。因此，用一页的篇幅和一副地图来讲述清教徒的故事，理应让他们满意了。

接着是史前期专家的质问。凭着霸王龙的赫赫威名，为什么我就不能多讲讲生活在恐龙时期的那些可敬可叹的克罗马农人呢？要知道他们在十万年前就发展出了高度的文明！

是的，为什么没提他们呢？原因很简单。我并不像某些最著名的人类学家那样惊叹于原始初民的完美。卢梭和一些 18 世纪的哲学家创出“高贵的野蛮人”一说，他们构想了这么一群生活在天地初开时的幸福境界中的人类。我们的现代科学家把这些为我们的祖父辈深深热爱的“高贵的野蛮人”扔到一边，代之以法兰西谷地的“辉煌的野蛮人”。他们在 35000 年前结束了矮眉毛、低程度的尼安德特人及其他日尔曼邻居的野蛮生活方式，并向我们展示了克罗马农人绘制的大象和雕刻的人像。于是，我们向他们投以莫大的赞美。

我并非觉得科学家们有什么错。可我认为，我们对这一时期的了解还远远不够，要想精确、描述早期的欧洲社会是非常困难的。所以我宁愿闭口不谈某些事情而不愿冒信口胡说的危险。

另外还有一些批评者，他们干脆就指责我不公平。为什么我不提爱尔兰、保加利亚、暹罗（泰国的旧称），却硬把荷兰、冰岛、瑞士这样的国家拉扯进来？我回答说，本人并未将任何国家硬拉进来。它们因当时当地的时势变化而自然呈现，我根本无法将之排除在外。为让自己的观点能被更好地理解，请允许我申明这本历史书在选择那些积极成员时所考虑的依据。

原则只有一条，即“某个国家或个人是否发明出一个新观念或实施一个创造性的行为，从而影响到历史的进程。”这并非个人好恶的问题。它凭据的是冷静地、几乎是数学般精确的判断。在历史上，从未有哪个种族扮演过比蒙古人更形象化、更富传奇性的角色，可同时也没有哪个种族比蒙古人对人类成就或知识进步的贡献更小。同样的，荷兰共和国的历史之所以有趣，并非因为德·鲁伊特的水兵曾在泰晤士河中钓鱼，而是由于这个北海泥岸边上的小国曾经为一大批对各式各样不受欢迎的问题抱有各式各样古怪看法的各式各样的奇特人物提供过友善的避难所。

亚述国王提拉华·毗列色的一生充满了戏剧性事件，可对我们来说，他也可能根本就没有存在过。确实，全盛时期的雅典或佛罗伦萨，其人口仅相当于堪萨斯城的 1 / 10。可如果这两个地中海小城中的任何一个不存在，我们目前的文明就会全是另一番模样。而对于堪萨斯城这个位于密苏里河畔的大都会，却很难说上同样的中听话（我谨此向怀安特县的好人们致以诚挚的歉意）。

由于本人的观点非常个人化，请允许我讲述另一事实。

当我们准备去看医生的时候，我们必须先搞清楚他到底是外科医生、门诊医生、顺势疗法医生或者信仰疗法医生，因为我们想知道他会从哪个角度为我们诊病。我们在为自己选择历史学家时，也该像选择医生一样仔细。我们常常想，“好呀，历史就是历史”，于是抓起一本历史书就读。可一个在苏格兰偏僻乡村、受长老会教派家庭严格教养长大的作者，和一个从儿童时代就被领去听不相信任何魔鬼存在的罗伯特·英格索尔的精彩讲演的邻居，他们会以截然不同的方式看待人类关系中的每一个问题。到一定的时候，两个人都会忘记他们早年的训练，从此不再踏足教堂或讲演厅。可这些早年的印象会一直跟随他们，在他们所写、所说或所做中无可避免地流露出来。

在本书的前言中，我曾告诉你本人并非一位完美无缺的历史向导。现在本书将近尾声，我乐意重申这一告诫。我生长并受教于一个老派的自由主义气氛的家庭，每日熏陶的是达尔文及其他 19 世纪科学先驱们的思想。在儿童时代，我碰巧跟我的一位舅舅度过大量的时光，而他收藏了 16 世纪伟大的法国散文家蒙田的全部著作。因为我生在鹿特丹，在高达市念书，这使我熟悉了埃拉斯穆斯。出于某种自己也弄不清楚的原因，这位“宽容”的伟大宣讲者征服了并不宽容的本人。后来，我发现了阿尔托·法朗士，而我与英语的第一次邂逅是偶然看到一本萨克雷的《亨利·艾司芒德》。这部小说给我留下的深刻印象超过任何一本英语著作。

如果我出生在一个欢乐的美国中西部城市，我或许会对童年听过的赞美诗怀着某种感情。可我对音乐的最初记忆要追溯到童年的那个午后，我母亲第一次带我去听巴赫的赋格曲。这位伟大的新教音乐大师以其数学般的完美深深地打动了我，以至一当我听到祈祷会上平庸无奇的赞美诗，就无法不生出一一种倍受折磨的感觉。

如果我出生在意大利，打小就沐浴在阿尔诺山谷温暖和煦的阳光中，我也会热爱色彩绚丽、光线明亮的画作。可我现在对它们之所以无动于衷，那是因为我最初的艺术印象得自于一个天气阴沉的国度。那里少有的阳光一旦刺破云层，以某种近乎残酷的姿态照射在雨水浸透的土地上，一切就会呈现出光明与黑暗的强烈对比。

我特意申明这些事实，好让你们了解本书作者的个人偏见。这样你们也许能更好地理解他的观点。

殖民扩张竞赛

说过这段简短但必要的离题话后，让我们回到最后 50 年的历史。这段时期发生了许多事情，但少有在当时是至关重要的。大多数强国不再是单纯的政治体，它们还变成了大型企业。它们修筑铁路。它们开辟并资助通往世界各地的轮船航线。它们设立电报线路，将不同的属地联为一体。并且，它们稳步扩充着在各大洲的殖民地。每一块能够染指的非洲或亚洲土地都被宣布为某个强国所有。法国成为阿尔及利亚、马达加斯加、安南（今越南）及东京湾（今北部湾）的主人。德国声称对西南及东部非洲的一些地区拥有所有权。它不仅是在喀麦隆、新几内亚、及许多太平洋岛屿上建立了定居点，还以几个传教士被杀为借口强占了中国黄海边上的胶州湾。意大利人试图在阿比尼西亚（埃塞俄比亚）碰碰运气，结果被尼格斯（埃塞俄比亚国王）的黑人士兵打得落花流水，只好从土耳其苏丹手里夺取了北非的黎波里聊以自慰。俄国占领整个西伯利亚后，进一步侵占中国的旅顺港。日本在 1895 年的甲午战争中击败中国，强占了台湾岛，1905 年又将整个朝鲜国变成自己的殖民地。1883 年，世界上空前强大的殖民帝国英国开始着手“保护”埃及。这个历史悠久的文明古国曾长期遭受世界的冷落，但从 1886 年苏伊士运河开通之后，它便一直处于外国侵略的威胁之下。英国卓有成效地实施着自己的“保护”计划，同时攫取巨大的物质利益。在接下来的 30 年里，英国发动了一系列殖民战争。1902 年，经过 3 年苦战，它征服了德瓦士兰和奥兰治自由邦这两个独立的布尔共和国。与此同时，它还鼓励野心勃勃的殖民者塞西尔·罗兹为一个巨大的非洲联邦垒好基础。这个国

家从非洲南部的好望角一直延伸到尼罗河口，巨细无靡地将所有尚无欧洲主人的岛屿和地区收入囊中。

1885 年，精明的比利时国王利奥波德利用探险家亨利·斯坦利的发现，建立了刚果自由邦。最初，这块幅员辽阔的赤道帝国施行着“绝对君主专制”。经多年的糟糕统治后，比利时人将其吞并，作为自己的殖民地（1908 年），并废除了这位肆无忌惮的利奥波德陛下一直容忍的种种滥用权力的可怕行为。只要能获得象牙与天然橡胶，陛下可是顾不上土著居民的命运的。

至于美利坚合众国，他们已经拥有那么多的土地，扩张领土的欲望并不强烈。不过西班牙人在古巴（西班牙在西半球的最后一块领地）的残酷统治，事实上迫使华盛顿政府采取行动。经过一场短暂而平淡无奇的战争，西班牙人被赶出了古巴、波多黎各及菲律宾，后两者则变成了美国的殖民地。

世界经济的这种发展是非常自然的。英国、法国、德国的工厂数量的迅速增加，需要不断增长的原材料产地。不断膨胀的欧洲劳工，也要求稳定地扩大食品的供应。到处都在呼吁开辟更多更丰富的市场；发现更容易开采的煤矿、铁矿、橡胶种植园和油田；增加小麦和谷物的供应。

在那些正计划开通维多利亚湖的汽船航线或修筑山东铁路的人们看来，发生在欧洲大陆的单纯政治事件已经变得无关紧要。他们知道欧洲仍然留有许多问题亟待解决，可他们不想为此操心。出于纯粹的冷漠或疏忽，他们为子孙们留下了一笔充满仇恨与痛苦的可怕遗产。自好多个世纪以来，欧洲东南角的巴尔干半岛一直是杀戮与流血之地。在 19 世纪 70 年代期间，塞尔维亚、保加利亚、门的内哥罗（今黑山）及罗马尼亚的人民再次为争取自由揭竿而起，土耳其人（在许多西方列强的支持下）极力镇压起义。

1876 年，保加利亚在经历一段极其残暴的屠杀后，俄国人民终于忍无可忍。俄罗斯政府被迫出面干涉，就像麦金利总统不得不出兵古巴，制止惠勒将军的行刑队在哈瓦那的暴行。1877 年 4 月，俄国军队越过多瑙河，风卷残云般地拿下希普卡要塞。接着，他们攻克普内瓦那，长驱向南，一直打到君士坦丁堡的城门下。土耳其紧急向英国求援。许多英国人谴责政府站在土耳其苏丹一边。可迪斯雷利决定出面干涉。他刚刚把维多利亚女王扶上印度女皇的宝座，由于憎恨俄国残酷镇压境内的犹太人，他对土耳其人反倒抱有好感。俄国被迫于 1878 年签署圣斯蒂芬诺和约，巴尔干问题则留给同年 6、7 月的柏林会议去解决。

这次著名的会议完全由迪斯雷利一手操控。面对这位留着油光发亮的卷发、态度高傲、却又具有一种玩世不恭的幽默感和出色的恭维本能的睿智老人，甚至连以强硬著称的俾斯麦都不禁畏惧三分。在柏林，这位英国首相细心看护着他的土耳其盟友的利益。门的内哥罗、塞尔维亚、罗马尼亚被承认为独立的王国。保加利亚获得半独立地位，由沙皇亚历山大二世的侄子、巴腾堡的亚历山大亲王担任统治者。然而，由于英国过分关心土耳其苏丹的命运——其领地是大英国防范野心勃勃的俄国进一步入侵的安全屏障，这几个国家均未获得机会充分发展自己的政治和经济。

更糟的是，柏林会议允许奥地利从土耳其手中夺走波斯尼亚及黑塞哥维那，作为哈布斯堡王朝的领地加以统治。诚然，奥地利人的工作做得非常出色。这两块长期被忽视的地区被管理得井井有条，不逊于任何大英殖民地。可这里聚居着大批的塞尔维亚人，早年曾是斯蒂芬·杜什汉创建的大塞尔维亚帝国的一部分。在 14 世纪初期，杜什汉成功抵御过土耳其人，使西欧免遭入侵。

当时的帝国首府乌斯库勃在哥伦布发现新大陆前 150 年前就已经是塞尔维亚人的文明中心。昔日的光荣牢牢地驻留在塞尔维亚人心中，谁又能忘记呢？他们憎恨奥地利人在这两个省份的存在。他们觉得从传统的各方面权利来说，两地应该是他们自己的领土。

1914 年 6 月 28 日，奥地利王储斐迪南在波斯尼亚首都萨拉热窝被暗杀。刺客是一名塞尔维亚学生，他的行动出于纯粹的爱国动机。

不过，这次可怕的灾难——它是引发第一次世界大战的虽非唯一却是直接的导火线，并不能归咎于那个狂热的塞尔维亚学生或他的奥地利受害者。其根源还得追溯到柏林会议的时代，那时的欧洲过分忙于物质文明的建设，而忽略了老巴尔干半岛上一个被遗忘的古老民族的渴望与梦想。

第六十二章 一个崭新的世界

世界大战其实是为建立一个新的、更美好的世界所进行的斗争

法国大革命以后

在那一小群应对法国大革命的爆发负责的热情倡导者中，德·孔多塞侯爵是人格最高尚的人物之一。他为穷苦和不幸人们的事业献出了自己的生命。他还是德·朗贝尔和狄德罗编纂《百科全书》时的主要助手之一。在大革命爆发的最初几年，他一直是国民公会里的温和派首领。

当国王和保皇分子的叛国阴谋使得激进分子有机会控制政府并大肆屠杀反对派人士的时候，孔多塞侯爵的宽容、仁慈和坚定使他沦为了受怀疑的对象。孔多塞被宣布为“不受法律保护的人”，可以任由每一个真正的爱国者随心所欲地处置。他的朋友愿意冒着生命危险藏匿他，可孔多塞拒绝接受朋友们的牺牲。他偷偷逃出巴黎，试图回到老家，那里也许是安全的。接连三个夜晚，他风餐露宿，衣衫槛楼，身上被划得伤痕累累。最后，他走进一家乡村小客店要些东西吃。警惕的乡民搜查了他，找出一本他随身携带的古拉丁诗人贺拉斯的诗集。这证明他们的囚犯是一个出身高贵的人，而在一个所有受过教育的人们都被视为革命之敌的时代，他是不应该出现在马路上的。乡民们将孔多塞捆绑起来，塞住他的嘴，将他扔进乡村拘押所。第二天早晨，当士兵们赶来把他押回巴黎斩首时，孔多塞已经死了。

这个人为人类的幸福献出了一切，却落得如此悲惨的下场，他本来是完全有理由憎恶人类的。可他写过一段话，到今天仍然与 130 年前一样铿锵在耳。我把它们抄录在下，以飨读者。

“自然赋予人类无限的希望。现在，人类挣脱枷锁，并以坚定的步伐向真理、德性、幸福的大道迈进的图画，给哲学家提供了一幅光明的前景，使他从至今仍在荼毒这个世界的种种错误、谬行和不公中超拔出来，得到莫大的安慰。”

我们身处的世界刚经历了一场剧烈的痛苦，与之相比，法国大革命不过是一次偶然事件。人们感受到巨大的震惊与幻灭之情，它扑灭了成百上千万人心中最后一线希望之火。他们也曾为人类进步高唱赞歌，可随着他们的和平祈祷而来的，却是 4 年残酷无比的战争。因此，他们不禁要自问，“值得吗？我们为尚未超越穴居阶段的人类所付出的种种艰辛和劳役，这些究竟是不是值得？”

答案只有一个。

那就是“值得”。

第一次世界大战无疑是一场可怕的灾难，可它并不意味着世界末日。正相反，它开启了一个新的时代。

关于历史的阐释

要写一部关于古希腊、古罗马或中世纪的历史是非常容易的。在那个早被遗忘的历史舞台上扮演角色的演员们已经逝去，我们可以冷静地评判他们。在台下鼓掌呐喊的观众也已风流云散，我们的批评不会伤害到他们的情感。

可要真实地描述当代发生的事件却是异常困难的。那些困扰着与我们共度一生的人们的种种难题，同时也是我们自己的难题。它们或者伤害我们太深，或者取悦我们太过，让我们难以用一种写作历史所必须的公正态度进行叙述。可历史并非宣传，应该做到公正。无论如何，我还是要告诉你们为什么我同意可怜的孔多塞对美好明天所持有的坚定信念。

此前，我曾不断提醒你们要警惕所谓的历史时代划分法所造成的错误印象，即人类的历史截然分为前后 4 个阶段：古代、中世纪、文艺复兴和宗教改革及现代，而最后一个阶段的称谓是最具危险性的。“现代”一词仿佛在暗示我们，20 世纪的人们正处于人类进步的顶点。50 年前，以格莱斯顿为首的英国自由主义者们认为，通过让工人享有与其雇主同等政治权利的第二次“改革法案”，建立一个名符其实的议会制民主政府的问题已经得到彻底解决。当迪斯雷利与他的保守派朋友批评此举是“暗夜中的瞎闯”时，他们回答说：“不”。他们对自己的事业深信不疑，并相信从今往后，社会各个阶级将通力合作，使他们共同的政府朝着良性的方向发展。此后发生过许多不尽人意的东西，而一些依然在世的自由主义者也终于开始意识到当年的过分乐观。

对于任何历史问题，都没有一个绝对的答案。

每一代人都必须重新奋斗，否则就会像史前期那些懒惰动物一样灭绝。

一旦你掌握了这一伟大的真理，你将获得一种新的、更宽广的看待生活的视野。然后，你不妨更进一步，设想你处于公元一万年时你的子孙们的位置。他们同样要学习历史，可他们对于我们用文字记录下来的短短4000年的行动与思想将作何看待呢？他们会把拿破仑当成亚述征服者提拉哈·毗列色的同时代人物，还可能把他同成吉思汗或马其顿的亚历山大混为一谈。刚结束的这场世界大战会被他们误为罗马与迦太基为争夺地中海霸权所进行的长达128年的商业战争。而在他们眼里，19世纪的巴尔干争端（塞尔维亚、保加利亚、希腊、及门的内哥罗为争取自由的战争）就像是大迁徙时代的混乱状态的延续。他们会看着不久前才毁于德国炮火的兰姆斯教堂的照片，如同我们打量250年前在土耳其与威尼斯的战争中被毁的雅典卫城的照片。他们会把我们时代许多人对死亡的恐惧视为一种小孩般的迷信，因为对一个迟至1692年还对女巫施以火刑的幼稚种族来说，这样说是毫不为过的。甚至连我们引以为荣的医院、实验室、手术室，在他们看来也不过是稍加改进的中世纪炼金术士和江湖医生的作坊而已。

原因非常简单。我们所谓的现代人其实并不“现代”。正相反，我们仍然属于穴居人的最后一代不肖子孙。新时代的地基仅仅在昨天刚刚奠定。只有当人类有勇气质疑所有现存事物，并以“知识与理解”作为创造一个更理性、更宽容的现代社会的基础时，人类才第一次有机会变得真正“文明”起来。第一次世界大战正是这个新世界“成长中的阵痛”。

在未来的很长一段时间内，人们会写出大量的书籍来证明，是这个或那个人导致了这场战争。社会主义者会出版成卷的著作来谴责“资本家”们为“商业利益”而发动了战争。资本家们则反驳道，他们在战争中失去的远远多于他们的所得——他们的子女站在冲锋的第一梯队，浴血奋战，长眠沙场。他们还会证明，各个国家的银行家是如何为阻止战争的爆发而倾尽全力。法国历史学家会历数德国人犯下的种种罪行，从查理曼大帝时代一直到威廉·霍亨索伦统治时期。德国历史学家同样会还以颜色，痛斥从查理曼时代到布思加雷首相执政时期的法兰西暴行。如此，他们便能心满意足地将“导致战争”的责任推到另一方头上。而各国的政治家们，无论已故还是健在，他们无不迫不及待地奔向打字机，倾诉他们如何尽力避免敌意，而邪恶的敌手又如何迫使自己卷入战争等等。

再过100年，历史学家将不再理睬这些歉意和托辞，他将看透外表下面的真实动机。他会明白，个人的野心、个人的邪恶或个人的贪婪与战争的最终爆发关系甚微。造成这一切灾难的最初错误，其实早在我们的科学家忙着创造一个钢与铁、化学与电力的新世界时就已经种下了。他们忘记了人类的理智比谚语中的乌龟还要缓慢、比出名的树懒还要怠惰，往往落后于那一小群充满勇气的先驱者。

披着羊皮的祖鲁人依然是祖鲁人。一只被训练得会骑自行车、会抽烟管的狗依然是狗。而一个驾着1921年新款劳斯·罗伊斯汽车、心智却停留在16世纪的商人依然不过是16世纪的商人。

如果你还不明白这一道理，请再读一遍。到某个时候，它会在你的头脑里变得清晰起来，能向你解释这最后6年所发生的许多事情。

也许我该给你举另一个更熟悉的例子来说明我的意思。在电影院里，笑话和滑稽的解说词常常映在银幕上。下一次进影院的时候，你注意观察一下观众的反应。一些人似乎很快就领会了这些词句，哈哈大笑起来。他们用了不超过1秒的时间。还有一些人慢一些，他们要花上20~30秒才笑出声来。最后，还有那些理

解力有限的男男女女，他们要在聪明的观众开始破译下一段字幕时，才对上一段若有所悟。正如我要向你们说明的，人类的生活也是如此。

在前面的章节里，我已经告诉过你们，罗马帝国的观念在最后一位罗马皇帝死后依然在人们的心里延续了1000年。它导致大量的“仿制罗马帝国”的建立。它还使得罗马主教有机会成为整个教会的首脑，因为他们正好代表着罗马的世界强权这一观念。它驱使许多原本善良无辜的蛮族酋长卷入一种充满犯罪和无休止杀戮的生涯，因为他们终生笼罩在“罗马”一词的神奇魔力之下。所有这些人，无论教皇、皇帝或普通战士，他们与我们本无区别。可他们生活在一个罗马传统笼罩下的世界，而传统是某种活生生的东西，长留在一代接一代人们心间。所以，他们殚精竭虑，耗费终生，为一个放到今天连10个支持者也找不到的事业而战。

在另一章里，我还告诉过你们，规模空前的宗教战争是如何在宗教改革出现一个多世纪后发生的。如果你将关于 30 年战争那一章和有关发明创造的章节进行比较，就会发现这场血腥的大屠杀正好发生在第一台笨拙的蒸汽机扑扑地喷着白烟在许多法国、德国、英国科学家的实验室里问世的时候。可全世界对这种奇特的机器毫不理会，依然沉浸在那些庞大而空洞的神学争执中。可放到今天，它们除了引起连天的哈欠，再也激发不起别的什么情感了。

对 19、20 世纪欧洲的描述

情形就是这样。1000 年后，历史学家会用同样的词句来描述 19 世纪的欧洲。他们会发现当大部分人们致力于可怕的

民族战争时，在他们身边的各实验室里，却有着一些对政治不感兴趣的人们在埋头工作，一心思量如何着从大自然紧守的口中掏出一秘密的答案。

现在，你们将逐渐领会这番话的用意。在不到一代人的时间里，工程师、科学家、化学家已经让欧洲、美洲及亚洲遍布他们发明的大型机器、电报、飞行器和煤焦油产品。他们创造的新世界大大缩短了时空的距离。他们发明出各式各样的新产品，又尽力将它们改进得价廉物美，使几乎每一个家庭都能负担。我已经给你们讲过了这些，可重复一遍毫不为过。

为让不断增加的工厂持续运转，已经成为土地主的工厂主们需要源源不断的原材料及煤的供应。特别是煤。可同时，大部分人的思维还停留在 16、17 世纪，依然固守着将国家视为一个王朝或政治组织的旧观念。这一笨拙的中世纪体制突然面临一大堆机械和工业世界的高度现代化的难题，难免手忙脚乱。它根据几个世纪前制定的游戏规则尽力而为。各国分别创建了庞大的陆军和海军，用以在遥远的大陆争夺殖民地。哪里尚有一小块无主的土地，哪里就会冒出一块新的英国、法国、德国或俄罗斯的殖民地。若当地居民反抗，便屠杀他们。不过他们大多不反抗。只要他们不阻挠钻石矿、煤矿、油田或橡胶园的开发，他们便被允许过和平安宁的生活，并能从外国占领者那里分享一些利益。

有时，刚好有两个正在寻找原料的国家同时看中了同一块土地。于是，战争便爆发了。15 年前，俄国与日本为争夺属于中国的土地，就曾兵戎相见。不过这样的冲突毕竟属于例外。没人真正愿意打仗。事实上，大规模使用士兵、军舰、潜艇进行相互杀戮的观念，已开始让 20 世纪初的人们感到荒谬。他们仅仅将暴力的观念与多年前不受限制的君权和汲汲钻营的王朝联系在一起。每天，他们在报纸上读到更多的发明，或看到一组组英国、美国、德国的科学家们亲密无间地携手合作，投身于某项医学或天文学的重大进步。他们生活在一个人人忙于商业、贸易和工业的世界。可只有少数人觉察到，国家（人们抱以某些共同理想的巨大共同体）制度的发展远远落后于时代。他们试图警告旁人，可旁人只专注于自己眼前的事务。

结语

我已经用了太多的比喻，请原谅我再用一个。埃及人、希腊人、罗马人、威尼斯人以及 17 世纪商业冒险家们的“国家之船”（这个古老而可信的比喻永远这么生动和形象），它们是由干燥适宜的木材建造的坚固船只，并由熟悉船员和船只性能的领导者指挥。而且，他们了解祖先传下的航海术的局限。

随后到来的是钢铁与机器的新世纪。先是船体的一部分，后来是整个国家之船都全然变样了。它的体积增大许多，风帆被换成蒸汽机。客舱的条件大为改观，可更多的人被迫下到锅炉仓去。虽然环境更加安全，报酬也不断增加，可就像以前操纵帆船索具的危险活一样，锅炉仓的工作并不让人舒心。最后不知不觉地，古老的木船变成了焕然一新的现代远洋轮。可船长和船员还是同一帮人。照 100 年前的旧法，他们被任命或被选举来操控船只。可他们使用的却是 15 世纪的老式航海术，他们的船舱内悬挂的是路易十四和弗雷德里克大帝时代的航海图和信号旗。总而言之，他们（虽然不是他们自己的过错）完全不能胜任。

国际政治的海洋并不辽阔，当众多帝国与殖民地的船只在这片狭窄海域中相互竞逐时，注定会发生事故。事故确实发生了。如果你冒险经过那片海域，你仍能看到船只的残骸。

这个故事的寓意很简单。当今的世界迫切需要能担负起新责任的领导者。他们具备远见和胆识，能清醒意识到我们的航程才刚刚开始，并掌握一套全新的航海艺术。

他们将经过多年的学徒阶段，必须排除种种反对和阻挠才能奋斗到领导者的位置。当他们抵达指挥塔时，也许嫉妒的船员会发生哗变，杀死他们。不过有一天，一个将船只安全带进港湾的人物终将出现，他将是时代的英雄。

第六十三章 从来如此

“我越是思索我们生活中的问题，我越坚信我们应选择‘讽刺和怜悯’作为我们的陪审团与法官，就像古代埃及人为其死者向女神伊西斯和内夫突斯祈求一样。”

“讽刺和怜悯是最好的顾问，前者以微笑让生活愉悦，后者用泪水使生活纯洁。”

“我所祈求的讽刺并非残忍的女神。她从不嘲笑爱与美；她温柔仁慈；她的微笑消除了我们的敌意。正是她教会了我们讥笑无赖与傻瓜，而如果没有她，也许我们会软弱到去鄙视和憎恨他们。”

我引用伟大法国作家法朗士的这些睿智言辞，作为给你们临别赠言。