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THE TIDES OF HISTORY

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BY JACQUES PIRENNE

VOLUME I

FROM THE BEGINNINGS TO ISLAM

JACQUES PIRENNE

40388

THE TIDES OF HISTORY

VOLUME II

FROM THE EXPANSION OF ISLAM
TO THE TREATIES OF WESTPHALIA

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY LOVETT EDWARDS

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FOREWORD

The first volume of this work was devoted to the history of ancient times. Before entering on the study of the new historical cycle, which begins after the downfall of the civilization of the ancient peoples, it will not be without value to pause for a moment and try to correlate the general impressions which forty centuries of history have left upon us.

Can we find in them anything more than a succession of civilizations formed in the midst of crises and wars which, after sometimes reaching a very high level, have disappeared without leaving more than a record in the memory of man? This leads us to ask: has history a meaning? Or is it only a chaos, a succession of efforts destined, like our own lives, to death and oblivion?

The life of the peoples seems to be controlled by mighty forces whose laws escape us, even as those forces which control the movements of the universe remained for so long unknown to man. Is it possible to find some order in them? The peoples of ancient times, perhaps even more than we, asked this question. They all—save for the Jews who alone attained monotheism—gave their answer in a pantheist conception of the world which, in the religions of Egypt, Persia, India and China and in the philosophy of the Greeks, reached a very high degree of spiritual progress. Let us consider them.

The most advanced religious thinking of the peoples of the Near East conceived the world as issuing from initial chaos made up at first of an unconscious fusion of matter and spirit. Spirit, by acquiring knowledge of itself—light separating from darkness—conceived and willed the world and thus made itself its creator. The world is therefore only the realization of the divine idea which is shown in all things, represented by the countless gods of polytheism. The conscience of the world, that is to say God, is the source of all form, of all life, of all thought. It is the absolute in which all contraries are made one. It is the harmony, the justice, the law of the world which is naught else than its own law—good. Good is mingled in it with the principle of life. Only the finite and imperfect nature of matter is the source of evil; death against life, sterility against fruitfulness, chaos against harmony, the material against the spiritual. Evil, therefore, exists inherent in matter whence are born the physical needs and consequently the passions of men. But the material world, inasmuch as it is part of the

created world, is also as good as it can be since it is the realization of the thought and the will of God. Every created thing, be it the whole universe or the smallest creature, being made up of matter animated by the divine breath, has in itself life and death, good and evil, between which a constant struggle is being waged. Evil tends towards chaos, towards inert matter, good towards the spirit, the absolute. Good therefore assures eternal life. To know it, we must search within ourselves, in our conscience, since this conscience is the expression of God himself. Man has therefore within himself the revelation of the good. It depends upon his will, by resisting the instincts of matter and by living according to the will of God, to gain eternal life, to participate in the absolute, and to rejoin the pure spirit, the good, pure because freed from all material form, that is to say God.

Since the created world is formed of finite matter and therefore tends towards death, it can continue to exist only by perpetual creation. But creation is the realization of the divine conscience. It is therefore conscience that assures the triumph of life and of the good. In this universe, conceived and willed by God, man who like every other thing is only a microcosm of the universe has his set place; a place higher inasmuch as in him, of all created things, conscience is made most clearly manifest. His role is to make this conscience triumph and thus to carry on, with God, the struggle against the forces of dissolution. Every man who helps the good to triumph, be it only in his innermost heart, participates in the work of creation and at the same time assures his own salvation. The sinner who allows himself to be ruled by matter returns to matter; the just man who assures the triumph of the spirit within him returns to the spirit. Whatever may be the evolution of the world, the universe therefore never ceases to become more spiritual through the efforts made by every man to attain justice, harmony and knowledge. Thus the individual is associated, through conscience, with the creative labour of divinity. No life, however obscure, is useless since its meaning is exclusively to participate in the perpetual creation of the universe by making spiritual values triumph.

It is a magnificent conception which gives man, whatever the circumstances, a role in the universe, while at the same time assigning an aim, infinite conscience, to the universe itself. It is an optimistic conception since it puts forward a reason for living; a fruitful vision since it allies the individual conscience with the universal effort towards good; a consoling vision since it makes man a free being, capable through reason of attaining knowledge; a moral vision, since it proclaims the absolute superiority of spiritual over material values; a human vision also, since by associating

life with good it establishes a harmony between physical and intellectual pleasures, between sentiment and reason, between creative love and the search for the absolute, which allows man to develop all the deeper aspirations of his being on the sole condition never to deny the primacy of the spirit.

By an analogous evolution, Hindu thought, passing progressively in the course of the centuries from animism to pantheism, conceived the world as issuing from primordial matter by the irresistible force of love, whence was born intelligence, that is to say the law which rules the universe. This love which permeates the world and gives it life, which gives it form and does not cease to re-create it by struggling against death which is inherent in matter, is what men call the divine. All creation derives from it; every creature, formed of initial matter and permeated by the divine flame, is a microcosm of the universe. The intelligence of which every man is aware by concentrating upon himself proceeds directly from God. Man is only an atom in the whole which is the universe, in which God is included and whose will and conscience it is. Human conscience is, consequently, inherent in the universal conscience. And man, before being body, is love, desire, thought, since his life, like the world itself, has emerged from chaos only by the love and the thought of God. The aim which man should pursue is therefore to ensure the dominance within him of spirit over matter, so that after this life in the created world he may rejoin the creative spirit, that is to say God.

Chinese Taoism is born of a parallel conception. The world was freed from initial chaos under the impulsion of the Tao, an impersonal and eternal principle which gives it form, gives it life and controls it. Tao is, in consequence, the supreme good. It works for the good of all beings. It is the life-force in opposition to the tendency that drives all matter to dissolution. It is the eternally creative principle but it is inseparable from the universe which it creates and which contains it.

It is at the same time the law of the universe and the universe itself. And since it is the law of the universe, it is also the law of men, that is to say morality. The supreme good therefore for men is not to strive for honours and riches which, being bound to this world, are perishable, but for virtue which, by its very essence, is merged with the law of Tao and which leads, in consequence, to the absolute, that is to say immortality.

The Egyptians and after them the Greeks posed the problem of the relation between spirit and created matter, that is to say between good and evil. Having conceived the universe as formed of matter and spirit, but as inherent in matter, they were forced to admit that even if the

spirit rules matter it is none the less subject to its influence. It is therefore necessary that it regenerate itself by constantly freeing itself from the bonds of matter, by creating itself anew. The world is therefore ruled by two laws, the law of matter which drives it towards death, that is to say evil, and the law of the spirit which drives it towards life, that is to say good. These laws, which are imposed upon the entire universe, and therefore on God himself, lead the world, after having created it, to its own dissolution and cause good to succumb under the blows of evil; but the spirit, by the creative force inherent in it, that is to say by love, by restoring its conscience to the world, gives back life to it and saves it from evil. That is the idea expressed in the Osirian symbolism and in all the mystery cults by the death of the God whose resurrection, by restoring its soul to the world, assures the triumph of good and opens to man the gates of eternal life.

All in all, the ancient religions have shown two aspects, the one metaphysical, the other mystical. But having been solely formed on the basis of ancient animisms, they could not free themselves from the claptrap with which they were encumbered by polytheism and which stifled the monotheistic tendencies of pantheism. The symbolism vested in polytheism, congealed into a misunderstood and stereotyped dogma, caused the mass of believers to return to the original ideas of a crude animism and a soulless polytheism in which the Egyptian religion ended by foundering.

The thinking of the ancient world reacted against this invading materialism. To free himself from it, Buddha preached that man can attain the absolute only by suppressing in himself all that attaches him to matter. By rejecting the life of this world he thus arrived at the most complete asceticism. Since nothing material could be permanent, there was no way to find eternal life other than to be absorbed into the Great All by renouncing as far as was possible the life of the senses. This cult of the spirit resulted in pessimism and in the denial of life. The created world, which pantheism had conceived as the expression of the divine will, was for Buddha an evil opposed to the good, which could only exist in pure spirit. Spirituality by proclaiming the bankruptcy of life became separated from it and isolated itself in an immense pride, the neighbour of death.

Men did not accept it. The disciples of Buddha returned to the conception of a Supreme Being who, permeating everything, gave man his conscience, a conscience which, since it came from God, was capable of finding Him without destroying itself. But the intransigent spirituality of Buddha had broken the world into two elements opposed to one another in the heart of every man, good struggling against evil. The great harmony

of pantheism which conceived the universe as a whole and God as the absolute was broken; there was henceforth no other solution save faith by which God could be found.

The triumph of the mystery cults throughout the Near East resulted in a similar conclusion.

Triumphant mysticism imposed itself upon the ruins of the magnificent conception of the God-Universe. But while religion, more and more exclusively preoccupied with the relations between man and the divine, no longer tried to give an explanation of the world and its laws, philosophy and science took over the task.

They reached their highest expression under the impetus of Greek thought, and gave birth to Hellenistic civilization which created an intellectual community, over and above all races, nations and religions, which was made up of tolerance, freedom of enquiry and disinterested knowledge. To the mystical attitude of the religious systems, which had up till then given man an explanation of the universe as revealed by God himself, Greek philosophy contrasted the scientific method which pursued knowledge—regarded as the highest form of the universal conscience—with no other aim than to know. It thus attained, on the rationalist plane, that spirituality which the religions were trying to attain through mysticism.

On the moral plane, rationalism led to Stoicism and mysticism prepared the way for Christianity. These were the topmost summits reached by spirituality after forty centuries of effort. Stoicism constructed its moral code on scientific reasoning and individual virtue, which it conceived in the framework of the collective happiness of men. Christianity, finding integral spirituality in Jewish monotheism, freed itself once and for all from polytheist claptrap by making pure spirit the absolute. Rejecting the pantheist idea, Christianity affirmed that the created world was not latent, like divinity, in initial chaos. God alone, pure spirit, was of all time; all life was his creation. He therefore escaped from the ascendancy of the matter that he had created from the void. But God, in creating life, had endowed it with conscience and liberty, and from the liberty of created things evil had issued. God had wished, by sacrificing himself, to become man's redeemer; he ransomed the human race from sin by teaching it that all moral conduct springs from love. Never had human thought conceived so purified an idealism, both on the metaphysical and the mystical plane. It was never to be surpassed.

In their ascent towards the spiritual, the peoples of the ancient world had all made their contribution to the civilization which was to become ours. The Egyptians built up, around works of charity, a moral code which

foreshadowed that of Christ; the Persians affirmed their faith in the final triumph of good over evil; the Jews had conceived monotheism, and the Greeks, transferring the conclusions of Eastern thinking from the mystical plane to the rational, had given the world philosophical thought and science. Egypt and Babylon had formulated the principles that have remained the foundation of modern law. Art, by drawing closer and closer to the inner life, had extracted from crude matter works of art so noble and so exalted that, down the centuries, they have never ceased to inspire humanity.

Thus the idea, conceived by the pantheism of ancient times, that the world tends, through the struggle of good against evil, towards an ever greater life of the spirit was proved true. This life of the spirit resulted in two basic ideas; one which makes individual conscience the basis of all civilization; the other which associates all individual consciences with the one divine conscience, and thus proclaims the universality of spiritual values.

The ancient world therefore did not end in total failure. Without changing the deeper instincts of men, which cannot change since the matter upon which they depend remains unchanging, it subjected them to the force of the spirit and thus made from blind and brutal forces a leaven of moral progress. It created the humanism upon which charity, art, science and also the art of living have been built. Despite the downfall of the greatest civilizations, despite the invasions of the barbarians, despite the wars, the social injustices and the crimes, the world conceived, by the efforts of individuals, a more and more exalted ideal. On the basis of the idea of the equality of men before God has been built up the idea of the equality of men amongst themselves, an idea which gave life to the great social movements which have attempted, in all civilizations, to give men a little more happiness and by doing so give them the possibility of freeing themselves from their instincts.

Certainly this advance towards an ever greater domination of conscience over instinct, of spirit over matter, was not carried out in an unbroken progress. It is only shown progressively as the resultant of periods of progress and decline. It is only across the centuries that we can realize that, despite the alternations of depth and height, this spiritual progress has been achieved for the world as a whole and that different peoples have been, during their periods of greatness, its momentary standard-bearers. History envisaged within the framework of a single nation or a single period does not allow us to discern the continuity and the unity

that dominate it, and only a wide view of the whole makes the magnificent ascent clear.

It seems that across the diverse movements of history certain constants, if not certain laws, can be seen emerging.

What strikes one at once is that the progress of humanity is not continuous. The history of the ancient world knew various periods of zenith, of which the most significant were from the XXXth to the XXth century BC, from the XVIth to the XIIth century BC and from the VIth century BC to the 4th century AD. All were followed by periods of profound decadence. However, from zenith to zenith, the spiritual acquisitions of the preceding centuries were not only found once more but were made greater as the framework of economic and political life became enlarged. The first period, which stretched from the XXXth to the XXth century BC, saw the formation of great monarchies within which was developed the individual conscience which was translated on the social plane into the emancipation of the individual freed from the group unit, and on the spiritual plane by the advent in Egypt of the first pantheist religion with moral preoccupations. But individual rights, as well as religious conceptions, still preserved a national character. During the second period, which began in the XVIth century BC, the national framework yielded before the sentiment of human unity; international law became organized, and private international law spread respect for individual rights beyond the frontiers of every state. Amenophis IV for the first time conceived religion as universal; and the equality of men before God led to the adoption of the principles of natural law which served as the basis for the earliest social legislation. Finally, from the VIth century BC the civilizations which had been formed—in the Near East, in India and in China—on the basis of trade, social, political and religious ideas, all tended towards unity. Everywhere, through wars, great empires were built up within which the ancient national, linguistic or racial characteristics died out to be replaced by the feeling of universality, on the material plane through trade and on the spiritual plane by moral concepts, in the twofold tendency towards monotheism and freedom of thought.

Civilization tends towards unity, that is to say the universal, by the triumph of the individual conscience.

Thus great empires were formed, around Rome, in Persia, India and China, which by giving the world an economic and moral basis brought it peace.

The history of ancient times therefore appears to be dominated by great

currents which showed themselves in the economic, political, religious, scientific and artistic spheres and which led, in the midst of actions and reactions, to universalism and individualism. This evolution which governs history may be compared with a swing which rises only to fall back but which mounts still higher at every motion, or to waves which fall back after rising but whose surges become more and more majestic as they approach the open sea.

These periods of zenith, of decline and of rebirth are particularly marked in those civilizations which were able to develop freely within themselves without being halted in their evolution by external forces. The most striking example of this is the history of Egypt which developed through three successive cycles. During the first, Egypt lived within her own frontiers (3500–2500 BC); during the second, she took her place in the framework of an international organization (2500–1000 BC); the third drew her into the current of world trade and integrated her within the Roman Empire which included all the Mediterranean lands.

But these cycles which succeeded one another in an ever larger framework were exactly parallel in their internal evolution. First of all the tribes became settled. In the maritime zone of the Delta, towns were formed on the sea-coast which put them in touch with foreign peoples. Trade broke down the tribal units and emancipated the individual; commerce led to an increase in civilization. Among the cities, at first rivals, federations were formed, then kingdoms; law, under the aegis of the cult centralized at Heliopolis, took the place of violence in relations first between the cities and then between states. Private morality, based on individual conscience, was formed at the same time as public law and placed under the sanction of the universal power of the gods. The kingdoms of the Delta were at last united under a single rule, that of the king, endowed with a sacred character by the high-priest at Heliopolis. Under his absolute authority, the social classes finally disappeared, law became unified, the royal taxes replaced the ancient seigniorial dues and civil equality triumphed.

In the Nile valley, on the other hand, the landowning system grouped men as serfs under the authority of lords, who were landowners, princes and priests. Society was organized according to a hierarchy of lands and persons, that is to say on personal power which step by step gave birth to a feudal monarchy of theocratic type.

The struggle broke out between the individualist society born in the maritime cities and the aristocratic society created on the land. The cities,

divided amongst themselves, succumbed and the feudal kings of the South unified Egypt. But monarchic unity, by opening feudal Egypt to the trade of the Delta cities, broke the framework of the closed manorial economy; and the destruction of the seigniorial régime, which followed as a consequence, led to the disappearance of social classes and of the feudal system, to the advantage of the monarchy.

When the royal power became the only holder of sovereignty, both urban and feudal autonomies were reduced. Throughout the whole country, now wide open to trade, the law was unified. The serfs were freed, the nobility lost their privileges and woman, legally emancipated, became the equal of man. The suppression of the ancient social groups led to the disappearance of hereditary functions; officials replaced the nobility, and taxes, necessary to pay the officials, took the place of the ancient social levies. The monarchy, tempered by the individual liberty that it had itself made general by destroying the privileged classes, adopted a theory of power. The state, centralized and organized, assured personal security. Thenceforward, justice ceased to concern itself with order and concerned itself with equity. While the king was extending his power, the law became more and more centred on the individual, who was freed from all authority save that of the state; thus the conception of the unitary state was accompanied by that of the equality of men not only before the gods—for religion was unified at the same time as the state—but before the king and, in consequence, among themselves. But if men were equal it was the task of the state, which had a unique authority over them, to assure every man the right to a living. Individualism caused the state to introduce social legislation; and since all social activities passed little by little into the hands of the state, it was forced, in order to satisfy social needs, to increase continually the administrative machine nourished by the taxes.

Individualism and centralization therefore developed alongside one another up to the time when the state, in order to assure its social mission, was compelled to use restraint. To have sufficient resources at its disposal, it had first of all to exercise fiscal restraint, which brought in its train economic restraint, the inevitable precursor of social restraint.

Social unity by becoming transformed into state socialism ended by making the state the enemy of the individual. But individualism had concentrated all power in the hands of the state, that is to say of an immense class of officials which the plethoric mechanism of the administration had made irresponsible. Isolated when confronted by the irresistible state machine, in the hands of an all-powerful oligarchy, the citizen

could only surrender. But the state whose structure made it entirely dependent on the taxes could live only by reason of those taxes. Fiscal restraint drained the country, and the state could no longer maintain the machinery that it had itself created and which had become indispensable to its existence. Unable to make its fiscal restriction bear fruit, it had to free itself of its obligations by handing over the task to rich and powerful citizens to whom it granted, in compensation, social and political privileges. It was thus forced to revert, through the reimposition of social restrictions, to the rebuilding of the class system and to suppress the equality of men amongst themselves on which it had been founded. Thus both individual liberty and the authority of the state disappeared. Since the state because of its lack of resources had handed over its authority an oligarchy superimposed itself as a ruling class over the mass of the people. The functions conceded to 'the great ones' became hereditary. Merging their own lands with the state domains which they administered, the governors became great landed seigneurs; and exercising in their own names the public powers delegated to them by the king, they transformed themselves into princes. The declining monarchy reverted to feudalism and lost its power. The country was once again broken into feudal estates, which led to personal power and a class system of lands and men. Trade, reduced to the barest necessities, became concentrated in the cities where it assured the existence of a free middle-class, isolated in the midst of the servile régime to which the people as a whole returned under the rule of their seigneurs.

Thus, after a long evolution which lasted for a thousand years, from the unification of the country to the dissolution of the Ancient Empire, Egypt reverted once more to a political and social condition similar to that she had known at the beginnings of her history.

The second evolution, which covered a period of fifteen centuries, reproduced all the stages passed through in the first; after a feudal period followed by a monarchical reconstruction Egypt was to know three centuries of zenith in the times of the New Empire under the glorious reigns of the kings of the 18th dynasty (XVIth to XIIth centuries BC); then, after the period of state socialism of the Ramesids, she slid into a dismemberment which in turn ushered in another period of feudalism in the XIth century.

The third cycle also passed through a long period of feudalism, sacerdotal in the south and military in the north, followed by a stage of monarchical and democratic individualism under the 26th dynasty which, continuing throughout the Persian occupation, led to the centralized empire of the

Ptolemies, in which state socialism and controlled economy ruined Egypt and made her the prey of the Roman power.

The Roman Empire, of which Egypt was then a part, passed through a similar evolution. After the period of construction under the Caesars and the liberalism of the Antonines, it slipped into state socialism under the Severi and then, under Diocletian, into controlled economy and social restraint, which was to lead the Western Empire to its downfall and to prepare the way for feudalism, the study of which begins this volume.

The reader will recognize, throughout the historical evolution of all the other peoples of the ancient world, not only in the Near East but also in India and China, a close parallel to the cycles sketched out above in the various periods of their development. And he will doubtless be struck by the fact that a constant evolution of ideas corresponds to the economic, social and political evolution that led society through feudalism to monarchy and from monarchy to centralized empire.

The international trade which led to the disappearance of the feudal seigniorial régimes, by replacing serfdom by individual liberty, opened the way to freedom of thought and, by breaking down the framework of the local groups, drew them into the orbit of world trade and substituted for national conceptions, which are common to all primitive communities, a civilization wide open to outside influences. This parallel development of individualism and universalism in all the countries which took part in trade and cultural exchanges was shown in a great current of idealism, similar to that which spread through the world from the VIIth to the Vth century BC, in Egypt with Osirian mysticism, in Persia with Zoroaster, in India with Buddha, in China with Lao-Tse and in Greece with Plato.

The widening of the framework of economic life entailed a parallel widening of political life. A strengthening of the monarchies and a policy of imperialism corresponded to the development of world trade. Central institutions were organized, based on wealth created by commerce. Social individualism led to the conception of natural law. The impetus given to freedom of thought led to rationalism which, alongside religious speculation, led to scientific methods. Realism appeared in all fields of activity. It was not by chance that in Greece Aristotle was the contemporary of Alexander and that at the same epoch in China the doctrines of Mencius served as a basis for the monarchical policy upon which the Tsin were to build their empire.

If we consider the different stages through which the peoples passed in the course of their historical evolution, we can distinguish clearly two

dissimilar types of civilization. One is that of a society formed within a closed social group, which lives in a narrow political and religious unit, exclusively national; in it, the individual is entirely subordinated to the group which appeals to the most fanatical intolerance and relies upon the racial superiority that it claims for itself. Its essential wealth is the land; its only way of increase is by conquest.

The second is a society based on trade and consequently influenced by the peoples with whom it is constantly in touch. The exchange of ideas and the needs of trade, despite the conflicts caused by competition, lead to the liberalism and tolerance always associated with cosmopolitanism. War is not enough to enrich merchants. They must have collaboration. The initiative that commerce arouses forces men to individualism, both on the social and on the intellectual plane.

The Assyrian civilization is the most perfect example of the first of these types; the Hellenistic civilization marks the zenith of the second.

In their beginnings all peoples lived in the manner of the closed civilization; historical evolution led them gradually towards a system more and more open to the outside world; and since the sea is the great trade-route, it was quite naturally the peoples who were in contact with the sea who were the first to become civilized. Generally speaking, therefore, the most developed type of civilization is that of the sea-coast peoples, but only if the sea is for them a gateway to the world and not a frontier that cuts them off from the world.

These two types of civilization, the one cosmopolitan, individualist and liberal, the other nationalist and based on the social group, and all the intermediate types to which they gave rise, have always co-existed, either because of differing geographical situation or because their level of evolution was dissimilar. It is not enough for relations to be established between men for them to be able to accept similar institutions. Societies, like individuals, have the characteristics of their age, that is to say their degree of evolution, which it is impossible to disregard.

According to their type of civilization—maritime or continental—or according to the stage of their evolution, the peoples are faced with problems posed in an absolutely dissimilar manner, since their economic life and their religious, spiritual and political ideas do not coincide. It is therefore impossible to try to unify them without giving rise to insoluble crises. This was the greatest drama into which the peoples of the ancient world were plunged by the attempts made by the Assyrians, the Persians and, later, Alexander the Great to unite in a single empire the continental regions of Nearer Asia and the Mediterranean countries which were

dominated by seaborne trade and by the urban middle classes created by it. The geographical unity of Nearer Asia, extending from the Syrian coast and the Black Sea as far as the Indus, was, because of the great mirage of unity that it created through the centuries, the origin of the great imperialist wars in which the eastern peoples were involved from the VIIIth to the Ist centuries BC.

But by remaining separate entities after the dismemberment of the Empire of Alexander the maritime countries—the Greek kingdom of Macedonia, Syria and Egypt—whose economic interests were complementary, found themselves involved in terrible conflicts for trade leadership which exhausted them.

These wars, some caused by territorial imperialism and others by trade rivalry, continued until Rome came on the scene and united all the Mediterranean lands in a single empire. By uniting in a single empire the maritime powers whom the sea had made into an economic unit the Roman Empire put an end to the struggles for leadership. By separating its Mediterranean regions from Nearer Asia, it made possible the formation of a Persian Empire composed of all the continental countries of the Near East and therefore viable because homogeneous. Thenceforward the two types of civilization, the one maritime in the Roman Empire, the other continental in the Persian Empire, developed freely.

If the Roman Empire was able to weld rapidly into a single whole these diverse countries it was because, grouped in the framework of a common civilization, they all developed in a common economic and social structure—mercantile and democratic—and towards the same moral ideas, individualist and universalist, so fully epitomized in Christianity.

It thus appeared that the historical evolution demanded by the constant widening of contacts among men was not to be realized in the framework, imposed by geography, of a continental unit, nor under the influence of similarity of race or affinity of language. It resulted in the grouping in a close economic, political and moral unity of all the peoples between whom the sea had established contacts which, over and above differing races, languages, customs and institutions, ended by imposing on them a similar type of civilization, whose unity was expressed in Hellenistic thinking, the parallel use of the Greek and Latin languages, and the Christian religion.

The unity of the Roman Empire was only maintained as long as all its parts remained dominated by their maritime character. The great crisis of the 3rd century, by destroying the prosperity of the cities in the western part of the empire and by favouring in it the ascendancy of the great

landed proprietors, led to the disappearance of Roman unity. Whereas the Eastern provinces remained dependent on the sea and international trade, those of the West, for whom the ocean was only a sterile frontier, reverted to the landholding and seigniorial system and began to slide into mediaeval feudalism, following a process of evolution similar to that which the Ancient Empire and the New Empire of Egypt had known. This split, between the East and the West, in the economic and social structure of the Roman Empire, which took place at the end of the 3rd century, affected political institutions and was the underlying cause of the reforms of Diocletian, who made the empire a dyarchy. The fissure continued to grow deeper. The landholding West lost all cohesion and, incapable of resisting the Germanic invasions, broke up into kingdoms on a seigniorial basis; whilst the East, grouped around its great business cities, preserved for another thousand years the developed type of civilization directly derived from Hellenism.

Thus the whole history of the countries of the Near East and the Mediterranean is shown as dominated by the profound difference between the two types of civilization, continental and maritime. Lack of understanding of the incompatibility which hindered their union in a single state plunged the world into general wars in which the history of ancient times came to an end; the balance established by the grouping of the maritime peoples and the continental peoples opened the era of the empires, which was also the era of prosperity and peace.

A similar statement holds true for the history of China. Once unified, the Chinese Empire, maritime in its coastlands and continental in its northern provinces, assumed a type of mixed civilization because of the penetration along the great rivers and the caravan routes from the ports and from Central Asia. This civilization maintained its unity throughout the empire as long as its relations with the outside world remained open by the continental trade-routes of the Tarim valley. But every time these were closed, thus isolating the northern provinces from world trade, the empire fell to pieces, since the social antinomy which was then established between the regions of the North, which immediately developed towards a seigniorial régime, and the urban and maritime regions of the South, made the maintainance of a single system of government impossible for the whole of the empire, now deprived of its unity.

The two types of civilization, continental and maritime, both ended by forming empires. The continental empires evolved towards an absolutism dependent on a landowning aristocracy. The cities played a secondary role, forming islands of individualist law in the midst of a semi-serf rural

population. Religion kept a nationalist character—as in Persian Zoroastrianism—and the influence of the external world only penetrated there—as in Assyria—to give techniques and not legal or philosophical ideas. All the continental empires collapsed in a similar manner, destroyed by an oligarchy which had usurped the royal power.

The maritime empires, on the other hand, were built on fluid wealth and took their individualist law from the merchant cities. National traits were merged, under the influence of individual liberalism, into a civilization cosmopolitan in type expressed in a universal religion. The absolutism towards which the central power evolved, far from relying on a privileged aristocracy, assumed an egalitarian character which was translated into economic and social reforms which in turn led to state socialism and, through state socialism, to ruin.

There is certainly one question which must be asked, urgently, about the history of the ancient world: is the decline of all civilizations inevitable?

History teaches us that civilization is maintained only by balance and that the ruin of all the empires was caused by the breakdown of social balance.

It is undeniable that civilization advances parallel with the development of the value of the individual. Progress and individualism are therefore, throughout the ascending evolution of civilization, inseparable ideas. Society only exists as a sum-total of distinct individualities and its value is decided consequently by the value of individuals. But the individual himself can live only in the framework of society; his personality, in order to develop freely, must depend on the collaboration of his peers. Individual liberty is therefore only a factor of progress insofar as it is assured to all men, which presupposes a balance between the rights of the individual and his social obligations.

Whenever this balance breaks down to the benefit of the individual, individualism becomes anarchic, egocentric and thus destructive. That is why, in the economic field, liberalism after having created international contacts which were the basis of Hellenistic civilization, after having broken down social restraints and emancipated thought, caused the appearance of great concentrations of capital, which gave the capitalists a power whose abuse was apparent in the great Roman crises. Individual liberty, set up as an economic dogma, ended by rejecting all social morality. The mass of the people was crushed by the power of money and the crudest materialism prevailed. On the religious plane, egocentric individualism

led religion to concern itself more and more exclusively with problems of individual salvation, thus giving it—in the mystery cults—an anthropocentric character which caused it to lose its sense of the universal, which was taken up once more by philosophy and science. But science is of necessity limited; metaphysical problems escape it. It was restricted to the study of the tangible world, which led to the appearance of an Epicurus or a Lucretius.

Thus began at the same time the crisis of capitalism which resulted in pauperism, social unrest, anarchy and dictatorship, and the crisis of morality which resulted in scepticism.

In all domains, crisis was revealed as a lack of balance. Stoicism searched for a solution in the creation of a new balance which, basing individualism on natural law, wished both to ensure individual liberty by imposing on every citizen respect for the rights of others—that is to say by combining creative individualism with the interests of society—and to free society from materialism by finding in the equality of men the basis of moral precepts independent of all religions.

This Stoic reaction was the origin of the social laws of the Hellenistic period, of the control of banking instituted by Caesar, of the nationalization of the mines carried out by Augustus and of the credits to the middle classes organized by Tiberius. But whereas Rome found the solution to the crisis of large-scale capitalism by setting up a régime of liberal economy, of free exchange and fluidity of wealth tempered only by state control over the main sources of wealth as represented by the mines and over the financial activities of the banks, China, faced with a similar problem, reacted quite differently. In China as in Rome empire meant individual emancipation and the advent of ideas of natural law. In Rome, a maritime empire, the equality to which men aspired was to be equally free in all their activities. In China, a continental empire, equality consisted in making access to ownership of land available to all. Without doubt the reforms of Wang-Mang tended, as did those of Caesar and Augustus, to protect the mass of the people against the too-great power of the capitalists by creating a mining monopoly and a control of the silver market, but the essential element was the confiscation of all the great domains which made possible the redistribution of land. Democracy in Rome was liberal; in China it was social and egalitarian. It was to find its most radical expression in the 7th century, in the great egalitarian reform of the Tang, which confiscated all land for the benefit of the state and shared out the enjoyment of it equally among all the peasants.

A similar social tendency was also to be found in the democratic aspira-

tions of the people of the Sassanid Empire; the revolt which followed the Manichaean heresy ended in the momentary triumph of land-communism. This was the essential difference between the maritime and continental civilizations. In the first, democracy tended towards liberalism, in the second towards egalitarianism.

In China as in Rome, however, the problem was the same; how to restore the balance between individual and social interests. Both looked for a solution in the development of social theses which led to state socialism. But this did not suffice to restore the balance; reversing the problem, state socialism crushed the individual to the benefit of the state. But society having no real existence in itself became merged with the state. The authority of the emperor, trying to make himself the instrument of social unity, centred all the powers in the hands of the state which, in order to assure the maximum possible well-being of all citizens, fixed society in more and more rigid categories. Reducing all activities to social duties, authoritarian absolutism set up controlled economy, led to social restraints, which it tried to justify by an ideology which was made compulsory. The end of individual initiative, by provoking the degradation of all values, henceforth subjected to the deified authority of the emperor, dragged civilization into an irremediable decline.

Faced with material and moral collapse, the only remaining refuge was in the life beyond. This was the origin of the great mystical movements which, in the 5th and 6th centuries, spread so widely in both Buddhism and Christianity.

Thus the balance broke down more and more; on the social plane between the individual and the state, on the spiritual plane between faith and science.

The crisis could only be settled by a return to balance, which took place in China, or by the ruin of all that civilization had acquired of material and intellectual values, which took place in the Roman Empire of the West. There remained only two ideas, preserved in the monasteries, saved by Christianity from the total disaster, one which made the individual conscience the mainspring of all civilization, the other which gave a universal value to moral ideas. In this way the two great conquests of the thought of the ancient world survived. They were to serve as a foundation for the patient work of reconstruction which the West was to take up once more, as Egypt had taken them up once more after the great state socialist crises following the decline of the Ancient Empire and the New Empire.

All in all, if we have concluded that, on the spiritual plane, the civiliza-

tion of the ancient world was not bankrupt, we are forced to admit that, in the field of economic, social and political institutions, it failed to free itself from a cycle which, through feudalism, monarchy and state socialism, led it successively to ruin, because it had not known how to organize a balance between the rights of the individual and the interests of society.

JACQUES PIRENNE

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PART ONE

THE CONTINENTAL ERA

BOOK I

Islam Revives World Trade and Isolates the West
(7th to 10th Century)

CHAPTER I

ISLAM

I. MOHAMMED AND THE BEGINNINGS OF ISLAM

The Origins

SINCE the most ancient times Arabia, because of the caravan routes crossing it and its coastwise shipping, had played a considerable role in trade relations between West and East.

In the 6th century AD Arabia had a number of important cities, Muscat on the Gulf of Oman, Aden, an indispensable staging-post on the sea-route to India, Medina and Mecca, great caravan marts on the Asian route to the Red Sea.

In the desert of Nedj, the Bedouin nomads were entrusted with the protection of the caravans. At the end of the 3rd century the Sassanids had recruited auxiliaries amongst them and had settled them in Mesopotamia. They had formed there, under the Lakhmid dynasty, a little Arab kingdom, vassal of Persia, of which Hira on the Euphrates was the capital, and they were soon converted to Nestorian Christianity. In the 6th century Justinian had settled Bedouins in the south of Syria; they too formed a little vassal kingdom under the family of the Ghassanids and had been converted to Christianity, but in the monophysite form which was then prevalent in Syria and in Egypt.

The conquest of the Yemen by Chosroes I had brought Medina and Mecca even more closely into touch with world trade. The influence of the outside world had increased there and the mystical movement had been greatly accelerated by the triumph of Christianity. The Christian communities, already numerous in the Arabian cities, were almost entirely recruited from amongst the people. The Jews, on the other hand, had a leading role in the business community; and the anti-Semite persecutions of Heraclius were to reinforce still more the Jewish plutocracy which dominated the important centre of Medina because of the emigration towards Arabia that they had caused.

Mohammed

Mohammed was born in Mecca about 570. He belonged to the middle class, and at first lived as a merchant. In his youth a Christian monk, whom he met while taking caravans into Syria, initiated him into Christianity. That was the beginning of his mystical vocation. Obsessed by this, he gave up business and devoted himself to prophecy; he professed a single God, the resurrection of the dead and the punishment of sinners, and exhorted men to win their salvation by prayer and alms. In the cities the common people, a prey to social and mystical movements, rallied around him. He seemed a troublesome agitator and the merchant patricians had him expelled from Mecca. He then retired to Medina, where he was strongly influenced by Judaism. He became familiar with the Bible and declared that Abraham, the father of Ishmael, was the ancestor of the Arabs and that Jerusalem was the holy city of his followers. His ascendancy over the people was soon so great that they seized power from the merchant plutocracy and made Mohammed head of the city. He became a social as well as a religious reformer and united the people of Medina in a closed community for whom he began to edit the Koran, which was to become both law and holy book. To gain the upper hand he had to triumph over the monied classes. Frightened by his democratic tendencies, the Jewish merchants left Medina where the revolution was triumphant and allied themselves with the upper classes in Mecca. The mysticism of Mohammed ended in a social conflict which led him to break with Judaism. The fate of Islam, thenceforward, was decided; it was to be an autonomous religion, of which Mecca and not Jerusalem was to be the Holy City.

The democratic party, which had rallied around the mysticism of Mohammed, was master of Medina. The rich oligarchy, faithful to the established order, held Mecca. War broke out between the two cities. In 630 Mohammed entered Mecca as a victor. The party of the Jewish merchants made Khaibar the centre of their resistance. This city too was taken, and the defeated Jews had their goods confiscated while waiting to be expelled from Arabia.

Islam satisfied the social, mystical and monotheist aspirations of the people of the cities. Throughout Arabia they embraced it enthusiastically. A revolt of the Bedouin, who wanted to resist the domination of the cities, was overcome; and when Mohammed died in 632 the whole Hejaz adhered to the new religion and Arabia was awaiting its unification.

This was achieved by Abu-Bekr, the father-in-law of Mohammed

(632–634). The business community however, to which Abu-Bekr himself belonged, rapidly recovered its political influence and while the people as a whole adhered to the monotheist religion of salvation, the business classes used the religious proselytism in which this mysticism was expressed to the advantage of its commercial interests.

The First Conquests

Omar (634–644), appointed by Abu-Bekr to succeed him, was representative of this merchant oligarchy. Chief of State as well as religious leader, he undertook a policy dictated by the interests of the great cities of Medina and Mecca. These depended upon international trade, the keys of which were in Mesopotamia and Syria and at Alexandria.

Islamic mysticism was to become an instrument of imperialism, directed against both Persia and the Byzantine Empire. But Persia and Byzantium, both exhausted by the wars in which they had just been involved, were incapable of serious resistance to the Arab army inflamed by religious enthusiasm.

The Arab kingdom of the Lakhmids had been transformed in the 6th century into a Persian satrapy. Converted to Islam, Hira opened the gates of Mesopotamia to the Moslem army; it entered there in 637. After the crushing defeat just inflicted on her by Byzantium, Persia was decomposing in anarchy under the disrupting action of the landholding mobility which had divided the kingdom into seigniorial princedoms. It was also much divided by the persecutions waged by the Mazdaist clergy against the Nestorian Christians. Incapable of resisting the Arab invasion, King Yezdigird III sought refuge at Merv, whence he appealed in vain for aid to the Emperor of China. By 642 all Persia was occupied.

Omar had scarcely won his first victories in Persia before he began the struggle against Byzantium. The situation there was not much better than in Persia. The emperor, whose treasury had been emptied by the war, had just suppressed the military credits for the defence of the Syrian marches which were to become the invasion road. They had nothing left to protect them save the Arabs of the Ghassanid kingdom. The eastern provinces coveted by Omar were torn by social, religious and nationalist disputes. The monotheists, recruited from the mass of the people, were not only a religious sect, but a democratic and national movement. On the religious plane—it will be recalled that they denied the humanity of Christ—they regarded the Orthodox with fanatical hostility, since they looked on the doctrine of the Trinity as polytheism; on the social and national plane, they represented the party of the peasant serfs in opposition

to the great Hellenistic landowners. Islam, directly derived from the rigorous Jewish monotheism, which considered Jesus to be only a prophet, seemed to them closer to their own religious ideas; in their eyes, it was only a Christian sect.

That was why, after the capture of the citadel of Bostra (634) and the defeat of the Byzantine army on the Yarmuk (636), Syria was conquered with the greatest ease. At Jerusalem the Jews, persecuted since the reign of Heraclius, hailed the Arabs as liberators (637). Monophysite Alexandria welcomed the Mohammedan Omar (642) as Catholic Gaul had welcomed the pagan Clovis.

Also the close trade relations which had existed for centuries between the Syrians, the Egyptians and the Arabs prevented them from regarding one another as real enemies.

By 643 the empire of Omar stretched from the Caspian to Cyrenaica.

Conflict Between Mystical and Imperialist Trends

On Omar's death (644) a serious crisis divided Islam. It is characteristic of Islam that the Koranic law governs the entire life of its adherents, not only on the religious plane, but also on the political, economic and social planes. This unquestioned obedience to the Law—of which Mohammed forbade discussion—was controlled by an implacable determinism. According to Koranic dogma, God in creating Adam had created at the same time all the generations of men, had received their oath of loyalty and had made them return one after the other into the loins of the first man and there enclosed them. All men were therefore presupposed to have promised loyalty to the God of Mohammed, and unbelievers could therefore be regarded only as rebels who must answer for their disloyalty. This dogma means that Islam must strive to impose its rule, that is to say the rule of the true God, on all men and that the actions of every man are determined before his birth. Certainly, however, man has freedom—and this will be the cause of heresies—to choose between the good things of this world and the next. According to the choice he makes, man will suffer eternal punishment or will see his fidelity rewarded eternally in the paradise of Allah.

Salvation depends entirely on faith. The faithful will be saved whatever they do, though they may have to endure a period of proving in the first circle of hell, a sort of purgatory. Hell itself is reserved for those who deny God, that is to say for infidels only.

The Arabs, and after them all the Moslems, thus appeared as the chosen of God. But this imposed upon them the rigorous observation of Law

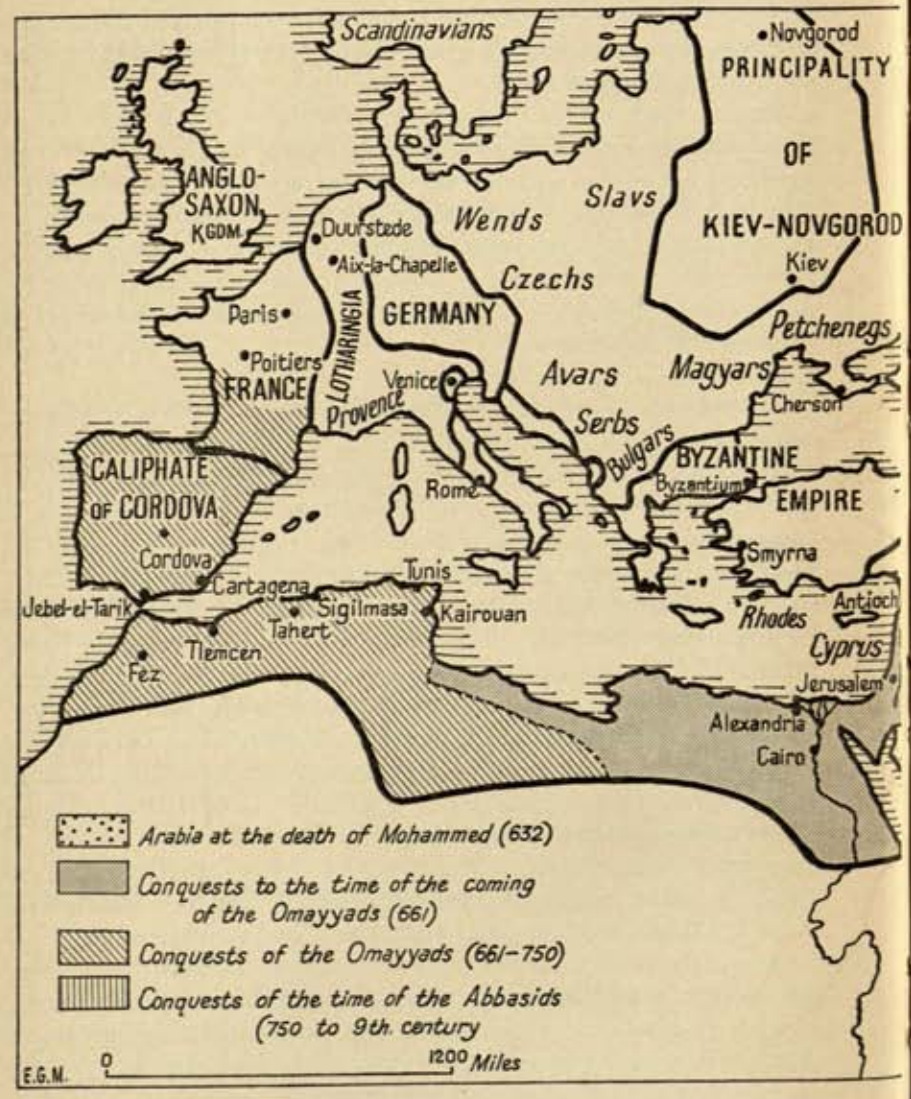
revealed to them, which was contained *ne varietur* in the Koran. This required believers not to mix with idolaters—amongst whom Jews and Christians were never numbered—and to form among themselves a band of brothers, practising charity and purity, and respecting the family law created by the Koran to replace the former Arab clan, and also to celebrate the ritual, the prayers, the ablutions, the alimentary tabus and the fasts prescribed by the prophet.

After the death of Omar (644), however, differing trends were evident amongst the Moslems, each represented by one of the sons-in-law of the prophet. Ali, a mystic, rallied around him the purely Arab pietist element. Othman, on the other hand, who came from the Mecca aristocracy, allowed his suppler piety to come to terms with temporal preoccupations. For him the empire was already more important than Arabia. After his election to the caliphate, Othman had to contend with a civil war, and when he fell, assassinated by Arab mutineers (656), the power passed to Ali and the pietists (656–661).

However, Moawiya, who had become governor of the great business city of Damascus, refused to recognize Ali. Islam was divided into two hostile sects; the Shiites ('partisans'), the pietists, whose centre was at Mecca, and the Kharedjites ('rebels'), the imperialists, who held sway at Damascus. The Kharedjites won the day. Ali was assassinated in 661, and Moawiya transformed the caliphate, which had till then been elective, into a hereditary power. Islam became a monarchy under the dynasty of the Ommayads. From the great trading metropolis of Damascus where Moawiya fixed his capital, he gave its first form to the great empire which was being built up, by dividing it, as the Achaemenids had done earlier, into vast provinces entrusted to viceroys, holders of all the civil and military powers of the caliph. The rudiments of a central government were formed at Damascus, conceived in a similar manner to that of Darius twelve centuries before; a chancellery centralized the correspondence of the caliph with his viceroys and a service of couriers was formed on the Byzantine model between the various parts of the empire; Arabic became the sole official language; and since the Ommayads represented the interests of the business classes they gave their closest attention to improving the economic unity of their empire by giving it a single monetary system, based on bimetallism and the duodecimal system of the countries who were the heirs of Babylon; the gold dinar (twelve gold francs) was made up of twelve silver dirhams (one gold franc).

Within this framework, both flexible and standardized, local institutions were respected and, in order to administer their conquests, the

Map No. 1


Scandinavians
Novgorod
PRINCIPALITY
OF
KIEV-NOVGOROD
Kiev
ANGLO-
SAXON
KGDM.
Duurstede
Aix-la-Chapelle
Wends
Slavs
Czechs
GERMANY
LOTHARINGIA
Paris
Poitiers
FRANCE
Provence
Venice
Avars
Magyars
Petchenegs
Cherson
Serbs
Bulgars
BYZANTINE
EMPIRE
Byzantium
Rome
CALIPHATE
OF CORDOVA
Cordova
Cartagena
Tunis
Jebel-el-Tarik
Sigilmasa
Kairouan
Tahert
Tlemcen
Fez
Smyrna
Rhodes
Antioch
Cyprus
Jerusalem
Alexandria
Cairo
Arabia at the death of Mohammed (632)
Conquests to the time of the coming of the Omayyads (661)
Conquests of the Omayyads (661–750)
Conquests of the time of the Abbasids (750 to 9th. century
E.G.M.
0
1200 Miles

THE CONQUESTS OF ISLAM
Bolgary
Khazars
Turkish
Tribes
Eighur
Turks
Sarkel
Itil
Kashgar
Tarim
Trebizond
Khorasan
Bukhara
Samarkand
Merv
Kabul
Aleppo
EMPIRE OF BAGHDAD
Peshawar
Damascus
BAGHDAD
Ispahan
Kaf
Hira
Bostra
Bassorah
PRATIHARA
EMPIRE
Nejd
Baluchistan
Khaibar
Medina
Arabia
Muscat
Oman
Mecca
Red Sea
Hedjaz
RASHTTRAKUTA
EMPIRE
MAHARASHTRA
EMPIRE
Yemen
Hadhramaut
Aden
Chola

B*

caliphs appealed to Coptic, Persian and Greek officials without, however, making any attempt at imposing Islam upon them.

The Triumph of the Imperialists and the Ommayad Dynasty (661–750)

While respecting their faith and their institutions, the Arab occupation made itself the more easily accepted by the conquered peoples by favouring their economic interests and facilitating trade relations between Egypt, Syria and India, since both the sea-route by the Red Sea and the land-route by way of Mesopotamia and Beluchistan were now dependent on the same empire. The ancient Persian Empire of the Achaemenids was thus restored as in its finest days. Quite naturally, the Ommayads were once again to adopt the foreign policy which, twelve centuries earlier, had been that of Darius. Masters of the trade-routes to Central Asia and India, they strove to dominate international trade by imposing their mastery on the Mediterranean. As Persia, in the times of the Persian wars, had tried to annex Greece, so the Empire of Damascus set out to conquer Constantinople. The Syrian and Egyptian fleets gave it naval supremacy. Rhodes was occupied; and Byzantium, without doubt, would have been overcome had not the incontestable superiority of arms that it then possessed, thanks to the recently invented Greek fire, assured the victory of the Greek ships (677).

Islam Wrests Mastery of the Mediterranean from Byzantium

During the next few years the Byzantine Empire fell into profound decadence. Deprived of its richest provinces, its greatest ports and its most active industrial centres, cut off from India and the Far East, it passed through a very severe economic crisis which forced it to revert to the political methods of autarchy and state socialism. The decline in the trade of the empire and in the influence of big business allowed the landowning aristocracy to take into their hands the reins of command. In 695 the aristocratic party seized the Emperor Justinian II, who was opposed to its encroachments on the rights of the state, and cut off his nose. The Bulgarians immediately crossed the frontiers of the empire, intervened at Constantinople—as formerly the Germans had done at Rome—and restored the emperor to the throne.

While these dynastic troubles were paralysing Byzantium, the Moslem fleet captured Carthage (697), which was to be replaced by the new city of Tunis. Thus master of the Mediterranean, Islam rapidly conquered all northern Africa.

In 711 Tarik, an African Moor, crossed into Spain where the Visigothic

dynasty, rent by family dissentions, collapsed. Two years later, the sovereignty of the caliph of Damascus was proclaimed at Toledo.

Islam Spreads to Asia but is Checked in Europe

At the same time Islam penetrated into Central Asia. In 711 the Indus basin, made an easy prey by its feudal dismemberment, was occupied. For the first time since Alexander the Great, the Indus again formed part of a Mediterranean Empire. Taking up once again the policy of Alexander, Islam tried to build up its sea-power. It had first, therefore, to conquer the coasts of Europe. An attack was again launched against Constantinople. But in 718 Leo III the Isaurian, who foreseeing the contest had restored the naval and military power of Byzantium, defeated the Moslem army and fleet and reconquered the coasts of Asia Minor. Once again—as formerly during the Persian wars—Greece checked Asia in the campaign for universal empire. In Gaul the Moslem onrush was broken at Poitiers in 732, when Charles Martel opposed it with all the forces of united Catholicism. From then on, the destinies of Islam were decided. Defeat in Europe shifted its centre of gravity to Nearer Asia. As in the ancient times of the East, Mesopotamia, dethroning the Mediterranean, once more became the main artery of international trade. A serious crisis was bound to result.

Arabia, the cradle of Islam, ceased to be its vital centre; it was Persia which became its heart. Conquered by its conquests, Islam fell deeply under Iranian influences. These even affected its religious ideas, arousing the protests of the Shiites who preserved at Mecca the purity of the original faith. The shifting of the economic centre of the empire resulted in fresh civil wars, caused by religious reasons, in the course of which the Ommayad dynasty was massacred and was replaced by the dynasty of the Abbasids, originally from the Persian province of Khorasan. Under it, Persian influences were to prevail throughout the empire; Damascus was abandoned as capital in favour of Baghdad.

2. THE EMPIRE OF BAGHDAD

Organization of the Empire

With the Abbasids the empire ceased to be Arabian and became Moslem. Arabia lost its leading role. Mecca remained a place of pilgrimage, but the capital of the empire was Baghdad on the Tigris, heir of the ancient Babylon and Ctesiphon of the Parthians. Quite naturally, the Abbasid caliphate regarded itself as the successor of the Sassanid monarchy, revived

its institutions, its court ceremonial, its civilization, its architecture and also its wealth.

The imperial framework created by the Ommayads was rapidly to be transformed into a centralized government ruled by the caliph, whose powers, both spiritual and temporal, made him an absolute monarch by divine right. But at the same time the equality of the faithful before God gave them civil equality within the empire; under the Abbasids there were no privileges, no castes and no hereditary nobility save that made up of the descendants of Ali and the members of the ruling family, both under the orders of marshals of the nobility. Every subject of the caliph, even were he a slave, could reach the highest office by his own merits. It meant the destruction both of social classes and landowning nobility.

The Abbasid Empire, absolute and democratic, returned to the ideas that had created the greatness of ancient Egypt.

Alongside the luxurious court, controlled by a chamberlain, where the caliph sat surrounded by imperial pomp, a government was organized and presided over by a vizier who acted as Prime Minister. The most important role was that of the Ministry of Finances with its administration of properties, its audit office and its office of expenditure. Taxes were made uniform; Moslems paid a tithe, and non-Moslems a land tax and a progressive poll-tax. The revenues of the empire rose to four hundred and eleven million gold francs. The bureaucratic state was based on these immense resources, which allowed it to cover the administrative and judicial expenses, as well as those of the Ministry of War responsible for the generals, army chiefs who themselves appointed their officers and treated with the enemy in the name of the caliph.

Throughout the empire justice was rendered according to uniform law and was entrusted to *kadis* appointed by the caliph, whose sentences were subject to revision by a central court over which the caliph himself presided.

The *kadis* appointed the legal officials, administered the properties of mosques and schools, presided over religious matters, controlled the offices of state for the registration of verified documents and supervised the inspectors entrusted with the policing of the markets and also the control of public morals.

Great irrigation works were undertaken in Mesopotamia; and to ensure the regular and equitable yield of the taxes a land survey was established in Syria and Iraq.

In contrast to the Byzantine Empire, the Empire of Baghdad never practised controlled economy. Absolutist monarchy adapted itself to

economic liberalism, limited solely by the authority it reserved to itself over exchange control.

The Empire Split Between the Continent and the Sea

Heir of the Sassanids, the Empire of Baghdad seemed, however, thanks to its possession of Syria and Egypt, far greater and more powerful than its predecessor; it reconstituted, but by extending as far as Spain, the ancient empire of Darius. Like that empire it was to be faced with the great problem of the sea.

Its extension to the Indus made the Empire of Baghdad an essentially continental state. Its repeated failures before Constantinople did not allow it to incorporate the whole Mediterranean into its economy. It was to split between its continental provinces and its maritime provinces, even as the Persian Empire had done.

When the Abbasids took over power, the last surviving representative of the dynasty of the Ommayads, Abderrahman, took refuge in Spain and, since the capital of the Moslem empire had deserted the sea for the continent when it had been moved from Damascus to Baghdad, he founded an independent Moslem dynasty at Cordova. Spain became detached from the Abbasids and Cordova was soon to become the rival of Baghdad.

At the same time North Africa also broke away from the empire. From the end of the 8th century, petty dynasties were set up at Tahert, at Sigilmasa, at Tlemcen and at Fez. In 788 an autonomous dynasty was set up in Morocco. In 800 Baghdad was compelled to recognize the independence of Tunis under the Aglabid dynasty; and in 868 Egypt separated from the empire under the Tulunid dynasty.

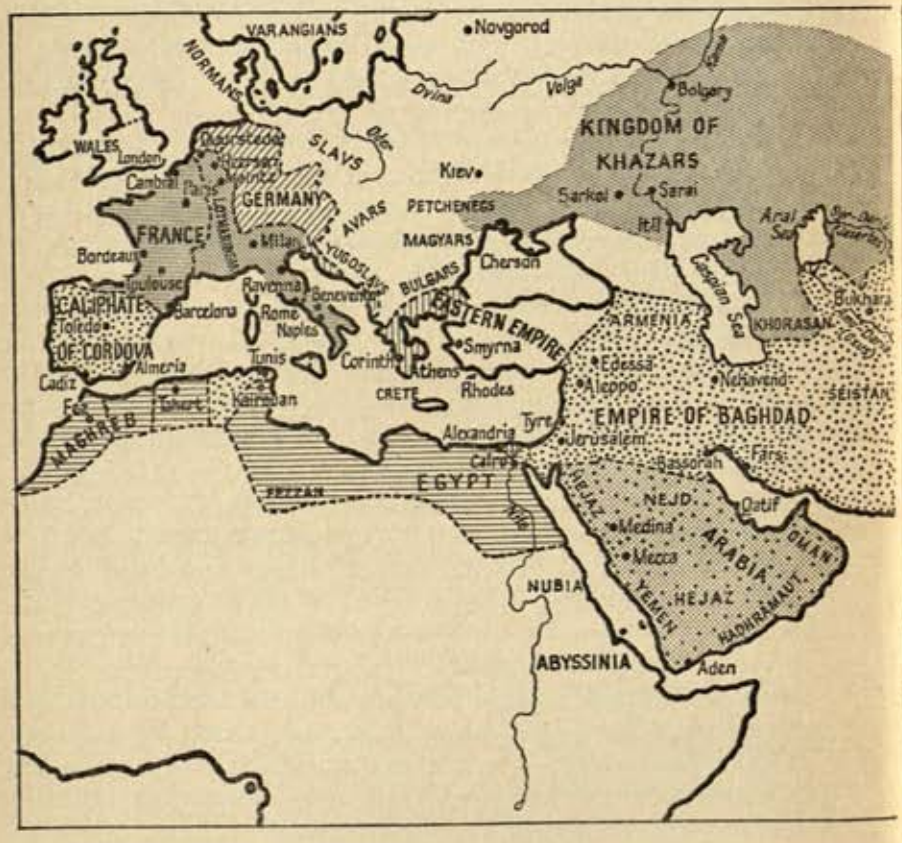
Once again the domination of the sea by a continental empire had proved impossible. The Moslem empire was rent between the continent, which remained centralized under the rule of Baghdad, and the sea, where the provinces bordering on it were split up into a series of independent states.

Just as the territorial break-up of the Roman Empire had rent the Christian Church into grave religious schism, so the break-up of the Moslem empire drove Islam into a number of heresies. Kharedjism triumphed in Northern Africa with the democratic movement. Egypt freed herself from the religious authority of the caliph of Baghdad while waiting to install an openly heretical caliphate at Cairo. Morocco also broke away from orthodox rule.

Deprived of its African and European provinces, the Empire of Baghdad once more took up the role formerly played by Babylon as a great centre

THE WORLD AFTER THE MOSLEM CONQUESTS
(mid-9th century)

Map No. 2



The middle of the 9th century is characterized by:

- The Moslem states
- The Chinese Empire
- The Turkish expansion towards Europe
- The partitioning of the Hindu states
- The reduction of the Eastern Empire into one Greek kingdom
- The division of the Carolingian Empire by the Treaty of Verdun(843) into: France, Lotharingia and Germany

of continental trade and aimed at control of the caravan routes of Central Asia. A little before the advent of the Abbasids the Ommayads had secured a foothold at Samarkand and in the valley of the Oxus. Continuing their policy, Haroun al Rashid (786–809) annexed Kabul; in 809 the frontiers of the empire had advanced to Peshawar and the valley of the Jaxartes where they marched with those of China.

At the beginning of the 9th century the Abbasids, to complete their plan to become masters of all the trade-routes of Nearer Asia, conquered Armenia and thus reached the Black Sea and the Caucasus.

Baghdad, as formerly Babylon whose role she had assumed, was the great capital of Asia. Haroun al Rashid had a revenue of three hundred and eighty million gold francs at his disposal.[1] His wife gave twenty-three millions[2] to endow Mecca with an aqueduct. These figures are sufficient to show the abyss which separated the court of Haroun al Rashid from that of his contemporary, Charlemagne.

China had restricted herself to a trading area almost entirely limited to the Far East; Islam brought her once more into the main currents of world trade, which were now to be dominated by the two empires, Moslem and Chinese.

At the beginning of the 9th century Islam incontestably held the trade supremacy of the world. It held the Mediterranean, where the coasts of Spain, Africa, Egypt and Syria were in its hands. Most of the Mediterranean ports had become Moslem bases; Cartegena, Tunis, Alexandria, Antioch. In such conditions the western Mediterranean could only be a Moslem lake. Within fifty years Sicily was conquered by the Aglabids of Tunis, whose fleets dominated the coasts of Corsica, Sardinia and Provence. Only Constantinople and the ports of Asia Minor escaped.

The Red Sea and the Persian Gulf were, for Islam, inland seas. Arab shipping replaced the Ethiopian, which had known two centuries of great prosperity and had controlled the trade of the Gulf of Oman, set up an important base in Zanzibar on the East African coast and another in Madagascar which, between the 7th and 9th century, was conquered by Islam. The Black Sea and the Caspian were entirely under Moslem control. Arab trading posts appeared in India and as far as China.

But this hegemony was not unbroken. The Byzantine Empire held the keys of Europe. The Greek and Italian coasts, the great Russian rivers and the Danube depended directly on Constantinople. That was why,

[1] Because of the defection of the maritime provinces the revenues of the empire were in continual decline; in 851 they fell to 290 million dirhams (gold francs).

[2] As a comparison, the revenue of the king of France in the 15th century was 1·8 million gold francs.

unable to unite in a single system the continental trade of Asia and the sea-borne trade of the Mediterranean, the Empire of Baghdad fell to pieces almost as soon as it had been formed. The possession of Constantinople would have made Islam the heir of the Roman Empire, even as the possession of Mespotamia made it the heir of the Persian Empire. But its failure before Byzantine resistance prevented it from uniting the whole Mediterranean under a single rule. Thenceforth Islam was unable to rebuild the economic unity that the Roman world had known; it had, on the contrary, broken it, restoring to the world the economic structure that it had had before Hellenistic times.

The breaking of Mediterranean unity deprived the sea of the economic primacy which it had enjoyed since the conquests of Alexander the Great. The Mediterranean, though still remaining the great route which had been the source of economic wealth, was no longer the centre of attraction it had once been, since it was no longer one. It was divided. That is why the great capitals which for more than a thousand years had depended on the sea withdrew into the interior of the continent. Antioch was dethroned by Baghdad, Alexandria by Cairo, Cartagena by Cordova. The Hellenistic capitals disappeared, the ancient capitals of oriental times once more revived. Only Constantinople and Tunis still held out, representing the two thalassocracies of the ancient world, Greek and Phoenician. In this world returning to its origins, Nearer Asia once more took the leading place and Europe withdrew from the great currents of trade and returned to an isolation which was to cause it to founder in mediaeval decadence. Rome and the Latin world were to experience an almost total eclipse. Islam, heir of the Eastern and Phoenician world, and Constantinople, the continuer of Hellenism, even though in decline, were to be for several centuries the only centres of civilization.

3. THE CALIPHATE OF CORDOVA

By contrast to the Empire of Baghdad, built on the continent, the Caliphate of Cordova, whose greatness was founded on the sea, was the main centre of Moslem civilization in the Mediterranean.

Over the extraordinary mixture of races which lived alongside one another in Spain and over the great fiefs that the Arab and Syrian conquerors had hewn for themselves out of the former Visigothic kingdom, the caliph of Cordova imposed the framework of a centralized and wisely adminstered state.

Like the caliph of Baghdad and the emperor of Byzantium, he was

surrounded by a luxurious court where eunuchs—generally Slav freedmen —held the highest posts. But the palace, which was to have a disastrous influence on policy at the end of the 10th century, did not normally interfere in the affairs of government. These were entrusted to three high officials, the chief *kadi*, who presided over justice, the civil administration and religious matters, the commander of the army and the admiral of the fleet who, as master of two hundred warships moored at Almeria, seemed the ruler of the seas.

The chief *kadi* acted as Prime Minister. Local *kadis* represented him in the provinces.

Save for the clergy, whose theocratic character soon made them a privileged class with their own law, there was no hereditary nobility in the caliphate. The officials, holders of the power, undoubtedly obtained great material advantages but they never became a closed caste and were recruited as much among the 'Slavs', that is to say European slaves purchased in the European slave-markets[1] or kidnapped by the Barbary pirates, as among the Arabs, Berbers, Christians and Jews.

As every centralized state, the caliphate, divided into provinces placed under the rule of civil governors and frontier marches under generals,[2] depended mainly on the financial organization which alone made possible the maintenance of the administrative services, the army of mercenaries and the powerful fleet on which the security of sea-trade depended and, in consequence, the great wealth derived from it.

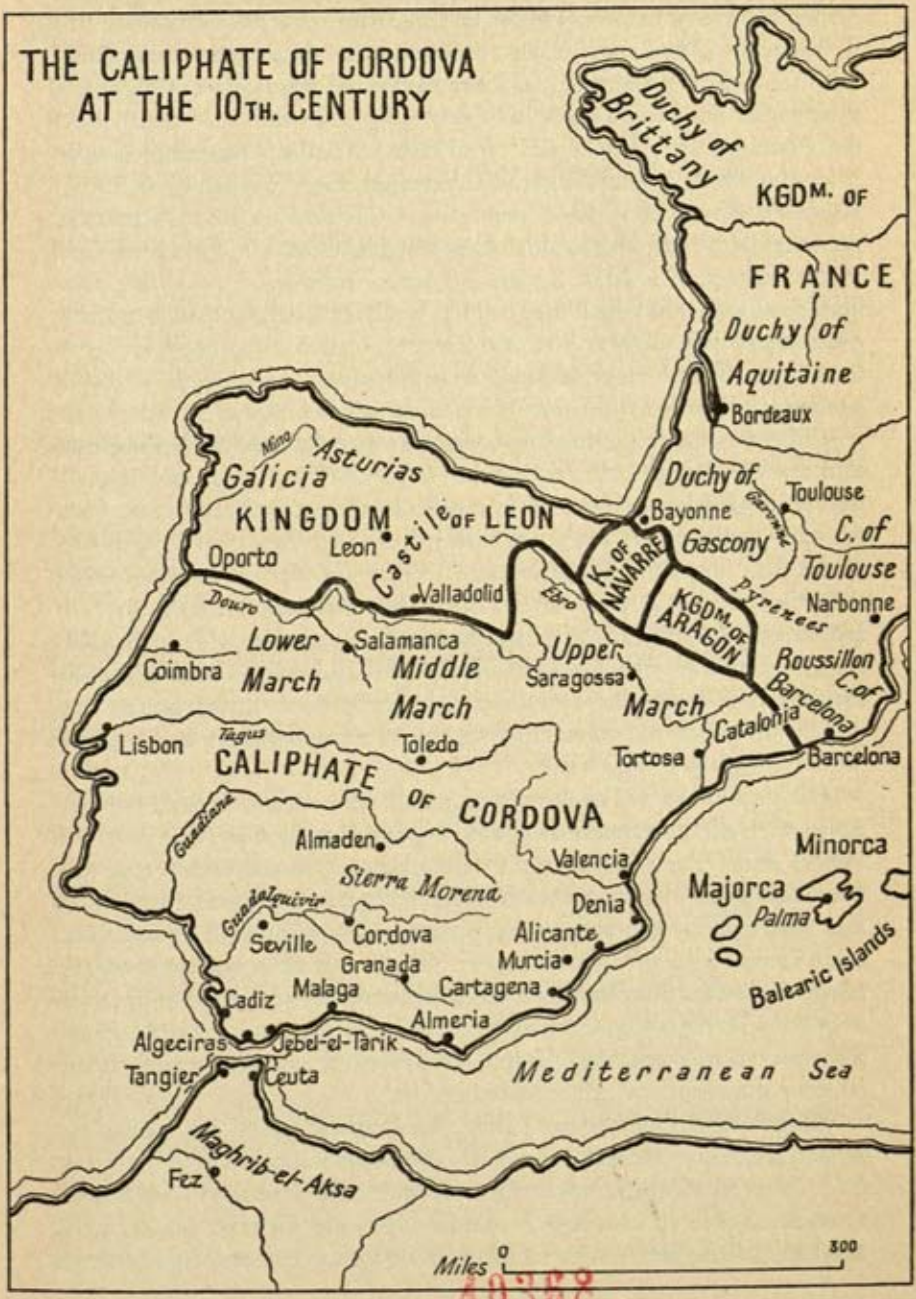
The international trade of Spain was strictly monetary in character. Cordova adopted the Baghdad currency which, current from the Atlantic Ocean to the frontiers of India and China, was to maintain, despite the political fractioning of Islam, its economic unity. An exporting country, Spain remained true to the principles of a sound currency. The mint, founded at Cordova in 928, was entrusted with the task of ensuring its stability.

The resources of the state were directly dependent on the trade activity of the country; they were derived, other than from the land-tax and the poll-tax, from customs dues, taxes on trade transactions and various public charges farmed out to financiers. The annual budget amounted, in the 10th century, to the enormous sum of forty million dinars, that is to say four hundred and eighty million gold francs.

[1] Especially at Verdun, which specialized in the sale of Slav slaves bought in Germany and castrated to be sold in Spain as eunuchs.

[2] Certain Arab or Syrian seigneurs, who had won their lands before the formation of the caliphate, continued to hold them as vassals of the caliph.

Map No. 3



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At the time of the conquest Spain, under the government of the Visigothic kings, had lost almost all industrial and commercial activity. The long period of state socialist evolution that the Roman Empire had known since the 4th century had introduced the seigniorial system there; the people, almost to a man, had been reduced to the status of *coloni* on the estates of the great landed proprietors, who had become seigneurs. The occupation by the Visigoths had created there, alongside the former Roman landowners, a landed aristocracy of Germanic origin, to whom the peasants, semi-serfs, paid feudal dues varying from a half to four-fifths of their harvest. The Arab, Syrian and Berber conquerors took their place in this social system which they found already established and also became great landed proprietors. Amongst these, the caliph, who had taken over the estates of the Visigothic kings, was the largest; the revenue from his lands was his personal income, independent of the state finances.

While preserving the existing social framework, the Arab administration revived the agricultural economy of Spain. On the caliph's estates, the status of the *coloni* was made similar to that of tenant-farmers (on a fifty per cent basis). A quarter of the income from the caliph's estates was destined to help the poor citizens of Cordova. Everywhere a system of irrigation was developed; horticulture, olive-planting, the cultivation of aromatic herbs, of flax, cotton and cereals was systematically encouraged; the mulberry was introduced and widely cultivated as food for silk-worms; three thousand townships specialized in the production of honey, and around the seigniorial dwellings were magnificent pleasure gardens which were one day to inspire Italy.

In ancient times the wealth of Spain had been mainly derived from its mines. The economic decline of the West had dried it up; but it was to know, under the government of the caliphs, a rapid renascence. Encouraged by the new possibilities due to the revival of sea-borne trade and protected by the authorities, mining, left to private initiative, was again resumed. Spain again took her place as a great exporter of metals: in the south-east silver and lead, in Andalusia gold, silver and copper, tin in Portugal and Galicia, mercury to the north of Cordova and throughout the country iron-ore, marble and semi-precious stones, restored to the country the wealth which it had long lost.

Mining and agriculture gave a vigorous impulse to industry. New and refined techniques were bought by the Moslems—above all the Syrians—from the Near East. The ancient Roman cities, fallen to the status of rural townships, revived. An active middle class was formed, made up of Moorish artisans and Jewish merchants, whose wealth soon equalled that

of the richest citizens of the East. Silk fabrics, flax, cotton, luxury weaves, gold brocades and fine cloths, furs, carpets, ivory work, jewellery, stamped leather, glassware—especially crystal, which was discovered at Cordova in the 9th century—mosaics, arms, iron and copper work, the preparation of parchment, paper-making imported from Samarkand, covered Spain with industrial cities.

Intellectual culture, the almost inevitable result of trade activity, became more general than perhaps in any other country. Universities were founded in all the great cities and there was an incomparable period of brilliance in the arts.

The produce of her mines and her luxury industries made Spain the most important exporting country of the Mediterranean. Her ports knew an activity they had never known before. Almeria, constantly in contact with Alexandria, Byzantium and the Syrian cities, became one of the greatest international marts for metals, if not the greatest; the influx of foreigners was so great that, in the 10th century, the city had no less than nine hundred and seventy inns. Seville too became astonishingly prosperous by the export of luxury goods. Toledo won a world-wide reputation for arms and Saragossa for furs.

The prodigious economic renascence of Spain was due both to private initiative and to the state. Without reserving any monopolies, the state, transforming itself into an industrial concern, inaugurated a policy of production; quantities of state factories were created, of which Cordova, soon peopled by half a million inhabitants, was the main centre. Without resorting to a controlled economy the state none the less intervened to control private activity. In every city a government official was entrusted with the supervision of transactions on the public markets, to check fraud, to ensure the quality of the goods for sale and to draw up daily market lists. Merchants and artisans formed guilds under the authority of syndics appointed by the public authorities and responsible to them, but who did not interfere in production trends.

This trade activity was the source of the greatness of Moslem Spain. It only attained its extraordinary level of prosperity through the liberalism —tempered by guild organization—of which the caliphs gave continual proof.

Their attitude to social affairs was similar to that they adopted to trade. From the time of the conquest the Moslems recognized, by agreements, the religious freedom and autonomy of the conquered peoples. The caliphs remained scrupulously loyal to these engagements. The Christians, left free to practise their religion, lived grouped around their bishops

presided over by the Metropolitan of Toledo. Doubtless the Christian population was rapidly Islamized, but none the less Christian colonies remained, especially in the cities, to whom the caliph granted the widest autonomy; they elected their own magistrates and had their own law which was based on the former Romanized Visigothic law.[1] The Jewish communities enjoyed similar privileges; they even had a famous Talmudic school at Cordova. The Visigothic kings, at the end of the 6th century, had undertaken anti-Semitic persecutions, but the freedom left to the Jews by the caliph drew them in great numbers to Spain. They were the most active agents of large-scale international trade.

The caliphate of Cordova, liberal in policy and devoted to the arts of peace, was not a military state. By the 10th century the Christian chivalry had reconquered the areas in the north of Spain where the petty kingdoms of Leon, Navarre and Aragon were formed. The Cordovan caliphs limited themselves to founding the frontier marches of Coimbra, Toledo and Saragossa, and made no real effort to complete the conquest of the peninsula. To ensure the defence of their lands, they adopted a system similar to that of the Byzantine *themes*, which consisted of settling soldier-farmers on small fiefs in the frontier marches. This national army, which numbered about twenty thousand men, was supported by mercenary troops made up of slaves bought in either Gaul or Byzantium and, after the 10th century, of Berbers. When need arose, special levies were raised for major expeditions.

All in all, the Cordova caliphate, set up in Spain at the end of the 8th century and which reached its summit of prosperity in the 10th century, was organized in many ways in a similar manner to the Byzantine Empire. Both owed their prosperity to their sea-borne trade. In the 9th and 10th centuries they shone with an equal brilliance and fell into decline at about the same time in the 11th century, the one in the western, the other in the eastern, Mediterranean.

Both of them peaceful in policy, they derived from the tradition of the ancient world, in their culture as well as their political institutions, the character of their economic life, their social structure dominated by the urban middle classes, and their dependence on the sea. They differed only in religion. That was enough to maintain between them, despite the

[1] No persecution was organized against the Christians before the times of the Almoravids. The executions of Christians which took place in the 9th and 10th centuries were due to nationalist insurrections or attacks on the Moslem religion by fanatical mystics desirous of voluntary martyrdom. In the 9th century a council of Spanish bishops tried to put an end to this wave of mysticism. The tolerance of Abd-er-Rahman III restrained it (in the 10th century).

similarities which should have been able to unite them, an irreparable breach.

4. MOSLEM CIVILIZATION

Moslem Civilization Founded on the Thought of the Ancient World

The Arabs, and after them the Moslems, brought nothing specifically new to the civilized world. Last offshoot of the Eastern and Greek civilizations, Islam inherited all that they had built. Even as its religion derived from Judaism and Christianity, its art was a synthesis of Byzantine and Persian styles. Simplified by the elimination of all human images, combining the classical column with the Persian ogive and cupola and Syrian decoration, the majesty of the basilica with the light of the great courtyards of the oriental caravanserais and the Byzantine palaces, Moslem art in the 9th century attained a sober magnificence, as shown in the mosques of Cairo, of Cordova and of Kairouan. This synthesis of all the architectural styles of the ancient world—in which the great innovation was the adaptation of the ogive to the Roman arch—was complemented by the magnificent combination of Persian ceramics of sumptuous colouring and Syrian decorative motives filled with the most brilliant fantasy which traced wide bands on the surfaces of great walls.

It was the same in science, philosophy and Islamic law as it was in religion and art. Islam picked them up once more from Greco-Roman sources and translated them into Arabic. The science and philosophy that were taught in the universities of the caliphates of Baghdad and Cordova were those of Alexandria and Antioch. The institutions of Islam were created on the basis of those of the Roman and Sassanid empires, its commercial law was the Law of Rhodes, and the Syro-Roman book, a Syriac edition of the Code of Justinian, was the manual of Islamic law.

In 529 Justinian had closed the schools of Athens, but Syrian and Iranian translations made under the Sassanids of the ancient classics were to inspire the intellectual renascence of which the Moslem universities were the instruments. Founded on the model of the universities of Alexandria and Athens in the merchant cities of Nearer Asia, at Baghdad, Bassorah, Bukhara, Kafa and in the principal cities of Spain, at Cordova, Granada, Toledo, Seville, Murcia, Valencia, Almeria and Cadiz, the great schools, in which Arabic was the universal language, were for three centuries to keep alive the ancient tradition of Alexandrian science, of Aristotelianism and of neo-platonism. The most complete freedom of thought[1] allowed Jews and Christians to teach alongside the Moslem professors whose mag-

[1] It was only to cease in the 11th century.

nificent tradition was to save the patrimony of ancient thought and to transmit it later to western civilization. Culture in the Moslem world was essentially, as it had been in Hellenistic times, cosmopolitan. Arabs, Persians, Syrians, Egyptians, Tunisians and Spaniards worked together without any national difference being apparent. As in all great periods of renascence, Islam searched for its justification in universal history. The Persian Kelbi, by writing a vast *History of the World* in 819, gave it that justification, complemented by the immense historical encyclopaedia of Masudi (956) and by the geographical enquiry into the Moslem world undertaken by Al-Makdisi (985), similar to those that Strabo and Ptolemy had devoted to the Roman world.

Far from repudiating the civilizations to which it owed its culture, Islam sought to know them: Nadim (995) published a bibliography of all the Arab, Greek and Hindu works known in his time, with biographical notes on their authors. In history, geography, astronomy and mathematics, Arabic thought preserved and often improved upon the sciences of the ancient world.

At the same time as Scotus Erigenus in England was expounding all that still remained there of Alexandrian thinking, that thinking was to have an extraordinary revival in the Empire of Baghdad, brought back to life by Alkendi at Bassorah, by Alfarabi at Baghdad and by Avicenna at Ispahan (died 1036). The vast encyclopaedias which they conceived in the tradition of the systems of Aristotle and Plotinus served as a basis for the revival of Christian scholasticism in the 13th century.

Liberalism and Freedom of Thought Assure the Triumph of Islam

In the Moslem world freedom of thought went hand in hand with an economic liberalism which in no way excluded a direct state control.

The liberalism of Islam explains to a great extent the attraction it had for the conquered peoples and especially for the Christians and the Mazdaeans. There were numerous affinities between Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Without doubt there was a deep divergence between the religion of Christ and that of Mohammed, which was far closer to Judaism. For Islam, Christ did not possess a divine nature, any more than Mohammed himself did. In this way, it was close to the Nestorianism then triumphant in Persia. The absolute monotheism of the Jews had made the Arabs reject the idea of God incarnate and led them to renounce the Trinity which was the basis of the Christian faith. In the 7th and 8th centuries the Mediterranean world was divided on the belief in the divinity of Christ.

But even if Islam was divided from Christianity on the essential question of redemption and from Judaism, which it considered to have had only a partial revelation, it proclaimed the common origin of the three revealed religions, claimed that the Koran confirmed the Law of Moses and the Gospels and considered as 'peoples of the book' Moslems, Jews, Christians and even Zoroastrians—that is to say they possessed a book which had been revealed to them. That is why, though Islam imposed upon pagans the choice between conversion and death, it left Jews, Christians and Mazdaeans free to exercise their religion, conditional on the payment of a tax which assured them equality of rights with Moslems.

It is easy to understand how, in these conditions, Islam at first seemed to the Christians, who were used to hearing arguments between orthodox and heretics about whether Christ were a man-God, a God made man, or both God and man, to be another Christian sect. The Arian, Nestorian and Monophysite heresies had paved the way for the triumph of Islam.

It must also not be forgotten that in Africa Christianity had in many places penetrated very superficially. To the recently converted pagans Islam cannot have seemed basically different from Christianity, whose spiritual meaning they were incapable of understanding.

Without doubt, had Islam appeared as a persecutor of the Christians it would have provoked a resistance which would have delayed its triumph. Its tolerance won the day.

There must also be mentioned the fiscal advantages which the Christians found in being converted. Other than the special poll-tax which they paid to have the right to practise their religion, they remained subject to the Roman land-tax from which Moslems were exempt. That was the best religious propaganda. If it seldom affected the Jews, who were not often farmers, it led so great a number of Christians to embrace Islam that by the end of the 7th century the tax yield in Egypt had gone down by a half because of the conversion of the Copts. However, Egypt alone in the Moslem world was to preserve a Christian community which preferred to renounce all the advantages that conversion would have brought rather than abjure its faith. In all the other provinces won from Christianity the Christian religion faded away before the religion of Allah.

CHAPTER II

THE CAROLINGIAN EMPIRE

I. FORMATION OF THE EMPIRE

The Breakdown of Mediterranean Unity

THE Islamic conquests shattered the political, economic and Christian unity of the Mediterranean. Christianity was driven back into Europe. Thenceforward the Mediterranean ceased to be the centre of a Christian civilization and the idea of Europe began to appear.

But Europe was a chaos of formerly Romanized peoples whose civilization had millenary origins and new peoples amongst whom were to be found all stages of barbarism and semi-barbarism.

The Church, welding all these peoples into Christendom, was to create Europe. It was not to be a political unity nor an economic unity; it was to be exclusively a Christian community.

By triumphing over the Arab fleet (677), Byzantium had saved Europe; and it was to Europe that she was to turn to try to rebuild the empire.

In the 7th century there were only two real states in Europe, the Byzantine Empire which still held power in Italy, and the Frankish monarchy. The bond which united Gaul to the empire had never been legally broken; but, in fact, it no longer existed. Rome was the only link which could hold the east to the west of Europe.

This the Emperor Constantine IV Pogonatus understood. Renouncing the provinces conquered by Islam, he turned definitely towards the reconstitution of a political unity by the association of the empire and the Church. Shortly after his great naval victory over the Moslems, he summoned a council in which he repudiated monophysism and formally recognized the primacy of Rome (680). A new form of empire was envisaged based on the division of power: temporal to the emperor and spiritual to the Pope.

But for such an empire to be formed, it must first possess a cohesion

which only the sea could give it. Between Byzantium and Gaul were the southern Slavs who had invaded Illyria and the Lombards who held northern Italy. But the sea was closed by the Moslems.

This stoppage of navigation, that it to say sea-borne trade, to Gaul was to cut off all contact between the Byzantines and the Merovingian monarchy and to force the two states into contradictory evolutions.

Up to the 7th century Gaul had kept its dependence on the sea which it had inherited from the Roman Empire. The closure of the coastline of Provence entirely changed its destinies.

In fact the ruin of the port of Marseilles rapidly resulted in the decline of all urban civilization. Trade withered away, the business classes disappeared. The cities were soon no more than episcopal residences. The taxes and customs dues no longer yielded anything. Money was lacking. The king, no longer able to pay his officials in money, paid them in lands. The manorial economy was strengthened. The constant reduction of trade hastened seigniorial evolution and the system of closed economy. The landed nobility, the only wealthy class, assumed a predominance forced upon it by the decadence of the administration. The disappearance of urban institutions involved that of the lay schools. Officials could no longer be recruited save from the clergy. Lacking resources, the king was compelled to let his powers be usurped by the oligarchy of the clergy and by the seigniorial landowners to whom he ceded, by immunities, the exercise of royal rights.

Deprived of its government, the Merovingian dynasty, which in itself represented nothing, foundered in palace dramas. The landed aristocracy assumed the reins of power. The greatest of these landed proprietors were in the north. The Frankish family of the Carolingians, who held lands between Nivelles and the Rhine, were the most powerful in Austrasia and, after internecine struggles, soon took the leading place in the government of the country. The Carolingians exercised a semi-sovereign authority alongside the king as Mayors of the Palace.

Under their influence the Merovingian policy turned to the north. War broke out once more against the Frisians and the Saxons, which led to the evangelization of the Franks (7th century) and then the Germans on the far side of the Rhine.

In the south, the crisis in the cities led to an anarchy which spread to the Church itself. At the beginning of the 8th century many bishoprics were vacant and no council met in Gaul from 695 to 742.

The confusion was made still worse by the Moslem invasions which devastated the country from the beginning of the 8th century and lasted

until the Carolingian Mayor of the Palace, Charles Martel, checked their advance at the battle of Poitiers (732).

After his victory Charles built up a corps of cavalry, by confiscating lands from the Church and granting them to professional soldiers who were soon to become a military nobility.

His son Pepin, who became Mayor of the Palace in 741, governed Gaul as if he were himself the king. The royal power ended in the hands of the largest landed proprietor in the country, while the whole population was subject to the rule of the landholding seigneurs who formed a privileged military class.

The Holy See Breaks with Byzantium and Turns Westward

While Gaul was turning away from the sea and an economy based on trade, Byzantium passed through an exactly contrary evolution.

The rapprochement with the west under the leadership of the Pope which was tried by Constantine IV soon proved itself to be impossible. It could only have handed the empire over to a landed aristocracy which, in 695, had tried to seize power by dethroning Justinian II. Constantinople could only exist by contact with the sea. Leo III the Isaurian (711) therefore abandoned the policy of Constantine IV. Renouncing the attempt to hold the west, he concentrated all his forces against Islam in order to recover mastery of the seas. In 718 the immense Moslem fleet failed to conquer Byzantium which, taking the offensive, reconquered the coasts of Asia Minor and its important cities. But instead of persevering in the war, Constantine in pursuance of a trade and maritime policy tried to approach the caliph in order once more to be able to make use of the great trade-routes to Asia. But religion raised an insurmountable barrier between them. Images, which Islam repudiated and whose use the piety of the monks had made widespread in the Byzantine Empire, seemed the tangible sign of the total opposition that separated Moslems and Christians. Perhaps the influence of the rigorous Islamic monotheism was the origin of the iconoclastic movement which at that time was evident at Constantinople. Was Leo III, when he published his famous edict against images (725), thinking of a rapprochement with Islam? It is possible. But it meant a break with Rome; the Pope replied by launching an anathema against the emperor. The conflict which followed between Rome and Byzantium had the gravest consequences. The Holy See, till then favourably inclined to Constantinople, turned finally to the West and, in order to recover the positions lost to Christianity, began to organize the evangelization of the barbarian peoples of the continent.

In 741 Zacharias, elected to the pontificial throne, no longer asked for the confirmation of the emperor as the Popes had hitherto done. Constantine V, crowned the same year, replied by launching a persecution of the monks who supported the Papal party against the Iconoclasts at Byzantium; fifty thousand of them were expelled and took refuge at Rome. Ravenna, deprived of the support of Byzantium, fell into the hands of the Lombards in 751.

Pope Stephen II no longer hesitated. Turning to Gaul for the protection that the emperor of Constantinople could no longer give him, he gave a legitimate basis to the usurpation that Pepin was preparing and a little later, in 753, re-crowned him at Saint-Denis and forbade the Franks ever to choose a king outside his descendants.

Allied to the Holy See, Pepin entered Italy and defeated the Lombards who were threatening Rome.

The fiction of the Roman Empire was finally given up. After breaking with Byzantium, the Pope took over in the West the role formerly played by the emperor. Universal power passed from the temporal to the spiritual plane. A Roman theocracy succeeded the Roman Empire in the West.

The Continental Empire of Charlemagne

When Charlemagne came to the throne in 768, there was no longer any link between Gaul and the Byzantine emperor. The royal power exercised by the Carolingians did not continue the Roman conception of sovereign right.

Sovereignty was henceforth associated with possession of land. The greatest landlord of the country became the king, even as in each city the greatest landlord was recognized as governor. His office, by this very fact, became hereditary. The former provinces became practically speaking principalities; and among these princes the king was no more than *primus inter pares*. His power appeared legitimate and superior to theirs only by virtue of the religious consecration conferred upon him.

Land became the basis of all law, while the spiritual power took precedence over the temporal. The idea of personal class took the place of the state. The former administration disappeared and was replaced, as in all primitive societies, by assemblies of landed seigneurs and prelates who met in March and in May to confer with the king on the policy of the kingdom.

The wise institutions of the Roman Empire were finally eliminated. Private law suffered the same regression as public law. The general

THE EMPIRE OF CHARLEMAGNE

Map No. 4

..... Partition according to the Treaty of Verdun (843). It was at this time that the tributary countries broke away.

insecurity forced the smaller landlords to 'do homage' for their lands to the great landed seigneurs and to the abbeys, in order to take them back once more on feudal tenure and thus to become integrated into the seigniorial framework which gave them the benefit of its protection. Thus liberty disappeared; only the great landlords could keep their autonomy—these would be freeholders—and escape the hierarchy of lands which, by this very fact, involved that of persons. There was no longer any difference between free tenants and the serfs, the former *coloni*. The sense of freedom vanished and was replaced by the need for security; but since freedom itself had become the appanage of a small minority of great landlords, it seemed a privilege, a sign of nobility. From the 9th century onward, it was not the acquisition of exceptional rights that distinguished nobles from other men, but simply that they had preserved the status, at one time general, of free men which the great mass of the population had lost.

Thus the advent of the Carolingians coincided with the collapse of civilization. By now the Roman Empire had quite surely ceased to exist. To make it come to an end once and for all, it only remained for the sea, whence civilization had come, to become a frontier, for trade to come to a stop and for the cities to waste away and, with them, the teaching which had perpetuated culture.

Now that the empire had dissolved, the Pope retained the only title to universal authority. The Christian world could only rally about Rome, even as all primitive political groups are formed around holy cities.

The Carolingian state, landowning and dynastic, aimed at the conquest of lands. The annexation of the Lombards of Italy, which made Rome pass under the political protectorate of Charlemagne, that of Saxony and Bavaria, and the defeat of the Avars who were settled on the Danube, made the Frankish kingdom an immense empire carved out of barbarian and pagan Europe. The forced conversion of these peoples followed the conquest. Christianity spread over Europe contemporaneously with the Frankish arms. In 800 Pope Leo III, reviving the idea of universal empire in a new form, conferred the imperial dignity on Charlemagne. Accepting the facts, the Byzantine emperor recognized Charlemagne as his brother, and Haroun al Rashid, the powerful caliph of Baghdad, granted him the protection of the Holy Places at Jerusalem.

A fresh international balance was created. The Carolingian Empire ruled in Europe and the Empire of Baghdad in Nearer Asia. Byzantium held the sea axis between Europe and Asia.

The reign of Charlemagne, hallowed by the protection of the Holy See, put an end to the internecine struggles which had ravaged Gaul for

a century past and gave it unity. The consequence was a certain revival of economic, political and intellectual activity, which favoured the immigration of many Syrians fleeing from the Moslem occupation. Quite naturally this revival came from two sources, the ancient Roman world represented by the Romanized Syrians, and the Christian thinking of the Fathers of the Church kept alive by the last remaining élite of the times, the clergy. In the palatine school of Aix-la-Chapelle, founded by the English cleric Alcuin and in the Academy created by Charlemagne to bring together a small élite of learned men recruited in Italy, England and Spain, classical Latin was restored to honour and the study of classical writers was once more resumed. Eginhard wrote the *Life of Charlemagne* modelled on the *Lives of the Caesars* by Suetonius. An artistic renascence bloomed in Charlemagne's capital, a Byzantine city in the heart of the Rhineland, where Syrian immigrants introduced the minor arts of Byzantium in the shadow of the cathedral copied from San Vitale at Ravenna. In reality, this renascence was only the last flicker of a dying civilization; the man who, at the court of Charles, represented the future was not the writer Eginhard but the illiterate emperor whose simple faith accommodated itself to the maintenance of several wives and concubines. But the restoration of the empire led men to believe in the restoration of the imperial civilization.

To make a real empire out of his states, Charlemagne undertook a considerable legislative task, codifying the laws of the Frisians, the Saxons, the Chamavi and the Thuringians and promulgating a number of capitularies. But almost all this work was pure loss since the imperial unity to which it tended was not based on any social reality. There was no common measure between Gaul, with its ancient civilization still permeated, despite its decadence, with ancient culture and profoundly Christian, and the four duchies of Saxony, Franconia, Swabia (Alamannia) and Bavaria, bordered by the half-Germanic half-Slav military frontiers where the population, Christian in name but pagan in fact, lived in rigid communities with primitive tribal customs. Charlemagne created a political framework for the barbarian tribes of Germany, gave *markgrafs* to the military marches and dukes to the duchies, who represented the imperial sovereignty, and created a landed aristocracy out of the great lay and religious seigneurs, organizing all the countries of the empire under Frankish institutions. But under this fictitious unity, they preserved a deep diversity. That is why behind the façade that he gave it, the empire of Charles remained a chaos of juxtaposed peoples.

The institutions organized but they did not create. For culture to flourish

once more it was necessary that the conditions for a revival existed, that is to say that contact be established with the world outside. Charlemagne seems to have understood this. He wanted to unite his empire under Gallo-Roman institutions around a trade axis running from Venice, through Lombardy, along the Rhône and the Rhine to the ports of Duurstede and Quentovic, whence there was still a certain amount of Frisian sea-borne trade to the English and Scandinavian coasts. To re-establish contacts with the East by sea, Charlemagne annexed Barcelona, conquered Corsica and the Balearic islands and gave orders for the construction of a fleet.

But the maritime policy of Charles failed and its failure made the whole of the grandiose scheme he had conceived impossible.

Cut off from the sea, the empire could only suffocate; its seigniorial evolution was thenceforward to become more and more rapid and to lead it fatally and inevitably to political dismemberment.

All that remained of Charles' legislative work was the *capitulare de villis* which foreshadowed feudalism by organizing the closed economy of the great royal domains and by the institution of the tithe, granted to the Church by a capitulary of 779, which was to survive up to the end of the *ancien régime*.

None the less one result of capital importance was attained. Over the barbarian tribes, upon whom the conquest had imposed a Christianity of which they were still incapable of grasping the high moral import, the Church created an organization of bishoprics and abbeys and the emperor appointed Frankish counts, royal officials who received, as remuneration for their services, vast landed estates. The chiefs of the Germanic tribes, integrated in the seigniorial system, soon became a landed nobility; the judiciary power, taken from the former assemblies of tribes and villages, passed to councils of notables (*échevins* or *rachimbourgs*) under the presidency of the counts; the village common land became private property. The West looked to the continent in order to impose on the Germanic peoples, still very nearly barbarians, the first elements of a political, religious and social organization.

By differing evolutions, the Gallo-Romans and the Germans both tended towards a similar landholding régime. Whereas in Gaul free property disappeared to become merged into the seigniorial system, in Germany the village unit, which practised community of land, evolved towards private property by the formation of great seigniorial estates.

In the whole Carolingian Empire, in the formerly Roman areas as well as in the recently conquered barbarian lands, a double structure, religious and feudal, made of Christianity a community that broke through the

former confines of the Roman Empire to become identified with the European continent. Christianity gave Western Europe a single leader, the Pope, a single social framework, the clergy, a single private law derived from canon law, a single morality, that of Christ, and, through the Church, a single culture with distant bonds with the humanism of the ancient Greco-Roman world.

2. THE EMPIRE BREAKS UP

The Treaty of Verdun (843) Tries to Establish a Trade Balance Around the Venice-Duurstede Axis

Lack of unity in the state and the patrimonial nature of power led to a division of the empire between the sons of Louis the Pious (814–40), in whose reign its unity had only been maintained with difficulty. The Treaty of Verdun,[1] which was prepared by a hundred and twenty experts who met in 842 at Metz, had the effect of dividing the empire into zones which, from the agricultural viewpoint, could be self-sufficient, since each contained pasture-lands, wheatlands, and wine and oil producing areas. It seems beyond doubt that trade considerations also played an important part, at least in the delineation of the territory which was granted, together with the imperial title, to Lothair, head of the Carolingian family. His kingdom stretched from Italy to the North Sea and included Venice and the valley of the Po, the Rhône valley with Marseilles and the former capitals of Vienne and Lyon, the Rhine, the Meuse and the Scheldt with the port of Duurstede and the Frisian coast of the North Sea as far as the Weser, that is to say the economic axis of the empire. Francia was granted to Charles the Bald and the Germanic duchies and the eastern marches to Louis the German. Generally speaking, each kingdom represented a homogeneous whole. The treaty laid the foundations of France and Germany, between which Lotharingia foreshadowed, because of its character as a great trade-route, the future states of Holland, Belgium-Luxembourg, Alsace-Lorraine, Switzerland, Provence and Lombardy. This was the first attempt at establishing a European balance. It was a work of wisdom, in that it took as a basis for states their social structure and economic life.

The Carolingian Empire Dissolves in Feudalism

But the solution of the Treaty of Verdun was soon to be overtaken by events. The Mediterranean policy of Charlemagne was without morrow;

[1] See Map No 3, page 51.

the sea remained closed. The great cities of the south became miserable townships threatened by the forays of the Saracens. In the north, the invasions of the Northmen which began in the middle of the 9th century finally destroyed Duurstede and the Frisian sea-borne trade. Finally, Venice was cut off from the Mediterranean by the Moorish pirates. Lotharingia, ceasing to be a trade-route, lost its reason for existence. It was split up by the Treaty of Meersen in 870 between France, Germany and Italy, more or less following a linguistic frontier which was also a social frontier. The empire, henceforward, was broken up. Louis II, whom his contemporaries called 'Emperor of Italy', could hardly hold his own against the seigneurs of the Benevento region who had become feudal lords. On his death Pope John VIII, by conferring the imperial crown on the king of France, Charles the Bald (875), aroused the enmity of the Carolingians who reigned in Germany. A struggle began for the possession of Lotharingia. The defeat of Charles the Bald at Andernach (876), the first Franco-German battle, delivered all the territories east of the Scheldt to Germany, including the bishoprics of Metz, Toul and Verdun. The Lorraine question had begun.

The Treaty of Meersen marks the end of the Carolingian Empire. On its ruins was built up France, whose language recalled the long and brilliant civilization that it represented, and Germany, a hybrid state formed east of the Rhine by more or less autonomous tribes grouped into duchies and west of the Rhine by peoples already touched by Romanization. There was no common ground between the social development of the Germans and the Avars annexed by Charlemagne and that of the Lotharingian provinces of ancient civilization. One thing alone could keep them united, the monarchical power which had been forced upon them and which had organized them in a system of civil and religious institutions directly borrowed from the Roman Empire.

The Advent of Feudal Elective Monarchies

Despite its dismemberment the Carolingian Empire survived in its dynasty. But it was only a fiction. Save in the event of the successors of Charlemagne being able to unite all the former Carolingian states in the hands of Charles the Fat (884) and thus revive the empire, their reunion was no longer possible.

France broke up into feudal principalities. The insecurity caused by the Norman invasions, against which the emperor could do nothing, hastened this evolution which rallied the people around the abbeys and the great landed seigneurs. By the end of the 9th century the power had passed to

such an extent into the hands of the local princes that the bishops and the counts brought to the throne, to succeed Charles the Fat (888), Eudes, count of Paris, who had defended the city against the Normans in 885.

In Germany the nobles had not waited until the death of Charles the Fat to depose him and to give the crown to one of themselves, Arnulf of Carinthia (887).

The dynastic principle had been replaced by the elective principle. The empire, thenceforward, fell to pieces. In Italy the dukes of Friuli and Spoleto contested the royal crown. Burgundy and Provence became independent kingdoms.

In contrast to France, where royalty had become submerged in feudalism, the kings of Germany were to exercise a political leadership over the continent which was consecrated by the Pope, who conferred the imperial dignity on Arnulf (896). It was a relative leadership however. For neither France, broken into feudal principalities, nor Germany, just beginning its apprenticeship to a civilization still rudimentary and which was already separating into national duchies—Saxony and Bavaria, still very close to their tribal origins, and Franconia and Swabia, the great religious centres of Germany—were, by any means, centres of economic or intellectual activity. Civilization was dying on the continent, where the vast kingdom of Germany, semi-barbarous, was to represent for centuries the only political factor of real power. The cycle of ancient civilization was ending. The decadence and dismemberment of the empire had reduced it to the most primitive forms of society and of the state. A new cycle was about to begin and to take up once more the evolution in all its social and political stages through which the peoples of the ancient world had already passed several times, and which had led them from the feudal-seigniorial régime to individualistic societies and centralized states.[1]

[1] The decadence that followed the downfall of the Roman Empire of the West developed in exactly the same manner and followed a similar process to that which followed the Ancient Empire and the New Empire of Egypt (Book I).

CHAPTER III

THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE, SEIGNIORIAL AND THEOCRATIC

Central Europe Becomes the Centre of the Continent

At the end of the 9th century, when Europe was becoming feudalized, the Germanic tribes, organized in villages, were being integrated into the structure of the seigniorial estates. The kingdom of Germany thus took a form externally similar to that of French feudalism, made up of the frontier marches and divided into four duchies, themselves subdivided into counties made up of great seignorial estates. An ecclesiastical structure similar to the political was made up of archbishoprics subdivided into bishoprics.

In fact this similarity was only apparent. In Germany the dukes, marquesses and counts were a social caste, alien to the country, which had been created by Charlemagne; though resident, they were not hereditary princes but royal officials. They lived under a Gallo-Roman law, and the bishops under canon law. The people, however, preserved their national customs entirely distinct from them, and the German nobility became a class of large and small landholders which formed the social, but not the political, structure of the country. There were, therefore, two entirely different classes in Germany; the laic and ecclesiastical aristocracy organized according to western law and still permeated with the ancient Roman individualism, and the people who evolved without contact with western law and who lived according to its original tribal law which ignored the individual, who was regarded only as a member of a group.

From the end of the 9th century, however, the whole monarchical structure created by Charlemagne was falsified by the fact that the counts and, after them, the dukes and marquesses, by making their offices hereditary, behaved as princes. The royal power, whittled down to the advantage of the dukes, broke into fragments. On the death of Louis the Child (911), the duke of Franconia, Conrad I, was brought to the throne

and, after him, the duke of Saxony, Henry I (919–936), who, relying on the national sentiment of the Saxon tribes, soon took the leading place in Germany. The kingdom of Germany soon became a federation of feudal duchies.

Essentially a land state, Germany immediately began her territorial expansion eastwards, where there were vast masterless regions, whence came the terrible incursions of the Hungarians. Henry I overcame the Hungarians and, after him, Otto I conquered Poland and Bohemia. The Church became the instrument of German imperialism. Hungary was converted to Christianity.[1] Poland was attached to the German archbishopric of Magdeburg (968), a bishopric was created at Prague, and Otto I compelled the king of Denmark to accept conversion.

The kingdom of Germany, however, split up amongst the dukes. Feudalism undermined the royal power and the empire no longer existed. No one bothered any longer to elect the emperor; for more than half a century after the obscure reign of Louis the Child (899–911) the empire remained without a titular head.

The feudalism that was being formed in Germany was, however, very different from western feudalism. In France and as far as the Rhine feudalism was a consequence of the dissolution of the Roman imperial power, but the unity from which it was derived never entirely disappeared. In law, the feudal royalty retained a unitary character which it had inherited from the empire. This explains why, from 987 onward, it remained in the same family, the Capets.[2] In Germany, on the other hand, feudalism was a product of the evolution of the tribes which, after their stabilization, became little territorial states which soon became grouped into principalities.[3] Far from being derived from an earlier unitary state, it had been built up within the imperial framework that the Carolingians had imposed upon Germany, with which it had no link and which it was ever trying to destroy.

Otto I Makes the Empire a Theocracy

The power of the king of Germany, imposed upon the Germanic tribes by the Frankish kings, was only maintained by the unity of the Church, which made Germany the largest state of the Catholic world. That was

[1] The Hungarian king, St Stephen (997–1038), completed the conversion.

[2] This was the same cycle through which Egyptian feudalism passed after the dismemberment of the Ancient Empire in about the XXVth century BC and that of the New Empire in the XIth century BC: but the theoretical unity that it preserved as the heritage of the imperial power soon fixed it in the family of the princes of Heracleopolis.

[3] It was the type of evolution of the Hittite feudalism.

why, in 962, the imperial dignity, re-established for the benefit of Otto I, was definitely associated with the German crown by Pope John XII.

Understanding that the German kingdom could only be maintained by the organization given it by the Church, Otto I (936–973), in order to prevent the oligarchy of the counts from becoming a hereditary and feudal class, invested the bishops with temporal power and arrogated to himself the right of choosing them. When John XII opposed this usurpation of Church prerogatives, Otto deposed him and replaced him by Pope Leo VIII in 963. Thenceforward the emperor possessed the right, formerly held by the Roman emperors, of controlling the election of the Popes. The Holy See was dominated by the emperor. But at the same time the empire, entrusted to the bishops, was changed into a theocracy.

The kings of Germany, having become emperors, exercised by their association with the Church a leadership which stemmed from the old tradition of the oecumenical empire, which had been preserved by the Pope of Rome. In the empire thus conceived sovereignty originated in the spiritual power of the Pope, but was exercised by the emperor. The Pope and the emperor, closely united, represented the rule of God on earth. The empire again assumed the universal character that it had had in the times of the Roman Empire. Otto I aimed at extending it, in fact as well as in law, over all Catholic Christianity.

The marriages of Adelaide of Burgundy, first to Lothair, king of Italy and then to the Emperor Otto I, joined Italy to Germany and the German crown was reinforced by that of Italy, borne by the 'King of the Romans'. King of Germany and Italy, with a protectorate over Poland, Bohemia and Hungary, it only remained for Otto to re-establish his power in France in order to restore the universal power possessed by Charlemagne. He tried to restore it by force of arms. But he failed when faced by a coalition of the French feudal lords at Attigny (942). Only the kingdom of Arles was restored to the empire. Then, attracted to Italy, he reverted to the idea of imperial Rome and in order to assert himself as the equal of the Byzantine emperor he forced him—by threatening the Byzantine possessions in southern Italy—to give Princess Theophano, niece of the Emperor Romanus II, in marriage to his son, the future Otto II. It seemed that the dyarchy of the Roman Empire was to be restored under the two emperors of Constantinople and the West. It was at this time that Otto, to confirm his succession to the Roman emperors, gave to his states the name of the Holy Roman Empire. Latin was its official language. To restore the empire, Otto also tried to restore the monarchical principle by breaking the hereditary tradition that had grown up in the duchies

and entrusting them to his relations. He created counts palatine, officials entrusted with supervision of the imperial revenues, and appointed, to assist him, a council which met in the *Hoftage*.

The Holy Empire Slides into Feudalism

On his death in 973 the empire seemed established on firm foundations. Otto II made another attempt to extend his rule over France. But his defeat at Montmartre (978) was the last time the empire tried to do this, and his successor Otto III (983–1002), giving up the attempt to impose his power by force, relied entirely on the mystical aspect of the imperial power. By integrating the empire with Christianity, he wished to restore its universality; the empire, image of the divine authority on earth, was to be placed under the closely linked authority of the Pope and the emperor. Rome was to be the capital of the empire as well as of the Church. Otto III went to Rome to rule there alongside the Pope and to build a dream empire of the imagination. He was recalled to reality by a revolt of the people of Rome which forced him to flee from the Eternal City. When he died (1002) without an heir, the folly of the imperial structure was revealed. The nobles gave the throne to the duke of Bavaria, Henry II (1002–1024), who could only confirm the dukes and counts in their hereditary powers. The king, without a capital, without a government, without even having, like the king of France, a patrimonial state, was revealed for what he was; the representative of a legal fiction created by Charlemagne over the German chaos. Conrad II (1024–1039), by recognizing the hereditary nature of all offices including those of the counts-palatine, gave legal sanction to the feudal dismemberment which already existed in fact. Germany set out—two centuries after France—on the road to feudalism. Already, under Otto III, the Slavs had broken away from the empire and the emperors had abandoned their work of evangelization, which was taken up once more in the north by the Scandinavian kings, Olaf the Child in Sweden (1006), Olaf the Holy in Norway (1016) and Canute the Great in Denmark (1018).

Feudal Lotharingia is Drawn to France

The dissolution of the empire caused Lotharingia, where feudalism had been formed on the western model, to break away also. Burgundy, conquered by Conrad II, had kept its autonomy; Lotharingia itself, incorporated into Germany by Henry I, refused to accept the imperial sovereignty once it was no longer held by the Carolingians, who had been Lotharingian princes. The duke of Ardenne, Godfrey the Bearded, and

the count of Flanders, Baldwin V, openly defied Henry III (1039–1056). French feudalism, where the principalities had become so many petty monarchies under the suzerainty of a few great vassals themselves linked to the king by their oath of allegiance, had a real attraction for the countries of similar feudal type surrounding it; Brabant, Hainault, Ardenne, as well as Upper Lorraine, Burgundy and Provence, associated themselves with French feudalism rather than with the countries of the empire. Thus Lotharingia, a formerly Romanized land annexed by force to the Holy Empire, spontaneously broke away from the Germanic world, since it differed so widely from it because of its Romanized civilization, and turned towards France.

Italy too reacted; every consecration of the 'King of the Romans' at Milan necessitated a military expedition, while at Rome the weakness of the empire was so great that the emperor, incapable of controlling the election of the Pope, abandoned it to the factions of the Roman people and the feudal lords of the States of Saint Peter. The Papacy, linked to the destinies of the empire, was in its turn submerged by feudalism. At one period during the reign of Henry III (1039–1056) there were three Popes at the same time; Benedict IX (1032–1044) elected by the people and clergy of Rome, Sylvester III (1044–1046) imposed by the Crescenzi family who dominated the Roman feudal lords, and Gregory VI (1044–1046) to whom Sylvester III had sold the tiara.

The two powers which had aimed to become universal, the empire and the Holy See, foundered in the feudal anarchy which reigned throughout all western and central Europe. In the middle of the 11th century only two forces remained: in Germany the bishops who had been saved from the downfall of the French bishops by the support of the imperial power, and in France the monasteries, whose religious fervour had a very great hold over the people who were grouped under their protection around the cults of the saints which formed, in the dismembered feudal world, so many little local religions.[1]

[1] The growing importance of the local cults of the saints, which developed parallel to the process of feudal dismemberment, recalls the religious evolution of Egypt during the feudal dismemberment which followed the ruin of the Ancient Empire.

CHAPTER IV

BYZANTIUM OPENS A NEW TRADE-ROUTE THROUGH RUSSIA AND THE BALTIC TO THE NORTH SEA

I. THE NOVGOROD-KIEV CIVILIZATION

Byzantine Influence in Russia

BY occupying Syria and Egypt, Islam cut the seaways between Asia and the West at Byzantium. In order to reopen them, Byzantium turned resolutely northward and tried to find a way to Asia through the Greek cities of the Crimea and the Caspian region. The trade of Byzantium was now to turn towards southern Russia.

After the great inroads of Attila, invaders from Asia had unceasingly penetrated into these regions. After the Huns came the Avars, whom Charlemagne was to halt in Hungary. The Bulgars, last branch of the Huns, after settling in the Kuban in the 7th century, had advanced to the Balkans and had been settled in Moesia by Justinian II. In the 9th century the Finnish tribe of the Magyars had reached the Danube, whence they made forays into Italy and the West until Otto I (955) halted them in Hungary. In the 8th century the Khazar Turks, who had been living on the Russian steppes, came into contact with Byzantium and Islam. They soon settled and fixed their capital, Itil, on the estuary of the Volga, till in 833 they moved it to Sarkel on the Don. Itil and Sarkel immediately became important markets, where Arabs, Jews and Byzantines came to buy furs. In the 9th century the trading post of Tamatarkha, founded by the Khazars on the Taman peninsula, had important trade relations with Baghdad, the Greek cities of the Crimea and Byzantium; and at the confluence of the Volga and the Kama the great business centre of Bolgary was founded, which was the end of the caravan route from China and India through Central Asia.

Little by little, the Khazars were converted to Christianity; only their aristocracy embraced Judaism under the influence of the great movement

of Jewish proselytism which spread to Russia in the 9th and 10th centuries.

By the end of the 8th century the attraction of the great Khazar markets was making itself felt, by way of the Don and the Volga, as far as the Baltic. The eastern Slavs sailed there, sometimes as pirates, sometimes as merchants; they descended the Volkov, the Dvina and the Niemen to the great Russian rivers, along which an active trade rapidly developed leading to the formation of market places around which cities grew up. Slav ports were founded on the Baltic coast, Stagrad (Oldenburg), Lubka (Luebeck), Wollin (Julin) and Stettin, in constant touch with Bolgary where the Slavs came into contact with Chinese merchants, and with Itil, where they traded with the Arabs of Baghdad who came there by way of the Caspian; at Sarkel on the Don they met the Greek merchants of the Crimea and Byzantium. A great staging-post grew up at Novgorod, on the caravan route between the Volga and the Baltic.

The Scandinavians Come into Touch with Russia and the West

On the Baltic the northern Slavs came into contact with the Scandinavian tribes—the Vikings—who were akin in race and language to the Ostrogoths who, in the course of the 4th century, had brought to them a very distant reflection of the Byzantine influences which they themselves had felt. The Scandinavians had adopted the Runic script; in the 5th century silver coins found their way into Sweden at a time when the first forms of political organization were apparent, leading to the formation of fourteen little kingdoms.

Addicted to piracy, which soon began to assume a commercial form, the Scandinavians came into contact both with the Slavs settled on the Baltic coasts and with the Carolingian Empire which Charlemagne had extended as far as Denmark.

About 820, in the reign of Louis the Pious, the Franks systematically undertook the evangelization of the Danes. Bishoprics were created in the country, which were attached to the archbishopric of Hamburg, created in 831 for the conversion of the northern lands, even as the archbishopric of Maintz had been created a little earlier for the conversion of Germany. But in 840 the Vikings made their first major raid on the West by sacking Hamburg.

While the Carolingians were trying to extend their rule over Denmark through Christianity, the Swedes or Varangians were influenced, across Russia, by Byzantium. They gave up piracy and entered into commercial relations with Russia. They set up trading-posts on Lakes Ladoga and Ilmen and soon reached the Volga.

In the 9th century they discovered the Dnieper route to the Black Sea, and soon began to appear as mercenaries or merchants at Byzantium.

A Great Urban Civilization Appears in Russia

Under the influence of this trade which linked the Baltic to Constantinople, markets were created along the rivers for the sale of honey and furs, which were the origin of cities in the Dnieper basin. Of these Kiev became the flourishing metropolis. Thus in the 9th century, while western Europe was slumbering in closed economy and serfdom under the seigniorial régime, two great trade-routes were created from Byzantium and Asia to the Baltic: one, in the hands of the Russians and Varangians, followed the Dnieper by way of the cities of Kiev, Chernigov and Minsk, the other, dominated by the Khazars, reached the market of Sarkel by way of the Don and then followed the Volga, where the trade of the Khazar markets of Itil and Bolgary led to the creation of the Russian cities of Suzdal, Yaroslav, Novgorod, Staraya-Russa and Pskov. These two routes were linked by an important trade-route on which were founded the cities of Ryazan and Smolensk.

Despite their frequent conflicts with Byzantium the Russian cities, which owed their existence to her, were deeply under Byzantine influence, which was the source of their civilization.

United by their trade and their religion, the Russian cities soon formed the first Russian national state. This was, in fact, a federation of cities ruling over the countryside which owed its prosperity to them. As formerly among the Greek cities, the monied middle class, made up of all heads of families possessing a house, elected a mayor, a chief of the militia who was also a judge of the 'little people', the chiefs of the city quarters, the elders of the trade guilds and the artisans' corporations.

In the middle of the 9th century Scandinavian leaders, half-soldier half-merchant, organized the defence of the country against the Asiatic nomads; they thus became the princes of these cities with a self-governing middle class, assuring their defence and sharing the judiciary power with the citizens' assemblies. Little by little a dynasty was formed to which the princes of the greater cities belonged. Their head, reigning at Kiev, became the commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the vast Kiev-Novgorod principality.

A brilliant civilization, directly inspired by the civilization of Byzantium, rapidly developed in this urban state.

From 865 onward international political or trade agreements were signed between the Russian cities and Byzantium. Evangelized by the

Byzantines, the Russians were converted to Christianity by the end of the 10th century. In the 11th century they published codes of local customs, real compendia of private and commercial law directly inspired by the laws of Justinian and the Law of Rhodes, which covered limited liability companies, trade associations, credit, commission contracts, fraudulent or commercial bankruptcy and which, under the influence of trade, developed ideas of international private law already so advanced that not only did they recognize the right of foreigners to trade and to possess property but granted their credits priority over those of nationals. By the beginning of the 11th century their art, Byzantine in origin but which was the fountain-head of the classical art of Russia, was flourishing. The princes of Kiev had so great a political influence that the kings of France, England, Sweden and Hungary, like the emperors of Byzantium, sought their alliance by marriage.

In the 10th century the Kiev-Novgorod state was the most active and civilized centre of the continent. It maintained contact with Byzantium, Baghdad, India and China and, through the intermediary of the Scandinavians, with England and Flanders. Russian influence penetrated into central Europe by way of the Danube, and led to the creation of the first trading-post at Prague, and revived the ancient Roman city of Ratisbon which was to become the first capital city of Germany, that of the duchy of Bavaria.

2. THE GREATEST TRADE EXPANSION OF THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

(9th and 10th centuries)

The zenith of the Kiev-Novgorod civilization coincided with the greatest prosperity of the Byzantine Empire. While a semi-barbarism was spreading over the European continent, Byzantium remained, confronting Islam, the only really civilized Christian state. The emperor, regarded both as the representative of God and the elect of the people, was surrounded by a government presided over by ministers, the prefect of the city who administered justice and the whole social and economic organization of the empire, the questor, entrusted with the preparation of the laws decreed by the emperor and who presided over the Supreme Court, the financial secretaries who controlled the state revenues according to wise regulations, and the director of the posts who was responsible for communications. Thousands of officials, trained in law, assured the smooth working of the public services in the central offices and in the provinces,

which were governed by military governors. The court was kept strictly separate from the government and to prevent the courtiers from becoming a hereditary oligarchy they were chosen, as in China, from the eunuchs, young men who, castrated in childhood, were thus prepared for high palace offices. The Church, dominated by the Patriarch of Constantinople, remained in contact with the emperor through a sort of minister of the cult, the *syncellus*, who was usually the successor-designate of the patriarch.

The resources of this structurally solid monarchy were enormous. They have been estimated, perhaps with some exaggeration, at six hundred million gold francs at the end of the 10th century. At any rate they were sufficiently large to allow the state to hold a surplus of two hundred and fifty millions. The Byzantine Empire, as rich as the Empire of Baghdad—both of them great 'modern' monarchies by comparison with the seigniorial states of Europe—drew its revenue from the land-tax, based on a land-survey, and the poll-tax, a fixed tax on every 'hearth', that is to say family; to these must be added the enormous yield of the indirect taxes, tolls, stamp duties and above all customs dues which were ten per cent on all imports and exports of the empire.

The authority of the state extended over all activities; it controlled religion, education and trade. Religion was the ideological basis of the state, so that heresy became a crime against which the state acted with the utmost severity, deporting those guilty of it—even entire villages—to the most remote parts of the empire. Education was the foundation of the whole administrative system; in the 9th century the university, where the law students graduated, was reorganized, the court seemed like an academy and culture was diffused by the monastery schools and by private instruction. But the life of the empire depended on its trade. Byzantium, with a population of not less than a million, was the most beautiful and probably the greatest capital in the world. Its churches and palaces topped by cupolas seemed the architectural synthesis of ancient Roman art and all the influences of the Near East; its wealth was prodigious; the city, regulated by a town-planning scheme and with a complete sewerage system, was given light and air by great public parks. The hospitals and charitable institutions had ample funds at their disposal. Trebizond and Salonica, the greatest ports of the Black Sea and the Aegean, rivalled Byzantium in splendour. But all this was only possible thanks to the immense revenues that international trade brought to the empire, especially to Byzantium and the ports.

The Arab conquests greatly altered the trade pattern of the empire; the Syrian cities, great industrial and maritime centres, were lost. Arab ship-

ping controlled the whole trade of the Indian Ocean and, as a result, led to the decline of the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia whose ships had maintained communications between Alexandria, the Persian Gulf and India. Alexandria itself, the market-place of Asia on the Mediterranean, had been reft from the empire.

The empire turned to the north. The Black Sea and the Aegean were now closed seas. Through Salonica it received metals from the Danube basin and by Trebizond it renewed its contacts with Central Asia, India and China, whence came the carpets of Persia, spices and silk. It gave new life to the Russian rivers and created a new trade-route by which it imported northern timber, furs, honey and slaves in exchange for luxury goods—silks, brocades, gold *lamés*, goldsmiths' work, enamels, ivories and wines—which brought to the whole world the reputation of the wealth and refinement of Byzantium. Finally, the Adriatic remained a part of the empire, whose commerce made the prosperity of Amalfi and paved the way for that of Venice. Under the influence of Byzantium, which opened its markets to Venetian trade, the port of Venice renewed the trade activity of the cities of Verona, Bergamo, Lodi and Cremona.

To maintain the yield of this trade from which it lived, the empire practised a policy of controlled economy.[1] The rich silk industry, which guaranteed it a favourable trade balance, became a state monopoly, as also did arms manufacture, upon which its military power was based. All the other branches of industry, left to private initiative, were strictly controlled. Every industry was obliged to form a guild under state control, but whose president was elected from amongst its members. It formed a co-operative which alone purchased raw materials and distributed them among the manufacturers; it had its own market where all the products made by its members were sold at prices fixed by the state, taking into account the interests of both the consumers and the producers. The quality of the goods was verified by public inspectors who guaranteed it with their seal. By this collaboration of state and guild all middlemen were eliminated. Commerce was entirely free, as was banking; credit, however, was subject to regulations, interest rates being fixed at 8·33% and loans for major enterprises—for example sea ventures—at 16·66%. The Rhodian Code was republished and served as a basis for seaborne trade, of which the limited liability company was the main support.

Since trade was the source of the prosperity and therefore of the social stability of the empire, the state guaranteed work for all; its main preoccupation was to check unemployment. Every unemployed man was

[1] Very similar—if somewhat less flexible—to that later practised by Colbert.

directed to the public assistance board which employed him on public works.

The same reasons of economic and social stability determined the monetary policy of Byzantium which, based on bimetallism, managed to preserve intact the value of the currency from the 4th to the end of the 10th century. In the 9th century the rise in prices due to the revival of trade forced the government to practise a policy of deflation.

The barbarism of the peoples surrounding her forced Byzantium to ensure her safety by keeping a very close watch over all the foreign merchants who flocked to the city. They were permitted to remain there for three months; after that time their stocks must be sold and they must leave the empire. There were, however, treaties which assured privileges to certain of them; thus a quarter was set aside for Russians at the city gates, where free lodgings and baths were placed at their disposal.

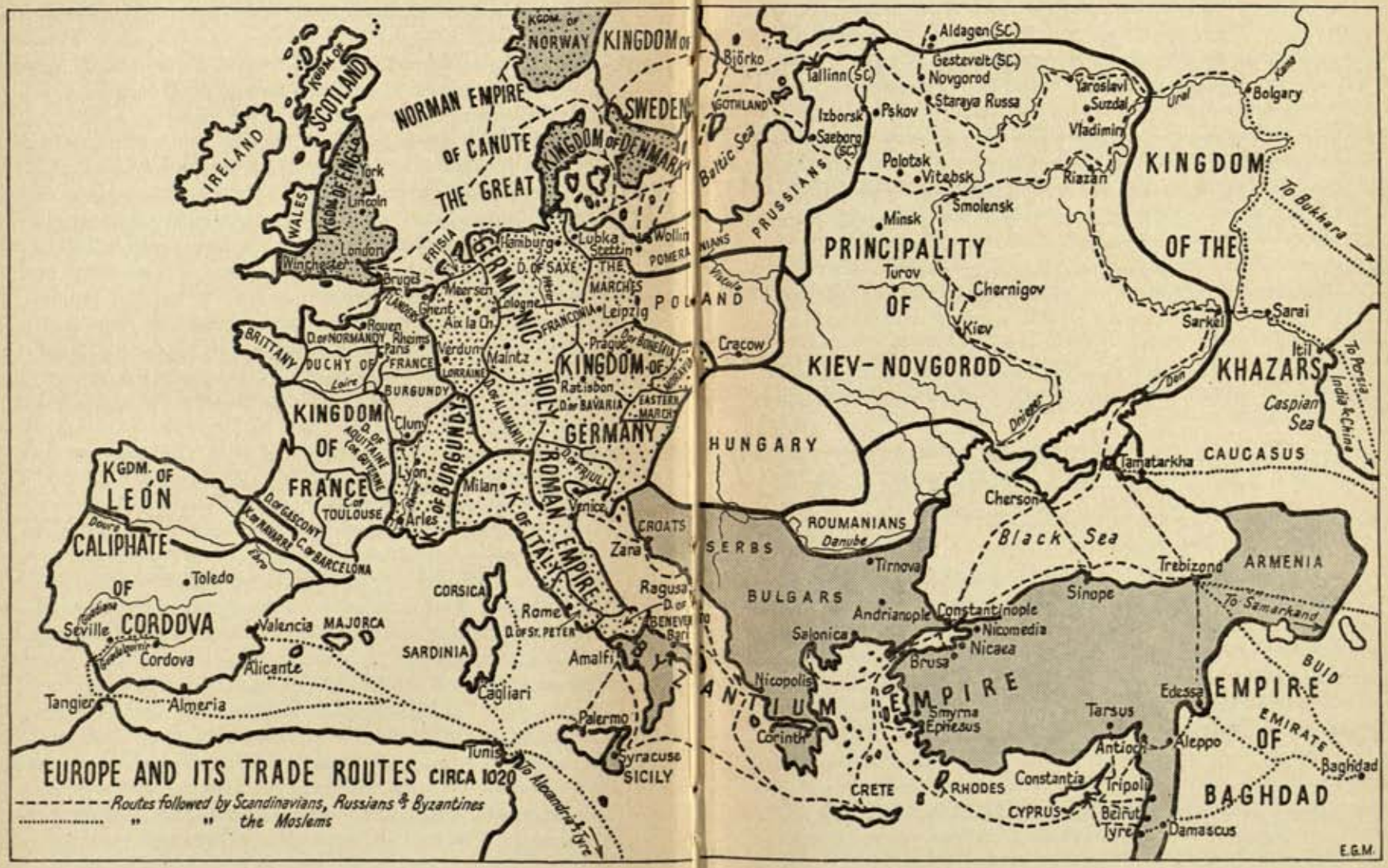
Outside the capital, fortunes were invested in land. But the government did all that it could to prevent the landed aristocracy from growing too powerful to the detriment of the villages and free peasants. The economic renascence of Byzantium in the 9th century resulted in reducing the influence of the great landed estates and making a number of their serfs into free farmers, while the villages of smallholders protected by the state escaped the rule of the seigneurs which had been so dangerous at the end of the Roman Empire.

Involved in trade activity, civilized for centuries, refined in their education and drawn in a remarkable way towards the aesthetic view of things, the people of Byzantium, despite the violence of certain revolts, were in general peaceful and level-headed. Of all the European cities Constantinople alone was not to know any popular communist movement. The repressive measures were mild. Undoubtedly the penalty of mutilation was frequent, but it must be remembered that it replaced the death penalty, which was retained for treason alone.

As all highly civilized peoples, the Byzantines did not like war and waged it as little as possible. But they understood the need for defence. The system of the *themes*, formed of worker-soldiers on the frontiers of the empire, assured a national recruitment for the army; supplemented by regiments of mercenaries, it had a service of civil supply, a corps of engineers and a medical service. Its strength amounted to 120,000 men.

But far more important than the army was the fleet. Byzantium remained a great power as long as she held control of the sea. The emperors, who had reconquered southern Italy and a part of Sicily in the 9th century and Crete in 961, prided themselves on having command of the sea in

Map No. 5


NORWAY
KINGDOM OF SWEDEN
SCOTLAND
IRELAND
WALES
KGDM. OF ENGLAND
York
Lincoln
London
Winchester
NORMAN EMPIRE OF CANUTE THE GREAT
KINGDOM OF DENMARK
Hamburg
Lubka
Stettin
Wollin
POMERA
FRISIA
Bruges
Ghent
Aix la Ch.
Liege
D. OF SAXE
THE MARCHES
Leipzig
POLAND
GERMANIC
Rouen
D. of NORMANDY
Rheims
Paris
FRANCE
Verdun
Maintz
LORRAINE
Prague
Bohemia
KINGDOM OF
HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE
BRITTANY
DUCHY OF
BURGUNDY
Ratisbon
D. of BAVARIA
EASTERN MARCH
KINGDOM OF FRANCE
Cluny
Lyon
Arles
K. of BURGUNDY
K. of ITALY
Milan
Venice
D. of FRIULI
CROATS
Zara
KGDM. OF LEÓN
CALIPHATE OF CORDOVA
Toledo
Seville
Cordova
Valencia
MAJORCA
Alicante
Tangier
Almeria
CORSICA
SARDINIA
Rome
D. of St. PETER
Amalfi
Cagliari
Palermo
Ragusa
Tunis
Syracuse
SICILY
To Alexandria
EUROPE AND ITS TRADE ROUTES CIRCA 1020
Routes followed by Scandinavians, Russians & Byzantines
" " the Moslems
Aldagen (SC.)
Bjorko
Gestevelt (SC.)
Novgorod
Tallinn (SC.)
GOTHLAND
Staraya Russa
Yaroslavl
Suzdal
Izborsk
Pskov
Vladimir
Saeborg (SC.)
Baltic Sea
PRUSSIANS
Polotsk
Vitebsk
Riazan
Bolgary
Ural
KINGDOM
To Bukhara
Minsk
Smolensk
PRINCIPALITY
OF THE
Turov
Chernigov
OF
Kiev
Sarkel
Sarai
Itil
KIEV-NOVGOROD
Cracow
KHAZARS
To Persia, India & China
Caspian Sea
Don
Dniepr
HUNGARY
Tamatarkha
CAUCASUS
Cherson
ROUMANIANS
Danube
SERBS
Black Sea
Tirnova
Trebizond
ARMENIA
Sinope
BULGARS
Andrianople
Constantinople
To Samarkand
Salonica
Nicomedia
Nicaea
Brusa
Nicopolis
BUID EMPIRE
EMPIRE
Edessa
Tarsus
Smyrna
Ephesus
Corinth
Antioch
Aleppo
EMIRATE OF
Baghdad
CRETE
RHODES
Constantia
Tripoli
CYPRUS
Beirut
Tyre
Damascus
BAGHDAD
E.G.M.

the whole eastern Mediterranean. They were to retain it, together with their trade supremacy, up to the 11th century, which marked the beginning of their decline.

The main cause of this decline was the flood of Turkish invasions in southern Russia, which jeopardized the safety of the trade with the Russian cities. This led to a fiscal crisis at the end of the 10th century which forced Basil II to reduce state expenditure. Involved in major wars against the Bulgarians which led in 1018 to their annexation to the empire, he could not consider cutting the expenses of the army; he therefore neglected the fleet and entrusted the policing of the Adriatic to the Venetians. The landed aristocracy, to whom the crisis gave a greater role in social affairs, was hostile to the maritime policy; what interested it was land. The Church supported it and with the decline of the business middle classes civilization too declined. Basil II, considering that education was a costly luxury, suppressed the University of Constantinople. Fifty years later, as a result of the great decline in the quality of the administration, Constantine IX had to revive the schools of law and philosophy.

The ascendancy of the landed aristocracy, thenceforward, never ceased to menace the economic and maritime policy which had created the wealth of the empire.

3. THE MARITIME EXPANSION OF THE SCANDINAVIANS REACHES ENGLAND AND FLANDERS

Scandinavian Expansion Westwards

The international trade-route established in the 8th century along the great Russian rivers had introduced the Scandinavians to commercial life and had put the Swedish Varangians into direct touch with Byzantium and the Arab world, while feudalism had given ground before this great maritime expansion. Centred around the sanctuary of Uppsala, Sweden at the end of the 10th century had become a kingdom, whose kings undertook wars of conquest in Finland and came into conflict with Denmark for the hegemony of the Baltic. The defeated Danes and Norwegians turned westward; and as they found no trade there, they took to piracy. But the kings of Denmark and Norway were at this time consolidating their authority and dispossessed the local princes. A great wave of emigration resulted. The Northmen reached Iceland by way of the Faroe Islands, whence they set out to discover the northern lands. They set foot on all the coasts of north-east America, in Greenland, in Labrador, in Newfoundland and as far as Wineland (the north-east coast of the present

United States).[1] Scandinavian colonies settled in the Shetlands, the Orkneys, Ireland, England and even on the Scheldt and the Seine, whence they organized the pillage of neighbouring lands.[2] In 886 they besieged Paris. To free himself from their incursions Charles the Simple authorized them to settle in the Lower Seine region under their duke, Rollo, by the Treaty of St-Clair-sur-Epte in 911. They at once assimilated all that remained of the Gallo-Roman civilization. Normandy, opened to sea trade by the Normans, was to become the most progressive region of northern France, both from the viewpoint of its institutions and from its artistic development. It was one of the most brilliant centres of the renascence which was to take place in the 11th century as shown by the construction in 1060 of the two splendid abbeys of Caen.

The maritime expansion of the Scandinavians was quite naturally to lead them to England.

Development of Royalty in England

England had been invaded in the 5th century by brutal and pagan barbarians from the regions about the Elbe—the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes. For a hundred and fifty years the Christian Celts fought desperately against them before being forced back into Ireland, Cornwall, Wales and Armorica (French Brittany). It was the memory of these wars that gave mediaeval literature the cycle of romances of Arthur and the Round Table.

In the 7th century the Anglo-Saxons founded seven little kingdoms in southern England, of which Wessex soon gained the leadership. But at the end of the 6th century Pope Gregory the Great had sent the monk Augustine at the head of a large mission to England to save Christianity in the island. He converted the king, Ethelred, and the Anglo-Saxons were organized around the two archbishoprics set up at Canterbury and York. Monasteries were founded, with schools staffed by monks from Italy and the Byzantine Empire. In 668 a Greek monk, Theodore of Tarsus, was made Archbishop of Canterbury. Under the influence of monks sent directly from Rome the English monastery schools soon became centres of a great classical tradition. While on the continent Christian thought was degraded into popular hagiography, these monasteries preserved the tradition of the Fathers of the Church and of antiquity. It may be said, quite justifiably, that England was for mediaeval Europe what

[1] They were to abandon America and forget the way there by the 10th century.

[2] The Scandinavian emigration was a phenomenon similar to the Greek colonization of the VIIth century BC.

Ionia had been for Greece—the cradle of thought. At Canterbury, York and Oxford the schools educated an élite so cultivated that when Charlemagne tried to revive culture in Gaul it was to the masters of these schools that he appealed. While the Carolingian renascence was being extinguished on the continent, brilliant thinkers still remained in England. Scotus Erigenus was the last great thinker of the classical tradition. His knowledge of Greek, Latin and Arabic writings made it possible for him to keep in contact with the thought of the ancient world, as well as with the works of the Jewish and Arab writers of the 9th century. He was the direct successor of the Alexandrian philosophers, and his neo-platonism, derived from Plotinus, caused the Church to remain 'Platonist' up to the 13th century.

The court of Wessex under Alfred the Great (*c.* 880) had, thanks to the monks, a culture far superior to that of the Carolingians. Whereas Charlemagne did not know how to write, Alfred adapted into English the *Universal History* of Paul Orosius and had collections made of the ancient English epics.

The Northmen in England

It was during his reign that the first settlement of the Northmen took place in Northumberland and eastern England. He converted them to Christianity and extended his influence over them, and also over the Celts who freely recognized him as their king.

The settlement of the Northmen in England made England into a sea-going nation. Alfred had a fleet built for him by the Frisians. But England, like the continent, was becoming feudalized; the seigniorial régime was introduced over the Celtic and Saxon village system. Already along the coasts and on the rivers merchant cities and fishing townships were being built. Bristol, Norwich, Lincoln, Oxford, York, Exeter, Winchester and above all London became markets where a middle class of traders and craftsmen was being created. In the midst of the manorial organization, the middle class formed merchant guilds, administered their own affairs and lived under their own law. Great fairs, like that of Winchester, came into being. Oriental goods were imported from Byzantium by the Scandinavians who exported English wool in exchange.

Already London, through its contact with the sea, was taking rank as a capital.

The Maritime Empire of Canute the Great

At the beginning of the 11th century the kings of Denmark set out, on

the heels of the Norse adventurers, for the conquest of the seas. The Norwegians, the Swedes, the Wends who had settled on the Baltic coast, had to recognize their rule. In alliance with the Normans of France, the Danes attacked England with more than five hundred ships. In 1013 their leader was recognized by the Saxons as their king; and soon Canute the Great set up a dynasty which ruled the country (1016–1035).

The reign of Canute was the high point of Scandinavian expansion in the northern seas. In his reign the Northmen had a real thalassocracy. From London Canute reigned over a great maritime empire which included Denmark, Norway, southern Sweden and England and which imposed the tribute of the *danegeld* on the Baltic ports. His court was the most refined and literate of the western courts. The sea, which had already brought Roman influence to England in the form of Christianity, now opened the country to Byzantine influences which came to it from very far away by commerce and the sea-routes. London was the end of the great trade-route which started from China, India, Baghdad and Byzantium and reached Luebeck and Birka by way of Kiev and Novgorod before turning westwards.

While Canute the Great was extending his rule over the northern seas, the Turks began to invade southern Russia, threatening the traffic along its rivers. In the Scandinavian world, the Varangians who maintained contact with Russia and Byzantium had to yield their primacy to the Northmen who were in contact with the West. Canute completed the conversion of Scandinavia—begun in Sweden by Olaf the Holy (1018)—and finally brought it within the pale of the Roman church. He attracted the Anglo-Saxons to Denmark and Sweden. Scandinavia, which had gravitated in the orbit of Byzantium, now became a centre of maritime attraction for the western peoples. The empire of Canute broke up on his death in 1035, but the impulse had been given and London became one of the centres of sea-borne trade in the west.

Foundation of Bruges

While the Scandinavian ships brought new life to London, they also were responsible for the appearance of Bruges on the Flemish coast, where the Northmen came to get the cloth which had been woven in Flanders since Gallic times.

The Flemish merchants, organized in armed caravans, bought their goods in common and sole them at a high profit. They too began to adventure and by the end of the 10th century were to be found in London in numbers equal to the Scandinavians. By way of the rivers they extended

the trade of Bruges into the Rhineland. Merchant colonies settled at the confluence of the Scheldt and the Lys, where they founded Ghent, in the centre of maritime Flanders, where they founded Ypres, and on the Scheldt at Saint-Omer. Others settled in Cologne and Maintz. Merchants from Cologne came to London in the wake of the Flemings.

Thus, under the influence of Byzantium, two spheres of commercial activity were created. One was at Venice, where a mercantile middle class flourished and revived the trade of the cities of northern Italy; the other was at the ports of London and Bruges, created by the influence of Scandinavian shipping which brought there the produce of Russia, of Byzantium and of Asia.

But there was no contact between Italy in the south and England and Flanders in the north. Byzantium was the focus whence trade expansion, by the Adriatic on the one side and the Baltic on the other, brought with it the dawn of a revival of civilization.

CHAPTER V

THE LAST CENTURIES OF WORLD TRADE

I. THE REVIVAL OF SEA-BORNE TRADE IN ASIA

Islam Revives World Trade

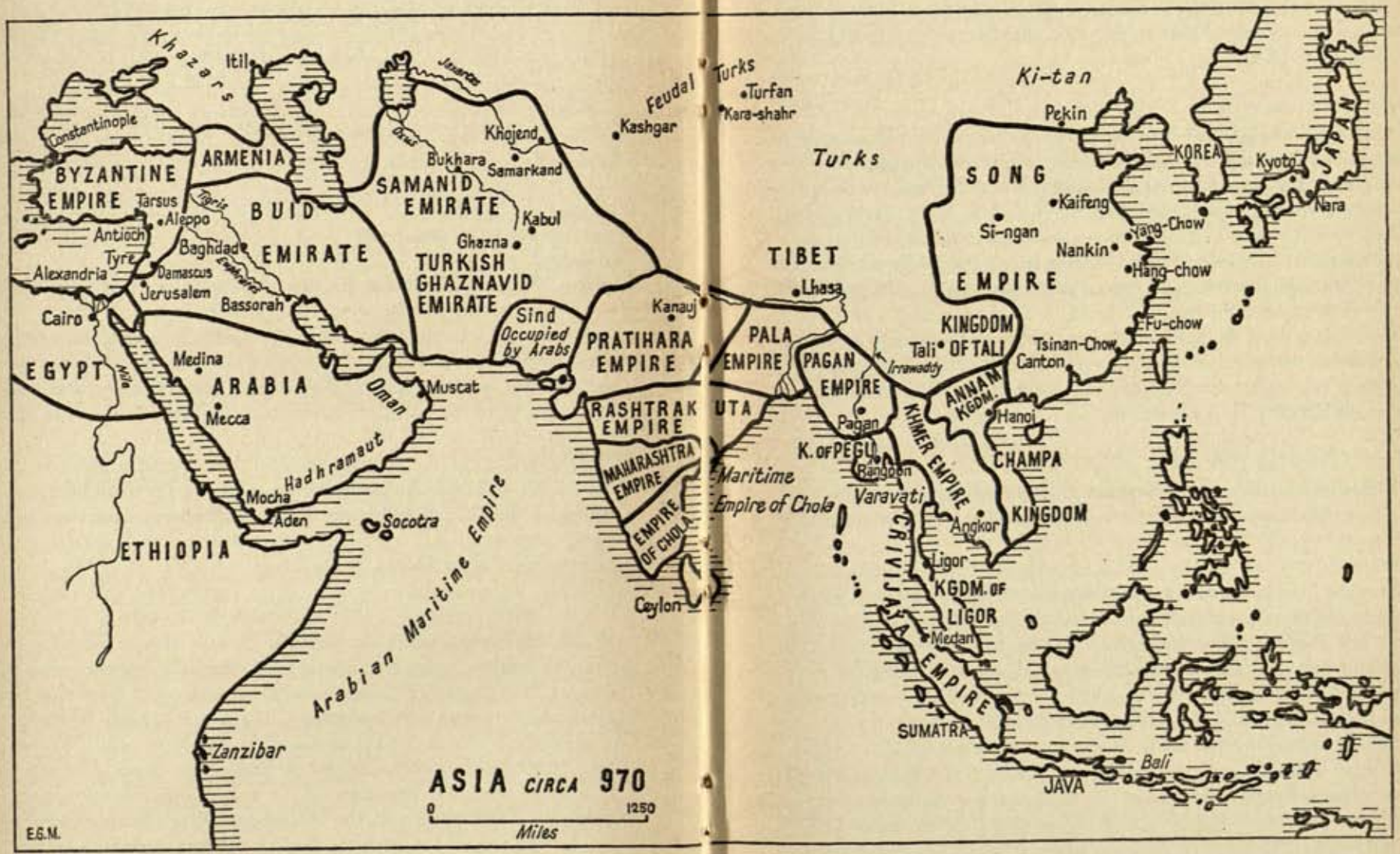
THE Islamic conquests led to a great revival of world trade. The peace which reigned in the Mediterranean and Nearer Asia favoured international exchanges which the unity of the Moslem world, which stretched from Cordova to India, increased to vast proportions. Byzantine prosperity also revived because of the new trade-routes opened to the north. At the same time China reached the limits of her expansion.

At the beginning of the 8th century all Asia depended upon the two empires, Moslem and Chinese, while the economic life of all Europe was centred on the Byzantine Empire. Exchanges between these three great empires were many and constant. It seemed that a period of stability was about to open in the history of the world.

Chinese Prosperity Under the Liberal Absolutism of the Tang

Under the Tang dynasty the immense Chinese Empire was to know, in the 7th century, a period of liberal absolutism. The emperor, who was known as the 'August of Heaven' was an incarnation of the divine will; liberty and prosperity were widespread. The system of land-communism, by which the land was divided among all husbandmen, assured the well-being of the people and encouraged the production of silk woven in the countryside. Freedom of trade led to a maximum development of international commerce and the encouragement given to education—schools were founded in even the smallest hamlets—opened a period of intellectual greatness in China, favoured by freedom of thought and religious toleration. Peace and security reigned. Law became humane and the death penalty was abolished. Under the influence of pacifist ideas and

Map No. 6


Khazars
Itil
Constantinople
BYZANTINE EMPIRE
ARMENIA
Tarsus
Aleppo
Antioch
Tyre
Alexandria
Damascus
Jerusalem
Cairo
EGYPT
Nile
BUID EMIRATE
Baghdad
Tigris
Euphrates
Bassorah
Medina
ARABIA
Mecca
Oman
Muscat
Hadhramaut
Mocha
Aden
Socotra
ETHIOPIA
Zanzibar
Arabian Maritime Empire
Jaxartes
Oxus
Khojend
Bukhara
Samarkand
SAMANID EMIRATE
Kabul
Ghazna
TURKISH GHAZNAVID EMIRATE
Feudal Turks
Kashgar
Turfan
Kara-shahr
Sind
Occupied by Arabs
Kanauj
PRATIHARA EMPIRE
RASHTRAK EMPIRE
MAHARASHTRA EMPIRE
EMPIRE OF CHOLA
Ceylon
PALA EMPIRE
UTA
Maritime Empire of Chola
TIBET
Lhasa
PAGAN EMPIRE
Irrawaddy
Pagan
K. OF PEGU
Rangoon
Varavati
Ki-tan
Pekin
Turks
SONG EMPIRE
Kaifeng
Si-ngan
Nankin
Yang-Chow
Hang-chow
Fu-chow
Tsinan-Chow
Canton
KOREA
Kyoto
JAPAN
Nara
KINGDOM OF TALI
Tali
ANNAM KGDM.
Hanoi
CHAMPA KINGDOM
KHMER EMPIRE
Angkor
SRIVIJAYA EMPIRE
Ligor
KGDM. OF LIGOR
Medan
SUMATRA
Bali
JAVA
ASIA CIRCA 970
0
1250
Miles
E.G.N.

of the security which seemed assured, conscription was abolished and a professional army was formed, mainly consisting of mercenaries, which was limited to a hundred and thirty thousand men.

International commerce, nourished in great part by sea-borne trade, increased enormously thanks to the economic liberalism practised both by China and Islam.

Japan Looks Seaward

Under the influence of China, Japan, which had just embarked upon a great monarchical reform (645), also took her part in international trade. Transforming into a feudal and landowning society the institutions of the liberalized, centralized and mercantile empire of the Tang, the emperors of Kyoto, relying on a class of Chinese and Korean *literati*, tried to convert Japan into a 'modern' state. Having united the whole archipelago under their rule, they created a central administration, issued a new code of laws, transformed the feudal lords into governors, asserted state control over religion, freed the serfs and declared their land-tenures to be transferred from the seigneurs to the emperor; freedom of trade was proclaimed, the craftsmen's associations abolished and the empire thus reformed began to look towards the sea.

Maritime Expansion of the Arabs

While sea-borne trade was beginning to expand anew in the Far East and to embrace Japan, in western Asia the Arabs undertook the conquest of the seaways.

Since the downfall of the Roman Empire, the silting-up of the canal linking the Nile to the Red Sea had encouraged the Ethiopians to take to the sea, and they controlled the traffic between the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. But since they had remained Christians in the midst of an Islamized East they soon found the seaways closed to them by the Arab conquests. Their expansion was checked and they withdrew within their own boundaries and lived for centuries in complete isolation.

The Arabs, on the other hand, who had just given the world a new faith and who were to prove themselves empire-builders, embarked on a great maritime expansion. The towns in Oman and Hadramaut, which until then had been staging-posts living from the commerce of others, now launched fleets which took the place of the Ethiopian shipping, assured them the mastery of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Oman, reached as far as China and set out on the discovery of the eastern coasts of Africa, where they were soon to found the port of Zanzibar.

The Mecca pilgrimages drew multitudes of believers to the Holy City and the Arabs undertook the transport of the faithful by sea from Persia and India.

An Arab thalassocracy was set up in the Gulf of Oman, which became a Moslem lake.

The Dravidian Thalassocracy

Since the most distant times the Dravidians of southern India had enjoyed a monopoly of the carrying trade in the Gulf of Oman and the Bay of Bengal. The great expansion of sea-going trade since regular contacts were established between the Hellenistic states and India, and later between the Roman Empire and China, had resulted in the growth of Indian civilization throughout the whole Bay of Bengal in the wake of the Dravidian mariners and traders. Prosperous ports were founded from the 1st century AD onwards on the deltas of the great rivers, on the Irrawaddy in Burma, on the Mekong in Cambodia, on the Red River in Annam. They had become centres of influence whence the Indian civilization had conquered all the sea-coast lands as far as Insulindia, even as formerly Hellenism had conquered all the countries of the eastern Mediterranean. In the 1st century Burma, in the 2nd century Siam, in the 3rd century Insulindia and in the 6th century all Indochina were drawn into the great maritime current and became deeply Indianized. In 711 the Moslems had undertaken the conquest of the Indus basin. In the 8th and 9th centuries they were to extend their rule over the whole of northern India. But the plateau of the Deccan defended the states of central and southern India which, earlier spared by the Huns, had preserved their prosperity and their sea-borne trade.

Though representing profoundly different worlds, the Arabs and the Dravidians did not come into conflict for the mastery of the seas. The Gulf of Oman passed to the Arabs while the Dravidians remained uncontested masters of the Bay of Bengal, where they acted as middlemen between the Far East and the Moslem lands.

This meant immense prosperity for them, since the economic liberalism of China and Islam, by facilitating trade, enormously increased the wealth of all sea-coast states, amongst which the little Dravidian kingdoms of southern India, Pandya, Chola and Ceylon had an uncontested leadership.

Thus along all the coasts of Asia, from Syria, by way of Arabia, to India and Insulindia and as far as China and Japan, sea-borne trade once more assumed a universal character, complemented by the trade of the caravan routes which, reaching Byzantium, were soon to be in touch,

through the great Greek port and the Russian cities, with the extreme north, the Baltic and the port of London.

This great prosperity was not, however, destined to last long. In the 8th century a series of crises appeared simultaneously, in India, China and Japan, which were to threaten it.

2. THE CRISES

Indian Resistance to Islam

The Hindu crisis was a consequence of the Moslem conquest. By its tolerance Islam had overcome the Christian and Mazdaean peoples with astonishing facility. The terror and persecution practised against the Hindus whom Islam regarded as idolaters aroused a passive resistance which it was impossible for it to break.

India, delivered over to pitiless massacre, was placed under the rule of Moslem governors. Unable to unite it, they found themselves becoming a part of the feudal framework in which the country had lived since the Huns had destroyed its cities; they soon became independent princes, linked to Baghdad only by an oath of allegiance. But to their subjects, who refused to accept Islam, they remained foreigners. The religious schism which took place between the Hindu people and the Moslem governing class marked the final decline of India as a political power.

India's refusal to be converted by its Moslem conquerors was a particularly interesting phenomenon. Hindu pantheism not only remained impenetrable to Islam but even attained its highest intellectual development in the 8th century. It had been progressively abandoning Buddhism since the 6th century and reverting to its origins which linked it directly to the civilization of ancient India. Buddhism, more and more relegated by its asceticism to the monasteries, was dealt its death-blow by the Moslem conquest. By the end of the 10th century it had completely disappeared in India. Brahmanism recovered all the influence which it had never lost among the common people and alone of all the ancient religions it survived the great waves of Buddhist, Christian and Moslem teaching.

While preserving the symbols and the divinities of the cult of the Mother-Goddess and the nature cult united under the omnipotence of the great Creator-God Vishnu, Brahmanism had built up a religion of the highest idealism. It had no orthodox dogma but, through various doctrines all admitted as so many attempts to arrive at a knowledge of God, the 'Great All', it conceived the world as permeated by divinity; and

considering that every man has God within him, it regarded the search for God as the aim of life which every man must try to attain by freeing himself from matter by knowledge, meekness and love.

Hinduism, the last stage of the development of the ancient pantheism, thus appeared as essentially syncretic and, in consequence, tolerant. It admitted all religions save those which, like Christianity and Islam, based upon monotheism a transcendental doctrine regarded as the one and only truth.

A religious sentiment rather than a religion, Hinduism had its greatest thinker just at the time when Islam was destroying its temples and massacring its priests. In Malabar, where an active economic and maritime life had been preserved, Sankara raised its thinking to a more absolute idealism than that of Plato. It was to remain an insuperable barrier to Islam.

But this very barrier, by completely separating the conquerors from the conquered, was bound to make the Moslem princes seem like tyrants opposed to all the great cultural traditions of the country; they could bring to it nothing save a borrowed civilization incapable of renewing itself in the living forces of the people, who refused to accept it. As the conquest advanced, the tragic rupture between governors and governed never ceased to widen, to extend over all India and to make it sterile.

State Socialist Crisis in China

The expansion of trade had led to the formation of enormous capitalist fortunes in China, before which the system of land-communism on which the Tang had based Chinese society could not make headway. The capitalists took the land for themselves and formed huge estates.

At the same time the normal development of the centralized absolutism continued to increase the services and the personnel of the administration. The fiscal needs of the state grew constantly until a time came when they became more than its resources could support.

In order to eliminate large-scale capitalism, which disorganized the social structure of the country, and at the same time to provide resources for the state, China reverted to the system of monopoly of the sale of metals, which forced the government into state socialism.

Absolutism, relying on a plethoric administration, was little by little transformed into autocracy and China found itself once more involved in a crisis of power; dynastic disorders plunged it into terrible internal convulsions[1] at the very time when the advent of the Abbasids began the greatest prosperity of the Empire of Baghdad (750).

[1] It was exactly the same phenomenon as the Roman crisis of 235.

Anarchy invited invasion. The magnificent capital, Chang-Ngan, was sacked. For twenty years the empire was the prey of civil wars and Mongol forays. Misery and famine took the place of universal well-being. If the annalists are to be believed, the population fell from fifty-two to seventeen million inhabitants.

In the midst of these disasters, the people of the continental provinces sought refuge in piety and rallied around the monasteries which became powerful landholding lordships. In the maritime provinces the great cities, especially the ports, escaped the general anarchy. All the economic activity of China came from the sea and was once more concentrated in the cities of the coasts and the rivers.

After sixteen years of crisis, power was restored (766). The need to re-establish order made the emperor adopt methods of authoritarian state socialism. The eclipse of power had favoured the concentration of wealth; in the countryside the land had been appropriated by the seigneurs; in the cities wealth had passed into the hands of Chinese or foreign capitalists. In order to restore a middle class and to provide resources for the state, the emperor took measures against this monied oligarchy and burdened it with taxes so heavy that they amounted to expropriation. The result was a severe crisis of international trade. All the propertied classes revolted in violent opposition. At Canton, the Arab and Persian business men, after sacking the city, set fire to it and left the port in their ships.

However, the central power, reorganized on a military basis, had been able to recruit a national army. The invaders were driven back. The restoration of internal security led to a less draconian régime. The prohibitive taxes were repealed and the foreign merchants returned to Canton. To encourage smallholding, the emperor expropriated the huge estates of the monasteries. For a century China, thus restored, sought to recover her internal stability. But the lack of social balance and the dynastic crises remained endemic. In 907 the Tang dynasty died out. The governors immediately transformed themselves into sovereigns. China was broken up into ten states, the invasions began again and the continental part of the empire, isolated from the movement of trade, once again hardened into a seigniorial régime, of which the monasteries were the main centres.

The anarchy of China allowed the Turks at the end of the 10th century to seize the cities of Central Asia which fell into utter decadence. The caravan routes were cut, China was isolated, her seigniorial evolution was hastened and the continental provinces slipped into feudalism. Trade

once more sought refuge in the great coastal cities and in the valley of the Yang-tse.

Ruin of the Monarchy in Japan

The Chinese crisis had severe repercussions in Japan, then in the full course of monarchical evolution. The reforms undertaken there during the last century had needed, in order to succeed, an active trade which did not exist in the landholding society of Japan. It could only come from China. The Chinese crisis of 750, by condemning Japan to isolation, doomed the monarchical reforms to failure. The administration, only just set up, was transformed into an oligarchy of nobles; the great families struggled amongst themselves to seize as appanages the high offices of state; the officials once again became territorial princes and the tenants who had been declared freemen fell once again into serfdom. The seigniorial estates reappeared. In the capital, Kyoto, an intellectual élite, many of them foreigners, continued to hold out for a century. But this was only a stage scene. In the countryside the social grouping of the people around the princes, who fought for power among themselves, drove Japan into feudal dismemberment. At the end of the 10th century the great monarchical experiment, which had tried to build up a centralized and liberal empire on a seigniorial régime without passing through the phase of feudalism, was only a memory. Japan reverted to the period of feudal evolution from which it had wanted to free itself. The imperial unity no longer existed save as a legal fiction. Japan, which had wanted at one time to follow the example of China, to centralize the state, emancipate the people and turn to sea-borne trade, now fell back into the closed economy of the seigniorial régime.

The Chinese Crisis Favours Dravidian Shipping

Though the Chinese crisis destroyed the maritime aspirations of Japan, it had, on the contrary, very favourable consequences for Dravidian shipping. The invasion and ruin of the northern provinces of China, by diminishing the importance of the international traffic on the caravan routes of Central Asia, made all trade turn to the sea and caused the zenith of the prosperity of the maritime states of India and Indochina. In the 9th century the Khmer Empire, with a purely Indian civilization, began a period of splendour. Angkor—where the famous temple was to be built in the 12th century—became a great international capital. The island of Sumatra united under the kings of Palembang became almost a maritime empire extending over Malaya and the islands of Java and Bali. In Burma

the port of Rangoon acquired a considerable importance. The wealth of all these countries, by developing the sea-power of the little Indian kingdom of Chola, made it in the 10th century the centre of a Dravidian thalassocracy. It incorporated Pandya and Ceylon, extended over the whole eastern coast of India as far as the mouths of the Ganges and thus came into conflict with the maritime kingdom of Crividjaya, whose centre was the island of Sumatra, for the possession of the Straits of Malacca.

Crividjaya had been a naval power from the 7th century; it first occupied the Malacca peninsula and then the island of Java. Its ships frequented both Chinese and Indian ports. At the beginning of the 11th century, a powerful Chola squadron set out for the conquest of Crividjaya which was forced to accept the suzerainty of the little Hindu kingdom. It kept it until 1070. For half a century the Bay of Bengal was a private sea of the Chola thalassocracy. Dravidian ships henceforth ruled the seas from Ceylon as far as Canton.

The prosperity of the Dravidian shipping had as a result the prosperity of the Arab shipping which, by monopolizing the traffic in the Persian Gulf, was to exercise a decisive influence on the destinies of the Empire of Baghdad.

3. THE BREAK-UP OF THE EMPIRES OF BAGHDAD AND BYZANTIUM

Feudal Dismemberment of the Empire of Baghdad

The mastery that the Moslem states of Africa, successors to the naval power of the Syrian cities, held in the Mediterranean, and the mastery of Arab shipping in the Gulf of Oman, condemned the Empire of Baghdad to remain a purely continental power. It was to be faced with a similar crisis to that which the empire of the Achaemenids had passed through fifteen centuries earlier; its maritime provinces, dependent on the sea, had a tendency to secession while the continental provinces were submerged in feudalism.

The great crisis that China had passed through in the 8th century, by diminishing the importance of the traffic along the trade routes of Central Asia, hastened this evolution. The diminution of trade drove the country into a system of closed economy; from the 9th century the landed seigneurs restored the seigniorial régime, turned themselves into governors and tried to usurp sovereign rights. In 875 the Iranian dynasty of the Samanids seized power in Bukhara, and Baghdad was compelled to recognize their

sovereignty over all the lands between the Caspian Sea and the Jaxartes; and in western Persia another Iranian family, the Bouids, carved themselves out an autonomous emirate.

The caliphs of Baghdad, leaders of the faithful, no longer had any political authority save in the regions immediately around the city. Their role in the world of Islam became similar to that played in Christendom by the Popes of Rome.

The Beginnings of Turkish Feudalism

In the great Samanid and Bouid emirates, seigniorial evolution threatened to break up the countries into feudal conglomerations under Iranian princes. To hold them in check the Samanid emirs employed their Turkish slaves as governors. In 962 one of these slaves, entrusted with the governorship of the city of Ghazna, declared himself an emir and the Samanids were forced to recognize him as their vassal. The first Turkish state was thus formed within the Moslem empire itself.

The final feudal dissolution of the eastern regions of the empire allowed the Turkish nomads, made up of a vast mass of tribes stretching from the Aral Sea to the Sea of China, to descend into Central Asia. This they did the more easily since the dismemberment of the Chinese Empire freed them from the tutelage that had hitherto controlled them. By the end of the 10th century all Central Asia was held by the Turks. This was a fact of immense historical significance. Being nomads, the Turks made the whole country revert to steppe. The rich caravan cities, where a refined civilization had grown up, made up of Iranian, Greek, Indian and Chinese elements, fell into decadence. Civilization broke all contact with antiquity. The Turk began his work of destruction.

The military citadel of Ghazna was the successor of the merchant cities of Bukhara, Samarkand and Kodjend. Plundering bands replaced the trade caravans. From the beginning of the 11th century the Turkish raids reached the Punjab which was horribly put to sack. Ghazna, as at one time Nineveh, became a great centre of wealth, thanks to the accumulation of booty plundered from the Tokharian cities and India. War took the place of commerce as a means of enrichment. The Iranian provinces of the Moslem empire, from Mesopotamia to Turkestan, deprived of their traffic with Central Asia and China, began to dissolve into a seigniorial-feudal system whose consequences were felt as far as the western regions of the caliphate. Armenia, and then Arabia itself, broke away from Baghdad; and Byzantium, taking the offensive under the emperor, Nicephorus Phocas, occupied Crete and seized Aleppo, Tarsus, Cyprus and Cilicia.

In 969 the caliph abandoned the whole of Syria to the emperor. The Empire of Baghdad collapsed. The authority of the caliph, it is true, remained uncontested as the religious leader of Islam, but he ceased to be an emperor and became only the head of a theocracy imposed on a federation of feudal states.

The Turkish Invasions Lead to the Decline of the Russian Cities and Byzantium

While Byzantium, taking advantage of the ruin of the Empire of Baghdad, was recovering the mastery of the eastern Mediterranean, the Turks poured into southern Russia and menaced the cities of the Kiev-Novgorod state. To build a bulwark against them the princes of Kiev seized Sarkel in 965, and in 1016, in alliance with the Emperor Basil II, they conquered the Khazar settlements on the Black Sea, which thereby became entirely Russo-Byzantine. But by destroying the power of the Khazars they left the way open for the Turks, Petchenegs, Oguz, Kipchaks (Polovtsi), whose forays extended as far as Thrace and along the Danube.

Contacts between Byzantium and the Russian cities and, in consequence, with the northern countries were almost entirely cut off. Also the Turkish invasions in Nearer Asia closed the caravan routes which reached Byzantium from Central Asia through the port of Trebizond.

A severe economic crisis, soon followed by a financial crisis, resulted. The empire, to find resources, tried to increase the taxes in kind that it received from the Bulgarians and the Serbs. The result was a great insurrection throughout all Macedonia (1040). At the same time the Norman French attacked Sicily, and the Turks threatened the Russian cities and the rich provinces of Asia Minor. The landed aristocracy profited by the situation to put one of their own men, Isaac Comnenos (1057), on the throne. This meant the collapse of the whole system and the government was taken from the jurists and handed over to the representatives of the great families who became a closed aristocracy and assumed semi-feudal independence in the provinces. The empire thus disorganized was unable to defend Asia Minor against the Turks who seized it in 1090. But it was in the Asiatic *themes* that the national army was recruited. Their loss entailed the enrolment of foreign mercenaries. Since the treasury could no longer meet the expenses involved, it had recourse to a 30% devaluation of the currency. The fleet, more and more reduced and now manned by Italian mercenaries, could not prevent the Normans of Sicily from taking possession of Thebes and Corinth, the main centres of the silk industry, which was brought by Roger II of Sicily to Italy.

The Turkish invasions ruined both the Byzantine Empire and Islam, whose sea-power collapsed at the same time as that of Byzantium. The Italian cities at once took over the succession. The decline of Byzantium and the Moslem states, simultaneous with that of the Russian cities now cut off from the sea by the Turks, led to a revival of city life in Italy. A great change began to take place which was to alter the economic balance of the world by transferring the great centres of international trade from the east to the west of Europe.

The ruin of Kiev, the decadence of Byzantium and the end of Moslem maritime supremacy in the Mediterranean were events not only simultaneous but derived from two similar main causes, the seigniorial dissolution of the Empire of Baghdad and the crisis in the Chinese Empire which made the Turkish invasions possible.

4. CHINA LOSES CONTACT WITH WESTERN ASIA AND EUROPE

Restoration of the Chinese Empire

At the time when the Empire of Baghdad was collapsing and Byzantium was falling into decadence, the Song dynasty (960–1127) restored the military power of China and reconquered all the Chinese provinces with the exception of the Pekin region which was still held by the Manchus and the region of the upper Hoang-Ho which was retained by the Tibetans. But it was the Hoang-Ho which opened China to the caravan men of Turkestan. The presence of the Turks in the Tarim basin and of the Tibetans on the Hoang-Ho had been the decisive factors in the decadence and dismemberment of the Empire of Baghdad as well as of the introduction of the seigniorial régime and the system of closed economy in the continental provinces of China. Thus, from the advent of the Song dynasty, continental China, cut off from Central Asia, was dominated by the great estates of the landed aristocracy, while southern China became enormously prosperous thanks to the sea-borne trade guaranteed her by the Dravidian mastery of the seas.

The restoration of Chinese unity allowed merchants to follow the waterways to the northern provinces; thenceforward, these provinces began to look seaward, while trade and the centralizing policy of the Song began to break down the seigniorial régime.

But China, though restored, became more and more isolated from the outside world. The Turks, by occupying Central Asia, closed the way to the West, and the feudal dismemberment of the Empire of Baghdad led to a cessation of communications by sea with the Persian Gulf. China

was therefore forced to organize her affairs in a semi-isolation which was to separate her almost entirely from western Asia and from Europe.

Democratic State Socialist Experiment Under the Song Dynasty

The crisis through which China had passed had greatly altered the former economic and social structure of her northern provinces. In order to restore unity, the Song undertook a policy of authoritarian absolutism. Reverting to the theory of power by divine right, introduced in the 7th century by the Tang, the emperor was held to be divine. But during the 7th and 8th centuries Nestorian Christianity and Islam had both penetrated into China. The emperor therefore tried to create a monarchical cult which would be a sort of syncretism of all religions. Placing himself above the various beliefs, the emperor conceived the idea of an imperial divinity akin to Buddha, Christ and Mohammed, declaring himself to be a descendant of Lao-Tse.

As in Egypt under the XVIIIth dynasty and later in Ptolemaic times, the evolution of the ideas of natural law and of monarchical imperialism led to a universalist conception of religion.[1] But the national traditions of China were too deep-rooted to be overcome by these new ideas. The universalist cult set up by the emperor became merged in the religious and traditional moral ideas of China; Taoism became the official Church and the moral code of Confucius was restored to honour.

There were now two ideas, each represented by a party; one, conservative and Confucian, based on national tradition, wished to return to the ideas of Chinese antiquity; the other, the universalist idea, wished to rebuild not only China but the world on egalitarian and reformist principles.

In 1068 the emperor gave power to the reformers. They were to initiate a great experiment in democratic state socialism. A commission was entrusted with the reform of the system of property and ordered to take all suitable measures 'to increase the well-being of the universe'. It was to be a revolution under the banner of an egalitarian and universal ideology. Between 1069 and 1073 a series of far-reaching reforms was introduced. Controlled economy was put into force, not to ensure increased production but to procure a more general well-being for the people. State services were set up to improve crop-yields by giving selected seed to the farmers on credit, and to ensure cheap wheat by organizing its sale at a fixed price throughout the whole empire.

[1] This tendency towards religious unity was shown in a similar manner in the Roman Empire first by the adoption of the solar cult of Serapis and later of Christianity.

From the social viewpoint, these reforms were inspired by a single aim: to extend well-being. Great land-clearance works were undertaken and five million acres of arable land were made available for division amongst the people.[1] Fiscal theories too were revised. The emperor, rightly considering that the state resources were related to those of the people, wished, by favouring trade, to improve general living standards by the exploitation of all the wealth of the country. The bullion and the works of art in precious metals possessed by the state were sold: the principle of fiscal balance assured by financial reserves was replaced by that of circulation, the productive source of private and thus of public benefits. For the first time a state socialist policy was aimed not at increasing the power of the state but at increasing the well-being of all its citizens.[2] Also, the theories of natural law which had triumphed in the country envisaged the state not as an entity in itself but as the sum total of its citizens. The state therefore took upon itself to assure their material well-being, but they in their turn owed it service, both as soldiers and officials. The army was organized on the model of a universal militia; and to allow the introduction of universal service for officials the administration was reorganized on an entirely new basis. Every citizen was required to serve the state for three years, without receiving any emoluments except whatever might be necessary to support his family. The reformers wished to prevent the formation of an official oligarchy and the abuses consequent on it.

But to make this bureaucratic service feasible, all citizens had to be sufficiently educated. Education was therefore made compulsory and higher studies—which up till then had been very expensive—were made available to all. The curriculum was entirely transformed. It broke away from the study of the classic humanities and adopted a utilitarian 'modern' curriculum devoted mainly to the study of the state institutions. This extension of education went hand in hand with recognition of complete freedom of thought and expression. But to prevent the individual from becoming regimented by party ideologies all political groups were dissolved.

Reforms so radical could not be put into force without arousing a vigorous reaction. Opposition to the reformers from time to time restored the government of the conservatives, who were opposed to the egalitarianism of the reformers and wished to maintain the social class-system. In 1073 they tried to introduce a fiscal régime which burdened the incomes of the workers with a 33% tax, while capitalists and landowners were only

[1] The total arable land in the empire was 72·5 million acres.

[2] It was a sort of mercantilism

taxed at 20%. But the people rose in revolt and the democratic régime finally became established.

It was to give China fifty years of social peace and an immense prosperity.

World Trade Comes to an End

The ruin of the Empire of Baghdad, the occupation of Central Asia by the Turks, the decadence of the Byzantine Empire and the even greater decadence of the Russian cities put an end to world trade for several centuries. The balance which the twofold hegemony of the Roman Empire and the Chinese Empire had established in the centuries of their greatness and which had continued to survive despite the crises under the twofold attraction of the Empire of Baghdad and the China of the Tang was finally destroyed. With the exception of China, preparing for the advent of a new régime which she wished to become universal, all the great states, whether in Asia or in Europe, had entered a period of economic decadence and political dissolution. The land extended its ascendancy over the continents, the manorial economy submerged the empires, breaking them into feudal principalities. All trade was concentrated in the ports. The sea was no longer a universal highway, but was divided into closed areas with no link between them. The Suez canal had silted up and all direct contact had ceased between the Mediterreanean and the Indian Ocean. The great empires—save for China—had had their day. Transformed into feudal conglomerations, they abandoned their former trade policies. A new period was opening in the history of the world, in which restricted horizons and reduced trade were to suffice for the activity of the cities which alone, henceforward, were to represent its economic life.

BOOK II

The Turkish Invasions and the Revival of the West (10th to 13th Century)

CHAPTER VI

THE TURKISH INVASIONS AND THE DECLINE OF THE MOSLEMS

The Seljuk Empire of the Turks Stifles Moslem Civilization in Asia

BY the beginning of the 11th century Turkish expansion had greatly increased. Masters of Ghazna, where they had founded a powerful feudal state which held northern India to ransom by their terrible forays, the Turks kept up a constant pressure on the former Empire of Baghdad, then ruled by the two Iranian dynasties of the Samanids, who reigned from the Caspian to the Aral Sea, and the Bouids, who held Mesopotamia under their rule. Pouring down from north of the Caspian, the waves of nomad Turks, more and more barbarous since they originated in the most distant parts of northern Asia—Petchenegs, Oguz and Kipchaks—also appeared in Europe where they were to cause the downfall of urban civilization in Russia, while the Turks of Central Asia came into contact with the Moslem peoples and were converted to Islam. About 1050 the Seljuks occupied all western Iran where their advance was halted by the Bouid emirs. The Seljuks belonged to the orthodox sect of the Sunnites, whereas the Bouids, whose rule extended to the outskirts of Baghdad itself, belonged to the Shiite heresy. The caliph of Baghdad did not hesitate to call on the aid of the Seljuks who entered the holy city of Islam in 1055 as allies.

The caliph appointed their leader, Toghrul-beg, as his temporal vicar, with the title of King of the East and West, and entrusted him with the mission of restoring the orthodoxy of Islam. It was the death-blow of Moslem civilization. Handed over to barbarians who had only just emerged from nomadism, Islam was to lose in less than fifty years the magnificent culture that it had built up since the 8th century. The bond that linked it to the Greco-Oriental traditions of the past was snapped. Islam, made sterile, was to lapse into stagnation; and its traditional tolerance towards Christians, Jews and Mazdaeans was to be replaced by the idea of the Holy War, which the caliph had so imprudently entrusted to Toghrul-beg.

Like the Roman Empire of the West, the Empire of Baghdad, undermined by the seigniorial régime, was to perish because it had wished to entrust its defence to the armies of the barbarians.

During the 11th century the decadent Caliphate of Baghdad had already begun to practise religious intolerance. The Turks were to make a system of it. In 1086 the Seljuks, having taken possession of Syria which, it may be recalled, had been reconquered by Byzantium in 969, divided it into feudal fiefs. The decline of the Syrian cities, which had been great international trade centres for four thousand years, began. The Turks at once embarked on an anti-Christian policy and harassed the pilgrims to Jerusalem. The struggle between Islam and Christendom was to blaze up once more.

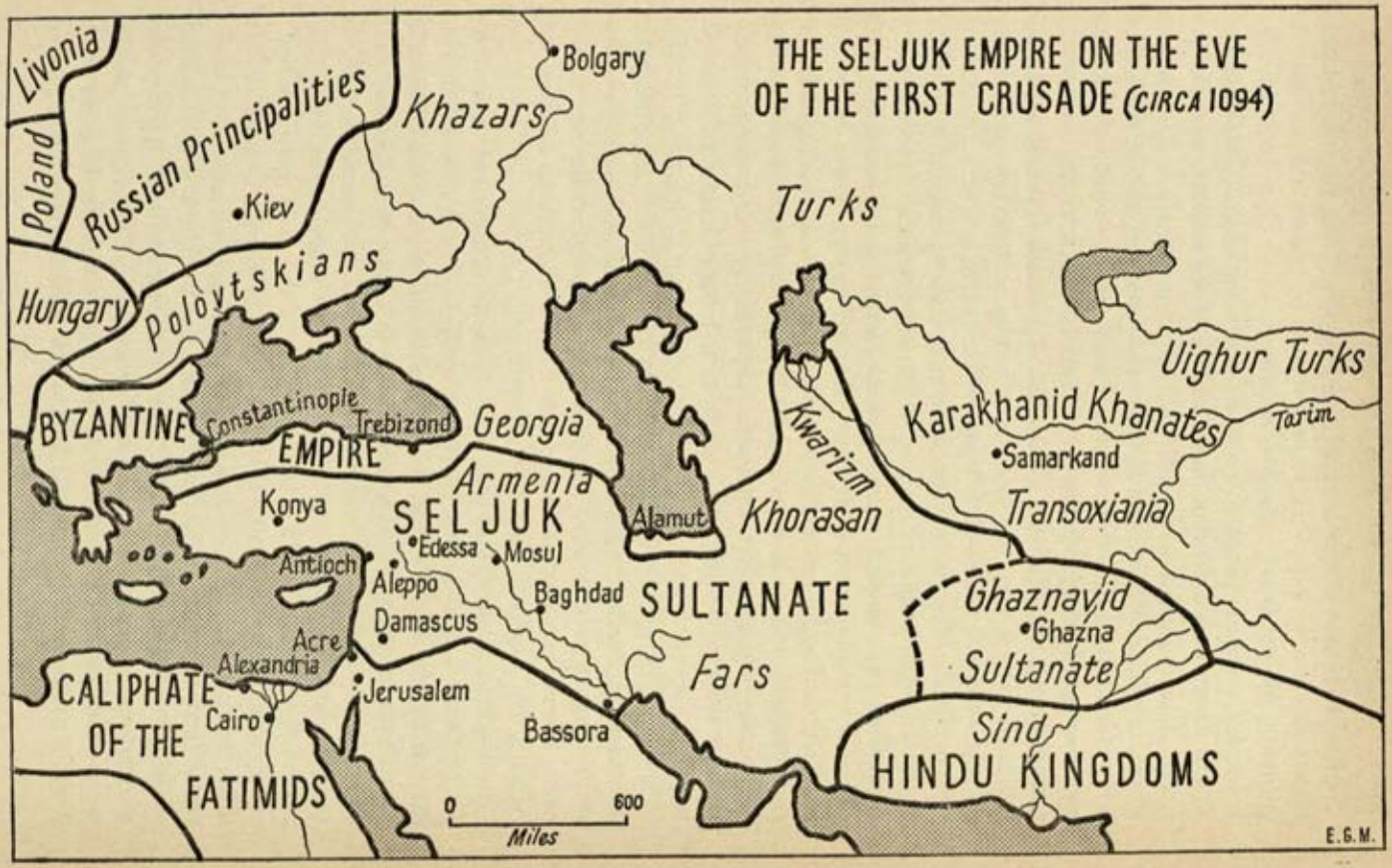
By the end of the 11th century all Nearer Asia was in the hands of the Seljuk Turks, whose immense empire stretched from the Mediterranean to the Aral Sea and the Punjab. Like the Germans in the Roman Empire of the West, the Turks had seized temporal power in the Empire of Baghdad, but even as the Christianized Germans had recognized the power of the Pope so the Islamized Turks accepted the religious authority of the Caliph. In Asia as in the west of Europe the former political empires were transformed into landholding feudal states grouped around a religious metropolis.

The Germans in the empire had become Romanized; so too the Turks in the former Persian provinces were subject to the influence of Iran. But the Persians were unable to absorb the Seljuks, who barbarized Persia, even as the Germans, in the 6th century, had barbarized Gaul, Spain and Africa.

It was similar in Syria, where the Turks were concentrated in the two kingdoms of Damascus and Aleppo, where they were exposed to Arab influences; but barbarization was less marked there, because of the importance of the Syrian cities which remained islands of civilization in the midst of the flood of Turkish feudalism which extended beyond their walls.

In Asia Minor, on the contrary, where the Seljuk Turks settled as a people around Konya, which they made their national capital, they kept their own customs. Being nomads, they destroyed the agriculture of the region and reduced the whole country to steppe. Asia Minor, which Hellenic culture had made one of the most civilized regions of the world, relapsed in a few years into total barbarism.

It needed less than a century from the time of the Turkish invasions for Moslem civilization- the direct continuation of the civilization of classical


THE SELJUK EMPIRE ON THE EVE OF THE FIRST CRUSADE (CIRCA 1094)
Livonia
Poland
Russian Principalities
Kiev
Bolgary
Khazars
Turks
Hungary
Polovtskians
Uighur Turks
BYZANTINE EMPIRE
Constantinople
Trebizond
Georgia
Armenia
Kwarizm
Karakhanid Khanates
Tarim
Samarkand
Konya
SELJUK SULTANATE
Alamut
Khorasan
Transoxiania
Edessa
Mosul
Antioch
Aleppo
Baghdad
Damascus
Ghaznavid Sultanate
Ghazna
Acre
Alexandria
Jerusalem
Fars
CALIPHATE OF THE FATIMIDS
Cairo
Bassora
Sind
HINDU KINGDOMS
0
600
Miles
E.G.M.

times—to be stricken with a wasting disease which was to prove mortal.

Decline of Moslem Power in the Mediterranean

Moslem power in the Mediterranean was in the hands of the Caliphate of Cordova, Tunis and Egypt. In the middle of the 10th century Cordova had had an economic and intellectual greatness which had made it a rival to Baghdad. But its wealth, and consequently its power, was linked with its trade with the Empire of Baghdad. The downfall of Baghdad therefore involved the decline of Cordova, which at the end of the 10th century passed through a crisis like that which Byzantium had experienced for the same reasons. The reduction in state resources, due to the decline in trade, allowed the power of the landed aristocracy to increase in the provinces. To prevent the aristocracy from seizing the high offices of state, the caliph manned them with Slav freedmen and Berber mercenaries. The court eunuchs seized power. Parties were formed, the Arab aristocracy in opposition to the Slavs and Berbers; the court was divided into factions. By the end of the 10th century there was constant civil war. In the provinces the governors became hereditary princes; and in the east of the country the slaves to whom the caliphs had entrusted the governorships in order to prevent their usurpation by the aristocracy founded, with the support of the Slav party, little independent kingdoms at Tortosa, Valencia and Denia. Broken up into little states, Spain became incapable of resisting the inroads of the Christian chivalry which, from the beginning of the 11th century, refused to accept Moslem overlordship and carved out in the north, alongside the ancient Christian kingdoms of Leon and Aragon, the kingdoms of Castile and Portugal.

In northern Africa, Tunis under the Aghlabids had set out to conquer Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica. Religious struggles had delivered Tunis to the Fatimids, adherents of the Shiite heresy, who had extended their rule over Egypt in 969 and set up their capital in Cairo. But their maritime empire did not last. Tunis, restored to orthodoxy, broke away and, from 1007, formed, like Algeria, an independent state ranged against Egypt in fierce religious hostility. But in the course of the 11th century nomad tribes from Arabia, the Hilalis, settled in Upper Egypt. In order to get rid of them, the Fatimids set them (about 1050) against Tunis and Algeria. Their invasion was as disastrous to civilization in Africa as the invasion of the Vandals had been in the 5th century. Overwhelmed, Tunisia and Algeria were parcelled out into petty princedoms. That was the end of the economic greatness inherited from ancient Carthage. Its great trade activity, hampered by Hilali feudalism which stifled it, lapsed into piracy.

But while the great centres of Islam were falling into decadence, a wave of religious enthusiasm was born in central Africa and in the Berber lands a military monastic order was founded for its conversion. It converted Senegal. But the religious conflicts between orthodox and heretics forced the Order to return to North Africa which it undertook to restore to the strictest orthodoxy. A Holy War was waged in Morocco by these soldier-monks under their leaders, the Almoravids. By 1082 all North Africa from Morocco to Algeria obeyed them. In 1084 Ibn Tashfin in response to an appeal by the Spanish Moslems, threatened by the Christians, conquered the country. Before his death he had united in a vast empire Spain and northern Africa.

The Holy War for the restoration of orthodoxy, waged in the east by the Seljuk Turks and in the west by the Almoravids, subjected Europe to a new wave of Moslem invasion, this time by tribes scarcely civilized, some from Central Asia and others from the African deserts. Moslem civilization foundered in an upsurge of religious fanaticism.

Thenceforward, in what had been the Empire of Baghdad, the brilliant philosophical and scientific culture of Islam was at an end. Moslem piety revolted against it. The theologian Al Gazel, a founder of monasteries, closed the era of Moslem thought in Asia with his *Refutation of the Philosophers*.

But Moslem thinking was to survive up to the 15th century in Africa and in Spain, where it remained sheltered from the fateful influence of the Turks. It was at Cordova that Averroes, the last of the great Arab philosophers, replied to Al Gazel (1198) by introducing into Aristotelianism the neo-platonist ideas which made it so easily assimilable by Christian thinkers in the 13th century; it was also at Cordova that the great Jewish idealist Maimonides took up once more the rationalist tradition of Aristotelianism that heralded Spinoza; it was at Cadiz that Abubacer expounded his ideas on the natural origin of all religions which were so greatly to influence the Encylopaedists of the 18th century; and it was at Tunis that Islam was to know, in the 15th century, its last great historian, Ibn Khaldun.

The political downfall of Islam, by completing the splitting up of the world into petty communities without contact with one another, finally brought to an end the cosmopolitan civilization inherited from ancient times. From the 7th to the 10th century the Empire of Baghdad, looking to the West, to India and to the Far East, had restored contact between all parts of the civilized world. The Seljuk Empire, instead of bringing Europe and Asia closer together, raised between them an almost insur-

mountable barrier. The maritime regions of India alone remained a point of contact between the two trade areas around which, in the 12th century, were to rally all that remained of civilization—the Mediterranean area and the Sino-Indian area.

CHAPTER VII

THE DECLINE OF THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE AND THE REVIVAL OF THE WEST

I. THE REFORM OF THE CHURCH AND THE WAR OF INVESTITURES

Spiritual Rebirth

BETWEEN the 9th and the 11th century the social and political life of the West, which had been cut short by the seigniorial régime, was reorganized within the feudal principalities themselves. A new balance, based on a class system, was adapted to the régime of closed economy, which banished every preoccupation of mercantile interest. Social status was fixed by heredity within the limits of the little world of the principality, whose members could look only towards spiritual things, since material existence within it had been fixed once and for all.

In each principality government was the task of the prince whose powers were sovereign. Between the principalities, as between so many miniature monarchies, the feudal tie established a political cohesion which formed them into federations under the suzerainty of the great vassals, themselves linked to the king by the oath of allegiance consecrated by religion.

As in all very primitive societies, power within these small units was based on the pyramid of the social hierarchy. The people had no part whatever in this patriarchal system of government. But though subordinated socially to the prince and the landlord, the 'boor' was their equal before God. The prince guaranteed the peace of the principality by force of arms, while the peasant, cultivating the soil, assured its provisioning. But all communicated in a single faith, and this faith was the only horizon open to their moral and intellectual aspirations.

The Church, it is true, integrated into the feudal framework and concerned about its landed properties, had fallen into decline. It none the

less represented the only heritage of civilization bequeathed by ancient times to this morally and materially debased society of the 10th century.

The Cluny Reform

In this seigniorial world, shattered and enslaved, Christian belief still preserved the universal character which had been cancelled from its political structure, and preserved in the moral domain of the conscience the individualism which had been so totally extinguished in the social organization. These two root ideas, universalism and individualism, which had disappeared from everyday life since the downfall of the Roman Empire, had been revived on the spiritual plane by faith. The very poverty of the intellectual life of the times and the lack of any lucrative activity made men concentrate all their material and spiritual needs on Christain belief. The result was an expansion among the nobility of chivalry, both in the religious and military sense, and among the people and the monks there was a magnificent enthusiasm for moral purity which led to the Cluny reforms and the astonishing artistic renascence of romanesque architecture. The movement began in Belgium where Gerard de Brogne reformed the abbeys of the principalities of Flanders and Hainault. But it was at Cluny in Burgundy that it rose to its greatest heights.

The aim of the Cluny reform was to free the Church from the guardianship of the temporal authorities which demoralized it, and to assure the fervour and independence of the monasteries. From France it passed into Italy and reached Rome. By way of Lotharingia it penetrated into Germany at the beginning of the 11th century. A large number of abbeys were founded at this time as a result of this general religious fervour.

The revival of religious fervour—which coincided with the rebirth of city life and the first political organization of feudalism—was notable for a sudden upsurge of civilization. The famous abbey-churches of Caen were built and, on the Rhine, the cathedrals of Speyer and Worms.

The emperor, Henry III, won over to the Cluny reform, intervened to impose on Rome a series of Popes chosen from amongst the imperial bishops and uninfluenced by feudalism, whose episcopal cities had remained —as at Liège under Notger—the only centres where a certain culture still lingered in the midst of the general decadence. The Popes Clement II (1046), Damasus II (1048), Leo IX (1049) and Victor II (1055) were adherents of the Cluny reform.

But the restored papacy remained subject to the imperial power from which Cluny hoped to free it and, by helping the Holy See to revive, Henry III was preparing the conflict between Emperor and Pope.

The Greek Schism (1054)

The spiritual rebirth of Rome brought to a head the crisis which had in fact been existent for a long time between the Holy See and Byzantium, ever since the quarrels about the iconoclasts. The thesis of the primacy of the spiritual power which led to the triumph of the Cluny reform caused the Pope as leader of the Church to intervene in the Byzantine Empire. A council of the Eastern Church replied by denying him any authority over the Patriarchs of Constantinople, Antioch and Alexandria. The Church was split (1054); Roman in the West, Greek in the East, it ceased to be universal. The unity of Christendom no longer existed.

The War of Investitures Hastens the Feudal Dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire (1059–1122)

The same conflict which had led to the Greek schism also caused the war between the Pope and the German emperor. Nicholas II, taking advantage of the minority of the king of Germany, Henry IV, ordered (1059) that the bishops, till then appointed by the emperor, should in future be elected by the cathedral chapters.[1] At the same time he forbade the marriage of bishops. They revolted against him. But the middle classes of the Italian cities, who had again become important through the revival of city life and whose aspirations for autonomy clashed with the political authority of the bishops, enthusiastically took the part of the Pope.

Henry IV however could not accept the reform of the Holy See, which ruined the imperial system of episcopal fiefs. He summoned a Council at Worms (1076) which proclaimed the dethronement of the Pope. Gregory VII replied by excommunicating the emperor. Unable to hold out against this terrible punishment, which placed him under the ban of the Church, Henry IV was forced to give way and to go to Canossa as a suppliant (1077).

The religious struggle was soon complicated by a war between the emperor and the feudal lords who wanted to take over the temporal power relinquished by the bishops. The Pope was induced to take the part of the feudal lords. Henry IV marched on Rome and Urban II sought refuge in France. The emperor had the military force on his side, the Pope the spiritual prestige. But so great at that time was the moral prestige of the Pope that Urban II, though in exile, persuaded the chivalry of Christendom to take the cross (1095) to deliver the Holy Sepulchre which had recently fallen into the hands of the Turks (1087). Supported by Christian

[1] The chapters of canons, of which the first was formed at Metz in 760, were made general by a capitulary of Louis the Pious promulgated in 816.

opinion, which was inflamed by the spirit of Cluny, the Pope won the day. The concordat of Worms (1122) marked his triumph. The elections of bishops by their chapters and the relinquishment by the bishops of the temporal power conferred on them by Otto I were confirmed. The Church separated from the empire; and since the empire was no more than a façade supported by the Church it collapsed. The victory of the Pope entailed that of the feudal lords who seized the imperial fiefs vacated by the bishops. The feudal period was beginning in Germany and gave the death-blow to the imperial fiction. Once the empire collapsed Germany was seen for what it was—a political chaos; it was to remain so for centuries.

The Church, however, which had consummated the triumph of feudalism, was soon to be submerged by the temporal power which it had striven to escape. The appointment of the bishops by the emperor had assured their independence of the local seigneurs. Left unprotected, the bishops were, in actual fact, elected by the feudal lords, and the Church of the empire, after its triumph, was drawn into the decadence into which it had plunged the empire itself.

The Pope, whose policy had been based on Germany since the days of the Ottos, now turned towards the West, where religious feeling was passing through a period of great revival and which, in the economic and political spheres, was clearly taking the lead in the European continent.

2. THE MILITARY EXPANSION OF CHIVALRY

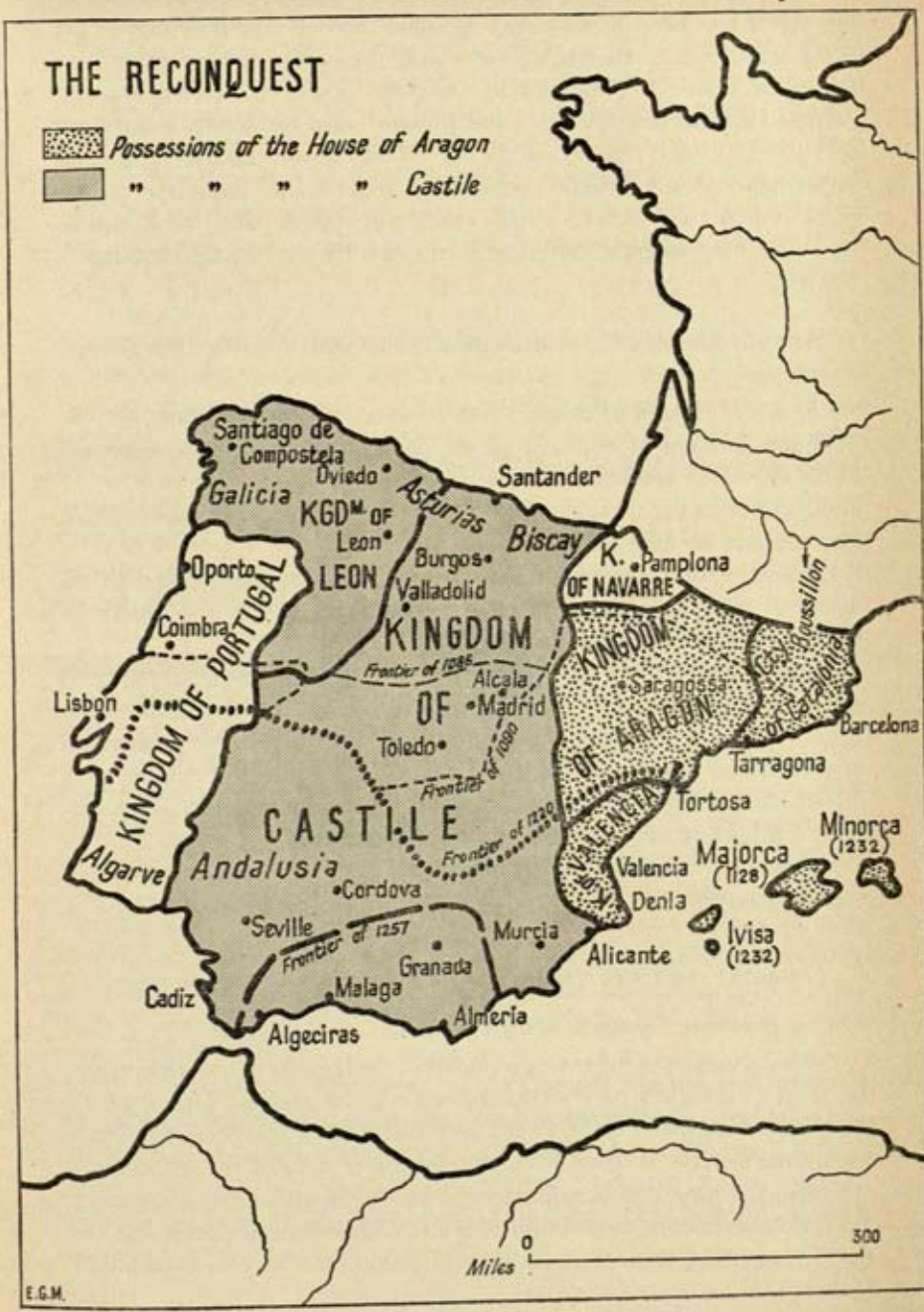
Whereas religious revival had led in the abbeys and amongst the people to the Cluny reforms, in chivalry, the great impetus of feudalism, it took the form of a conquering energy placed at the service of the faith. Chivalry began a period of military expansion which had from the very start a religious and adventurous character.

The 'Reconquista' in Spain and the Conquest of Sicily

In Spain, the chivalry of the little Christian states which had continued to exist in the north of the country—the French march of Catalonia and the little kingdoms of Navarre, Leon and Aragon—carried on a war of attrition against the rich Moslems, and new petty Christian kingdoms were formed in the north of the peninsula—the Asturias, Castile, Portugal —which were recognized as fiefs of the Holy See.

The Norman knights of France went to fight the infidel in Sicily and also turned their arms against Byzantium, with which Rome had now

Map No. 8


THE RECONQUEST
Possessions of the House of Aragon
" " " " Castile
Santiago de Compostela
Oviedo
Galicia
KGDM. OF Leon
Asturias
Santander
Biscay
Oporto
LEON
Burgos
Valladolid
K. Pamplona OF NAVARRE
Coimbra
KINGDOM OF PORTUGAL
KINGDOM
Frontier of 1085
Alcala
Madrid
OF
Lisbon
Toledo
Frontier of 1090
KINGDOM OF ARAGON
Saragossa
Co. Roussillon
Co. of Barcelona
Barcelona
Tarragona
Tortosa
Frontier of 1220
CASTILE
Algarve
Andalusia
Cordova
Seville
Frontier of 1257
Murcia
Granada
Malaga
Cadiz
Algeciras
Almeria
Alicante
K. VALENCIA
Valencia
Denia
Majorca (1128)
Minorca (1232)
Ivisa (1232)
0
300
Miles
E.G.M.

broken off all relations. Nicholas II, whom this rupture authorized to dispose of the conquered lands, confirmed the fiefs that they carved out for themselves in Sicily and southern Italy. Sicily thus became part of the feudal circle of the Pope and its conquest, finally completed in 1090, detached it from the Byzantine and Moslem world in which it had lived for centuries and attached it to the West. It was an event of great historical importance. Sicily, which had preserved its Byzantine institutions and its cities where a rich and active middle class lived, was to exercise a preponderant influence in the 12th century on the destinies of Europe.

William of Normandy Conquers England and Creates There the First Western Monarchy

But this expansion of chivalry did not turn only against Islam. In 1066 William, Duke of Normandy, on the pretext of his rights of succession to the crown of England, which he took care to have recognized by the Pope, called on the chivalry of Normandy, Brittany and Flanders to help him conquer his kingdom.

Drawn by the promise of fiefs, adventurous knights flocked to his standard. William, having crossed the Channel, seized the crown of England at the battle of Hastings.

Treating the country as his property, William confiscated all the lands of the Saxon nobles and granted them as fiefs to the knights of his army. A new type of feudalism was thus introduced in England. No great vassal intervened between the king and his feudal tenants, all of whom were directly responsible to their royal suzerain who alone preserved, throughout the whole of the kingdom, the right of justice.

Norman feudalism, in 1066, thus created the first monarchical state of western Europe.

3. REBIRTH OF CIVILIZATION IN THE CITIES OF THE WEST

Moslem Decadence Opens the Mediterranean to Italian Shipping

Venice, a village of fishermen founded in the lagoons in the 5th century, had remained linked to Byzantium, with which she had little by little developed a coastwise trade. From the 8th century it had been sufficiently important to have its own bishopric. In the middle of the 9th century Venetian shipping had been hampered by the Moslems, but it managed, by trade agreements, to establish contacts with Palermo, Alexandria and the Syrian cities, whence it once again found, the way to Byzantium.

Politically isolated, it was organized as an autonomous republic under the rule of a merchant oligarchy. In the 10th century the civil wars that divided Islam and caused the ruin of her shipping allowed Venetian trade to expand. Byzantium, having at that time no merchant fleet, could not fill the place vacated by the Moslem ports; it was Venice which filled it. From the 11th century Venice ruled over the whole Adriatic, which had been entrusted to her by Byzantium. She occupied Zara, Spalato and Istria; the foundations were laid of a Venetian thalassocracy which was to supplant Tunis and to take, in the Mediterranean, the place formerly held by Carthage.

When the Turkish invasions in southern Russia made the use of the trade-routes from Byzantium to the Baltic impracticable, Byzantine trade turned seaward and made use of Venetian shipping. The activities of Venice were greatly increased, and the Po basin, where industry had begun to revive about the end of the 10th century, had a sudden spurt of development thanks to the market for its manufactures and agricultural produce opened to it at Byzantium. The closed economy of the region was broken, the seigniorial régime weakened and industrial centres, especially those devoted to cloth-weaving, were created in the ancient Roman cities of Lombardy to provide the Venetians with return freights.

Venice, however, was not enough to satisfy the Byzantine traffic. The ports of Genoa and Pisa also revived. In 1015 their united naval forces destroyed a Moslem fleet off the Sardinian coast and in 1034 another one in the port of Bône. Arab decadence drew Christian knights to Sicily in search of adventure and about 1060 the Norman invasions began, supported by the Italian fleets. In 1062 the Pisans burnt the Saracen arsenal at Palermo and in 1087 the united fleets of Pisa and Genoa broke the Tunisian blockade by seizing Mahdia which commanded the Sicilian straits. The western Mediterranean was thenceforth open to Italian shipping which was, during the 12th and 13th centuries, to play the role that the Phoenician and Greek cities had played two thousand years earlier.

Trade Revives City Life

The development of Venice, and then of Genoa and Pisa, and the trade revival in Lombardy restored their former commercial and industrial activity to the Italian cities. From Lombardy, the revival spread into Tuscany and into Provence, where Beaucaire was to become a great international trade centre; it gave fresh life to the port of Marseilles, crossed the Alps by the St Bernard Pass, spread through Champagne towards

Flanders and by the Rhône to the Rhine; and also through the Brenner Pass to the Danube.

A new route was opened from Venice, by way of Lombardy, Alsace—where Strasbourg was founded—Champagne—where arose the international markets of Provins, Troyes, Bar and Barcis-sur-Aube—and Flanders, towards Bruges where it linked up with the Scandinavian shipping and thus reached the port of London.

Flanders, the meeting place of the northern seaways and the route from Italy, became by the beginning of the 11th century an important international trade centre. Cloth manufacture rapidly became a great industry. New towns appeared: Ghent, Ypres, Saint-Omer, Douai, Arras. International fairs at Messines, Lille and Ypres made Flanders, till then isolated in the north, an essential crossroads of trade.

From Flanders trade activity spread along the rivers. On the Scheldt Cambrai and Valenciennes, on the Meuse Liège, Dinant and Huy, on the Rhine Cologne, Maintz, Worms and Speyer became merchant cities.

Traffic ascending the Rhône from Marseilles reached Lyon; by the Garonne it reached the ocean, reviving on its way Montpellier, Toulouse and Albi, and gave life to the port of Bordeaux and, farther north, led to the founding of La Rochelle. Navigation began once more on all the rivers. From the river port of Rouen, linked with England, shipping followed the Seine to Paris. Nantes developed at the mouth of the Loire and later Bayonne on the Adour. London became a great trade centre.

Meanwhile, far from the trade-routes, central France and central England kept, up to the 12th century, their purely manorial organization.

A business middle class was formed in all these merchant cities; the guilds drew up an international commercial code of rules, and fortunes were made in trade. The manorial régime had kept men in a state of serfdom but trade wherever it appeared led to the rebirth of liberty by breaking down the system of closed economy. New cities, born of trade, suddenly appeared like islands of law and liberty in the midst of feudal society, rigid and tied to the soil, since the middle class, obliged to move from place to place and to be busy at their jobs, demanded and obtained from the seigneurs, in exchange for toll-rights, privileges which guaranteed their individual liberty and the right to administer their own affairs.

In Italy the different social and legal régimes under which nobles and middle classes lived were bound inevitably to lead to conflicts between the new population of merchants and the landed proprietors who lived in the cities—Milan, Florence, Bologna, Verona, Siena, Lucca and many others. Parallel with this movement for political emancipation represented

by the property-owning middle classes, a democratic movement soon appeared among the working proletariat in the industrial cities whose social claims were confused with the great current of religious feeling which was then sweeping the people. Everywhere conflicts broke out against the lay or ecclesiastical princes for political autonomy. Milan was the first of these in 1057. During the 12th century all the cities of Italy, and later those of Languedoc, freely elected their communal magistrates, the consuls.

In Flanders and in northern France, where the towns were for the most part newly created, the people, more homogeneous, had no conflicts with the landowning nobility. But they were drawn onward by the irresistible movement for political emancipation. In 1077 Cambrai, having revolted against its prince-bishop, proclaimed the 'Commune', sworn to by all the middle class, and thus created the classic type of Flemish city law.

By the end of the 11th century all the Flemish cities enjoyed an autonomous régime. They were, in the course of the 12th century, to give themselves institutions which were completely to transform western society.

4. THE FIRST CRUSADE

Foundation of the Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099)

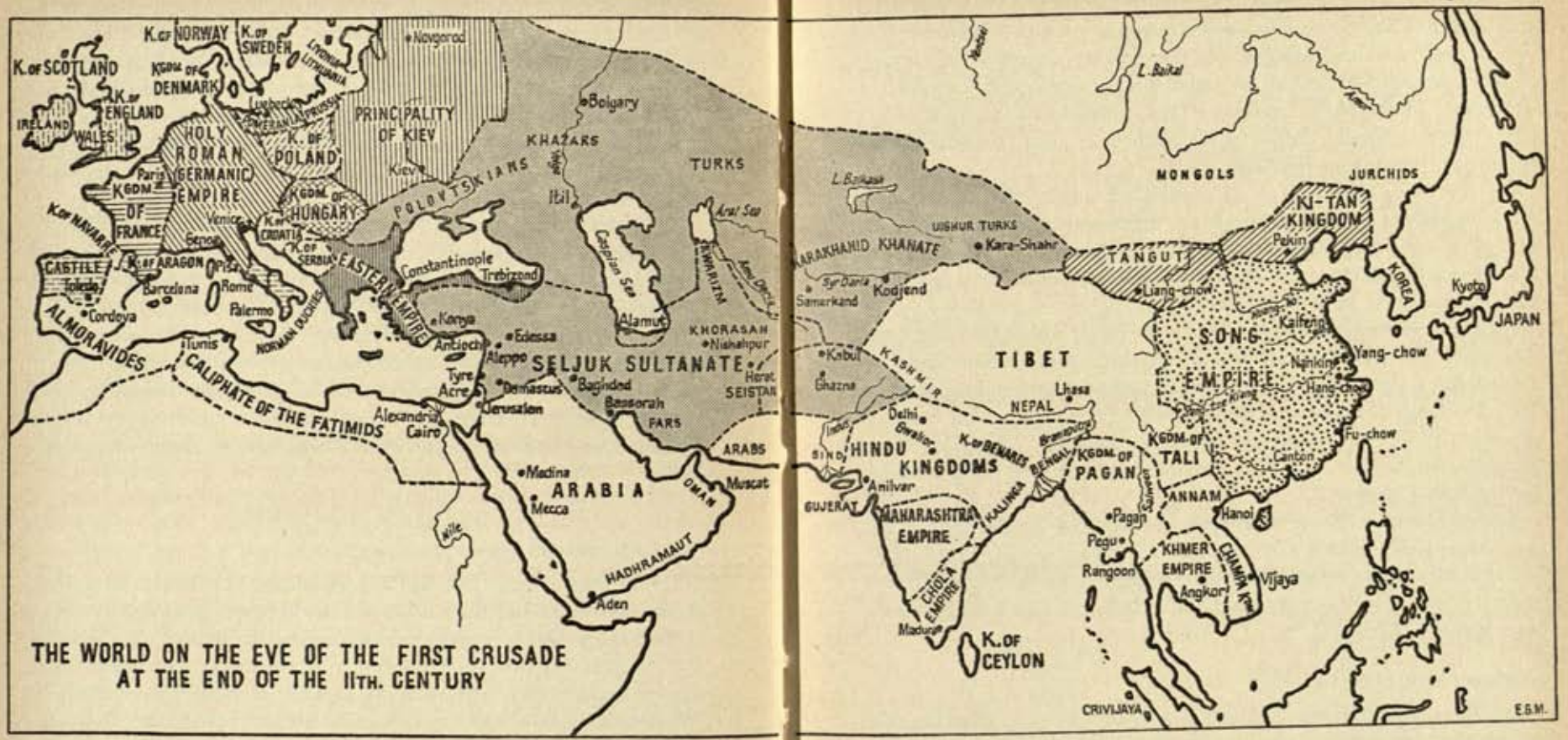
Turkish expansion in Asia had isolated Islam from the traditions of the ancient world. In this the role of the Turks was similar to that of the Germans in the Roman Empire. The consequence, in both cases identical, was the utter downfall of civilization. The decline in urban trade which resulted and the return to a mainly agrarian economy caused the individualist character of Moslem civilization to disappear. It also abandoned the tolerance that it had always shown in the 9th and 10th centuries towards the monotheist religions for a narrow fanaticism.

This fanaticism, by closing the Holy Sepulchre to the Christians, led to the great upsurge of Christian fervour which was to plunge Western chivalry into the great adventure of the first crusade.

The unity of Christendom, broken in 1054 by the Greek schism, could have been renewed against the Turks. Byzantium, directly threatened in Asia Minor by the Seljuks and in Europe by the Kipchak Turks who had invaded southern Russia, had tried to draw closer to the West, with which it was now linked by economic interests due to the revival of Italian shipping. The emperor, Alexis Comnenus, appealed to Pope Urban II, letting him infer the return of the Greek church to his obedience.

The spiritual authority of Rome was then at its height. The power of the

Map No. 9



THE WORLD ON THE EVE OF THE FIRST CRUSADE
AT THE END OF THE 11TH. CENTURY

At the end of the 11th. century the features were:

The Turkish conquests which destroyed the Moslem power and separated

the Byzantine Empire from

the Principality of Kiev.

the Chinese Empire was broken up in the north

by the Barbarian States.

The Carolingian Empire divided to give rise to:

France and

the Germanic Empire.

England and

the Spanish Christian kingdoms (Castile and Aragon) were formed.

Poland and

Hungary became the great seigniorial States

Germanic Holy Roman Empire had collapsed during the War of Investitures and the Cluny revival had given immense prestige to the Holy See. The revival of Italian shipping and the military expansion of chivalry together provided the means of undertaking a great expedition for the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre. Thus, when Urban II launched his appeal for the crusade in 1095 at Clermont it aroused an extraordinary enthusiasm throughout the West.

It was at first a band of peasants, monks and knights who set out under the leadership of Peter the Hermit for the conquest of Jerusalem, massacring on their way the Jews settled on the Danube who fled towards Poland and Russia. Many of these crusaders died on the way and those who reached Syria were made slaves by the Turks.

But the movement had begun. Under the direct authority of the Pope, who this time really seemed to have become the supreme leader of Christendom, a great army of French and Lotharingian knights got under way. The kings of France and England, and the emperor, who was then at war with the Pope, did not take part in the crusade. It was the last of the great deeds of chivalry; it directly continued the epics of chivalry in Spain, in Sicily and in England.

After a heroic cavalcade Jerusalem was taken. A Belgian prince, the duke of Ardenne, Godfrey of Bouillon, was recognized as 'Protector of the Holy Sepulchre'. The Holy Land became a feudal kingdom very similar to the one which William the Conqueror had founded thirty years before in England.[1]

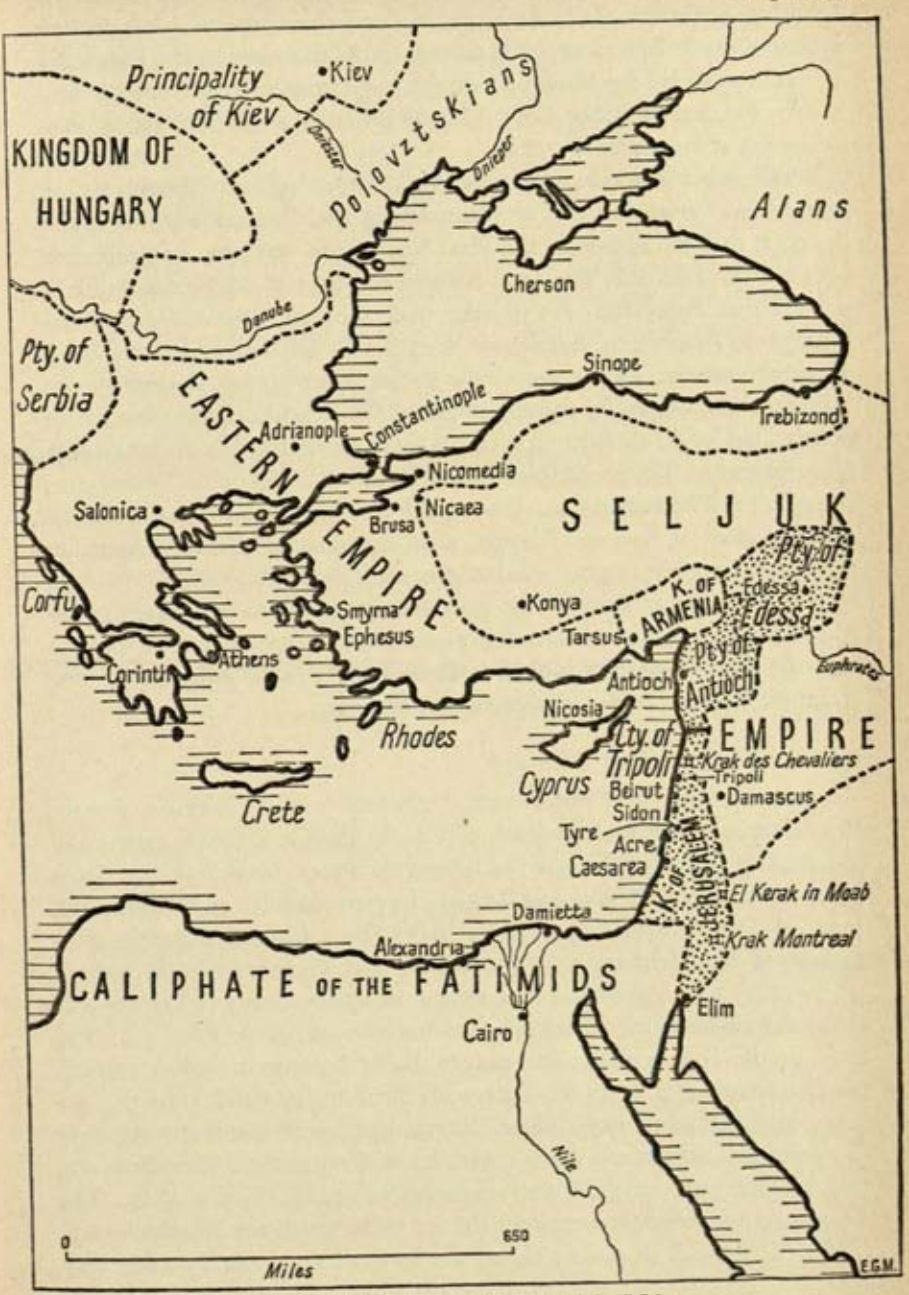
Economic Results of the Crusade

Far from bringing together the Greek and Roman churches, the crusade separated them once and for all. The Western knights appeared to the Byzantines what they in fact were by comparison: semi-barbarians. And Byzantium soon realized that even if the settlement of the crusaders in Syria favoured her economic interests, it also aroused against her the formidable competition of the Italian fleets.

From the political and religious viewpoint the crusade had ended in failure. No sooner had it been created than the kingdom of Jerusalem was divided by continual squabbles between the feudal principalities and the great seaport cities of Antioch, Tyre and Acre. Inspired by Moslem

[1] To cover the expenses of the campaign Godfrey sold his castle of Bouillon to the Bishop of Liège, who paid for it with monies borrowed from Liège merchants. It was a striking example of the connection between the urban revival and the crusade. It is also interesting to note that Godfrey was the son of Eustace of Boulogne who had taken part with William the Conqueror in the conquest of England.

Map No. 10



THE FRANKISH STATES OF SYRIA
(12th century)

example, orders of soldier-monks, the Hospitallers in 1113 and the Templars in 1118, were created; and western chivalry was able to hold a defensive front. But in 1144 the capture of Edessa marked the beginning of an offensive by the Moslems which, despite the crusade undertaken in 1147 by the king of France, Louis VII, and the emperor, Conrad III, resulted in the fall of Jerusalem in 1187.

On the other hand the economic results were decisive. The occupation of the great Syrian ports by the crusaders gave an immense advantage to the fleets of Venice, Genoa and Pisa. Navigation was now re-established between the East and West and revived the port of Marseilles, while it seemed that Barcelona was to take over the role formerly played by Cartagena. Byzantium, having no fleet, finally lost her trade supremacy on the continent. Furthermore, the greater and greater decline of the Russian cities, caused by the settlement of the Kipchak Turks in southern Russia, had led to the adoption of the trade-route from Venice through Champagne to Bruges in place of the earlier trade-route Byzantium-Kiev-Baltic. The Russian markets, which for four centuries had been the meeting place of Asia and Europe, were abandoned. Itil and Bolgary on the Volga lost their international importance, as did Kiev and Novgorod, to the advantage of Venice. The sea once again became the main trade-route. The Slav and Scandinavian ports of the Baltic instead of looking towards Byzantium now looked towards Bruges and London as the first stages on the way to the Mediterranean countries.

The Scandinavians Turn Westward

Since she controlled the Sound, Denmark, whose maritime empire had fallen to pieces on the death of Canute the Great, once again took the leading place among the Scandinavian states. Valdemar the Great (1137–1182) seized the island of Rugen, the ports of Julin and Wollin, and founded Danzig and Copenhagen. After him, Canute II (1182–1202) conquered Mecklenburg and Pomerania, and Valdemar the Victorious (1202–1241) founded Reval and settled along the coasts of Livonia and Esthonia, undertaking a crusade against the pagan peoples who still lived in the Baltic lands. The eastern Baltic became a Danish empire. Sweden, hampered in its relations with the Russian cities, turned westward in great naval expeditions. Rome had made Lund the religious metropolis of all the northern countries in 1095 and the Scandinavians had become part of the great religious movement in the West. The Swedes transformed into crusades the sea raids which the Northmen had earlier carried out as pirates on all the western countries. In 1183 they

appeared on the coasts of Portugal to fight the Moors and a few years later they reached the Holy Land just as Saladin had conquered Jerusalem. They seized the port of Sidon from the Moslems and then went back to their capital at Stockholm, just founded by King Sigurd, by way of Constantinople and Germany.

The Scandinavians broke away from eastern Europe to turn towards the new world which the revival of Italian shipping and the renewal of urban civilization was creating in the west.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CENTRE OF GRAVITY IN EUROPE MOVES SEAWARD

I. PARALLEL EVOLUTION OF CITY LIFE AND ROYALTY IN THE WEST
(from the 11th to the 13th century)

City Life in Italy and Flanders

THE revival of sea-borne trade and the development of city civilization was mainly evident in northern Italy, in the French Midi and in Flanders, where the cloth industry created large industrial complexes manufacturing for export. In the 9th and 10th centuries the Jews alone had trafficked in the precious metals. From the 12th century the profits made by international traders led to the rise of a capitalism which broke away from the Byzantine banking system and expanded greatly in Italy and later in the south of France. The merchants of Siena, then Florence, and soon afterwards Cahors, as formerly the Syrians, became the money-lenders of the West. Lyon and, in the north, Arras became centres of merchant banking. The Templars, back from the Holy Land after the fall of Jerusalem, brought the Syrian banking system to France and with the immense wealth they had amassed in the East became the competitors of the Jews whose credit associations were then granting loans at rates of from 20 to 25%. The nobles, and even the king himself, placed their liquid capital in the hands of the Templars who invested it. Capitalism even invaded the newborn monarchical institutions; at the beginning of the 14th century Philip the Fair leased the royal taxes to Italian business men. In Italy, in Languedoc, in Flanders, the limited liability company allowed those with funds at their disposal to participate in commercial operations, while the 'ground rent' by opening credit possibilities against landed property made possible the fluidity of wealth based on land. Even in England loans on interest were introduced in forms which did not openly break with the dictates of the Church which,

in theory at least, forbade them. The letter of credit made its appearance at the fairs of Champagne.

In Flanders, Languedoc and Italy it was the manufactured product—cloth—which was the basis of international trade; in France it was agricultural products. Bordeaux exported to England the wheat of Guyenne and the Bordelais wines, which the Norman and Breton ports forwarded as far as Flanders and the Baltic; Dieppe and Fécamp sold fish to the English.

International trade was organized, naturally enough, on the basis of the ancient Sea-Law of Rhodes. This had been preserved at Byzantium, whence it had passed to Venice. From Venice it passed to the cities of Provence, and to Bordeaux, and from Bordeaux to Bruges where it became the law of Damme, which exercised a great influence over the trade customs of London and the Teutonic Hansa.

In the trading cities, which tended to become organized as little autonomous republics, a new society was being formed in the midst of social struggles between the burghers who, in the 12th century, held the power and the proletariat which was being created in the great industrial centres like Milan, Florence and Siena in Italy and Ghent, Lille and Ypres in Flanders. The new problems brought to the fore by trade, the individualism caused by it and the relations between cities revived legal activity and, quite naturally, the Italian middle classes turned to Byzantine law which was based on urban economy.

At the beginning of the 12th century Irnerius founded at Bologna a school of Roman law. It was the first time since the 9th century that a lay school had been opened. From Bologna the study of Roman law passed into France, where Placentinus founded the school of Montpellier. Philip Augustus in 1219 and Pope Honorius III in 1254 tried to prohibit instruction there, the one because he feared lest the Holy Roman Empire might achieve a legal justification, the other because he wished the primacy of Canon Law to remain unchallenged. But their opposition was useless, since Roman law satisfied a need. The Church itself, moreover, was conquered; in 1150 Gratian laid down the bases of classic Canon Law by returning to the directives of Roman law, and at Milan the two consuls, when codifying feudal law in the *Libri Feudorum*, in order to reduce its prerogatives, imposed a Romanized code upon expiring feudalism.

City trade also revived the ancient institutions which had been preserved at Byzantium. And Latin, which under the influence of the Church had been in use as the universal language, began to lose ground to French which at the fairs of Champagne, where Flemish and Italian merchants met, became the international language of trade from the 12th century.

The Beginnings of International Life

Trade contacts necessarily led to political contacts. Between the traders of different cities controversies arose which, since there was no authority capable of sorting them out, gave rise to violence which in its turn led to reprisals. To guarantee the credit of one of their citizens, the cities used to seize the goods of the debtor's fellow-citizens. International trade was thus accompanied by constant conflicts between the cities. The Italian cities were the first to give legal sanction to these reprisals. From the 12th century treaties were concluded between one city and another which forbade making the whole middle class of a city responsible for the debts of one of their fellows, and permitted enforcement only against the debtor himself. Under the influence of trade private international law was born. From Italy it reached the north, where similar treaties were concluded between Bruges and the cities of Holland (1167), and between the king of England, Henry III, and the city of Luebeck. Individualism, breaking down the barriers of the corporate city, took its place in international life.

Breakdown of the Manorial Closed Economy

Wherever they existed, the cities, by creating outlets for the sale of agricultural products, broke down the closed economy, destroying the seigniorial system and replacing serf labour, which yielded little, by free labour. The seigneurs, to attract the people, founded new towns to which they conceded freedom by charters.[1] Thus a new social class was formed, made up of free peasants whose status reacted on that of the seigniorial tenants. They transformed into collective possession the rights of usage which they held on their lords' estates and began to parcel them out; the uncultivated lands became common land for the use of the peasant communities which were formed with the parish as their centre.

The spread of free labour favoured the cultivation of waste lands and the monies available were employed for the exploitation of the soil. The abbeys invested their sterile treasures of precious metals and, like the temples in ancient times, began, especially in Normandy in the 13th century, to act as agrarian banks, lending funds at 10% and creating fresh resources by pledging, against advances in ready money, the land-tithes which the Church collected in kind.

Agrarian credit, in its turn, hastened the emancipation of the subtenants. Thus, through the influence of the cities, whose trade made

[1] Typical of these was Lorris in Gâtinais (1115).

wealth circulate and become productive, the West set out on the road to social emancipation and economic revival which, in turn, led to a great intellectual and artistic renascence.

Royalty in France

Religious enthusiasm, the expansion of chivalry, the increase in trade and the growth of the cities in the western lands led to a political reorganization of feudalism around the monarchy. The unitary conception of power, inherited from the Roman Empire, revived again at the very moment when, because of the breakdown of the exclusively landowning framework of the seigniorial régime, individual liberty was reborn in the cities.

This spontaneous reorganization of feudalism was shown in the 11th century in the monarchical constitutions of William the Conqueror in England and Godfrey of Bouillon in Palestine, as also in the concentration of power which began to be felt in France at the time of King Louis VII.

From Hugh Capet to Philip I (1060–1108) the kings of France had lived as feudal princes. At first elected, they became hereditary kings by granting their sons the title of 'king-designate'. It was the conquest of England by the duke of Normandy that forced Louis VI the Fat to emerge from his feudal isolation if he were not to be outstripped by his too powerful vassal. This was the time, moreover, when western society was undergoing a rapid transformation. The cities were a new element in the political organization which escaped, or tried to escape, from the rules of feudal law. The king, wielder of all power that was not exercised by the feudal lords, seemed quite naturally to be their protector. The circulation throughout the whole kingdom of people and goods caused by trade, since it went beyond the boundaries of their principalities, made internal security a problem which was beyond the powers of the feudal lords and necessarily made the king the guardian of the public order desired by God. There was thus created, above the feudal structure, a wide sphere of influence of which the king took charge. A royal government was superimposed on the local princes. Louis VII (1137–1180), realizing this, associated with his power his greatest vassals, the twelve Peers of France, six princes and six prelates.[1] By thus associating the feudal lords with his power, the king asserted his superiority over the great vassals and by claim-

[1] The twelve Peers were six lay princes, the Dukes of Aquitaine, Burgundy and Normandy, the Counts of Flanders, Toulouse and Champagne, and six ecclesiastical princes, the Duke-Archbishop of Rheims, the Duke-Bishops of Laon and Langes and the Count-Bishops of Beauvais, Noyon and Châlons.

ing the right of imposing on all the feudal lords royal ordinances approved by the twelve most powerful amongst them—the first such ordinance promulgated a ten-year peace throughout the country (1155)—he broke down the principle of individual sovereignty.

During the reign of Louis VII, mainly concerned with the restoration of the royal power, city life developed rapidly and the circulation of money increased. Louis founded the royal power upon the wealth of the cities, inaugurating an economic policy which led to the development of the Paris guilds. The Romanesque style had marked the mystical revival of Cluny; the Gothic style came into being at the time when the cities and the monarchy began to develop side by side: Notre Dame was begun in 1163.

While the cities were breaking the structure of closed economy which led to a weakening of the seigniorial system, and trade, by forcing upon the country an economic interdependence, made the local sovereignties of feudalism impossible, the royal power, driven onwards by the necessities of the new way of life, built up the structure of the new society. Philip Augustus (1180–1223) resolutely set out to carry on a centralizing policy. He minted coins, hired mercenaries and linked the cities—whence he drew his resources—directly to the crown. He kept in his own hands the final word on episcopal elections, appointed salaried magistrates, who were in fact officials exercising legal and financial powers in the name of the king, and royal notaries charged with authenticating private contracts, thus reviving written law which had disappeared since the 9th century and had been replaced by oral custom and which trade exchanges had caused to reappear.

During his reign the court began to be a government. The widening of the political structure of the country and the development of trade went hand in hand with a revival of thought. Philip Augustus, by uniting in a single corporation all the monastic schools of the capital, founded the University of Paris.

Royalty in England

Half-English, half-French, the monarchy founded by William the Conqueror in 1066 was to become the synthesis of western civilization. The economic upsurge in England, contemporaneous with that in France, the intellectual impetus given the country by the University of Oxford, founded, like that of Paris, by the union of the monastic schools, made England and France the two wings of the diptych of monarchical evolution in the West.

Situated on the opposite sides of the Channel, England and France had complementary economies. Civilization therefore developed along similar lines around the little inland sea.

Masters of Normandy and England, the English kings, who were also French princes, aimed at control of the Channel. Henry I (1100–1135), by giving his daughter in marriage to Geoffrey Plantagenet, count of Anjou, united in the hands of Henry II (1154–1189) the kingdom of England and the French principalities of Normandy and Anjou. By marrying Eleanor of Aquitaine, Henry added to his states Guyenne and Poitou and suzerainty over Brittany. From Spain to Flanders he thus reigned over all the Atlantic and Channel coasts.

The strong monarchical constitution that William the Conqueror had given England, where no great vassal intervened between the king and his barons, enabled Henry to carry out a strong centralizing policy. Like Louis VII he created the rudiments of a central government but, more powerful than Louis, he subjected his vassals to royal taxes which allowed him to levy mercenaries in Brabant; furthermore, having all civil jurisdiction in his hands alone, he tried to suppress ecclesiastical jurisdiction also, to the advantage of the royal power. He thus aroused the enmity of the Church, barons and cities; and since the kingdom was not divided into great fiefs, the whole country formed a solid bloc in opposition to the centralizing power of the king. A feeling of national unity was created, in opposition to the crown, which extended to all classes. The struggle was so sharp that it ended in the murder of one of the king's main opponents, Archbishop Thomas Becket (1170). But then Rome intervened and Henry surrendered. He restored its privileges to the Church.

England and France Prepare for the Struggle for the Sea and the Netherlands

Ever since the marriage of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, war between the king of France and the king of England had been constantly rekindled by the overwhelming power of the Plantagenet which had overshadowed that of the king of France by extending his sovereignty over the county of Toulouse (1173). Peace was restored, for better or worse, by the intervention of the Pope (1177); but it was only a truce and Richard Lionheart (1189–1199) after coming to the throne formed a coalition of feudal lords against the monarchical policy of Philip Augustus (1189). Once again the Pope reconciled the two kings, by calling on the Christian sovereigns to embark on a crusade to reconquer Jerusalem which Saladin had just taken (1187). They left for the Holy Land together in 1191. It was, however, impossible to stop the great conflict that was now in-

Map No. 11

Dublin
York
Lincoln
Norwich
Oxford
London
Bristol
Winchester
Canterbury
Exeter
Dorchester
Bruges
Dover
Ghent
Flanders
Brabant
Cologne
Liège
Namur
Hainaut
Artois
Maintz
Beauvais
Rheims
Rouen
Caen
Normandy
Champagne
Metz
Paris
Provins
Brittany
Maine
Orleans
Troyes
Langres
Rennes
Anjou
Blois
Tours
Angers
Nantes
Bourges
Burgundy
Poitou
Bourbon
La Rochelle
Guyenne
Lyon
Périgueux
Auvergne
Bordeaux
C. of Toulouse
Avignon
Albi
Arles
Gascony
Toulouse
Marseilles
Aigues-Mortes
Carcassonne
KGDM. OF NAVARRE
KGDM. OF ARAGON
C. of Barcelona
Barcelona
THE STATES OF HENRY II PLANTAGENET
(1133–1189)
States of the Plantagenets or dependent on their suzerainty
Royal domain
Principalities dependent on the King of France
0
300
Miles

evitable. The Plantagenets, masters of all the coastal principalities, aimed at mastery of the seas. The Capets, whose kingdom lay across the great trade-route from Italy to Flanders, tried to get economic mastery by laying hands on the Netherlands, where they already possessed Flanders. The king of England could not carry out his plans except by finally dismembering the kingdom of France, upon which he was dependent for his French fiefs, while the king of France wanted to establish his direct authority over the whole of his kingdom and to seize its Lotharingian states from the empire.

The centre of the conflict was the Netherlands, politically divided between France and the empire, but welded more and more closely together by their common economic structure which drew them both towards London and towards the fairs of Champagne. Dominated by the influence of the great merchant cities, which would accept no political tutelage hostile to their interests, the principalities of the Netherlands were to carry out a policy of independence, some from France and others from the Holy Empire. They were thus to form a group of little states, practically autonomous but united by common business interests, which was to end by combining into a single nation their peoples of differing races and different languages.

2. THE CALL OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

Feudal Dissolution of the Holy Empire

While France and England were evolving towards monarchy, Germany ever since the Concordat of Worms (1122) had been dissolving into feudalism. The seigniorial domains, up till then under the direct authority of the emperor, became independent political states, reducing the empire[1] into no more than a federation in which there no longer existed any permanent monarchical principle. Being elective, the emperor was continually forced to grant fresh concessions to the feudal lords in order to assure his election. And the Pope, profiting by the emperor's weakness, demanded, as a condition of crowning Lothair of Saxony (1125), that his right of consecrating the emperor only if he approved his election be recognized. Formerly the emperor had had the right of controlling the election of the Pope; now it was the Pope who imposed his conditions on the emperor. The Pope alone could claim to exercise on the spiritual plane the universal power which the emperor was no longer able to exercise on the temporal plane.

[1] It was a similar evolution to that of the Chinese Empire under the Chou in the VIIth century BC.

Frederic Barbarossa Tries to Base Universal Empire Upon Feudalism

The monarchical evolution which was taking place in the West had an immediate repercussion on the empire.

Frederic Barbarossa (1152–1190) influenced by the example of Louis VII and Henry II wanted like them to carry out a monarchical policy and, since he was the emperor, to extend it to all Christendom. Roman law was at that time at the height of its influence in Italy, and Frederic declared himself to be the successor of Augustus.

But, whereas the monarchical policy of the kings of France and England rested on firm foundations, the policy of the emperor was built on a theory. The drama of Germany began; encouraged by the example of countries socially more advanced by several centuries, the emperor was to try not only to imitate them but to impose on them the universal sovereignty of the Germanic Holy Empire, which was only a mirage. A feudal king, Frederic claimed to be an absolute sovereign. In reality, he had no power other than that of his vassals. It was therefore on them that he relied to rebuild the empire. In order to create an army, he granted a number of fiefs to his knights recruited from amongst the lesser officials. The dismemberment of Germany was thereby made even more evident. In 1154 he demanded from his vassals, the princes and cities of Germany and Italy, an oath of allegiance. The Italian cities refused. Frederic sacked Tortona and marched on Rome. But Rome was then in the midst of an insurrection. With the eternal mirage of the Roman Empire before their eyes, the Roman people, under the leadership of Arnold of Brescia, dreamed of restoring it, but according to the mediaeval concepts of city autonomy and evangelical purity. The Pope was to become a simple priest and the emperor, elected by the people of Rome, would hold universal power.

Frederic would have been able to merge his dream with Arnold's, but he did not want to hold his crown at the will of the people. He delivered Arnold over to the Pope, Hadrian IV, who had him burnt alive. Crowned emperor (1155), Frederic at once came into conflict with the Pope, who wanted to treat the empire as a fief of the Holy See, and with the cities which, jealous of their autonomy, refused to accept the imperial *podestàs* whom Frederic tried to impose on them. Frederic razed Milan to the ground (1160); but the cities, instead of submitting, began a pitiless war in which two social conceptions clashed irreconcilably, that of the trading middle classes and individualism, and that of the aristocratic and land-owning chivalry.

The cities won. In 1176 the imperial chivalry was annihilated by the cities' militia at Legnano. Frederic at once renounced his régime of terror

and adopted a policy of compromise. He humbled himself before the Pope, Alexander III, and recognized the autonomy of the Italian cities by the Treaty of Constance (1183).

Defeated by the cities, Frederic triumphed over the most powerful of his vassals, the duke of Saxony and Bavaria, Henry the Lion, whom he deposed. Bavaria was enfieffed to Otto of Wittelsbach, and Saxony was severed from Westphalia and granted to the archbishop of Cologne.

Of all the great German feudatories only Henry the Lion, whose duchies had stretched between the Danube and the Rhine, would have been able to undertake a monarchical policy, based on the wealth of the Rhineland and Danubian cities. His defeat made certain the triumph of the feudal chaos into which Germany was plunged.

Frederic Barbarossa realized that it was not possible to create the universal empire of which he dreamed without having at his disposal a patrimonial state upon which he could base his imperial policy. In 1186 he therefore married his son Henry (VI) to Constance, heiress of the Norman dynasty in whose favour the Pope had made Sicily a kingdom in 1130, an elevation fully justified by its great urban development and its centralized administration of Byzantine origin. Sicily, of all Europe, was the most monarchical, the wealthiest, the best administered and the most developed state, thanks to its mercantile economy based upon the cities.

The possession of Sicily gave the Hohenstaufen the financial resources which they had lacked to carry out their monarchical and imperial policy. It extended the power of the emperor from the Baltic to the farthest confines of southern Europe. It only remained for the emperor to receive the recognition of the French feudatories in order to rally all Christendom under his banner. Events of world-wide importance than developing in the Mediterranean were to give him the chance to try.

Attraction of the Mediterranean on International Politics: The Second Crusade

While Frederic Barbarossa was engaged on his Sicilian policy the Mediterranean came to the forefront of international politics, both for the Christians and for the Moslems. The settlement of the Crusaders on the Syrian coast had given the Byzantine Empire, thus freed from the Turkish threat, a great renewal of prosperity. It reconquered Dalmatia and, driving back the Petcheneg Turks, imposed its rule on the Serbs and the Bulgars. Under the Comnenus dynasty (1057) it had thus become, in Europe, a territorial state ruled by aristocratic seigneurs; but, in Asia, it was to experience a rebirth of its maritime economy, though entirely dependent on Venetian shipping.

None the less, the Turkish threat remained. In 1144 one of the greatest of the cities conquered by the Crusaders, Edessa, fell. The Pope immediately tried to assert himself as leader of Christendom by organizing a fresh crusade to restore the situation. The attraction of the Mediterranean, source of all its economic development, made itself more and more strongly felt in Europe. The king of France, Louis VII, and the emperor, Conrad III, took the cross in 1147. It might have been thought at the time that the Christian community was a political reality. But the second crusade was only a demonstration of weakness; it provided a striking proof of the immense transformation that had just taken place in Christendom over the past half-century. The religious idealism of the 'holy war' that had inflamed the Crusaders in 1095 had been extinguished with the feudal régime and the seigniorial economy. A new sort of religious enthusiasm had replaced it, born among the city proletariat, which no longer turned towards a distant war for the conquest of the Holy Sepulchre but towards ideas of social reform based on Christian charity and evangelical purity, which were to give birth to the great social and heretical movements of Languedoc.

The Byzantine Crisis and the Expansion of Egypt

Soon after the failure of the second crusade a severe social crisis was apparent in the Byzantine Empire. Half-seigniorial and half-mercantile, it split apart little by little under the double influence of the landed aristocracy then dominant in the European provinces and the urban middle classes of the cities of Asia Minor dependent on Venetian shipping.

The emperor, Andronicus Comnenus (1182–1185), tried to restore the unity of the empire by freeing it from the tutelage of the landed seigneurs and of the Venetian sailors. The result was a revolt of the people of Byzantium who massacred the Venetians, and an insurrection of the great landed proprietors who overthrew Andronicus and brought to the throne one of the most powerful amongst them, Isaac Angelus (1185). The triumph of the landed aristocracy signalled the economic ruin of Byzantium. The struggle between the controlled economy practised by the Byzantines and the free competition of the Italian cities ended in favour of the latter. The economic crisis that ensued in the Greek Empire was followed by a fiscal crisis which forced it to devalue its currency by a third. In Constantinople the era of fiscal difficulties was opening which was to result in the downfall of the empire at the time of the fourth crusade (1204).

After the proof of the weakness of the emperor and of the king of

France shown by the second crusade, the Byzantine Empire, whose prosperity was waning, tore itself to pieces in internal strife. The Crusaders had therefore no-one to whom they could look for help. The sultan of Egypt, Saladin, took advantage of this to invade Syria; in 1187 he took Jerusalem and, leaving only the coastal cities to the Crusaders, rapidly extended his rule over the hinterland. The conquest of Syria by Egypt is an important date in the history of Islam, A real Egyptian empire was created, which held the gateways to India, both by the Red Sea and through Nearer Asia. It thus became the successor of the Empire of Baghdad. It was to become the great economic and political force in the Moslem world.

The Third Crusade

The danger to Christendom was imminent. Gregory VIII once more called for a crusade. The occasion was too favourable for Frederic Barbarossa not to respond.

The monarchical policy of Philip Augustus in France and of Richard Lionheart in England had aroused the hostility of their feudatories. Frederic Barbarossa urged the feudal lords of all countries to respond to the Pope's appeal and to rally around the emperor, who thus took up once more, above the authority of the kings, the role of sovereign of Christendom. The alliance of the Pope and the emperor, based upon feudal customs and upon the unity of Christendom, asserted itself as the expression of a single universal power.

To prevent the union of all the feudal lords around the emperor, Philip Augustus and Richard Lionheart took the cross and, willy nilly, ranged themselves under the imperial standard.

But Byzantium was suspicious of the intentions of the Pope and the imperial army and wished to prevent the crusaders from crossing her territory. The crusade therefore began by a war between the two Christian emperors. The Byzantine emperor was defeated and forced to give way. But Frederic Barbarossa, as his army advanced in triumph through Asia Minor, was drowned in the Cydnus (1190). After that, the French and English armies, between which there had already been quarrels, abandoned the struggle and—a new factor in the annals of Christendom—an agreement was signed by the two kings with Saladin (1192), by which Saladin retained Jerusalem but opened the Holy Sepulchre to Christian pilgrims.

The third crusade, far from uniting Christendom under the joint authority of Pope and Emperor, ranged the West against Byzantium and

divided the Christian princes among themselves. The death of Frederic Barbarossa plunged Germany once more into the chaos of dynastic wars, setting at one another's throats his son, Henry VI, and the duke of Bavaria, Henry the Lion, who had been deposed by the emperor but who was now supported by the king of England who wanted to have an ally on the continent in the war which was now inevitable between England and France.

Henry VI Tries to Make the Mediterranean the Centre of the Empire

The advent of Henry VI meant a complete change in imperial policy. Emperor of the Holy Empire (1190–1197), he revived his father's dreams of universal sovereignty. But Sicily had freed the empire from the bonds of feudalism and showed it the possibilities of the sea. Frederic Barbarossa had tried in vain to restore the conception of the continental empire, by relying upon feudalism. Henry VI, reverting to the tradition of antiquity, wanted to rebuild the empire around the Mediterranean. Byzantium was completely decadent and the Moslem world divided; Sicily therefore seemed the obvious centre of an empire which would embrace all continental Europe and all the Mediterranean lands. Under the influence of Sicily, the feudal Hohenstaufen broke away from the manorial and religious domination of the Middle Ages and launched out on a maritime policy, both realist and mercantile, which foreshadowed modern times.

Such a Mediterranean empire could not be a Christian empire; it must unite in a single whole Christians and Moslems and be founded not on a spiritual unity but on an economic unity. Henry therefore rejected the suzerainty of the Holy See over Sicily and approached the last Christian princes of Syria and the Moslems of Africa. He was preparing to attack Byzantium when he died in 1197.

His son Frederic was still a child. The German feudal lords, bought by the king of England, Richard Lionheart, elected as king of Germany Otto of Brunswick, son of Duke Henry the Lion. Richard thus sealed his alliance with the Holy Empire against the king of France. Philip Augustus countered by approaching Philip of Swabia, brother of Henry VI, who had just succeeded him as king of Sicily and who had pretensions to the German crown, claiming hereditary right. To obtain an ally in Germany, Philip conferred the dignity of king on the duke of Bohemia. The German princes split into two camps, the Guelfs around Otto of Brunswick who defended feudal prerogatives and opposed hereditary right, and the Ghibellines who supported the imperial authority. The war between them

represented a struggle between two widely differing conceptions; one continued the tradition of the Christian empire, the other aimed at the restoration of the empire of ancient Rome, centred on the sea and the island of Sicily, fusing Christians and Moslems in a single state.

Pope Innocent III, as the incarnation of Christian unity, naturally took the side of Otto and excommunicated Philip who had already had himself called Philip II, recalling the Roman emperor, Philip the Arab. But the religious enthusiasm of the times of the War of Investitures was over and the Pope's excommunication remained a dead letter. Philip took up once more his brother's plans for Constantinople, and married Irene, daughter of the Emperor Isaac Angelus in order to acquire rights of succession in Byzantium.

Europe, however, was not divided solely over the conception of the empire. The kings of France and England, who were indifferent to the empire, each carried on a monarchical policy aimed at getting possession of the shores of the Channel. Instead of dreaming about vast, chimeric empires, they relied upon homogeneous social groups and pursued precise political realities.

The clash of these two policies, moving on different planes, divided Europe into two camps; in one, the king of England and the Emperor Otto, in the other, the king of France and Philip of Swabia. Above both of them, the Pope, Innocent III, aimed at universal leadership. In an attempt to achieve this he appealed for a fourth crusade.

The Fourth Crusade

It was an anachronism. On the continent only moribund feudalism, searching for fresh fiefs, responded to the appeal. But the crusade fitted in with the plans of Philip of Swabia who already coveted Crete and was dreaming of preparing a throne in Byzantium for himself, by restoring Isaac Angelus, who had been overthrown by a usurper, to the throne. He therefore entrusted the conduct of the crusade to his brother-in-law, Boniface of Montferrat. But Venice, more realist than Philip, whose fleet had been hired for the transport of the crusaders, demanded payment in advance by getting the crusaders to seize Zara, which was annexed to the Venetian empire. Then, turning towards the Straits despite the excommunication fulminated by the Pope, the crusading army, now turned into a band of adventurers, attacked Constantinople where Montferrat, to further the plans of Philip of Swabia, aimed at restoring the throne to Isaac Angelus. But the Greek Empire was then involved in inextricable financial difficulties. The foreign mercenaries, who had not been paid,

refused to fight and the city surrendered almost without making a defence. Once masters of the rich metropolis, the crusaders forgot the Emperor Isaac Angelus whom they had come to restore. They sacked the city atrociously, set on the throne the count of Flanders, Baldwin IX, and divided the European provinces of the empire into fiefs (1204). Having set out to fight Islam, the crusaders destroyed the only Christian empire which might have been able to defend Europe against the Turks. Undertaken by western knights ruined by the dissolution of the seigniorial régime and searching for adventure, the fourth crusade ended by extinguishing the last flame of the Roman Empire at the very moment when Philip of Swabia was dreaming of rekindling it.

The Latin Empire of Constantinople (1204–1261)

The conquest of Constantinople by the crusaders rent the Byzantine Empire in two. The European provinces were feudalized; the Asiatic provinces, dominated by the cities, seceded under descendants of the imperial dynasties. The Greek Empire was expelled from Europe. Even in Europe the great centres of Byzantium, Adrianople and Salonica, rose against the 'western barbarians' and became autonomous cities. The central government fell to pieces. It was the ruin of the administration, of trade and of the finances; the currency was debased and fell to a sixth of its value. All that remained of the power and the intellectual activity of the empire was transferred to Nicaea, which became the capital of the Greek Empire.

Pope Innocent III, however, hoping finally to attain the aim which the Holy See had pursued so steadfastly, proclaimed in 1211 the adhesion of the Greek church to the Roman obedience. But the people of Constantinople rose in revolt and restored the Patriarch to his seat. The emperor and the Latin feudatories were, thenceforward, only a Catholic framework over the people of the Greek rite and without contact with them.

Western feudalism had given the death-blow to Byzantine power.

3. THE FIRST GREAT EUROPEAN CONFLICT

The Roots of the Conflict

The ruin of Constantinople was only one of the aspects of the great political crisis which accompanied the formation of the monarchies. It centred on two problems, both concerned with the sea; that of supremacy in the Mediterranean pursued by the Hohenstaufen and that of supremacy in the Channel disputed by the kings of France and England.

This concentration on the sea was a result of the shifting of the great international currents of trade which made the Mediterranean and the Channel, with the Atlantic coasts of France, the two key-zones of European wealth and therefore of European power.

Thus a fresh balance was being prepared. Up to the 12th century the Germanic Holy Empire, continental and landholding, had exercised a political hegemony in seigniorial Europe which corresponded to the supremacy of the spiritual power of the Pope over the temporal power of the princes.

The rebirth of city civilization, by creating fresh sources of wealth in the coastal regions of the south and west of the continent derived not from the land but from international trade, shifted the economic, and consequently the political, centre of gravity towards these regions.

In opposition to the Holy Empire, now in the process of feudal dismemberment, two monarchies were being created, France and England, which, rejecting the unitary conception of the imperial power, asserted their full sovereignty by their own force alone. Both of them founded on the new trade currents, they were to come into conflict over the mastery of the seas and the Netherlands, on which these currents were centred.

In the empire itself a conflict was arising between the mediaeval conception which wished to base power upon land ownership and the new conception which wished to centre its power on the sea and base its authority on economic wealth.

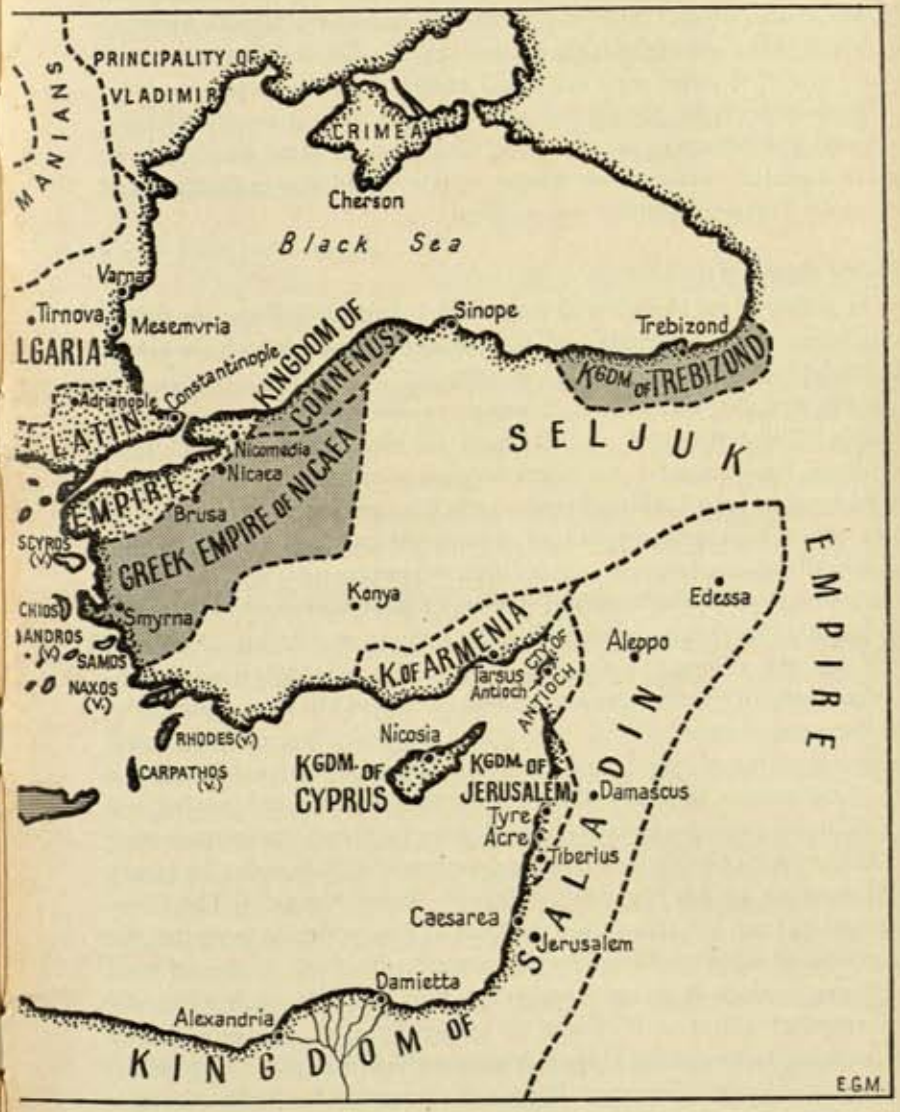
The conflict that tore the empire was no more than the political expression of the struggle between two economic and social evolutions which affected, in different ways, the landowning and seigniorial continent and the coastal countries involved by the cities in a trading economy.

But this conflict involved another, of a purely religious nature; the continental Holy Empire had till then represented the unity of Christendom, dominated by the authority of the Holy See; the maritime empire that the Hohenstaufen wished to create would have to extend over Catholic, Orthodox and even Moslem regions. It could only be achieved outside the structure of Catholic unity. It meant the reversal of all the traditions of the Middle Ages. The conflict which was inevitable between Pope and Hohenstaufen was a conflict between two utterly opposed conceptions of political life, one that wished it to be ruled by faith, the other by economic and dynastic interests.

Economic evolution, by contrasting a new conception of society to that which had been elaborated since Carolingian times, involved Europe in a

Map No. 12

KINGDOM OF ITALY
KINGDOM OF HUNGARY
Milan
Venice
Genoa
CROATIA
Pisa
Florence
Zara
BOSNIA
PTY. OF SERBIA
ROU
Ragusa
K GDM. OF BU
Philippopolis
Rome
NORMAN KINGDOM OF THE TWO SICILIES
Naples
Durazzo
Brindisi
Taranto
GREEK DESPOTATE OF EPIRUS
SALONICA
Salonica
Mt. Athos
CORFU (V.)
Palermo
Messina
CEPHALONIA (V.)
ZACYNTHUS (V.)
D. of ATHENS
PTY. OF ACHAIA
Athens
Tunis
MELOS (V.)
MALTA
CRETE (V.)
THE LATIN EMPIRE OF CONSTANTINOPLE (1214)
Greek States
Latin States of the East
Venetian Empire
0
300 Miles


MANIANS
PRINCIPALITY OF VLADIMIR
CRIMEA
Cherson
Black Sea
Varna
Tirnova
Mesemvria
Sinope
Trebizond
LGARIA
Constantinople
KINGDOM OF COMNENUS
K GDM. OF TREBIZOND
Adrianople
LATIN
Nicomedia
Nicaea
SELJUK
EMPIRE
Brusa
GREEK EMPIRE OF NICAEA
SCYROS (V.)
Konya
Edessa
CHIOS
Smyrna
ANDROS (V.)
SAMOS
K. OF ARMENIA
Aleppo
Tarsus
Antioch
SEE OF ANTIOCH
NAXOS (V.)
RHODES (V.)
Nicosia
CARPATHOS (V.)
K GDM. OF CYPRUS
K GDM. OF JERUSALEM
Damascus
Tyre
Acre
Tiberius
Caesarea
Jerusalem
SALADIN EMPIRE
Damietta
Alexandria
KINGDOM OF
EGM

series of conflicts; conflict between the unitary power of the Holy Empire and the independent powers of the western monarchies, conflict for leadership between France and England for the possession of the Channel and Atlantic coasts, conflict between the two trends, one continental, the other maritime, that divided the Holy Empire, and finally conflict between the conception of spiritual supremacy and temporal sovereignty.

These conflicts, by the play of politics, were to become blended and confused by circumstances, and, as at all periods of great crisis, were to end in a general conflagration whence a new world was to emerge. The first great European conflict was at hand.

Political Aspects of the Conflict

The policy of the Holy See had met with two great failures; the fourth crusade had ended in scandal and the attempt at reunion with the Greek church had met with an invincible resistance.

In the west the war broke out once more. After their return from the crusade, Philip Augustus and Richard Lionheart had renewed their hostilities. Richard, who was killed during the campaign, was succeeded by his brother, John Lackland (1199–1216). His authoritarian rule immediately provoked violent opposition among the barons, of which Philip did not fail to take advantage; using a disputed succession (1202) as a pretext Philip summoned John Lackland before a feudal court and decreed the confiscation, for felony, of his fiefs of Normandy and Anjou.

Within the empire the situation was no less troubled. The Hohenstaufen Philip of Swabia was assassinated in 1208. Otto IV, supported by the Pope and the feudal lords, was elected emperor. But, once crowned, he turned against the authority of the Holy See, and claimed Rome as a fief of the empire. Innocent III excommunicated his former protégé, but this did not prevent the king of England, John Lackland, from maintaining the alliance with Otto which had been concluded a little earlier by Henry II Plantagenet against the king of France, Philip Augustus. The Pope, betrayed by Otto IV, approached the king of France, proclaiming him the champion of legality. Philip Augustus took advantage of this to have the young Frederic II elected emperor. He thus took sides against Otto IV and prepared a fleet at Boulogne to invade England. Flanders, despite the growing power of the king of France, turned to England with which it was linked by trade interests. But it was impossible for Philip Augustus to attack England before gaining possession of the port of Bruges. The fleet prepared at Boulogne set sail for the great Flemish port in order to capture it. It was destroyed by an English squadron at Damme in the

first great naval battle of the West. Flanders saved England. Fortune changed sides, and John Lackland became reconciled with the Pope. Then, allied to the count of Flanders, Ferrand of Portugal, and the emperor, Otto IV, he prepared to invade France. The emperor and the count of Flanders were to invade from the north and the king of England by Guyenne.

For his part, Philip Augustus appealed to the duke of Brabant, Henry I, who was a vassal of the emperor, but who wanted to free himself from imperial suzerainty.

French Victory at Bouvines

In 1214 the French army utterly crushed the army of the Holy Empire at Bouvines in Flanders.

The victory of Bouvines was the great political event of the 13th century. It marked the end of the hegemony of the Holy Empire to the advantage of the western monarchies. It opened the period of French greatness which was to extend its influence over Europe for the whole of the 13th century and to attract all the vital forces of the continent. The alliance of the duke of Brabant, vassal of the emperor, with Philip Augustus was a striking example of this; it marked the breakaway of the Netherlands, irresistibly drawn by the economic evolution of the coastal countries, from the continental idea of feudal hierarchy as represented by the Holy Empire. But the most striking symptom of the new period was incontestably the policy of the Holy See which, breaking with its traditions and even with its doctrine, turned to the French monarchy. By renouncing the system which since the times of Otto I had envisaged Christianity as subjected to the joint power of Pope and Emperor—representatives of divine power on earth—it closed the historical epoch during which Europe seemed a theocratic entity, and opened a new era marked by the formation of great monarchical states. By breaking away from the Holy Empire, the Pope took from it even the fiction of universality which, despite its dissolution, it had continued to claim; now it was nothing more than a political unit amongst others, the relic of a vanished age surviving among the young monarchies around it, which were to build the individualist civilization which was emerging in the West.

The importance of the battle of Bouvines was no less great for the internal policies of the western countries, whose formation it marked—France, England and the principalities of the Netherlands—than for the balance of power in Europe. There too it marked a turning point. Freed from imperial tutelage and asserting their temporal independence of the

Holy See, the Western sovereigns came into contact with a new factor which was being created—the peoples on whom they had built their power and who, progressively conscious of their force as freedom emancipated them, were soon to become an essential element in the internal organization of the monarchies.

CHAPTER IX

LEADERSHIP PASSES TO THE WESTERN KINGDOMS

I. ROYALTY BECOMES ORGANIZED IN ENGLAND AND FRANCE

Royal Centralization and Parliamentarianism in England

THE defeat at Bouvines forced John Lackland to capitulate to his barons who were in revolt against his centralizing policy. Supported by the clergy and the urban middle classes, they forced him to seal the Great Charter in 1215.

The king of England's court was made up of barons, clergy and the delegates of the city of London. But this 'Common Council' had only a consultative role. The Great Charter made it an essential factor of power by requiring its assent for the levying of all royal taxes.

The collaboration forced upon the king by all classes in the country closely united in the 'Common Council' made England the first European 'nation'. Under Henry III (1216) the Council took the name of parliament. It became a political assembly, within which a parliamentary opposition was formed. The representative principle was conceded in 1265 for its members who, from 1295 onwards, were elected by their peers. English parliamentarianism had been born.

From that time England possessed the basis of the institutions upon which her history was to be founded. More centralized than any other state, the kingdom was divided into counties governed by officials, the sheriffs, assisted by county courts. Throughout the country the king held the judicial power, which he exercised through itinerant judges working in conjunction with juries of notables. Courts of appeal for criminal cases were organized in 1285, and under the direct influence of Roman law, introduced into England by the masters of the School of Bologna, jurisprudence, supplemented by the royal 'statutes', created a coherent national law.

While it was being organized, the whole of Great Britain rallied around

the monarchy. Henry III, suzerain of Scotland, added Cornwall to England, which already possessed Ireland. The kingdom of Wales was to be added in 1277.

The Policy of Monarchical Centralization in France

Whereas in England defeat had obliged the king to capitulate to the barons, the clergy and the city of London, in France victory gave the crown an immense prestige of which it at once took advantage to introduce a policy of monarchical centralization. The seneschals and bailiffs, hitherto feudal officials, were transformed into a corps of royal officials directly dependent on the crown throughout the whole country. Under Louis VIII (1223–1226) the feudal courts became a royal tribunal, the *parlement*, which under Louis IX (1226–1270) was made up exclusively of lawyers trained in the Roman law schools, now officially recognized by the king. Ordeals and the judicial duel were abandoned for written procedure. The right to justice thus became the basis of the royal power. A literate class of officials was created—alongside the middle classes of the cities—recruited from the middle classes and the lesser nobility, upon which the king was to build his power. With it appeared the first collections of legal usages, edited by the officers of the crown or professors of law.

Territorial Unity of the Country

As in England, so too in France, the monarchy carried out a rapid concentration of the country around the crown, though not without difficulties. Under Louis VII the war against England had limited the extension of the power of the crown, and the royal domain comprised only Paris, Orleans and Bourges. The victory of Bouvines permitted Philip Augustus to add to it Normandy, Maine, Anjou, Touraine and Auvergne confiscated from John Lackland; he also acquired Artois and Vermandois by marriage. Louis VIII finally succeeded in driving the English out of Poitou.

The Flemish Crisis

The royal policy of uniting France, though victorious over the great vassals, met, despite the fact that it favoured city trade, with opposition from the most powerful cities of the kingdom, those of Flanders and Languedoc, since, especially in these two areas, trade was essentially international. In Flanders it was oriented towards the sea and towards England, whence it obtained the wool for the cloth which constituted

the wealth of its industry; in Languedoc it was subject to the irresistible appeal of the Mediterranean, which put it into direct contact with Italy, Byzantium and the East.

Louis VI had already been forced to capitulate to the Flemish cities which, usurping royal rights, had elected Philip of Alsace as count of Flanders. Henceforward the cities, both Walloon (Lille, Douai) and Flemish (Bruges, Ghent, Ypres) drawn by their trade interests towards England, united in a common opposition to the king of France.

The Albigensian Crisis: The First Social Heresy

In Languedoc the conflict, infinitely more serious, had quite diffe nt causes.

The southern regions—those known as the countries of 'the written law' because their customs were more directly allied to Roman law—had preserved, because of their greater civilization, a constant tendency towards autonomy, which had already been shown in Carolingian Aquitaine. In the 12th century the county of Toulouse, revived by the renewal of sea traffic with Venice, Byzantium and the Levant, had become the main cultural centre of France. Influenced by the social aspirations of the cities, it was open to heresies from overseas. Religious enthusiasm, then so active throughout the West, took there a purely oriental form. Derived from the ancient Manichaean sect, which had originated in Persia, the Albigensian heresy admitted the dualism of good and evil and, reacting against the depravity and simonism of the southern clergy, had returned to the pristine purity of the Gospels. It rejected the ceremonies of the Church and preached an ascetism which was not unlike the Hindu *nirvana*.

In the 5th century Manichaeanism had been, in Persia, the religious support of a purely communist social revolution. The Languedoc heresy of the *cathari* (the pure ones), as they called themselves from a Greek word which proves their origins, was also clearly associated with a social movement which, in order to attain perfection, refused to admit private property and repudiated all violence, especially war.

Such was the influence of the cities in Languedoc that the catharist heresy, born among the people of the cities, converted the feudal lords and the count, Raymond VI of Toulouse, himself.

France was about to tear herself to pieces in a religious and social conflict.

All the official forces of France united against this mystical and communist revolution. Philip Augustus, then engaged in his great contest with England, refused, as Pope Innocent III urged him, to undertake a crusade against the Albigenses to bring them back into the orthodox

fold, but he allowed it to be organized. The chivalry of the North, fanatical for the faith and for their own interests, plunged into sack and massacre of the most civilized regions of France. Crushed by the steel of the knights—at Béziers alone twenty thousand people were butchered—and by the inquisition created by the Pope for this occasion, the Albigensian heresy was extinguished. Languedoc was attached to the crown. But the great city civilization of the *Midi* was stricken to death.

The ruin of the county of Toulouse, whose position between the Rhône and the Garonne had made it one of the wealthiest regions in Europe, did not permit the monarchy to extract all the advantages that it would normally have obtained. The wealth of Languedoc was to pass to Catalonia; and the role of France in the Mediterranean was to be delayed by two and a half centuries.

The Zenith of Mediaeval Royalty—Louis IX (1226–1270)

At his accession Louis IX possessed in his own right half of his kingdom. In his reign the royal government was organized. He created the Audit Office, made the minting of coins a royal monopoly and made the *langue d'oil* the official language of all France.

Feudalism died out. In the *parlement* the great vassals and the prelates were replaced by lawyers. Ecclesiastical jurisdiction, which had almost replaced civil justice since the 10th century, was deprived of its competence in contractual and property matters. Power became centralized, specialized and laicized.

None the less, Louis IX was still a mediaeval king, ruled by a simple and sincere faith. For him, Christian morality was applicable to kings as much as to ordinary mortals; it denied them the right of invoking reasons of state to free themselves from divine laws. Christianity, to Louis IX, was a living reality. That was why instead of profiting by his victories to confiscate the fiefs of Henry III of England he restored Périgord and Limousin by the Treaty of Paris in 1259. In order to give France a Pyrenean frontier, he even abandoned to James II of Aragon the magnificent county of Catalonia with the port of Barcelona against the cession of some lands in Languedoc (1258). The acquisition of Catalonia, at the very moment when it was becoming the successor to Languedoc ruined by the Albigensian crusade, opened the way to the maritime greatness of Spain in the Mediterranean to the detriment of France. But Louis IX—who was to become St Louis—wanted peace to reign among Christians. The moderation and equity of his policy won him an immense prestige throughout Europe. The princes of the Netherlands called on him to be

arbiter in their disputes and, in England, Henry III, by agreement with his barons who had revolted against his attempts to return to an authoritarian policy, also appealed to him for his mediation.

As a true follower of universal Christianity, Louis IX did not want to limit his policy to the interests of his kingdom and his dynasty alone. Considering himself the agent of Christendom, he accepted the Holy War as a sacred duty. He tried to achieve his great ambition by his two crusades, against Egypt in 1248 and against Tunis in 1270. This was the triumph of Christianity over Islam and the restoration of the true faith in the Holy Land and in those countries where it had once flourished. To this ambition, which failed because it represented an outworn ideal, he sacrificed his life in battle.

2. FAILURE OF THE MONARCHICAL POLICY OF THE HOHENSTAUFEN

Failure of the Mediterranean Empire of Frederic II

The failure of the fourth crusade closed a period of history by openly revealing the lack of that religious sentiment which had dominated the West in the 11th and 12th centuries, and by destroying the Greek Empire of Byzantium whose economic influence had been paramount in Europe since the downfall of the Roman Empire.

The battle of Bouvines (1214) which had seen the defeat of the Holy Empire by the French and which had marked the triumph of the monarchical policy in France and of parliamentarianism in England opened the new era.

It was marked by the decline of feudalism in the West and its expansion in Germany. It marked the destruction of the unity which Christian Europe had known in the early Middle Ages, which was shown in economic affairs by the closed seigniorial organization and in social affairs by the heredity of duties and the division of society into rigid classes. As long as this unity existed the Germanic Holy Empire was a political reality. When the rebirth of trade in the West had revived the life of the cities and had broken down, with the seigniorial régime, the social structure of serfdom, the Holy Empire fell to pieces, since it represented only an inert and archaic civilization, incapable of rallying around it the new moral and material forces that had arisen from the renewed contact with the sea.

This was understood by Frederic II of Hohenstaufen, the son of Henry VI. Elected king of Germany in 1212 and anointed Emperor in 1220, he

broke away finally from the Germanic empire and turned towards the Mediterranean, where he possessed the rich kingdom of Sicily.

Having assured himself of peace in Germany by allowing the feudatories complete independence under the nominal rule of his sons, first Henry and then Conrad, he took up his residence at Palermo and resumed the policy of maritime imperialism already pursued by his father, Henry VI, and his uncle, Philip of Swabia. His court was cosmopolitan, half-Christian and half-Moslem. He set up a harem there, adopted oriental customs and appealed to the most famous Arab and Jewish professors to undertake a Latin translation of the works of Aristotle.

In order to restore the empire of ancient Rome, Frederic II had the grandiose idea of trying to revive classical thought.

The Pope, still following the double policy of assuring the hegemony of the Holy See and reunion with the Greek church, was preparing a new crusade, which he wanted Frederic II to lead. But the realist policy of the young emperor, which revealed him as the first of the agnostics in religious matters, would not allow him to take the cross. He therefore left the titular king of Jerusalem, Jean de Brienne, together with the duke of Austria and the papal legate, to set out for the conquest of his kingdom (1220). It ended in the most lamentable failure.

Gregory IX, in order to force Frederic to serve his ends, excommunicated him. Pretending to submit, he left for the Holy Land (1228). But instead of fighting the sultan of Egypt, Frederic concluded a treaty with him which established a Christian-Moslem condominium at Jerusalem, granted the sultan of Egypt the title of King of Jerusalem with the right of garrisoning the citadel, and guaranteed the widest religious freedom both to Christians and Moslems. Peace, based on tolerance, was restored between Christendom and Islam.

But at this time, when he was carrying on the most bloodthirsty of religious wars against the Albigensian heretics and had just organized the tribunals of the inquisition, Gregory IX could not accept such a solution. He placed Jerusalem under an interdict (1229)—thus paving the way for its final recapture by the sultan of Egypt in 1244—confiscated Sicily, which was a fief of the Holy See, from Frederic II and allied himself with the Italian cities which had rebelled against the authoritarian policy which the emperor had tried to impose on them.

In this duel between Gregory IX and Frederic II two contrary political conceptions clashed; that of the Pope which aimed at the intransigent hegemony of the Holy See and the maintenance of a rigorous orthodoxy by force, and that of Frederic which aimed at the restoration of Mediter-

ranean unity by religious tolerance and the independence of the temporal power.

Frederic played for time. He could not hope to realize his plans if he roused the opposition of the Moslems, but it was even more important to avoid the hostility of the Pope. To avoid the conflict he restored its privileges to the Church, which had been subjected to taxation and to the royal jurisdiction.

This reconciliation with the Holy See was the more necessary for the emperor since he had undertaken to unite in a single monarchical state the whole of Italy, over which he ruled in the south as king of Sicily and in the north as 'King of the Romans'. But he found himself faced by the desperate resistance of the city republics riddled with democratic aspirations, which their savage religious enthusiasm allied to the Albigensian heresy. To obtain the support of the Pope, and above all doubtless to put an end to the independence of the great Italian cities, Frederic II issued bloodthirsty edicts against the heretics. It needed many years for him to vanquish the resistance of the proud cities. In the end, unable to agree among themselves, they gave way (1238) and allowed the centralized monarchical régime then in force in Sicily to be imposed on them.

The maritime empire was thus being built up, piece by piece. But in trying to lay hands on Sardinia, which was another fief of the Holy See, Frederic revived the hostility of the Pope. Surrounded on all sides by the states of the emperor, the patrimony of St Peter risked falling under his tutelage. Innocent IV reacted by convoking a Council at Lyon which excommunicated Frederic and pronounced his deposition (1245). Supported by the Pope, the Lombard cities rose in revolt; and in 1250 the Roman Empire which Frederic II had hoped to restore collapsed before the Parma militia.

Frederic died soon afterwards. His ancient—or modern—dream died with him. The Pope, savage in his desire to destroy the Hohenstaufen, took the kingdom of Sicily from them and gave it to Charles of Anjou, brother of the king of France, Louis IX, whose prestige was then spreading throughout Christendom.

CHAPTER X

THE GERMANIC HOLY EMPIRE IS SPLIT BETWEEN THE CONTINENT AND THE SEA

I. THE ATTRACTION OF THE OPEN SPACES OF THE EAST

Feudal Crumbling of the Empire

WHILE England and France were being centralized and unified under their monarchical institutions, Germany, after the vain efforts of the emperors to unite the continent under universal rule, crumbled away in a feudalism which became less and less coherent.

After the deposition of Frederic II by the Council of Lyon, the empire became a fiction to such an extent that the feudal lords did not even bother to give it a titular head, and the archbishops of Cologne and Maintz assumed the right, amid general indifference, of conferring the imperial crown on Count William of Holland. His only act as emperor was to claim for himself the principality of Zeeland. He never took the trouble to visit Germany.

On his death, seven princes met spontaneously (1258) to dispose of the imperial crown; this was the origin of the College of Electors which was henceforth recognized as having the right to elect the emperor. They openly put the empire up to auction among all the princes of Europe. Some nominated Alfonso of Castile and others Richard of Cornwall, brother of the king of England, Henry III. The Pope had by now become so disinterested that he did not bother to anoint either of them. On the death of Richard, as the succession remained vacant, the Holy See had to threaten that it would itself nominate the king of Germany before the electors agreed to confer the crown on one of the less powerful princes, Rudolph of Hapsburg (1273), since he was not powerful enough to exert his authority. The empire, in fact, no longer existed: Germany became a mere cluster of independent feudal states.

German Expansion Eastward

These states not only did not represent a homogeneous political entity,

but were at different stages of evolution in different parts of the empire. In the west, in Lotharingia and the Rhineland, and in the south, in the Danube basin, the economic current which crossed Europe from Venice to Bruges had led to the appearance of merchant cities which looked towards the western countries and the sea, while in the centre and north the seigniorial chivalry was irresistibly attracted to the vast landed spaces of Eastern Europe.

The eastward expansion begun by Otto I, who had undertaken the conquest of the Slavs on the Elbe, was halted after his death. It was resumed once more by the German knights under the duke of Saxony, Henry the Lion, and the margrave of Brandenburg, Albert the Bear (1170), during the reign of Frederic Barbarossa.

While the Italian cities were launching out for the conquest of the Mediterranean, the German feudatories, like those of the west a century earlier, entered a period of religious and military expansion. This was evident in the west in the universal movement of the crusade and in Germany by a decisive movement to the east. The German knights, supported by the religious order of the Teutonic Knights, founded earlier in Jerusalem, set out for the conquest of the Baltic lands whose coasts had recently been occupied by the Danes. In the name of faith, the Slav peoples were massacred and the knights installed *coloni*, summoned from all parts, on the lands which they had seized. Holy war was combined with racial war against the Slavs and with the conquest of land for the benefit of the military caste of the knights. This was the beginning of what was later to be known as 'the Prussian spirit'.

It was a systematic colonization. The peasants were grouped under the rule of stewards; monasteries were founded which became centres of immense estates; rural townships were created to serve as centres to provision Brandenburg: Spandau, Berlin and Frankfurt-am-Oder.

In 1234 Pope Gregory IX entrusted to the Teutonic Order sovereignty over the lands that it had won for Christianity, and handed over Prussia as a fief.

An immense field of expansion opened eastwards for the Germanic race.

2. THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN PEOPLES AND THE GERMANIC EXPANSION

All Eastern Europe, between the Germanic Holy Empire, the Kiev-Novgorod state and the Byzantine Empire, was at that time settled by peoples—Hungarians, Poles, Bulgars and Serbs—whose social organiza-

tion was only a stage above the tribal; a landowning aristocracy held vast estates on which were settled farmers more or less in a state of serfdom. Only the Roumanians, who had been settled for several centuries in Valachia and Moldavia, lived as free men in their villages under their local chiefs.

The Poles

In the 9th century the Polish tribes had been federated under the leadership of one of them, the Polani, and its chiefs, the Piasts. The conversion of the Piasts to Christianity in the 10th century had been followed by the conversion of the tribes. The Poles, thenceforward, were a part of the Christian community and the Church set out to civilize them by giving them an organic structure. The Emperor Otto III detached the Polish church from the Germanic archbishoprics on which it had at first been dependent and in 1025 the Pope recognized Boleslaw Chobry as their king.

The Polish tribes at this time held a sort of empire extending from the Oder to the Dniester. It was an ephemeral structure that did not survive its leader. The monarchy was incapable of imposing its rule on the great nobles, who formed a clan of landed proprietors, descendants of the former tribal chiefs or military leaders. They broke away and formed local units and Poland became a number of independent duchies which tore one another to pieces in incessant internecine wars up to the 13th century.

Power was organized around the county palatine of Cracow which, having declared itself a vassal of Rome, found to govern it the only force which had been able to extend its authority over the entire country—the clergy.

The Czechs

Farther westward, the Slavs had settled in Bohemia between the 2nd and the 6th century AD. In the 7th century a Frankish merchant called Samo had come there from Flanders and had united all their tribes for the first time. At the end of the 8th century they passed under Carolingian rule. In the 9th century the country had been converted to Christianity, partly by the great Byzantine evangelists Cyril and Methodius and partly by the German clergy who finally gained the upper hand. In the 10th century Bohemia was affiliated to the Bavarian bishoprics.

Bohemia thus became a market between eastern and western Europe which it has continued to be ever since. Economically, it was under Russian influence. The trade current which spread from the Russian

Baltic ports led to the appearance at Prague and Leipzig of colonies of merchants, attracted by the nearby mines which were, however, little exploited. From the religious point of view, it was attached to the Church of Rome which became, for the Czechs, the main source of western influence.

The social structure of Bohemia was somewhat similar to that of Poland; the country was organized about Prague which, in the 10th century, became the residence of the Przemysl princes. Prague, the royal residence and a commercial centre, was always the capital. The decline of the Russian cities during the 11th century turned Bohemia definitely westward. The Emperor Henry III finally incorporated Bohemia into the empire, the higher posts among the clergy were filled by Germans and the bishopric of Prague, created in 973, was affiliated during his reign to the archbishopric of Maintz. From that time the Czech rulers, of all the princes of the empire, were the staunchest supporters of the monarchic policy of the emperors. They stood by Henry IV during the War of Investitures and supported Barbarossa in his struggle with the Italian cities. The competition among the candidates for the empire led Philip of Swabia to grant the title of king to Ottokar of Bohemia (1198), and in 1273 the king of Bohemia was to become one of the Electors. But the kingdom of Bohemia never lost its elective character; as in the past, the king was only the first magnate of the country, elected, as in Poland, by the diet of the nobility.

Originally, the estates of the nobles were peopled by free peasants and slaves; but, as in Hungary, Poland and Bulgaria, the evolution which brought the tribes into a seigniorial régime confounded, during the 12th century, slaves and freemen in a common semi-serf class. At the same time German merchants replaced the Russians and settled in Prague where they formed a middle class and obtained, at the end of the 11th century, their first charters. German *coloni* were settled on the church estates, and the country rapidly became germanized.

The Hungarians

East of Bohemia, the Hungarians, settled in the former Dacia by Henry I and Otto I, became, like the Poles, united around a few tribal leaders. One of these, Stephen I (997–1038), who had been able to assert his power over his peers, was responsible for the conversion of the country to Christianity, which earned for him the title of king, granted him by Pope Sylvester II. Christianity integrated the Hungarians—of Finnish, that is to say Turco-Mongol, stock—into the European community and, under the influence of the bishoprics and monasteries, they began to be civilized.

Within the framework given it by the Church, the magnates gave the country a social structure very similar to that of Poland. The nobility, which elected the king, was represented in a diet where, from the 13th century, the principal nobles and prelates met annually. But far from being a leaven of unity, this diet was the great obstacle to monarchical centralization. In 1222 Andreas II was forced to grant it a Golden Bull, which confirmed almost sovereign rights to the nobles and authorized them to rise in revolt against the king if he violated their privileges. As in Poland, the king had no other power than as the leader of the nobility in war; his rule did not affect the common people who, all of them peasants, lived more or less as serfs under the oligarchy of the magnates.

Hungary, a vast seigniorial state, had no other policy than the conquest of fresh lands. In the 11th century, attracted by the salt-mines and above all the gold-mines, its kings took possession of Transylvania, peopled by Roumanians, and attached it to the Catholic bishopric of Belgrade. In the 12th century they conquered Dalmatia. But having no middle class, the Hungarians relinquished all the trade of the country to the Venetian merchants who soon settled in the ports of Zara and Spalato.

The Bulgarians and Serbs

The Hungarians were in a state of continual war with the Roumanians settled in Valachia and Moldavia and, to the south, with the Serbs and the Bulgars. The Serbs were a western branch of the Slav race. The Bulgars were a residue of the Hunnic invasions; settled between the Danube and Thrace, they became Slavized in the course of the 8th and 9th centuries. In their constant struggles against Byzantium, their tribes became united under a monarchy, at first elective and then hereditary. West of the Bulgar tribes, the Serbs stretched as far as the Adriatic. The Greek cities on the coasts of the Black Sea, the Aegean and the Adriatic, as also the cities of Epirus, escaped their dominion.

The evangelization of the western Slavs, amongst whom the Bulgars are included, began in the 9th century. Cyril and Methodius, who came from Salonica, extended it as far as the borders of Bohemia where they came into violent conflict with the Frankish evangelists who wanted to affiliate the Slavs to the Carolingian church. This was the origin of the struggle, which has gone on unceasingly, between the Germans and the Slavs. Rome, for its part, converted the Slavs of Dalmatia and Croatia. Split between the Byzantine church and the Roman church, the western Slavs lost their unity by the end of the 9th century.

During the 10th century the Bulgars seemed the most formidable

enemies of Byzantium in the Balkans. A Bulgarian empire was organized under Tsar Simeon, who reigned with the assistance of an oligarchy of boyars, descendants of the former tribal chiefs. The conquest of the Greek ports of the Black Sea—Mesemvria and Burgas—and their nearness to Byzantium, as well as the affiliation of their church to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, brought the first elements of civilization to the Bulgars, while Hellenizing them. A sort of government, formed of boyars, was organized around the tsar who ruled as best he could over the 'great ones' amongst whom the land was divided. On their seigniorial domains lived free men, who made up the army, serfs and *coloni*, foreigners or prisoners-of-war.

The Serbs were organized along similar lines.

Trade found its way there by merchant caravans from Constantinople or the Greek coastal cities. The army followed the merchants. The conflicts between Byzantium and the Bulgarians for the Greek cities led, in 1018, to the annexation of the Bulgars and Serbs by the Byzantine emperor, Basil II Bulgarochtonos (the Killer of the Bulgars). Both Bulgars and Serbs, who were to remain a part of the eastern empire until 1186, were divided into districts under Byzantine governors and subjected to a tax in kind which the boyars paid in horses from their studs. Under the Byzantine régime, the Church, enriched by donations of lands, became a great social force alongside the landowning nobility. Like the Roman church among the Germans, it was the great source of civilization.

The rule of the Byzantine landed aristocracy became harsher and harsher in the European provinces of the empire, while the fiscal crisis through which Byzantium was then passing led the government to exact heavier and heavier contributions from the boyars and peasants; as the emperor refused to enrol Slavs in his armies, the difficulties of gaining a living led to a revolt of the Bulgars, which was followed by one among the Serbs, during the reign of the Emperor Isaac Angelus (1186).

At this time the army of the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa set out for the conquest of the Holy Places. It arrived before Constantinople in 1189 and was refused passage. The Bulgars allied themselves with the Latins; so that the more durable result of the third crusade was to revive a Bulgarian empire, whose capital was at Trnovo where a complex of fortresses and monasteries was built. In order to dissociate himself from Byzantium, the Bulgarian tsar asked for and obtained from Innocent III the adhesion of the Bulgarian church, which was recognized as autocephalous, to the Roman obedience.

Some years later, in 1204, the Latins took Constantinople. They at once

tried to subject the Bulgarians to French feudatories. A merciless war ensued. The emperor, Baldwin of Flanders, fell into the hands of the Bulgars and perished after the most atrocious tortures, and the Bulgarian Empire, keeping as best it could the institutions given it by Byzantium, remained independent. The Greek governors were replaced by boyars who formed an assembly of notables around the king; the tsar, claiming for himself the contributions formerly demanded by Constantinople, organized an army of Turkish and Tatar mercenaries recruited in Russia; the Byzantine merchants were replaced by Venetians, Genoese and Ragusans who organized the trade of the country by appointing consuls[1] whom the tsar took under his direct protection. The Bulgars allied themselves sometimes with the Greek emperors of Nicaea against the Latins and sometimes—at the Pope's appeal—with the Latin emperors against the Greeks.

The reconstruction of the Greek Empire in 1261 forced the Bulgarians to fight on a double front, against the Byzantines and against the Hungarians; but, just at this time, the Mongols poured out of Russia and penetrated into Bulgaria. The empire of Trnovo collapsed in anarchy.

German Colonization in Central Europe

Such was the situation in Central Europe at the time when Prussia became a fief of the Holy See (1234). It coincided with the ruin of the Russian cities which, from the 11th century, had been cut off from the Black Sea by the invasions of the Petcheneg Turks in southern Russia, and with the threat of the Mongol invasion which had already reached Moscow (1235). Faced with disasters of this magnitude, the German colonization, which spread prosperity in these almost uncultivated lands, seemed an immense benefit. The dukes of Poland, like the kings of Bohemia and Hungary, called for German colonists for their estates; they settled them as farmers and founded rural townships where they lived alongside the Jews who had sought refuge in Poland after the first crusade to escape the bands of Peter the Hermit. Thus a half-German half-Jewish middle class was formed in Poland and in Silesia.

In Bohemia under Wenceslas II (1230–1235) German immigration was considerable. The ruin of the Russian cities, cut off from the sea by the Turkish and Mongol invaders, left an important sphere of activity open to the Germans. A new German middle class became more and more important at Prague, alongside the Czech middle class, and many German colonists settled in the mining areas.

[1] As the Corinthian colonies had done in the VIth century BC.

The kings of Hungary, after their conquest of Transylvania, also appealed for German colonists to whom King Andreas II granted a charter of autonomy in 1224. The knights of the Teutonic Order entered Transylvania in the wake of the colonists. The foundation of Buda in 1245 was a result of this colonization.

But the Teutonic knights soon came into conflict with the king, and the Pope, called in as arbiter, ordered them to leave the country.

The occupation of Transylvania urged the Hungarians onward towards fresh conquests in the east. Followed by the German colonists, they soon penetrated into the Balkans among the Roumanian peoples settled on the Danube and in the Carpathians. A Romanized mixture of Thracians, Slavs and Finns, the Roumanians were stock-breeders who lived in small communities without any form of cohesion and were incapable of resisting the Hungarian cavalry. Converted to Christianity at the same time as the Bulgars, they were affiliated to the Greek church of Trnovo. The Hungarians thus carried out a work of piety by their conquest, since they restored them to the Roman obedience, as well as a profitable one, since they took possession of their land and settled German colonists there.

3. THE ATTRACTION OF THE SEA

Lotharingia Looks to France

While the imperial power was falling into decrepitude and the princes of northern Germany were launching out on conquests in the east, the Holy Empire was falling to pieces. The countries of lower Lotharingia —the feudal principalities of Louvain, Brabant, Luxembourg, Hainault, Holland and the episcopal principality of Liège—whose economic and social evolution was influenced by French feudalism and the port of Bruges, became Western states and broke away from imperial suzerainty. The kingdom of Burgundy, bequeathed by its last king to the Emperor Conrad II (1033), turned towards the Mediterranean. Marseilles, Lyon, the county of Provence, Dauphiné, Franche-Comté, which had never paid any heed to the authority of the emperor, looked to France whose language, economic interests and social evolution they shared to the extent that Philip Augustus could treat them as vassals. The power of the king of France, overstepping the confines of the Holy Empire, which had once been established by force of arms (876), thus replaced that of the emperor without arousing even a protest, and a new frontier was spontaneously created which attached all the previously Romanized districts to France. The attraction of sea-borne trade, stronger than the conventional

Map No. 13

Europe and the Great Interna

tional Trade Routes (*c.* 1270).

conceptions of politics, undid the work of the Treaty of Meersen (870) and regrouped Europe according to the needs of its economic, and consequently social, evolution.

City Civilization Comes to Germany by the Baltic, Venice and the Rhine

The conquest of the Baltic coasts was quite naturally followed by the subjection of the Slav ports. In 1153 Henry the Lion took possession of Luebeck and in order to Germanize the ancient Slav city appealed for German immigrants who took over the city law that the Slavs had introduced. Luebeck, formerly the end of the Russian river-route, became an export centre for wheat for the northern countries. Riga became a German bishopric (1186) where the Porte-Glaive order of monks was founded against the pagans of Livonia and Esthonia. Dorpat too was granted a bishop. All the Baltic coast was seized from the Danes who had settled there only a short while before, and German shipping, rapidly developing, set out for the conquest of the Baltic. The Germanized ports formed a powerful league with its centre at Wisby on the island of Gothland, the Teutonic Hansa, which became the centre of attraction for the trade of the northern countries.[1] Pushing onwards into central Russia, the German merchants appeared at Novgorod in search of honey and furs. The way to Byzantium being cut by the Turks, Novgorod, whose trade was dying, now turned to central Europe.

Russia, driven back from the Black Sea by the Turks and cut off from the Baltic by the Germans, was doomed to suffocation. Its brilliant city civilization was to be extinguished and gradually to decline into a feudal and landowning régime. The trade-route cut off from Byzantium was forced to turn westward, where London, and even more so Bruges, was expanding rapidly. To assure the mastery of this route, the Teutonic ships clashed with the ancient Scandinavian thalassocracy. Denmark, driven back from the Baltic coast by the Teutonic knights, still held the Straits and had, for this reason, incontestable control of the Baltic. To seize it, the Hansa cities began a war which ended in their victory in 1227; the Danes were driven back into the peninsula of Jutland.

Now that contact with Byzantium had been lost the Baltic became the domain of the Hansa cities, and the Rhineland was drawn by the trade currents flowing towards the Netherlands. At Maintz, Cologne and Strasbourg, as at Trier, Speyer and Worms, merchant middle classes were formed alongside the episcopal governments. Under the influence of city trade, the great seigniorial domains were broken up into tenures. During

[1] It was similar to the leagues formed in ancient times by the Phoenician and Greek cities.

the War of Investitures, the Emperors Henry IV and Henry V, who sought the support of the urban middle classes, granted the cities immunity from customs dues, as well as the privilege of appointing their own magistrates and organizing the supervision of their own markets. In 1254, to defend themselves against the exactions of the warlike petty nobility and assure the safety of their trading caravans, they united in a league of Rhineland cities.

Ratisbon, which had formerly been revived by the Kiev trade, turned away from the east towards Venice, which was becoming the successor of Byzantium; and the upper Danube, like the Rhine, became a great international highway.

The economic structure of central Germany was now defined. In the mid-13th century the influence of Bruges shifted the centre of Hanseatic activity westward. Luebeck took over control and became the centre of all the northern German ports, amongst which Hamburg, Bremen and Rostock took the lead. A highway was established across the continent from Luebeck, Hamburg and Bremen, via Munster and Dortmund, towards the Rhine, which it reached at Cologne. Another such route linked Luebeck, via Magdeburg, and the ancient Slav city of Leipzig, to Nuremberg where an important market was created at the meeting point of the traffic routes towards Strasbourg in one direction and Venice in the other, while Augsburg became on this route, the main entrepôt of Venetian trade. The route which previously had led from Luebeck by way of Kiev to Byzantium and the Volga shifted westward. The German cities garnered the heritage of the former Russian prosperity. But while in the Novgorod-Kiev state the cities, much more powerful, had united the country in a single state, in Germany they were organized as independent republics or remained episcopal cities in the midst of the feudal-seigniorial countryside. Thus all around Germany, on the Rhine, on the Baltic, on the Danube, a city civilization appeared, a century later than in the west, which reaped from the east the institutions of the Slav cities and from the west those of the cities of Flanders. Prague which had had a written municipal law from 1061 transmitted it to the towns of eastern Germany, and Luebeck when it became Germanized in 1153 preserved its earlier Slav institutions. In Bavaria, city law was derived from that of Ratisbon, created under the influence of Russian trade. Leipzig and Breslau, also Germanized in the 12th century, continued the tradition they had inherited from the Slavs.

In the west, the influence of the institutions of the Netherlands cities made itself felt in Cologne and Dortmund from 1120.

The appearance of a city middle class gave fresh vigour to the local customs codified in the 13th century in Saxony and in Swabia.[1] Commercial ties with Italy made the *Libri Feudorum*, edited at Milan, the code of German feudalism.

[1] Codified under the names of *Saxonspiegel* and *Schwabenspiegel*.

CHAPTER XI

INTELLECTUAL REVIVAL IN THE WEST AND THE EXPANSION OF FRENCH CIVILIZATION

The Period of Platonist Scholasticism

THROUGHOUT the whole of the feudal period the West, cut off from the sea and, consequently, from any contact with the outside world, vegetated in almost complete intellectual torpor. All spiritual life was concentrated in the Church whose thinking was based on the platonist scholasticism established by the Fathers of the Church.

The abbeys of Ireland and England which had kept in touch with Rome and the Hellenized world by sea were alone, after the ephemeral Carolingian revival, to continue the great tradition of the ancient world; Scotus Erigenus in the 9th century was the last great thinker directly inspired by the neo-platonist school of Alexandria. He had a great influence on scholasticism, which was to continue until the revival in the 12th century.

Throughout the early Middle Ages the real heir of ancient philosophy was Islam. The flourishing Arab universities of Spain were the principal centres of enlightenment, whence Western clerks again made contact with world thought. Others, it is true, attended the lessons of the 'philosopher-in-chief' of the University of Byzantium, Michael Psellos. But far more than the influence of Byzantium, it was the influence of the Arab schools—those of Persia as well as those of Spain—which was decisive in the revival of Western thought in the 11th century. The Christian knights who carved out kingdoms for themselves in Moslem Spain were assimilated by their subjects. Spain was a country of cities, of trade, industry and universities. In the conquered provinces, Christianity was introduced without destroying either their wealth or their culture. For the whole of the 12th century Arabic remained the language of instruction in the University of Toledo, whose influence was considerable at Paris.

The quarrel of the 'universals' which set the supporters of Plato and of

Aristotle at one another's throats at the University of Damascus was introduced, a century later, into the University of Paris. Abelard, taking up once more the principles of the pre-scientific method of Aristotle, seemed deeply imbued with the thinking of the Islamized Persians, Alfarabi and Avicenna, who had tried to reconcile Aristotelianism with the religious neo-platonism of Plotinus and Porphyry.

The principal Arab works became known to the West through the Latin translations made at Toledo by a converted Jew, John of Seville. They were to inspire Dante, who took his description of Paradise from them.

The rationalist current, contemporary with the Aristotelian revival, was evident in the 12th century both in France and in England. Scientific and philosophical problems appeared once more. The Englishman Robert Pulleyn and the Bishop of Paris, Pierre de Novarre, began to discuss, though with an astonishing naivety, the great problems formerly so brilliantly treated by ancient science, and which the Arab and Jewish professors were then expounding in the universities of Islam. It was in Sicily, where the Byzantine and Norman civilizations met and mingled with Moslem culture, that western thinkers re-established direct ties with the tradition of the ancient world. Roger II, and after him Frederic II, summoned to Palermo Jews and Arabs under whose supervision the works of Aristotle, lost by the West, were translated into Latin after the versions of Averroes. Frederic sent copies to Paris, to Oxford and to Bologna, which were then the centres of Christian thought.[1]

From the 13th century Paris and not Rome, where the teaching of theology was not of great importance in the Middle Ages, was the real centre of Catholic thought, even as Byzantium was the centre of Orthodox thought. That was why the University of Paris was cosmopolitan in character. Alongside the French professors there were Englishmen like Duns Scotus and Germans like Albertus Magnus. It was a characteristic of the intellectual revival of the 12th century that, like the thinking of the ancient world, it was universal; it represented the Catholic world.

The activities of the School of Bologna were quite different. It was not, like the universities of Paris and Oxford, derived from the abbey schools. It was created by the urban middle class with its commercial interests. Its professors were not clergy but laymen. Its teaching was not universal, but specialized. It was divorced from scholasticism and in direct contact with the needs of the times; it was a school of law.

[1] In 1198 the philosophy of Averroes had been condemned by the University of Paris as tainted with pantheism, which proves the penetration of Arabic works in the West. The first versions of Aristotle according to Averroes date only from the beginning of the 13th century and the first Latin edition of Averroes dates from the 15th century.

The Pope had a similar reaction to the appearance of Roman law at Bologna and of Aristotelianism at Palermo; he condemned them both.

So too Philip Augustus, who saw in Roman law a powerful monarchical instrument favourable to the policy of universal sovereignty of the emperor, forbade its teaching at the University of Paris.

But from the middle of the 13th century both the Church and the kings of France modified their views. After the defeat of the empire at Bouvines, the king of France himself adopted a monarchical policy which found its justification in Roman law. The law schools of Montpellier, of Toulouse (founded in the 12th century) and of Orleans (founded in the 13th century) soon rivalled the school of Bologna from which they were derived, and France like Italy became a great centre of legal studies.

The lawmen, created by the study of Roman law, took a leading place in all the Western states, where they became the real founders of monarchical institutions.

The *Great Gloss* of Accursus, professor at Bologna (died 1260), initiated the West into the laws of Justinian, which were taught in France by Jacques de Revigny and Pierre de Belleperche (professor at Toulouse), and in England by the son of Accursus himself.

The revival of Roman law led to a renascence of the science of law. In the 12th century the consuls of Milan codified feudal law—the *Libri Feudorum*—and the Bolognese monk Gratian codified canon law; both were integrated more or less into the framework of the principles of Roman law. In France the professors and the magistrates published commentaries on local customs, till then oral, which led to the reappearance of written law. Philippe de Beaumanoir attempted to compile the first legal *Summa*, uniting public law, private law, criminal law and rules of procedure according to a single system based on the principles of Roman law (1283). The *établissements* (edicts) of King Louis IX were published in a single volume, and the *Parlement de Paris* from 1254 kept a record of its decrees. In England the royal laws, applicable to the whole of the kingdom, gave the country a virtual legal statute-book.

Under the influence of the Holy See and the cities, international life became organized. From the time of Gregory VII (1073–1085) the Pope sent legates to the royal courts. Venice was represented by ambassadors at Rome (1236) and Constantinople (1261). Everywhere society took measures against the scourge of private war which the *cortes* of Castile (1128) and Aragon (1247), the kings of France and England and the Lateran Council (1215) subjected to strict legal regulations. Pope Gregory IX (1227–1241) was the first to try to establish a code of war by prohibiting the use

of cross-bows and other missile weapons, considered as being too deadly.

Reason, in the form of the law, penetrated all fields of activity. It triumphed in the Church at the same time as the revival of Aristotelianism. In 1250 the Pope authorized it to be taught at the University of Paris. The rationalist movement, first sketched out in the 12th century, led mediaeval mysticism towards a pantheism favoured by Platonist ideas. The Pope saw a defence against pantheism in the doctrines of Aristotle which conceived God as outside the world, but the scientific movement threatened to develop independently of scholasticism. In the hierarchy of the sciences as conceived in Aristotelianism the Church found a means of ordering human thought under the primacy of theology. Aristotelianism took the place of Platonism in scholasticism.

The Period of Aristotelian Scholasticism

The revival of Aristotelianism was really the work of an international movement of which the Englishman Alexander of Hales, the Bishop of Paris, Guillaume d'Auvergne, Vincent de Beauvais, the tutor of Louis IX's son, and the noble Saxon Albertus Magnus, a Dominican of Cologne, all professors of the University of Paris, were the main representatives.

An accord between platonist scholasticism and Aristotelianism was realized by the Italian Thomas Aquinas and the Scot Duns Scotus, who gave scholasticism the form it was henceforth to retain.

From then on scholasticism included all the disciplines. In imitation of Alfarabi of Baghdad (9th century) and the Rabbi of Cordova, Maimonides, Thomas Aquinas made a virtual encyclopaedia of his *Summa*. Scholasticism henceforth accepted rationalism in the sense that it admitted that philosophy must prove the existence of God, but it accepted it only within a religious framework which imposed upon it the tutelage of revelation. Philosophical speculation was therefore only legitimate if subject to dogma. Science must remain subordinate to theology even as the temporal to the spiritual power. The theory of the supremacy of the Pope found its place in scholasticism; it was to find as an adversary the greatest religious writer of the 13th century: Dante (1265–1321).

The Scientific and Liberal Movement Triumphs in England

Thomas Aquinas took from rationalism only its dialectic. Far from submitting knowledge, as the Greeks did, to a continual revision, he immobilized it within the framework of revelation. Through rationalism he thus arrived at the principle of authoritarianism. Duns Scotus, less sensitive to the principle of reason, saw in creation a divine work inde-

pendent of what we call reason; he did not conceive the world as subject to laws, but to the will of God alone. From that he deduced that man, like God, is free and thus found himself defending the principle of individual liberty in the religious field and differentiating science, which is based on human reason, from religion which moves on the supernatural plane. The English Franciscan William of Occam, a disciple of Duns Scotus, concluded from the absolute liberty of God that all science is impossible since there is no such thing as an immutable law. But he wanted theology, like science, to renounce the attainment of absolute truth; the Church must remain essentially mystical, divorced from science, and revert to sanctity. Mysticism therefore became the most powerful adversary arrayed against the temporal supremacy at which the 13th century Popes were aiming. But despite the new mysticism of William of Occam, it was the scientific and liberal trend which triumphed at Oxford with Roger Bacon who, despite the condemnation of Rome, introduced the experimental method into teaching. At the same time Ramon Lull made himself the popular exponent of ancient science.

Mediaeval Mysticism Persists in Germany

Germany, with the exception of Albertus Magnus, who taught at Paris, remained faithful to mediaeval mysticism. It did not, however, escape the influence of the outside world; with Eckhart of Cologne it assumed a pantheist form and with the Netherlander Thomas à Kempis this was developed into a sort of Christian nirvana.

Thus, in the different parts of Europe thought developed parallel to their political and social currents. The court of Rome, which tended towards hegemony, adopted the authoritarian scholasticism of St Thomas as an official doctrine. In France, in full monarchical formation, the rational and legal trend prevailed. Liberalism and scientific research triumphed in England at the same time as parliamentarianism; while mysticism remained dominant in Germany where the old feudal-seigniorial régime still existed.

Literary and Artistic Renascence

The renascence of thought went naturally hand in hand with a revival of art and literature.

Byzantium had continued to produce a certain number of historians, writers and jurists. Procopius of Caesarea under Justinian, Leo the Deacon under the Isaurians, were historians of great significance and the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus himself wrote a study of the

administration of the empire. Sea laws, military codes, lexicons, works of philology and science were constantly appearing. The West, from the 9th to the 11th century, produced nothing.

But in the 11th century a revival became evident both in trade and in art. From the sea to the Rhine, in the cities and in the abbeys, the Romanesque style burst out in astonishing variety. In Italy the wealth of Venice was shown in St Mark's, of pure Byzantine style, and the churches of Pisa, of Lucca and of Verona revived the Roman basilica; in southern France the cathedral of Périgueux introduced the Byzantine cupola to the West; at Poitiers Byzantine influences merged with the Norman style which flourished at Caen and in England, while the cathedral of Tournai marked the transition from Norman art to the art of the Rhine and the Moselle.

This diversity and surprising richness of the Romanesque style showed that the revival of the 11th century was not a mere imitative movement, but a new flowering. After the Carolingian revival the cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle was built in the Byzantine style modelled on St Vitale at Ravenna, while St Mark's in Venice was directly inspired by Santa Sophia at Constantinople. In Sicily the Normans adapted themselves to both Byzantine and Moslem styles. The pilgrims, and after them the Crusaders and the merchants, brought from the Holy Land the influence of Syrian architecture which served as a basis for the Romanesque style of Provence and of northern and western France.

It is no less true that the extraordinary variety of the Romanesque style—far more varied than the Gothic—proves that during the centuries of stagnation of the early Middle Ages Christian faith had given birth to a new and very exalted vision of life. Nothing in Romanesque architecture, even though so clearly associated with the Roman basilicas, the Byzantine churches or Syro-Greek decorative art, really recalls antiquity; an entirely new civilization was built upon the ancient elements, as formerly Greek art, conceived under oriental influences, had brought to them a new formula.

Western art, making its debut in the Romanesque style in the 11th century reached its highest point in the cities of France in the 12th century in the development of the arch, born of the advance in technique and of Moslem influences. It was to conquer all Europe.

Romanesque art, by its gravity, its calm idealism, seems to express a civilization which believed that it had arrived at a final form. Gothic art, on the contrary, launches out to the conquest of a future whose horizons open on to infinite possibilities. The arch, which seems to have come from Iran, allows great flights of the imagination and the great stained-glass

windows which blaze in the glory of the sunlight bring a vision of Paradise to a world which feels itself on the road to material and moral advancement. Gothic art is not only a new art formula, it is also the perfection of scientific building technique. Romanesque sculpture sought its inspiration solely in sacred subjects treated with gravity and respect. It is an art of the abbeys. Gothic sculpture is brimming over with life; it mingles the sacred and the profane, amuses itself with the most intimate, even the most material, of subjects, is mocking and ironical in the gargoyles of its cathedrals and gives free vent to an unbridled fantasy inspired by the discovery of freedom by the city craftsmen. It is an art of the middle classes and displays the anti-clericalism of those merchants whose piety in no way hindered their love of gain. It is an art of a society which has burst its fetters and feels itself strong enough to adapt its exuberance of life to an ideal supported by optimism.

The cathedrals of Paris (1163), Chartres (1194), Rheims (1212), Amiens (1220), the Sainte-Chapelle (1242) and the magnificent civic monuments put up by the Flemish burghers, the markets and bell-towers of Ypres, Bruges and Ghent, which proudly bear witness to their wealth and their freedom, opened a new era in the history of art; and at the same time as Dante, who crowns the Middle Ages, Petrarch and Boccaccio, who herald the renaissance, gave to Christian civilization a literature comparable if not superior to that then known in Islam, India and the Far East.

A literature written in the language of the people flourished in all the western lands; religious with the Fleming Ruysbroek and the Germans Tauler, Eckhardt and Suso, profane and worldly in the romances of chivalry, popular, satiric and mordant in the *Roman de Renart* which the peoples of the cities devoured with joy. Manuscripts were decorated with illuminations whose gold ground recalled the sun shining through the stained-glass windows; and painting, which was feeling its way, opened a new page in the history of human feeling. Cimabue and Giotto still have all the gravity of the Romanesque stonemasons, they have the faith of Dante and, like him, are akin, by this wonderful Italian sobriety, to classic art. On the gold ground of their missals the Sienese painted virgins whom they surrounded by a tender love and a living faith.

The many-sidedness of the Gothic feeling, unified in a style of perfect harmony, proves both its extraordinary power and the unity of inspiration of the revival which was evident in all fields, animated by a common certainty of progress.

A daughter of antiquity, western culture, which was at its most brilliant at Paris, showed itself suddenly as a new and creative force. The spires of

its cathedrals, thrust skyward like a cry of faith in the future, heralded the zenith of European culture.

Predominance of French Civilization

France was incontestably the centre of this revival. In trade she lagged behind Italy and Flanders; but her central position between Italy, the Rhine, Flanders, England and Spain made her the centre of the whole intellectual life of the West. The Cluny reform, the courteous code of chivalry, the *chansons de geste*, the Gothic style, were the creations of French feudalism. For the return to civilization preceded the restoration of the monarchy, which was also an aspect of it. It had already been prepared in the feudal principalities. The revival of the cities had caused a new life to appear, together with commercial prosperity, a new life whence emerged social emancipation, the revival of law, scientific trends and the Gothic style. But the Christian faith formed in the abbeys was at the root of all thought and art from the 12th to the 15th century, just as it was in the feudal courts of France and the Netherlands where the courtesy, the sentiment of honour and the cult of woman were created, for whose celebration first the *langue d'oc* and then the *langue d'oil* took their literary form in the songs of the troubadours. At the end of the 11th century this French culture came to England with William of Normandy. It was implanted in Syria by the Crusaders, whence it passed into Greece. It was diffused by the Angevin dynasties in Sicily, at Naples and in Hungary, where it initiated the Magyar nobles into the courtesies of chivalry. The first crusade, in which France was the moving spirit, made French the international language of the Christian Mediterranean, even as the fairs of Champagne, where Flemish and Italian merchants met in the 12th century, made it the international language of trade. The middle classes of the Flemish cities adopted it and it was through them that it exercised, from then onwards, a decisive influence on the intellectual life of Germany. Strasbourg was a staging-post of French influence in the Rhine and Danube lands. The first German writers, Hartmann of Strasbourg and Wolfram von Eschenbach in the 13th century were wholly inspired by French models, as too was van Maerlant in the Netherlands. Paris was the international centre of science and theology; but France was also the centre of imaginative literature and Gothic architecture, which her architects carried as far as Magdeburg and Lund.

Throughout Europe the ruling classes, the nobles, the intellectuals and the merchant burghers in the 12th and 13th centuries were under the influence of France, which gave its classic form to mediaeval civilization.

BOOK III

The Mongol Empire Aims at Universal Rule (13th and 14th Centuries)

CHAPTER XII

ASIA IS SPLIT BETWEEN THE SEA AND THE CONTINENT

I. THE BRILLIANT CIVILIZATION OF MARITIME ASIA

THERE were two events of considerable historical importance in Asia during the 12th century: the downfall of the Chinese Song Empire and the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire of the Seljuks.

The Downfall of the Chinese Empire Under the Song Dynasty

The fifty years of immense prosperity which the democratic reforms of the Song had given the Chinese Empire had spread there an ease of life which had led to economic, artistic and intellectual activity; peace had led to the belief that security was the normal state of society and the militia which formed its military force had ended by losing all combat value.

Unfortunately the peoples who surrounded China were not on the same level of civilization. Her wealth attracted the northern barbarians. An invasion of the Ki-Tan Mongols, who had been settled in the north of China since 836, where they occupied Pekin, crossed the frontiers of the empire in 1125 and besieged the luxurious capital of Kai-feng, situated on the lower Hoang-Ho.

The militia proved itself incapable of stopping the barbarians. They were bought off by an annual tribute of three hundred and eighty-five thousand pounds of gold and a million pieces of silk.

At this time the 'reformist democrats' held the government. The court held them responsible for this humiliating and ruinous defeat and recalled the conservative party to power. They at once embarked on a prestige policy but, as they had no military force able to support their policy at their disposal, they made the mistake of concluding an alliance against the Ki-Tan—who, although barbarians, were already deeply impregnated with Chinese culture and had been converted to Buddhism—with the

Manchus, the most barbarous of all the nomads who threatened the northern frontiers. The Ki-Tan were crushed. But this defeat left the way open to the Manchus, who in their turn invaded China. All the northern provinces were disastrously ravaged. The emperor took refuge at Hang-Chow and China was shorn of all her northern areas, which she made no effort to recover.

China Looks Seaward

The Southern Empire of the Song (1127–1252) turned seaward and completely abandoned all contacts with the Asiatic continent in order to associate itself more closely with the maritime economy of the states of Insulindia, Indo-China and southern India which, like it, were at this time passing through a period of incomparable prosperity and splendour. It was then that the Temples of Angkor were built by the dynasties of the Khmer Empire. Contacts by sea with China, but above all with India which was the great centre of its culture, developed there an urban civilization whose wealth was shown in art of extraordinary imagination. Though inspired by India, Khmer art shows a widely different trend; it substituted for the asceticism of Hindu Buddhism a strangely voluptuous view of life which bore witness to the wealth of its cities, its business classes and its royal court.

Nothing shows more clearly the rupture that existed between the various parts of the world in the 12th and 13th centuries than this rich civilization, refined and pacific, of the maritime states of eastern Asia at the very time when, after the decadence spread by Turkish feudalism throughout all continental Asia, the Mongol invasions were about to take place.

Not only had Europe broken all direct contacts with China, to the point of forgetting that it even existed, but a similar rupture existed between the Asiatic continent and the sea-coast regions of the Bay of Bengal and the China Sea, so that the empire of the Song did not even suffer any after-effects from the epic of Genghis Khan. In 1206, when the whole continent was to be put to fire and sword by the Mongol horsemen, the Song emperors, having disbanded their armies, were living in complete security. At a time when the most disastrous period of ruin and massacre in all the history of Asia was about to begin, civilization in southern China reached a refinement and mildness it had never previously known. The critical period of the great reforms was over. It had led to a stable régime in which individualism, from the intellectual and social viewpoint, reached its highest point. The perfection of the government gave the empire such security that the prisons were empty. While trade enriched

the people, thought, turning to moral preoccupations, attained a height displayed by the works of Chu-Hi. About 1200 he published a neo-Confucian synthesis in which he sought, as had formerly the Stoics, to establish a system of morality independent of divinity. And while the Mongols were cutting the throats of the people of the cities of Central Asia and Persia, China was divided by the quarrel between 'the ancients' who wished to return to the classic tradition of the time of Confucius and 'the moderns' represented by the 'school of method' founded by Chu-Hi.

But China was soon to be brutally awakened from her dreams by an invasion of the redoubtable Mongol armies in 1252.

The Feudal Evolution of Japan

In the 11th century while China was engaged in carrying out social reforms, Japan, after the failure of its monarchical experiment, had slipped back into feudalism.

At the end of the 12th century the empire was no more than a very loose federation of feudal principalities organized socially on the manorial system. Near to the ancient capital of Kyoto the main representative of feudalism, the chief of the Minamoto family, had set up his residence at Kamakura on the eastern coast close to the tutelary shrine of his family. He placed agents who represented his interests in all the hereditary principalities. They were forbidden to have any contact with the court of Kyoto which was under his complete control. The emperor was compelled to appoint him *shogun*, that is to say commander-in-chief, and to allow him supreme authority over all the temples and monasteries of the country.

Thus the ancient monarchy, in which the dynasty continued to exist as a sort of archaism, was replaced by a feudal military sovereignty in which the *shoguns* were the real hereditary heads,

Within the framework of this feudalism, political, economic and social evolution continued just as if the great monarchical experiment had never taken place. Little by little economic life revived; tea was imported from China, and a merchant middle class was formed at Kamakura and other centres, where it was organized in local and professional corporations. The merchants won the right to travel freely through the whole country and set up a monopoly of trade. They also gained recognition of the privilege to refer to their own commercial courts and by the payment of excise-dues enjoyed the protection of the local lords.

While trade was expanding, the seigniorial régime was disintegrating

under its influence. The closed economy was replaced by a régime of production for sale. The ties which bound the worker to the soil were loosened and serfdom was weakened, not this time by virtue of a royal decree but under the pressure of economic necessity; the tenant of the soil became, little by little, its owner; it was possible for him to leave and even to sell his holding. Once the soil became alienable, family responsibility disappeared, the right of primogeniture was abolished and women acquired a legal status of their own.

While individualism began to free itself from the seigniorial system of collective responsibility, public law became distinct from private law, and the fief ceased to be a patrimonial property and it became impossible for the prince to alienate it.

Quite naturally the advent of individual liberty led to a revival of intellectual life; the 13th century marks a renewal of art and civilization.

Taken all in all, Japan in the 13th century underwent a social evolution more or less similar to that which western Europe was undergoing at the same time. In 1232, when the first works on law were published in France, there appeared in Japan a sort of great customary law which ratified the new social situation.

2. DECADENCE OF THE ASIATIC CONTINENT UNDER TURKISH ASCENDANCY

Break-up of the Seljuk Empire

At the time when China, at the end of the 11th century, had reached the final phase of its centralized, state socialist evolution, soon to be succeeded by the Manchu invasion, the Turkish Seljuk Empire, only recently constituted in the form of a military and feudal state, fell to pieces. Cut off from the sea by the Christian settlements in Syria, it passed through a crisis of territorial dismemberment similar to that which had caused the downfall of the Abbasid Empire of Baghdad. The Turkish governors of Damascus, of Aleppo, and the regions of Mesopotamia, Armenia and Persia, declared themselves independent rulers and the immense empire became a mosaic of feudal principalities. For this reason it could not react either against the Crusaders or, in Central Asia, against the semi-barbarian peoples surging continually from the east. Driven out of China by the Manchus in 1127, the Ki-Tan flowed back westward and settled in the districts of the Tarim, from Turfan to Kashgar. Strongly influenced by Chinese civilization and converted to Buddhism by a century of contact with the Chinese, the Ki-Tan did not destroy the caravan cities of Tarim

but used them to replace the Turkish feudal régime by a monarchical government in the Chinese manner, which formed the Empire of Kara-Khitai.

This was the first retreat of Islam in Central Asia. The Eighur and Karakhanid Turks who occupied the regions were made vassals; Islam was driven back. The Christians, on the other hand, were allowed freedom to practise their religion under the authority of the Nestorian bishop who lived at Kashgar.

Faced with this solid Ki-Tan state, the Turkish Empire fell to pieces. South of the Sea of Aral, the Turkish governor of Kwarizm, which had become independent, undertook the conquest of Transoxiana; at the end of the 12th century all Transoxiana, Khorasan, Persia and Seistan formed a great Kwarizmian empire. But the Kwarizmians professed the Shiite heresy. The political dismemberment of the Seljuk Empire was complicated by a religious war.

Reconstitution of an Egyptian Empire

While the Seljukids, and with them Moslem orthodoxy, were being thrown out of Central Asia a Turkish officer, Saladin, in 1171 overthrew the Fatimid emirs of Egypt and founded the Turkish orthodox dynasty of the Eyubites.

Instead of plunging into a religious war against the Kwarizmian sultan, Saladin had the political wisdom to make an alliance with him against the Crusaders, which enabled him to take Jerusalem in 1187.

Egypt immediately took up once more her traditional policy of control over the great trade-route from Syria to the Persian Gulf. Once Jerusalem had been conquered, Saladin imposed his rule on the Turkish principalities of Damascus and Aleppo and even extended it as far as the Tigris. A great Egyptian empire was thus formed, master both of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. It was inevitably to come into conflict with the Crusaders for the possession of Syria.

Turkish Rule Ruins India

From the 8th century onward Islam had been established in northern India where, with its Holy War, it had completed the ruin of the country whose prosperity had been brutally checked in the 5th century by the invasion of the Huns. In the 11th century the Turkish princes, who had formed a powerful military state at Ghazna and who had continuously raided northern India, annexed the Punjab. But the appearance of the Seljuk Turks in Central Asia had broken up the empire founded by the

Ghaznevid princes and thenceforward Seistan and the Punjab were prey to continual wars between the Turkish feudatories. In 1192 a prince of Ghazna, having defeated the Moslem prince of Delhi, replaced him by a Turkish slave; in 1206 he proclaimed himself sultan and inaugurated the 'slave dynasty'. The Turkish sultans of Delhi were the real founders of Moslem rule in India. They divided all northern India into fiefs, which they granted to Turks or loyalist Hindus. The Buddhist and Jain temples and monasteries which still existed were destroyed. From that time the history of northern India was only a succession of conspiracies, revolts, massacres and tortures. But up to 1282 the Deccan plateau checked the Turkish tide and protected the states of central and southern India which, like southern China, continued to enjoy their prosperity while the Mongol whirlwind struck at the Asiatic continent.

CHAPTER XIII

THE MONGOL EMPIRE

Mongolia in the 12th Century

ALL northern Asia beyond the Caspian Sea, the Sea of Aral and China had been occupied, for thousands of years, by the nomad peoples belonging to the three branches of the Altaic race, the Turks, the Mongols and the Tonguses.

Amongst these peoples, those who lived on the steppes were herdsmen; those who wandered through the forests were hunters, and these were the most savage. They had no way changed since the earliest ages. In the 5th century of our era the Turkish tribes of the Huns had produced the great migration which had ended with the empire of Attila. In the 7th century the Turkish tribes of the Tu-Kiu had created two great khanates, one reaching from the Sea of Aral to the Yenesei, the other from the Yenesei to the north of China. They had been affected by a current of civilization starting from the Central Asian caravan route which had brought them into contact with Buddhist, Christian (Nestorian), Manichaean and finally Islamic influences. The Eighur Turks, settled in the Tarim valley, who had been converted to Buddhism which had come to them from China or to Nestorianism which had come from Persia, had extended their rule northward and had introduced agricultural civilization and Nestorianism to the Siberian steppes.

But in the 9th century this Eighur penetration had been repulsed by the savage Kirghiz, who had occupied the country; and in the 12th century the nomad peoples had fallen to a far more primitive state than they had known four centuries earlier.

Their civilization was that of all nomads at all times. An aristocracy superimposed on the warriors formed the class of freemen under whose rule lived, in a state of slavery, clients or conquered tribes who herded the cattle and made up the auxiliary troops. The nobles elected the tribal chief. The tribes as a whole elected a Khan at the great assemblies of chiefs. They lived in tents, moved on horseback or in carts, and set up huge

encampments where the chief of the tribe or of the federation of tribes lived.[1] They were peoples of the utmost savagery, for whom human life had no value. When they invaded a civilized country they massacred or made slaves of the population and allowed the land to lie fallow so that it could serve as pasturage for their flocks.

Nevertheless, civilization advanced steadily from the south.

The Naimans, Turco-Mongols, influenced by their Eighur neighbours, gradually adopted Nestorianism, became agriculturists and created a rudimentary form of government to assist their chiefs.

To the north of the Naimans, the Kirghiz, who had been driven back in the 10th century, were no longer of any importance. East of the future Karakorum, the Keraits, also Turco-Mongols, were visited by Christian merchants who came to buy furs, and the authority of the Nestorian Bishop of Merv spread farther and farther over the steppes.

The Mongol Oirats, that is to say confederates, lived north of the Keraits, to the east of Lake Baikal, neighbours of the Tatars, the most barbarous of all the Asian nomads, who were settled in the north of Manchuria. None the less, Moslem merchants were already in touch with them.

The Oirats were divided into tribes, which were sub-divided into clans. Sometimes they fought amongst themselves, sometimes they joined together to make forays. It was in one of these that, at the end of the 12th century, Genghis Khan was born.

Genghis Khan

Chief of a clan, and then chief of a tribe, Genghis Khan succeeded in uniting the Oirat tribes in his vicinity, defeated the Tatars and conquered the Keraits. In 1205 he was master of a Mongol empire. He mustered an immense body of horsemen, at least a hundred and fifty thousand and, as in the times of Attila, a tidal wave surged suddenly from the Altai which spread over the former northern provinces of China, already invaded by the Ki-Tan and the Manchus, where the Mongol dynasty of the Kin, for whom Genghis Khan had at first fought as a mercenary, was ruling. It was a terrible massacre. Not knowing what to do with the conquered peoples, the Mongols exterminated them. Pekin was taken in 1215, the population was massacred and the city razed to the ground.

Genghis Khan was preparing to destroy the ten million inhabitants of the Chinese provinces subject to the Kin Empire in order to reduce the whole country to steppe when a Ki-Tan prince, whom he had taken

[1] It was exactly the same type of civilization as that of the Scythians in the VIth century BC.

prisoner at Pekin, convinced him that he could exact from the population a tribute of five hundred thousand ounces of silver, eighty thousand pieces of silk and four hundred thousand sacks of grain. Genghis Khan renounced his plan for a massacre and entrusted the Ki-Tan prince with the organization of the tribute on that basis.

Leaving the conquest of the Kin Empire to his lieutenants, Genghis Khan turned westward. The Kara-Khitai had been conquered by the Ki-Tan; as Moslems they were then being persecuted by the Nestorians and welcomed the Mongols as liberators, so that the country did not suffer greatly. The Turkish sultanate of Kwarizm was, on the other hand, annihilated. All the great caravan cities were destroyed. At Bukhara twenty thousand people were killed. At Samarkand thirty thousand perished and thirty thousand craftsmen were sent to Mongolia. If these figures are accurate, they prove the great economic importance that the cities of Central Asia still had at that time. From Kwarizm a Mongol army, sent northward, skirted the Caspian, crossed the Urals, crushed the Khazars and, destroying everything in its path, advanced as far as the Crimea and the mouths of the Danube. On his death in 1226 Genghis Khan held under his iron rule all Asia from Kwarizm and the Indus to Manchuria, and all southern Russia.

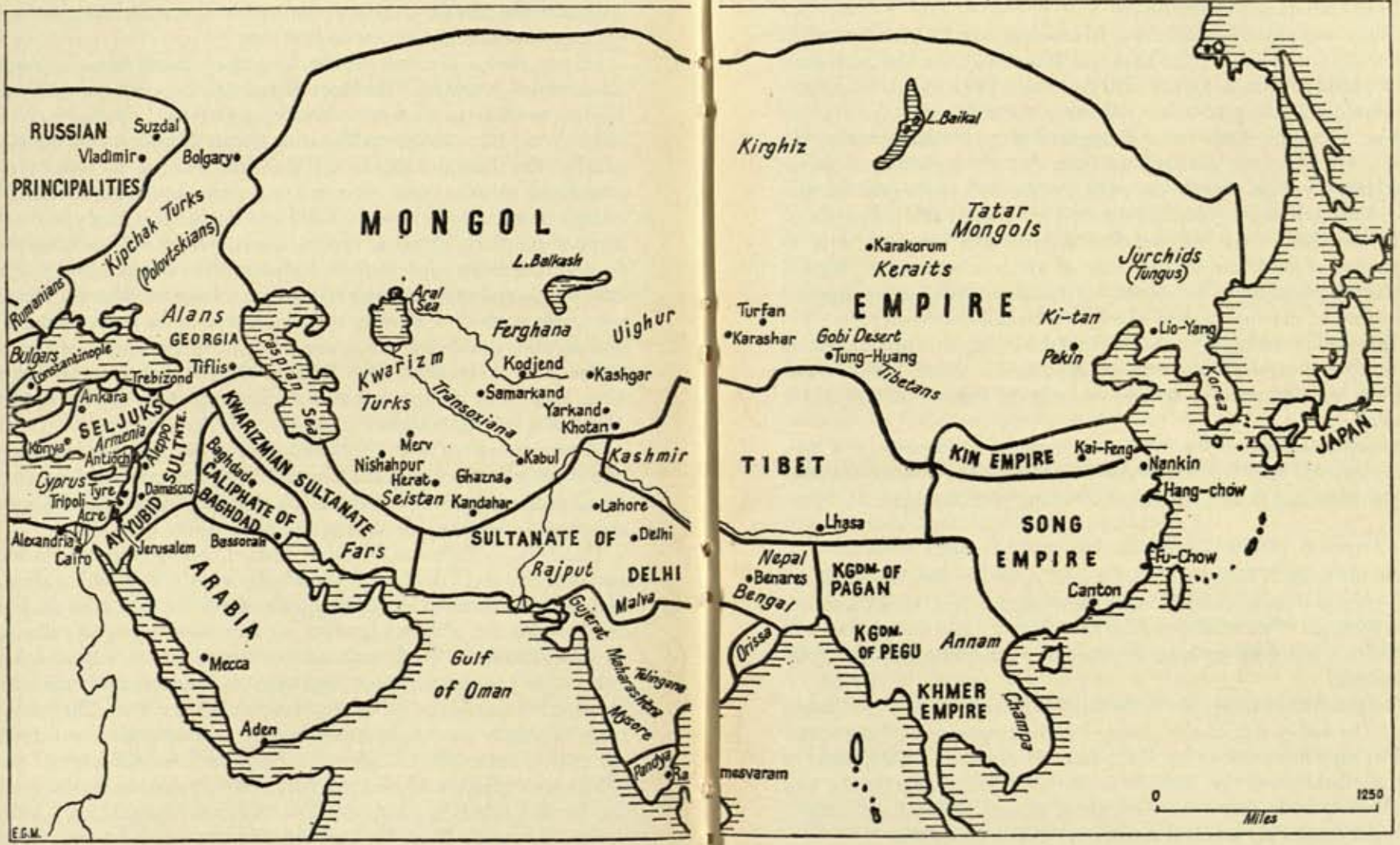
The conquest, in a space of twenty years, of this immense empire was one of the most terrible episodes in the history of mankind. Carried out by nomads, incapable of understanding the life of settled peoples, it was accompanied by massacres such as had never before been known.

Thanks to his Eighur and Ki-Tan advisers, who represented the most advanced sections of the Turkish and Mongol races, Genghis Khan allowed himself to be influenced by the experience of civilized men. After shedding torrents of blood wherever he went, he then tried to impose order and security. The iron discipline, based on terror, that he enforced from Pekin to the Caspian Sea put an end to the constant wars that were always breaking out among the Turkish feudatories of Central Asia. The 'Mongol peace' was assured throughout Asia and the caravan routes, bordered by the ruins of once rich and cultured cities, knew absolute security.

Such is the egotism of men that Marco Polo, roused to enthusiasm by the ease with which he could cross Asia, thanks to Mongol 'order', was to deplore the death of Genghis Khan since he was a man 'of integrity and wisdom', and Joinville praised him in the words: 'He kept his people in peace'!

In the wake of his conquests, Genghis Khan organized his immense empire. In 1206, at the *kurilai* (assembly of nobles) which had granted him

Map No. 14



The Mongol Empire at the Death of Genghis Khan (1227)

power over all the Mongol tribes, a criminal code was accepted which punished by death murder, theft, receiving of stolen goods, witchcraft and adultery; it was to be supplemented by the 'edicts' of Genghis Khan and become customary Mongol law.

The power of the Mongol Great Khan, elected by his peers, was of an essentially feudal nature. The khan was at the head of a hierarchy based on the bond of personal loyalty of all the nobles. The army too was feudal, commanded by the great nobles and composed of free men, that is to say nobles. The Great Khan had a bodyguard of ten thousand nobles. His power was, however, distinguished from that of his peers by its divine character. The khan was the representative on earth of the great heaven-god, Tangri, whose worship had already been strongly affected by Iranian influences. His power was therefore absolute. His conquests were an expression of the divine will, by virtue of which he became the owner of all the conquered lands. But in order to conciliate local gods, he respected the priests of all religions. Fear of the gods made him tolerant.[1]

Through his contact with the Eighur Turks, Genghis Khan introduced writing, created a chancellery and appointed a Chief Justice whose verdicts were recorded in writing to form the basis of the law of the empire.

Booty was replaced by tribute imposed on the peoples of China, Turkestan and Iran which was divided amongst the principal Mongol nobles according to facts established by a kind of land-register.

The Empire of Ghengis Khan Aims at Universal Sovereignty

On the death of Genghis Khan, his sons, to whom their Eighur tutors had given a Turco-Persian culture, surrounded themselves with courts. The principle of the election of the khan by his peers, though respected in theory, had been replaced by dynastic rights. His sons shared his conquests.

Genghis Khan had appointed the third of his sons, Ogodai, to succeed him. The *kurilai* ratified this choice, but the empire was so vast that it had to be divided among his descendants: Batu obtained the khanate of the Kipchaks from the Ukraine to the Aral Sea; Chagatay the two Turkestans, while Tuluy, the youngest of his sons, received according to Mongol custom his ancestral patrimony, eastern Mongolia.

Ogodai (1229–1241) built a capital at Karakorum in the middle of Mongolia and set up a government there, presided over by a Nestorian

[1] It was an organization very similar to that of the Persians during their conquests in the VIth century BC.

chancellor and a minister who was imbued with Chinese culture. He was to try to make his military empire a state administered in the Chinese manner.

A fixed budget was established, based on the yield of the taxes; the Chinese of the former Kin Empire were taxed by families, while the people of the cities of the west paid a poll-tax; the Mongols themselves were forced to pay the value of one tenth of the produce of their flocks and herds. The administrative personnel was made up of Eighur Turks and Chinese. An imperial postal service, with relays, was organized.

The conquered countries for the most part kept their own institutions. The Mongol nobles were granted huge appanages in Mongolia; they only lived in the provinces as soldiers or representatives of the khan. The army became a permanent institution, a hundred and twenty thousand strong.

In order to civilize the Mongol aristocracy, the sons of noble families were sent to schools opened for them at Pekin.

But while he was organizing his empire, Ogodai continued his conquests both in Asia and in Europe. He concluded an alliance with the Song emperors against what remained of the Kin Empire, while he launched an attack on Europe and on the Empire of Baghdad.

While peace, order, tolerance and freedom of thought reigned in the conquered countries and trade revived, thanks to the safety of the trade-routes, the conquests went on with the same terrible plan of massacre and the systematic destruction of all who resisted.

The death of Ogodai in 1241 once more halted the Mongol onrush.

The empire was organized on a universal basis. Covering all races and all religions, it accepted them equally. Guyuk (1246–1248), himself a Buddhist, surrounded himself with Christian ministers. But to the embassy sent by Pope Innocent IV in 1246, inviting him to embrace Christianity, Guyuk replied that he held universal sovereignty from the heaven-god and that he expected the Pope and all the Christian princes to acknowledge his suzerainty.

The advent of Mongka (1251–1259) marks the zenith of Mongol power. The empire achieved a solid and regular administrative framework. The Great Khan was not only the political chief but also the chief of all the religions of his states. His chancellor was a Nestorian and he was surrounded by Christian priests; but a Taoist church leader and a Buddhist 'master of the kingdom' were personally attendant on him. Once again the conception of universal empire was accompanied by that of a universal religion. To the Flemish ambassador of Louis IX, Ruysbroeck (Rubruck),

who came in 1253 to propose an alliance against Islam, Mongka replied that 'the religions are as the five fingers of the hand', Buddhism, he added, being the palm. Christian churches and temples of all religions were built at Karakorum. In 1256 Mongka convened a Buddhist General Council there. The Mongol khan, who was well informed about European affairs, knew that Louis IX held leadership among the Christian princes and was ready to recognize this on condition that he paid homage. For, he said, even as there is only one God, so there can be only one sovereign on earth.

So vast an empire had never before been created; and never had the theory of universal empire been asserted so forcefully.

To achieve the world empire at which he aimed, it only remained for the Great Khan to conquer the China of the Song, the richest and most civilized country of the times, and to impose his rule over Islam and Christianity.

The Conquest of China

The invasion of China, undertaken in a period of great prosperity and absolute peace (1252), was to necessitate a campaign which was to last for twenty-five years. As before, the war was waged with ruthless cruelty. China fought heroically, but in vain. Nankin fell in 1275—a million people were massacred there—and in 1276 Canton was occupied. After the destruction of the Song fleet at Kuang-Tung—where the young emperor perished—the conquest was over.

Annam, Champa, the Khmer Empire, Burma, then on the crest of their civilization, hastened to recognize the suzerainty of the Great Khan. Japan, attacked in 1274 by a fleet of nine hundred ships, and then once again in 1281 by four thousand ships, was able to resist thanks to its insular position. But being totally isolated from the continent, it sank into terrible poverty that led to civil war.

The Mongol Empire was at once absorbed by the China it had conquered. After a terrible dynastic war, in which Kublai emerged as Great Khan, the capital was moved from Karakorum to Pekin, which became the great cosmopolitan centre of the immense state whence, imbued with Iranian influence brought there by the ministers of Kublai, Chinese civilization, victorious over its conquerors, was to shine for a century to come with incomparable brilliance.

CHAPTER XIV

CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM AGAINST THE MONGOLS

The Mongol Khanate of Russia is Converted to Islam and Begins a Holy War Against Europe

WHILE Kublai was engaged in the conquest of China, Batu, the Kipchak khan, launched an attack on Europe with armies of Turkish mercenaries. In 1235 the capture of Moscow and in 1240 that of Kiev put an end to the Kiev-Novgorod civilization and forced the ruined Russian cities to accept Mongol suzerainty. Their raids penetrated into Hungary, Dalmatia and Poland, and even as far as Moravia and Bohemia. Advancing towards the Caucasus, they exterminated the brilliant Georgian and Armenian chivalry.

The very small number of Mongol aristocrats in the khanate—they only numbered a few thousand—were absorbed by the Turkish army which they had recruited and were converted to Islam. The Mongol khanate of Kipchak became a Moslem state.

Its capital, fixed by Batu at Sarai on the Volga (1229), took over the role of a great international mart which up till then had been that of the former capital of the Khazars, Itil. Venetian and Genoese merchants soon appeared there to meet the caravans from Asia.

There was no European state able to put up a serious resistance to the menace of the Mongols. Pope Innocent IV summoned a Council at Lyon (1245), where it was decided to parley. The teaching of Mongol and Arabic was introduced in the University of Paris and diplomatic relations were established with Karakorum.

Meanwhile the Mongol menace spread. In 1257 Cracow fell. Russia was rapidly converted to Islam which, now firmly established in Europe, was preparing a new Holy War against Christianity.

The Mongol Khan of Persia Attacks Islam

While the Mongols in Russia were being converted to Islam, the Mongols in Persia came into conflict with the Moslem power. The Great

Khan aimed at universal empire. He could not tolerate, in opposition to his power, the authority of the caliph of Baghdad, who claimed to exercise authority over all Moslems, even were they Mongol subjects. The khan of Persia, Elgigidai, therefore gave orders for the capture of Baghdad. The moment seemed favourable. The treaty concluded in 1228 by Frederic II with the sultan of Egypt, which had established a sort of condominium over Jerusalem, had been broken directly after the excommunication of the emperor (1243). Taking advantage of the conflicts caused by the Pope among the Christians by nominating Henry of Cyprus as king of Jerusalem in the place of Frederic II, the Eyubite sultan expelled the imperial garrison and occupied Jerusalem. The truce between Islam and Christianity was broken. Louis IX was preparing a crusade to destroy the power of Egypt and reconquer the Holy Sepulchre. Elgigidai sent him ambassadors to propose an alliance against Islam. But Louis IX refused to treat with an infidel. He left on his crusade against Damietta (1248–1250) alone. It was a disaster. Taken prisoner by the sultan of Egypt, he had to pay a ransom in gold. Islam triumphed and Jerusalem remained in the hands of the unbelievers. Louis IX, defeated, once more tried to get into touch with the Mongol court, but instead of approaching the khan of Persia he sent Ruysbroek to Karakorum when the Great Khan Mongka proudly replied that he was waiting for the king of France to acknowledge himself a Mongol vassal (1253).

A few years later (1258) the khan of Persia, Hulagu, took Baghdad, massacred the caliph and about a hundred thousand Moslems, but spared the Christians.

The capture of Baghdad was welcomed by the Christians of the East as the dawn of a new era. The Christian king of Armenia (Cilicia) and the prince of Antioch at once made an alliance with Hulagu against the Mameluke sultans of Egypt, formerly mercenary palace officers who, in 1250, had replaced the dynasty of the Eyubites after a *coup d'état*. Aleppo, a possession of Egypt, was taken and put to fire and sword by the allied armies of the Mongols and the Crusaders (1260). Damascus surrendered. Christianity, allied with Mongol power, triumphed over the ruins of Islam.

Christianity Divided in its Struggle with Islam

But the conflict between the Holy See and the Hohenstaufen deeply divided the Christians of Syria. Some recognized Conradin, the son of Frederic II, as king of Jerusalem; others recognized Hugh of Cyprus, the Papal candidate.

The Italian cities intervened in the conflict; Venice and Pisa took the side of Hugh, and Genoa that of Conradin. The stake was, in fact, no longer the Holy Sepulchre but possession of the port of Acre, the key to the Levant, where Venice held power. Through hostility to the king of Armenia and the prince of Antioch, allied with Hulagu, Tyre and Acre did not hesitate to conclude an alliance with the Mamelukes of Egypt (1260). Revictualled by the Crusaders themselves, the Moslem army recovered Damascus and restored Islamic worship there.

By contrast to the Christians who were divided amongst themselves, Islam was again united. The Moslem khan of Kipchak, breaking with his blood brothers the Mongols, guilty of killing the caliph of Baghdad, allied himself with the sultan of Egypt against the khan of Persia. And, profiting by the dissensions among the Crusaders, Michael Paleologus, heir of the Byzantine Emperors, who reigned at Nicaea, returned in triumph to Constantinople with the aid of the Genoese fleet and restored the Greek Empire (1261). Venice which, under the Latin emperors, had held a monopoly of commerce at Byzantium, was henceforth to find an irreconcilable rival ranged against her.

The Pope did not seem to understand the great drama which was being played and in which Christianity was the stake. His policy had other aims. He wanted, on the one hand, to take Sicily from the Hohenstaufen, upon whose extermination he had set his heart, and, on the other, the reunion of the Greek church with Catholicism, now finally compromised by the restoration of Michael Paleologus. In 1266 Clement IV granted Sicily, which was a fief of the Holy See, to Charles of Anjou, whose great plans he was to support. Charles, in fact, reverting to the dreams of Frederic II, aimed at re-establishing the Roman Empire by seizing Byzantium and restoring it to Papal obedience. Venice, which wanted to win back from Genoa the dominant position it had held at Constantinople under the Latin emperors, joined the alliance between the Pope and Charles of Anjou. Byzantium found ranged against her the Pope, the king of Sicily and Venice, as well as the Bulgars and the two greatest powers of Islam, the khanate of Kipchak and the sultanate of Egypt, allied to the Christian princes of Tyre and Acre.

The Beginnings of Spanish Power

But just at this time a new power appeared in Spain, that of the kings of Aragon. By ceding Catalonia with the port of Barcelona to James I (1213–1276), Louis IX had opened the Mediterranean to the little kingdom of Aragon. James immediately took advantage of this. Step by step, he

THE WORLD UNDER MONGOL HEGEMONY (*c.* 1260)

Map No. 15

The essential characteristics of this period are:

- The enormous expansion of the Mongol Empire
- The Moslem penetration to the Indies in the Sultanate of Delhi
- In Europe, the important position occupied by the Spanish kingdoms
- The decline of the Byzantine Empire
- The partitioning of the great Principality of Kiev
- The Christians still hold, since the first Crusade, the possessions of the "Latins" in Syria

took possession of the Balearic islands, seized Valencia (1238), Alicante and Murcia (1265) from the Moors, and gained a foothold on the Moroccan coast at Ceuta. These conquests were made possible by the victorious wars that the king of Castile was waging in the interior of the country against Islam, from which he took the two great cities of Cordova (1236) and Seville (1248).[1] In 1269 the Empire of the Almohades,[2] which held Spain and northern Africa, fell to pieces. The power of Islam was finally destroyed in the West. Granada, the last Moorish kingdom in Spain, became a vassal of Castile; and Barcelona, freed from the Moslem menace, began to look to the Levant, rivalling Venice, Pisa and Genoa. But the Levant, to which Barcelona owed her new wealth, was falling little by little into the power of the Mamelukes of Egypt. In 1268 the capture of Jaffa reduced the Christian possessions in Syria to a few citadels and the port of Acre. James I, on the pretext of a Holy War, occupied Acre and, in order to gain allies against Egypt, approached the khan of Persia and Byzantium. A Christian policy, based on a Mongol alliance, was sketched out. But Louis IX, reverting to his plans for a crusade, assembled an army which, after taking Tunis, was intended to attack Egypt and to destroy, by its victory, the last great bastion of Islam. The concentration of forces against the Mameluke sultan should finally have destroyed him. But neither Louis IX nor the Pope, each intent on his own private policy, was capable of carrying out an action on that scale. The Pope remained obstinately attached to his Angevin, anti-Byzantine policy; and Louis IX, refusing to imitate Frederic II by parleying with an infidel even to save Christianity, tried to act alone. He was to die before Tunis (1270), where pestilence decimated his great army.

Christianity was defeated. Egypt was saved, and all that James I could do was to evacuate Acre. In order to avoid being overwhelmed by the coalition against it, Byzantium reversed its alliances and made common cause with the Kipchaks. A triple alliance was therefore concluded between Byzantium and the two Moslem powers, the Kipchaks and Egypt, against Persia, the Bulgarians, the Pope, the Angevins of Sicily and Venice.

But James of Aragon, though forced to evacuate Acre, had not renounced his plans for naval supremacy. Since the Levant was now closed to him, he was to try to assure his supremacy in the Mediterranean by taking possession of Sicily. Quite naturally, he approached Byzantium against Charles of Anjou, and destroyed the Sicilian fleet which was being prepared to attack the Greek Empire.

[1] Toledo had been conquered in 1085 by Alfonso VI.

[2] In 1147 the Almohad dynasty replaced the Almoravid dynasty in Spain and Africa.

The intrigues of Byzantium and the king of Aragon led to the 'Sicilian Vespers' in which the supporters of the Angevin dynasty were massacred (1282) and a little later Sicily fell into the hands of the House of Aragon (1285). The Angevins kept only the kingdom of Naples. This meant the collapse of the Angevin policy upon which the Pope had relied and Aragon became the great naval power of the Mediterranean. At the same time Castile, firmly settled on the Atlantic coasts, had, like Catalonia, profited by the flourishing Moslem industry in Spain. It too looked seaward. In a few years its shipping was of such great importance that, in 1280, the Castilians had a standing at Bruges equal to that of the Hanseatics. A new trade-route was formed, from the Levant by way of Barcelona and Castile, to the ocean and Bruges; Spain became the great staging-post on the Asian sea-route to Bruges and England, which suddenly took a dominant position in international trade. In 1279 Barcelona created the first consular court to legislate on marine disputes, according to the classic principles of the ancient Rhodian law, which it published in a sort of code known as the 'consulate of the sea'; it became little by little the international law of sea-borne trade. Spanish competition was not slow in making itself felt also in continental trade which reached Bruges from Venice, by way of Lombardy and France.

Heir to the caliphate of Cordova, Spain once again took up its role as the great maritime power of the West.

The Moors had made Spain a country of industrial cities by introducing cotton, the silk-worm and merino sheep. Spanish ships, kept busy by an industry comparable only with Lombardy and Flanders, were to restore to Spain the greatness it had known in the 9th and 10th centuries. The wars of the *reconquista* against the Moors had led first the kings of Leon, then those of Aragon, to create *cortes*, in which sat the representatives of the clergy and nobility alongside the king. The cities, united in powerful leagues, had since 1188 been permitted to send their deputies there and very soon acquired a predominance in them.

Policy of Religious Tolerance

The economic development of Spain was essentially due to the Moors and the Jews. The kings of Castile and Aragon had the wisdom, despite the orders for repression issued by the Lateran Councils of 1180 and 1215, to practise a policy of wide religious tolerance. They refused to allow the Inquisition to be introduced into Spain. The king of Castile, Ferdinand III (1229–1252)—who was nevertheless to be canonized—assumed the magnificent title of 'Emperor of the Three Religions', thus

stressing that he considered his Christian, Moslem and Jewish subjects to be equal. This religious tolerance was rendered the more necessary by the fact that the whole economic life of Spain was dependent on the Moslems and the Jews who were the most active and the most civilized elements of the population.

The conquest gave the kings a power against which the petty feudal lords could not contend. In the 13th century the kings of Castile and Aragon alone possessed legislative and judicial power. The Spanish kingdoms, which had created an advanced civilization based upon that of the Moorish states, suddenly found themselves the equals of the English and French monarchies.

Portugal

The development of Portugal was parallel to that of Spain. When it was conquered by the Christians in the 11th century and the Burgundian dynasty was set up there, it was in the full tide of prosperity. Agriculture had made the country into a garden. An active industry of arms, weaving and leatherwork existed in the cities. Commerce was in the hands of rich Jews. Fishing and mining were prosperous. The cities had an autonomy, that linked them directly with the Roman *municipia*, which the Moors had respected.

The Christians superimposed a seigniorial framework over the whole country without, however, breaking it up into feudal principalities. Rich donations of land were made to the abbeys which were founded there, as well as to the monastic orders and the nobles. The result was a rapid decline of agriculture. The nobles neglected cultivation for the chase and the great estates were left fallow. The Moors and the Jews retained their own institutions and their own system of justice, as well as the right of practising their own religion and of trading freely. As in the Spanish kingdoms, a high official represented the Moorish and Jewish communities at the king's council.

The country was progressively converted to Christianity, and in the 13th century a Catholic university was founded at Coimbra. The Christian population of the cities increased and in 1254 the deputies of the cities were permitted to sit in the *cortes* which, from 1211, had been detached from the king's council.

Shipping too began to play a role in Portugal, at the time of the great expansion of Aragon. At the end of the 13th century the first warships were built and the sailors of Porto exported wine to England and France. This trade soon became of great importance. In 1308 a treaty was concluded

with London which became the international mart for Portuguese wines. This was the origin of the friendly relations between Portugal and England, which were henceforth to be almost constant and which led, in the 14th century, to the marriages between the Avis dynasty, then reigning in Portugal, and the English royal house. Like Aragon and Castile, Portugal turned seaward.

CHAPTER XV

THE END OF THE MONGOL EMPIRE AND THE DECLINE OF ASIA

Persia and Central Asia Revert to Islam Under Turkish Feudal Rule

THE alliance between Byzantium and the two Moslem powers—the Kipchaks and Egypt—completely encircled Persia. The Mongol minority which ruled it, Buddhist and favourably inclined to the Christians, could no longer withstand the pressure of Islam to which the great majority of the people belonged. The khans of Persia, thus isolated, were obliged to accept the Moslem religion at the end of the 13th century.

They immediately began a persecution of Christians and Jews who, until then, had had a decisive influence in the state, but who were thenceforth to be removed from all executive authority and were forced to display prominently a distinctive badge. In a short time Christianity was to disappear entirely from Persia.

After its conversion to Islam, Persia rejected the suzerainty of the Great Khan who then resided in Pekin. The result was to hand over the power in the state to the Turkish feudatories; they transformed the country into a military and landowning feudalism which broke it into independent principalities.

The loss of Persia involved the loss to the Mongols of Asia Minor also, where the Seljuk Turks recovered their independence. The Ottoman princes came to the fore as the most powerful amongst them. They came originally from Khorasan, whence they had been expelled in 1221 by Genghis Khan. Enrolled as mercenaries by the Seljuk sultan of Anatolia, they had been settled along the frontiers of the Byzantine Empire about a hundred miles from Constantinople with the task of keeping guard over it. In 1228 their beg was to be converted to Islam and take the name of Othman. His clan thenceforth became the Ottoman Turks.

Turkish Feudalism Spreads to Central and Southern India

Up to 1282 the Deccan plateau had protected central and southern

India from the power of the Turkish feudatories. But at that time the rich kingdom of Telingana was conquered by the sultan of Delhi. The Turkish conquerors confiscated all the property of the Hindus, leaving them only the bare minimum necessary for existence; feudalism replaced the organized state and an era of internecine wars began between the Turkish feudatories for the possession of power and wealth. The negligence of the sultans was such that, despite their immense exactions and the forced loans which they continued to demand from the people, they were soon compelled to issue base metal coins.

India was broken up between the prince-governors of Bengal, Jaunpur, Kashmir, Gujerat and Malva. Extending their rule as far as southern India, the sultans of Delhi forced upon the maritime kingdom of Pandya, then at the height of its prosperity, a Moslem prince who recognized their suzerainty. Turkish rule, now represented by the sultans of Delhi, covered all India. In 1335 Delhi was the centre of an immense feudal empire; for the first time in its history India was united in a single state. But this state was not really united; it was only a feudal aggregation which rapidly broke up into independent kingdoms. Alongside Delhi, which retained the Punjab and the Doab, autonomous kingdoms were set up in Bengal, Jaunpur, Gujerat, Kandesh and the Deccan; the south which from the 10th to the 13th century had been a powerful thalassocracy, first under the kings of Chola and then of Pandya, was united under the dynasty of Vijayanagar. Thus the historical traditions of India forcing themselves upon the invading strangers compelled them to regroup themselves in the ancient political framework which its economic life had given to the country.

End of the Dravidian Thalassocracy

The occupation of southern India by the Turks, persistently feudal and landowning, had the same result as in all similar cases; the prosperity and the activity of the country were destroyed. The Dravidians who had held naval supremacy in the Bay of Bengal for centuries lost it. It was a historical fact of the utmost importance. India, till then looking seaward, was henceforth to suffocate in an essentially continental civilization, landowning and feudal, under the yoke of a parasitic military aristocracy.

The Asian Continent Loses Naval Supremacy to Java

It was the Malays of Insulindia who succeeded the Dravidians of India as masters of the eastern seas. In the east of Java the state of Madjahapit rapidly developed and expanded over the whole island, while the king-

dom of Crividjaya took the place of Chola in the mastery of the seas and sent its fleets as far as Ceylon (1275).

The kingdom of Crividjaya, involved in the decline of the states of southern India, could not fail to collapse in its turn to the advantage of the kings of Madjahapit (Java) who, after having victoriously repulsed an attack by the Mongol emperor of China, became the centre of a great maritime empire extending over the islands of Java and Sumatra and the Malay peninsula. Controlling the Straits of Malacca, the indispensable link between India and China, it was to become the great naval power of Asia up to the 15th century.

Since Hellenistic times the influence of India had never ceased to expand in the Bay of Bengal. In the 14th century it yielded pride of place to Islam, whose trade relations with Java favoured its penetration of the islands of Insulindia. The ruin of the Dravidian shipping led to the decline of the Khmer Empire, whose wealth was dependent on sea-borne trade. The end of the prosperity brought to it by international trade caused it to fall within the orbit of the far less developed continental states upon which it bordered. It was conquered by the continental state of Siam. Indian influence, which came from the sea, was superseded by that of the continent, which brought Buddhism with it. The spread of Turkish feudalism in India was therefore the direct cause of the decline of the Khmer Empire and also of the land-owning régime. which became rooted there after the Siamese conquest. Champa, which also drew its wealth from the sea and from Hindu shipping, fell into decline once it was isolated from India. It was incorporated into Annam in 1312, and Indian influence was replaced by Chinese.

Thus, by extending its domination over Central Asia and India, Turkish feudalism destroyed the economic unity which had been maintained since ancient times and which had continued to exist in the southern seas despite the Mongol conquest. The end of the Dravidian thalassocracy marked the end of the overwhelming influence which Hindu civilization had exercised from the 9th to the 13th century. The sea lost its leading role to the continent and Asia started on its long course towards decadence.

The End of Mongol Unity

Submerged by the return of Islam to the scene, which brought in its train the dismemberment consequent on Turkish feudalism, the Mongol Empire by the middle of the 14th century ceased to exist. With it disappeared the unity of Asia which it had momentarily created and which had permitted a vigorous but ephemeral revival of international trade.

Everywhere regional nationalisms reappeared, in reaction against the domination of the Mongol ruling class, which aggravated the economic isolation resulting from the feudalization of Nearer and Central Asia. The last act of the final effacement of the Mongol Empire was the revolt of China which, in 1368, put an end to the period of great civilization which it had known under the Mongol dynasty of the Yuan.

The Chinese Empire Under the Mongol Dynasty of the Yuan (1280–1368)

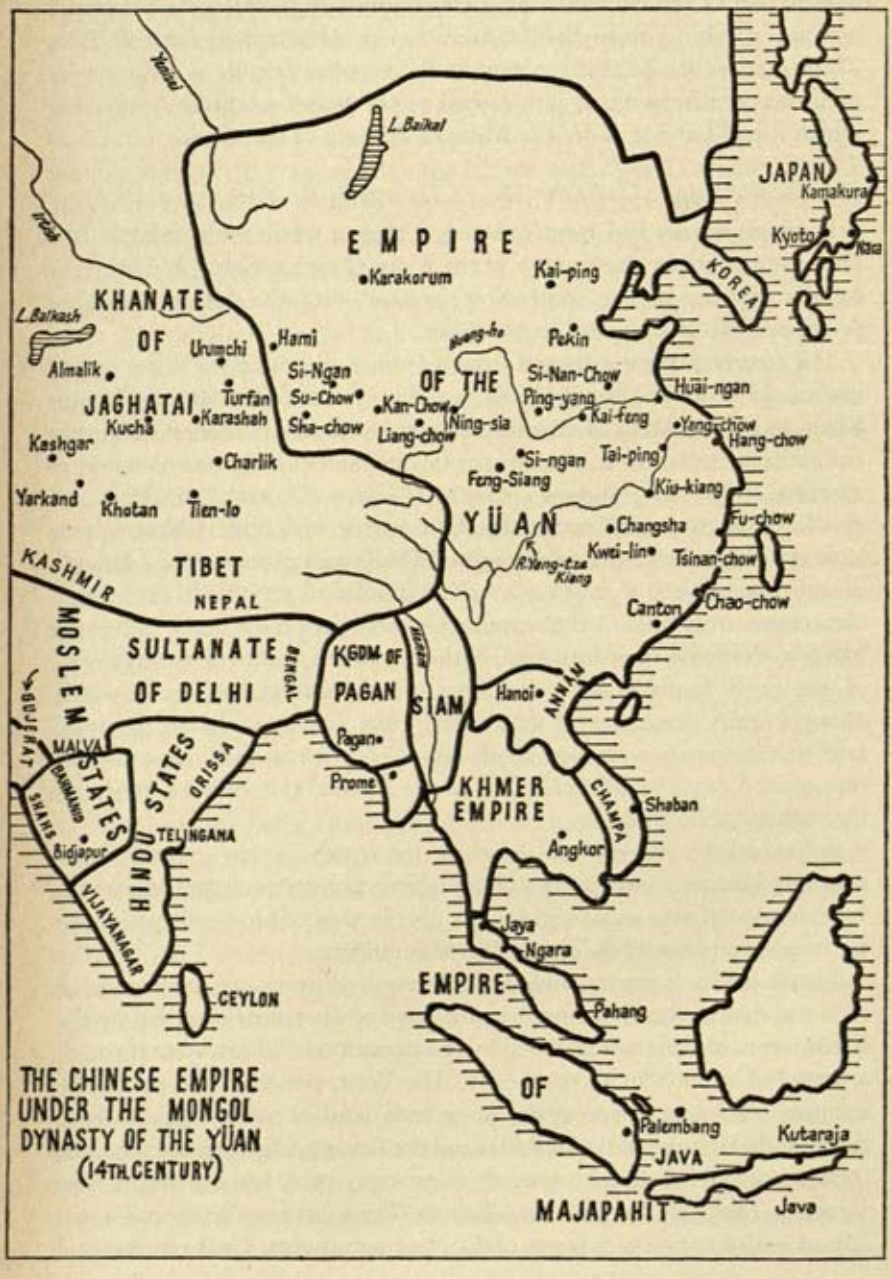
Southern China had been conquered after a terrible blood-bath. But once pacified under the dynasty of the Mongol Great Khans, it recovered, by the reunion of the southern provinces with the former northern provinces, the unity it had lost in 1127.

The removal of the Mongol capital from Karakorum to Pekin (1280) had made China the centre of the empire of the descendants of Gengis Khan and Pekin the capital of Asia. But by fixing it there Kublai was conquered by his own conquests; the Great Khan of this immense empire, suzerain of the four Mongol khanates of China, Central Asia, Persia and Kipchak became, in all essentials, the emperor of China. China, whose authority henceforth extended across all Asia and as far as the Mediterranean, experienced a great economic and political revival. Its centralized institutions were extended to cover the northern provinces, which were given fresh life by the contact established between the maritime economy of the great southern Chinese ports and the continental trade which Mongol unity had revived in Central Asia. Great public works were undertaken, canals were dug to provision Pekin and the state granaries reorganized to prevent famine. The Mongol postal system was introduced throughout the empire.

Individualism, which had reached its zenith in the coastal cities, triumphed throughout China and gave birth to humanitarian ideas which were translated into social legislation; distribution of foodstuffs was made to the poor and hospitals founded for the indigent.

Thanks to the security which the Mongol Empire had created in all Asia and thanks also to the policy of economic liberalism practised by the Yuan, international trade, revived by the attraction of China, went through a period of extraordinary prosperity. The West, which had lost even the memory of China, once again came into contact with Chinese trade through the intermediaries of Persia and the Levant. Christian ambassadors took the road for Karakorum. Business men even reached Pekin. The Venetian Marco Polo, who travelled in China between 1261 and 1291, left an enthusiastic description of Chinese commerce. Coal-mines—coal

Map No. 16


Yenisei
L. Baikal
JAPAN
Kamakura
Kyoto
Kaia
EMPIRE
Karakorum
Kai-ping
KOREA
KHANATE
OF
JAGHATAI
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Almalik
Urumchi
Hami
Turfan
Karashah
Kucha
Kashgar
Yarkand
Khotan
Tien-lo
Charlik
Si-Ngan
Su-Chow
Kan-Chow
Sha-chow
Liang-chow
Huang-ho
Pekin
OF THE
Ning-sia
Si-Nan-Chow
Ping-yang
Kai-feng
Huai-ngan
Yang-chow
Hang-chow
Si-ngan
Feng-Siang
Tai-ping
Kiu-kiang
YÜAN
Changsha
Fu-chow
Kiwei-lin
R. Yang-tze Kiang
Tsinan-chow
Canton
Chao-chow
KASHMIR
TIBET
NEPAL
SULTANATE
OF DELHI
BENGAL
KGDM OF
PAGAN
SIAM
Hanoi
ANNAM
Pagan
Prome
KHMER
EMPIRE
CHAMPA
Shaban
Angkor
MOSLEM STATES
GUJERAT
MALVA
DHAMANND
SHANS
Bidjapur
HINDU STATES
ORISSA
TELINGANA
VIJAYANAGAR
CEYLON
Jaya
Ngara
EMPIRE
Pahang
OF
Palembang
Kutaraja
JAVA
MAJAPAHIT
Java
THE CHINESE EMPIRE
UNDER THE MONGOL
DYNASTY OF THE YÜAN
(14TH CENTURY)

was then unknown in the rest of the world—were exploited in northern China. From Hang-Chow, the largest city in the world and the greatest port of China, huge fleets, equipped by the empire, voyaged as far as Insulindia. In the merchant cities, business men, as rich as kings, were organized in corporations. Pekin was the centre of the silk-weaving trade of the north; the export trade to Central Asia was concentrated at Cheng-Tu; Nankin and Su-Chow manufactured cloth of gold; Yang-Chow was the main rice-market, Hang-Chow the sugar-market as well as the greatest centre of international sea-borne trade; Fu-Chow and Tsinan-Chow were centres of the spice trade, the trade in pearls and imports from India. Navigation there was so intense, reported Marco Polo, that for every ship laden with pepper which left India for Alexandria, more than a hundred left for Tsinan-Chow.

A magnificent intellectual revival accompanied this immense economic prosperity. The Mongol century was the great century of theatrical art in China and it also saw the beginnings of the realist novel. The luxury of life favoured art and taste.

Because of its power, the Yuan dynasty, which had been imposed on the country after a terrible and bloodthirsty war, quite naturally practised a strictly absolutist policy.

Economic liberalism did not prevent the emperor from basing his power on a police régime entrusted to secret agents usually recruited among foreigners—Marco Polo was one of them—and keeping in his own hands the reins of state.

The religions too were controlled by the government. According to Mongol custom, Kublai was tolerant in religious matters. But because it did not want any religious ideology to become a barrier to its power, the Mongol dynasty feared Taoism, which it regarded as a possible lever for a nationalist movement. That was why Kublai ordered the burning of all Taoist sacred books.

Buddhism, on the other hand, whose universal character favoured their imperial policy, was everywhere adopted by the Mongol khans as an official cult and was given its place in the framework of the administration. Buddhist monasteries and temples were given canon laws by the state, which kept in its own hands the administration of their properties. All the religions, however, passed under government control (1292) and the government sought to attach the clergy to its interests by granting them privileges; the Buddhist, Taoist, Christian and Moslem clergy were exempted from military service. Christianity, represented by the Nestorian church, was at this time organized throughout Asia under a Patriarch

resident at Pekin, upon whom depended archbishoprics at Merv, Fars, Samarkand, Namangan, Almalik, Kashgar, Si-Ngan and bishoprics at Tolmak, Urumtsi, Ning-Sia and Tien-lo. The Jews, who played an important part in Chinese trade, were almost all concentrated in the former capital of Kai-feng.

From 1293 Catholic missions had come to China in the footsteps of Marco Polo; the Franciscan John of Monte Corvino appointed Archbishop and Primate of Asia by Pope Clement V was installed at Pekin, while a bishop created at Tsinan-Chow was granted a stipend by the Great Khan.

The Decline of India Leads to an Economic Crisis in China

The policy of the Yuan soon met with great fiscal difficulties. The immense expenses of the court, of the administration, of the army and of the fleet, rapidly surpassed the normal tax-yield. The great naval expeditions against Insulindia, Champa and Japan—that of 1281 consisted of four thousand ships and an expeditionary force of a hundred thousand men—were exceedingly costly. But from the beginning of the 14th century the decline of India caused by Turkish rule led to a greater and greater reduction of sea-borne trade. The commercial prosperity of the great Chinese cities suffered severe counter-effects, which were shown by an appreciable reduction in the tax-yield. The treasury could no longer afford the enormous expenses of the administration and of the imperialist policy of the Mongol emperors. To cover the deficit, the state put into circulation an ever-increasing quantity of paper money. Its use had been introduced by the Song, but they had always used it in moderation. The Yuan, whose absolutism made it easy to take such measures, developed this practice so much that it soon led to inflation. Coined money was withdrawn from circulation and the state imposed a fixed exchange rate for bank-notes. Prices rose. It was in vain that they tried to halt the inflation by maximum price edicts. Prime necessities became very dear and a lively discontent was soon apparent among the people.

The fixed exchange rate for paper money soon threatened to have serious effects on the economic life of the country. In order to prevent export prices from rising too steeply an exchange control was imposed by a decree which compelled all importers of gold, precious stones and pearls to hand them over to the state against payment in paper money. Importers had necessarily to spend this money within the country—since it was worth nothing abroad—and to buy goods at officially fixed prices. In trying to maintain artificially the trade balance of the empire by a

policy of controlled economy, absolutism reverted to the régime of barter.[1] The result was a rapid decline of Chinese trade on the international market and a considerable reduction in Chinese purchasing power; imports, which could no longer be made except against equivalent exports, were paralysed; the fiduciary issues were only accepted by the people through necessity and a severe internal trade crisis ensued which obliged the emperors to mint bronze coins in 1308.

The unrest caused by the crisis aided the national opposition which was increasing throughout the country against the 'government of foreigners' which was accused of ruining China. The Yuan, in order to strengthen their position, made the serious error of granting privileges to the Mongols, who thus became a sort of ruling aristocracy. The police and the administration became more and more closed to Chinese nationals. However, in 1313, before the growing opposition, to which the trade crisis had given a threatening character, the emperor changed his policy; posts in the administration were opened to Chinese and examinations were restored for the recruitment of officials but, when equal merit was involved, priority was given to Mongols and to foreigners. The break between the nation and the government remained. It was to prove fatal.

National Reaction in China

About 1340 riots broke out. The government replied by forbidding Chinese to possess arms and horses, and also forced them to learn Mongol. The struggle began. The insurrectionist movement could no longer be checked. It spread to the ports, to the cities of the Yang-Tse and even to the countryside. The constant rise in prices, ruining the people, led to the appearance of bands of insurgents. In order to combat them, the government was obliged to form local militias in the cities (1357). But national sentiment prevailed over the need to preserve order; they made common cause with the rebels. Relying upon these new forces, the usurpers seized power in the Han, in the Sia, in the On and in the Ming. In 1367 a monk named Chou-Yuan-Chang was proclaimed king of Ming. Making common cause with the national revolution, he announced the restoration of a Chinese government based on intellectual merit and the equality of all citizens by the restoration of examinations for admission to the public service. It was impossible for the dynasty to resist a movement which had united against it all the deepest forces of China; in 1368 Pekin was

[1] It was a similar system of exchange controls and barter to that practised by the autarchic states in Europe in the 20th century.

taken without much resistance. The Yuan dynasty fled to Mongolia and the Ming national dynasty took over power.

In reaction against the dynastic policy of the Mongols, a period of nationalism and xenophobia began in China. Hate of the Mongols was turned upon the foreigners who had served them. The whole nation rose against them. Officials, traders and clergy, whether Persian, Arab, Greek, Armenian or French—for there were many French in the Catholic missions—were all lumped together in common execration and were either massacred or expelled. With them the imported religions, to which China had been so hospitable under the Yuan, disappeared. Only Islam held its own in the north-west provinces, where its influence penetrated along the caravan routes of Central Asia. Christianity was rooted out of the empire; and Buddhism—just at the time when India finally abandoned it—became the state religion.

China withdrew into itself just when the wave of Turkish feudalism, by overwhelming all the parts of the former empire of the descendants of Genghis Khan and by destroying its mastery of the seas, dealt a mortal blow to the international trade which had been the foundation of the prosperity of the Yuan dynasty.

BOOK IV

The Feudal-Seigniorial Régime Dies Out in the West and Takes Root in Central Europe (14th and 15th Centuries)

CHAPTER XVI

TRIUMPH OF THE MONARCHICAL POLICY IN THE WEST

I. END OF THE IDEA OF A CONTINENTAL EMPIRE

The Revival of Western Trade Destroys the Universal Character of the Holy Empire

THE ruin of maritime and urban civilization in the 9th century had shifted the Christian empire to the centre of the continent, and the complete decline of civil authority had caused political supremacy to pass to the Holy See. Thus the Germanic, continental, seigniorial and theocratic Holy Empire replaced the maritime, urban and lay Roman Empire.

The restoration of contacts by sea between the West and the East at the close of the 11th century and the revival of urban civilization that resulted from it had the effect of destroying the feudal-seigniorial structure of society in the countries which had once formed part of the Roman Empire. Urban economy replaced the closed manorial economy and, over and above the feudal principalities, monarchical power, relying on the cities, was created in France, in England and, a little later, also in Spain.

Thenceforward Europe was divided into two zones differing both in their economic and social structure and in their political framework. Commercial activity, till then restricted to the feudal estates which were small closed units, reappeared in the Western cities under the attraction of the sea, and the development of material and intellectual wealth which resulted from it wrested political leadership from the Holy Empire. The appearance of the Western monarchies shattered the dyarchy which had existed between the spiritual and temporal power. The collapse of the imperial power after the downfall of the Roman Empire had replaced the former civil sanction of law, which had become inoperative in a society delivered over to anarchy, by the sanction of religion which had imposed the same moral and social discipline on Romans and barbarians

alike. Monarchy, by restoring a civil sanction, rapidly eliminated the religious sanction from temporal affairs; written law reappeared and the signature of the royal notaries replaced, under Philip Augustus, the oath formerly taken by the parties concerned; in the course of the 13th century the ecclesiastical courts lost their civil competence and the kings aimed at freeing themselves from the temporal authority of the Pope as well as that of the emperor.

The ancient mediaeval balance which was based on the conjoint universal authority of Pope and Emperor was broken.

The first sign of the rupture between the temporal and the spiritual power was a severe crisis expressed in the mysticism of Cluny. The Church underwent a revival. By its union with the temporal power it had become corrupt and materialistic. To free itself and recover its pristine purity it refused to act any longer as the tool of the government of the emperors. The result was the War of Investitures.

The revival of sea-borne trade, the renascence of urban civilization and the monarchical policy in the West put an end to the mediaeval idea of an immutable social and political hierarchy, upon which the whole organization of Christianity within the framework of the Holy Empire had been based. Furthermore the War of Investitures destroyed the theocratic character of the empire which had enabled it to claim to be the political expression of the Catholic world. Separated from the Church, the imperial power, which had no sanction save the religious, could not maintain itself and dissolved into anarchy.

The political supremacy of the Holy Empire therefore did not collapse for fortuitous political reasons, but under the pressure of the evolution which, drawing western Europe to the sea, had profoundly altered the foundations upon which the landowning and seigniorial society of the Holy Empire had been established.

That was why Frederic Barbarossa was unable to restore a universal character to his empire. His policy, which could only rely upon feudalism and chivalry, that is to say on old and outmoded forces, was bound to fail. It was then that Henry VI and Frederic II, realizing that the feudal lands could no longer serve as a support for an empire, looked to the sea and dreamed of restoring the empire not on a basis of feudalism, the manorial system and theocracy, but on monarchy, sea-borne trade and the civil power. This was the great epic of Frederic II who was so much in advance of his times. But the emperor found the power of the Pope barring his way. The Church represented Christian unity, to which Thomas Aquinas had given a doctrine, based on ten centuries of religious

thinking and on the revival of ancient thought adapted to dogma. To oppose so great a force Frederic had only a political ideal, certainly on the grand scale, which was supported neither by faith, nor the consent of the peoples, nor their immediate interests. Against the imperial unity of which he dreamed were arrayed feudalism, which represented the past, and also the cities, which were the greatest force of his own times. The Mediterranean, which he wanted to make once again the heart of the empire, was divided between Christians and Moslems and had lost its former Roman unity. The idea of the maritime empire of the Hohenstaufen was broken by the power of the Holy See, for no political formation was feasible which did not rely upon both social and spiritual homogeneity.

But there was no alternative; the empire had either to look seaward or to collapse. Continental Europe had been deprived of its supremacy, which had passed to the maritime lands. It was therefore, quite naturally, the most powerful and most homogeneous country of the West which was to reap the benefits of the imperial idea. This country was France, which could rely upon all the religious forces of the past and the new social and spiritual forces of the present, and to which the reign of Louis IX had given an incontestable prestige.

The Kings of France Undertake an Imperial Policy

The prestige of Louis IX was reflected upon all his House. The Pope, drawing closer to it in his struggle with the Hohenstaufen, had made Charles of Anjou—brother of Louis IX—king of Sicily (1266). Taking up once more the imperial aims of Frederic II, Charles immediately formed a plan, supported by the Pope, to reconquer Byzantium and set up a Latin empire in the Mediterranean.

The House of France was therefore in the full blaze of its glory when Philip the Bold (1270–1285) ascended the throne in succession to his father, Louis IX. His uncle was trying to create a maritime empire; he, for his own part, put himself forward as a candidate for the crown of Germany (1272)[1]; he thus affirmed his desire to build the great continental empire of Charlemagne, but this time under the aegis of France.

The Angevin dynasty aimed at nothing less than the extension of its rule over all Europe. Philip was to rebuild the Carolingian Empire and Charles the Roman Empire.

The idea of conferring the imperial crown on the powerful king of

[1] It had been assigned previously by the electors to other Western princes: Alfonso of Castile and Richard of Cornwall.

France frightened the electors who above all wanted to preserve their feudal independence. Therefore they elected one of the less powerful German princes, Rudolph of Hapsburg. His election put an end to the great imperial dream of Philip the Bold. It also put an end to the idea of a universal empire.

Now that he could no longer be emperor, Philip at once asserted his independence and began an imperialistic policy aimed at recovering for France all those lands which had formerly been part of Gaul. He demanded that the Archbishop of Lyon, a vassal of the emperor, take an oath of loyalty to him (1272); he successfully supported the claims of his vassal William de Dampierre, Count of Flanders, to the county of Namur, a fief of the empire, and obtained the bishopric of Liège for one of his sons. Unable to resist these encroachments, Rudolph also abandoned the bishopric of Toul to Philip in 1281.

While Philip was extending his rule at the expense of the Holy Empire, Charles of Anjou, master of Sicily and Naples, took up once more the policy of Italian unity already attempted by Frederic II and cast his eyes on Rome. His title of senator had already been recognized when he was still only king of Naples and he made use of it to declare himself protector of the Roman people. Wanting to make the Pope a tool of his policy, he created a faction favourable to him in the Sacred College, almost all of whose members were at this time Italians. He had sufficient influence there to have Sicilian and French cardinals brought into the College who who assured him the election of a French Pope, Clement IV, who, a little later, conferred on him the crown of Sicily. On Clement's death in 1268 the Papal election caused an open struggle between the Angevin cardinals and their adversaries. The latter won and gave the tiara to Gregory X; but in 1280 Charles, triumphing once again, had a French Pope, Martin IV, who was to become the champion of Angevin ambitions, elected by the Conclave.

It was then that the monarchical policy of the Angevins in Italy, which tried to impose French Popes upon the Holy See in order to by-pass the obstacle caused by the existence of the States of the Church, was checked by a new adversary, the king of Aragon. In 1283 the intrigues of Peter II of Aragon kindled the insurrection against the French in Sicily known as the Sicilian Vespers. The Angevin power was never to recover from it.

However Pope Martin IV, openly supporting the House of Anjou, excommunicated Peter II, confiscated the kingdom of Aragon, which was a fief of the Holy See, and conferred it on the king of France, Philip the Bold. Aragon was at that time of very great maritime importance. Its

possession, added to that of France and the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, would have given the kings of France an incontestable mastery in the Mediterranean. A French army crossed into Spain. But Philip the Bold died without being able to conquer his new kingdom.

In 1285 Charles II of Anjou, who succeeded his father, was forced to cede Sicily to the king of Aragon. The great Angevin imperialist policy had to be reversed. Charles II, who had kept Naples, wanted—following a policy similar to Frederic II—to extend his rule over all Italy. But Rome, where Pope Celestin V had just ascended the Papal throne, barred his way as it had barred Frederic's. Charles II forced Celestin V to take up his residence at Naples under his tutelage. The Sacred College at once reacted and declared the prisoner-pope to be dethroned, replacing him by a Roman noble, Boniface VIII (1294). Once again, the Holy See successfully opposed the unification of Italy.

The Italian policy of Charles II was only a secondary facet of the great crisis caused by the French policy of hegemony. It brought into question the supremacy of the power of the Holy See over the temporal sovereigns which Boniface VIII, a convinced adherent of Thomist scholasticism, was determined to enforce. The mediaeval ideal of the theocratic unity of Christendom was to find itself faced by new forces represented by the Western monarchies.

2. MONARCHICAL POLICY IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND

Monarchical Policy in France

Philip IV the Fair (1285–1314) ascended the throne in the same year as Sicily passed into the power of the House of Aragon. He did not waste time in a futile imperialism, but made peace with the king of Aragon and commenced a policy aimed exclusively at the unification and consolidation of the French monarchy. By his marriage he added the county of Champagne to the possessions of the crown; the only great fiefs still existent in the kingdom were Brittany and Flanders, which carried on a policy almost independent of the king, and Guyenne, which Louis IX had left to the king of England.

The whole reign of Philip the Fair was aimed at forming a solid monarchical government free of any interference by the feudal nobles and at completing the unity of the kingdom by the recovery of the counties of Guyenne and Flanders.

Philip firmly linked his monarchical power to the new forces. He no longer governed with the help of the nobles, but relied on the middle

classes, the lawyers trained in the Roman law schools whom he was to make the agents of a frankly monarchical policy and the Italian bankers who furnished him with the resources he needed for his enterprises. Roman law, which Philip Augustus had repudiated, was to create a new law which substituted the interests of the crown for the old ideal of Christian justice professed by Louis IX. The idea of the State began to emerge. The *parlement*, the royal court of justice, composed only of lawmen, and its jurisprudence, collected since the times of Louis IX, created the first framework of a national law over and above the former customary law. Legal science reappeared with Philip de Beaumanoir who reintroduced, on the basis of Roman practice, the idea of monarchical unity into public law and the ideas of natural law into private jurisprudence, in contrast to feudalism and serfdom.

Royal centralization, which had been strengthened since the times of Louis VIII by the creation of a central judiciary power represented by the *parlement*, was extended by Philip the Fair to the field of civil and military administration. The powers of the nobility were curtailed and replaced by the power of the officials who, in all the districts directly dependent on the crown, were put under the authority of magistrates and provosts who became its representatives.

A royal army was formed of companies regularly paid. And the king, asserting himself as sole sovereign, forbade his vassals the right of waging war.

The administration of the army necessitated fresh resources. The finances therefore became of increasing importance in the state, and their administration was entrusted to an Audit Office. The feudal notion of personal military service was replaced by the monarchical idea of taxation. The king introduced the practice of buying-out of military service to which, according to feudal law, all his subjects were liable.

Now being able to rely on strong national force, Philip the Fair carried on a policy of national unity. For the feudal lords, France was an assemblage of independent principalities and the political unit was therefore not France but the principality. For the king, France was a unity in itself which, beyond the frontiers assigned to it by politics, was linked with ancient Gaul and the natural frontiers within which, formerly, it had been created. The king's mission was to restore them to it. France thus isolated itself from the rest of Christendom and assumed a distinct personality to which it had not been able to aspire in the mediaeval system based on imperial unity. The monarchy had, however, no intention of breaking away from the idea of universal power which had remained so vigorous in the

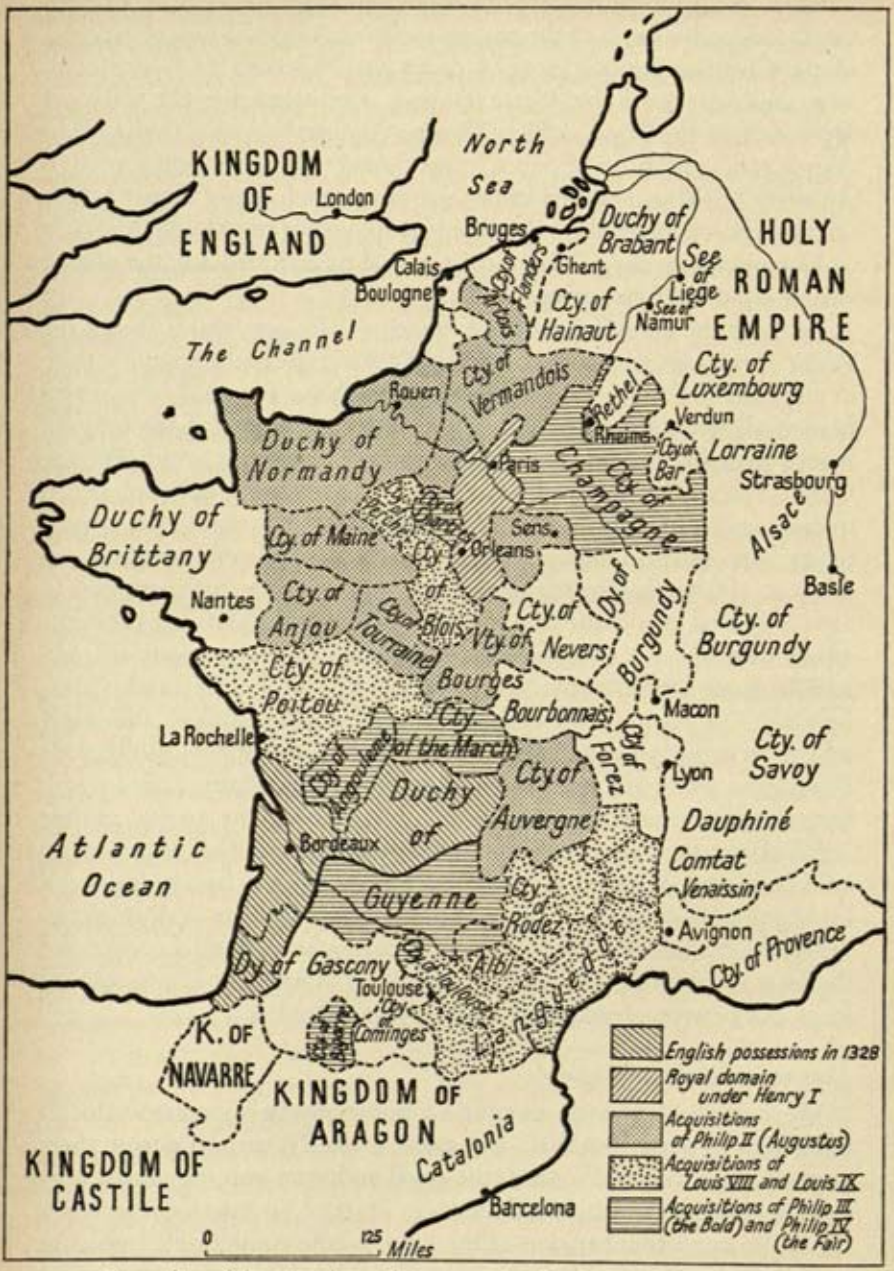
religious and political conceptions of Europe since the Roman Empire, but abandoned the idea of the empire to replace it by the idea of a society of the Christian nations grouped under the leadership of France. This new ideal, expressed by Pierre Dubois, substituted for the universal supremacy of the Pope—which Thomas Aquinas was to introduce into dogma at the very moment when it was ceasing to be a fact—the sovereign authority of the monarchies under the primacy of one of them. A new political era was beginning; the theocratic power of the Middle Ages was to be replaced by the power of the national monarchies, and the idea of empire by that of leadership.

To reach the natural frontier of France on the east, that is to say the Rhine, it was necessary to isolate the Netherlands from the empire which, in any case, held only a nominal suzerainty there. But to do this it was first of all necessary to enforce the effective authority of the king of France over his fief of Flanders and its cities, amongst which Bruges, Ghent, Ypres, Lille, Douai and Arras were the wealthiest and most active trading centres of the West. Circumstances were to provide the opportunity. The Flemish 'communes' were the prey of very serious social crises. A violent class hatred ranged the people against the patricians. In 1280 a general revolt broke out in the cities against their governments which were ruled by mayors (*échevins*) elected by the property-owning middle class. Strikes broke out everywhere, with riots and street-fighting. The patrician mayoralties, which claimed complete autonomy, refused to accept the intervention of the count of Flanders, William de Dampierre, who tried to enforce on the cities a centralizing policy which was almost monarchical. He joined forces with the people, whose social claims he supported, against the mayoralties. The patricians, to hold their own, appealed to the king of France, who hastened to send his 'serjeants' to hoist the fleur-de-lis in the cities. William de Dampierre, supported by the urban popular party throughout Flanders, asked for the help of the king of England, Edward I. Once more, war was to break out between France and England over Flanders.

Monarchical Policy in England

The English kings were pursuing a policy precisely similar to that of the kings of France. But since, as a result of the Norman conquest, there were no great fiefs in England, the royal authority was organized more rapidly and more systematically than in France. All England was under the justice and administration of the king, whose considerable legislative work had already created a coherent national law. From the 13th century

Map No. 17



Formation of the Kingdom of France under the Capetians (987–1328).

the English monarchy also aimed at giving the kingdom its natural frontiers, that is to say to extend it over the whole island of Great Britain. In 1284 Edward I (1272–1307) annexed Wales.

But Scotland was restless under the suzerainty enforced on it by England. At the time when the count of Flanders appealed for the alliance of Edward I, war had only just ceased between the two kingdoms of England and Scotland.

Renewed Conflict Between England and France Over Flanders

Philip the Fair, faced with the Anglo-Flemish alliance, countered by concluding an alliance against Edward I with John Baliol I, king of Scotland. And as the king of England was a vassal of the French crown in his capacity as count of Guyenne, Philip sentenced him for felony and confiscated his fief of Guyenne, which he occupied. As war between France and England involved the fate of the Netherlands, which were dependent both on France and on the Holy Empire, it was bound to extend to all Europe. Edward I, as formerly John Lackland, offered alliance to the emperor, then Adolph of Nassau, whom the French policy of 'natural frontiers' threatened; he hastened to accept. However, having no means at his disposal—the empire had ceased to be a political reality—his intervention was necessarily purely nominal. When Edward I landed in Flanders (1297) the emperor made no move. But Baliol I in Scotland began the war anew and Edward I was forced to re-embark for England. Flanders remained alone to face Philip the Fair; he sentenced William de Dampierre as a felon and confiscated and occupied his fief. The conflict ended by the annexation of both Flanders and Guyenne to the French crown.

But the king had counted without the cities. His triumph meant the triumph of the patricians in the great Flemish cities; the popular party immediately revolted in an upsurge of democratic enthusiasm which, since it was now directed against the king of France, for the first time assumed a national character. The French representatives who had been sent by the king into Flanders were massacred during the 'Bruges Matins' which recalled in Flanders the 'Sicilian Vespers' and, in 1302, the army of the militia of the Flemish communes, supported by the count of Namur who feared the extension of the king's power in the Netherlands, defeated the French knights at the battle of Courtrai, even as the Parma militia had beaten Frederic II.

The popular party had saved the independence of the Flemish cities. But the cities were too divided by their social upheavals to sustain a prolonged effort against the most powerful king of the time. Philip soon returned to

the offensive and, triumphing at Mons-en-Pévèle (1304), won for the French crown almost all French-speaking Flanders, Lille, Douai and Orchies. At the same time he supported against his vassal, the count of Flanders, the claims of the count of Hainault, a vassal of the empire, and helped him to drive the emperor, Albert of Austria, out of the counties of Holland and Zeeland by force of arms. The policy of natural frontiers was consolidated.

But by aiding the counts of Hainault to reject imperial suzerainty, at the very moment when the Flemish cities were rejecting his, the king of France was unwittingly preparing the future independence of the Netherlands.

France and England Reject the Tutelage of the Holy See

To obtain resources for their wars, both Philip the Fair and Edward I taxed the properties of the Church.

Boniface VIII had immediately retaliated (1296) by forbidding temporal sovereigns to tax the clergy without the consent of the Holy See. Edward I paid no attention. Philip the Fair retorted by forbidding the export of moneys and letters of credit from his kingdom, which meant for Rome the cessation of its rich source of income from Peter's pence.

Thus deprived of the revenues which came to him from France, Boniface VIII changed his policy and canonized Louis IX.

He did not, however, renounce his policy of spiritual hegemony. To ensure its success he reverted to the idea which, despite one check after another, the Holy See had kept alive for the past two centuries: to organize a new crusade which would unite Europe under the Papal standard. The crusade could only succeed if peace were assured between France and England; but Edward I would not accept the loss of Guyenne and Philip the Fair would not renounce Flanders. Both, therefore, openly prepared for war.

At this time Rome was celebrating, on the occasion of the year 1300, the first great jubilee of the Church. It was a triumph. Two hundred thousand pilgrims flocked from all the countries of Europe to prostrate themselves at the feet of the Pope, who looked upon himself as the master of Christendom and wished to assert himself as the arbiter of kings. He promulgated a jubilee year and declared peace throughout Christendom. But war broke out again between the kings of Scotland and England. Boniface ordered them to put an end to the war, and imposing his arbitration, condemned the policy of Edward I and accused him of injustice (1301).

Boniface VIII looked on the war as purely a struggle between the kings. He addressed himself personally to Edward I, but Edward I turned to the nation and submitted the dispute to Parliament, which was unanimously in favour of rejecting the Papal pretensions. The English nation as a whole asserted its full sovereignty against the Holy See.

While he was intervening in England, Boniface VIII also claimed pre-eminence over the king of France. Using as pretext the confiscation of certain fiefs of the Archbishop of Narbonne, he sent the Bishop of Pamiers to the king as his legate. The bishop treated the king with great arrogance. Philip the Fair had him arrested for *lèse-majesté* and had him condemned by an assembly of prelates and doctors who demanded his dismissal by the Pope. The struggle became acute, both in France and England. Boniface VIII sent a pastoral letter to Philip the Fair, in which he reminded Philip that God had set the Pope above Princes and states and claimed to be Philip's superior to whom he owed obedience. At the same time Boniface summoned to Rome representatives of the French clergy to help him take measures to force the king to amend his views.

Philip, perhaps following the example of England, appealed in his turn to the nation. In 1302 he convened for the first time the States-General of the kingdom, made up of delegates of the clergy, the nobility and the cities. To confirm his sovereign rights he felt it necessary to base them upon the will of the nation.

The Estates, consulted separately in their three 'orders', unanimously supported the king.

The kings of France and England thus appealed to the will of their peoples, as expressed by Parliament and the States-General, against the temporal tutelage of the Pope.

Confronted with this clear expression of will, which heralded new times for the West, Boniface VIII tried to revive the forces of the past. He therefore, quite naturally, turned to Germany. After destroying the imperial power, the Pope tried to restore it as a counterpoise to the sovereignty of the kings supported by the will of their peoples. The Emperor Albert of Austria, whose election he had up till then refused to recognize, was to become his champion. He reminded him that 'the French lie when they say that they have no superior, since they are subordinate to the Emperor'. And again, in the bull *unam sanctam*, he affirmed—it was to be for the last time—the primacy of Rome over the temporal power.

But the imperial power was no longer anything save an outworn fiction. Albert of Austria did not react because it was not in his power to

do so. The times of feudal policy, and consequently of the policy of the Holy Empire and theocratic power, were over.

Philip the Fair once again convened the States-General (1303). Boniface VIII, it will be recalled, had been elected during the lifetime of Celestin V whom Charles II of Anjou had forced to take residence at Naples. The king maintained to the States-General that Boniface VIII had been illegally elected and proposed to them that the question be referred to a Council. He obtained their approval and sent William de Nogaret to Rome to seize the person of the Pope and extort his abdication. Despite the violence of the royal legate the Pope refused to give way, but he died shortly afterwards. In 1305—after the short pontificate of Benedict XI (1304)—the Conclave, in order to obtain from the king an undertaking that he would not continue with his project of having the dead Pope judged by a Council, granted the tiara to a Frenchman, Clement V (1305–1314).

The Holy See Moves to Avignon

The new Pope filled the Sacred College with French cardinals and, leaving Rome, settled at Avignon which was to remain the seat of the Holy See until 1377. The policy of the universal supremacy of Rome rapidly collapsed before the power of the kings of France, whose protégé the Pope became.

Clement V could only be a docile instrument of the policy of Philip the Fair; and the dogmatic authoritarianism which the Church had professed since the times when Innocent III had created the inquisitorial courts was, for the first time, to serve as a basis for monarchical absolutism.

The policy of centralization required great resources which the king had not got; the war against England was in preparation. Philip, short of means, was forced to debase the coinage. It was urgently necessary for him to find a remedy for his financial situation and to do this he did not hesitate to cast his eyes on the great wealth which had been amassed by the Order of the Templars, whose financial power was such that it seemed both threatening and enviable. He therefore accused the Order of heresy; the Grand Master was brought before the court of the inquisition, and his condemnation to the stake allowed the king to confiscate the property of the Order. This was the first of the persecutions which the authoritarian régimes were to carry out, in the name of faith, in order to seize the property of their victims. A little later the Jews suffered a similar fate. Their credit associations had amassed huge capital

sums. The king expelled them from the kingdom and confiscated their property.

Thus reasons of state triumphed in politics, while the feeling of nationality grew stronger at the expense of the feeling of Christian community.

CHAPTER XVII

SOCIAL CHANGES IN THE WEST DURING THE 14TH CENTURY

Evolution and Crises of the Urban Economy

THE rapid evolution of western society under the influence of the continual extension of trade and navigation led to a serious economic and social crisis. From the end of the 13th century the population was no longer increasing as it had been doing since the middle of the 11th century. A balance seemed to have been reached between economic possibilities and the number of the inhabitants. As well as the wealth which in the 11th century had been based exclusively on the ownership of land, liquid capital was being amassed in the cities. Trade led to a reappearance of capitalism which, adopting the financial methods of Byzantium and the East, began to flourish in Italy. Great banks were founded in Siena and Florence during the 13th century, which were soon powerful enough to lend money to Philip the Fair. The development of banking revived the minting of gold. After he had cut Sicily off from the Byzantine sphere of influence, Frederic II had found himself compelled to mint a gold currency (1231) in order to replace the Byzantine one. Florence struck her famous florins in 1252, soon to be followed by the Venetian ducats, all of them currencies made necessary by the decline of Constantinople after its occupation by the Latins. From Italy the minting of gold spread to France, Flanders and England; and by way of the Danube it reached Hungary[1] and Poland.

Capitalism and gold currency spread with the extension of sea-borne trade, which was dominated in the Mediterranean by Venice, Genoa and Barcelona. By the 13th century the Atlantic was open to the Venetian and Genoese galleys and soon also to those of Castile which encountered, at Bruges and at London, the ships of the Teutonic Hansa cities, which held the uncontested mastery of navigation in the Baltic. England and

[1] Hungary possessed goldmines in Transylvania.

Holland still had only coastal shipping and Bruges had no fleet of its own; it was a great market but not a city of shipowners.

At the beginning of the 14th century commerce was international in character, maintained by an intense monetary circulation which made more and more use of the bills of exchange which had originated at the fairs of Champagne.

This essentially international capitalism was centred in the great merchant cities. But already it was finding adversaries in the particularist policy of the cities, which aimed at assuring themselves strict monopolies, and also in the democratic movement which was assuming a revolutionary form among the lower middle classes and the proletariat. The patrician governments of the cities came into conflict with the guilds. These guilds were trade-groups formed spontaneously within the cities themselves. From the 12th century onwards there was a tendency to extend them to all the workers. In the 14th century, in all the cities, in Italy as well as in Flanders, in France, in England and in Germany, they formed part of a compulsory corporative régime which granted them an exclusive monopoly and subjected their members to a very strict social and economic discipline. In this form, which became more and more rigid, they became the structure of the lower middle classes up to the time of the French revolution.

But the guild system, once it had become obligatory, began to work in favour of the masters, who tended to become a closed and hereditary caste. As formerly in the city corporations of Roman times after the Severi, the social structure became rigid and the masters, in order to safeguard their privileges, organized a sort of industrial malthusianism which led to economic stagnation and checked the increase of the urban population. This rigid corporative system led inevitably to a violent reaction by the 'companies' condemned to remain for ever excluded from 'the masters'; strikes and riots broke out and workmens' associations were founded to protect their interests against the masters.

In the great cities of Flanders and Italy where cloth-weaving had become a great export industry the social problem was even more serious. The artisan, whether master or worker, was entirely subordinate to the capitalist contractor. The master himself was no more than a wage-earning employee of the merchant who provided him with wool. But the clientele for whom the cloth-weavers worked was international. War brought unemployment crises, the fluctuation of the price of cloth on the European market determined the scale of wages, and wage increases caused continual disputes not only between workers and masters, but also between masters

and the capitalist contractors. The struggle between capital and labour had begun; and the companies of weavers, fullers and croppers resembled trade unions.

The working proletariat, thus organized, became a force. Thenceforward, driven by social reasons, the people demanded equality of political rights and tried to seize the city governments from the patricians.[1] Democracy appeared, as it had done formerly in the Greek cities, but as there were no more slaves the mediaeval democracies were much more of the people than the lower middle class democracies of ancient Greece. They closely recall them, however, in both their social and economic evolution, and also by the fact that they too were privileged democracies which aimed at strictly limiting their statutes to the city alone.

The struggle between the guilds and the patricians led everywhere to compromises, more or less democratic according to the importance of the forces involved, which were shown by the setting up of a system of representation of interests. These corporative governments all had a similar policy; to assure social and economic balance by maintaining the *status quo*. But this they could only achieve by restricting the freedom of trade and by killing private initiative; the result was that the patricians abandoned commerce and became a class of *rentiers* which invested its money in land and tried to enter the ranks of the lesser nobility. To replace this big-business class, a class of new men, based on capitalism, was created which was not restricted by the rules of the city. At the end of the 15th century, this class, which relied upon the monarchical policy, was to become concentrated in the new towns which, sheltered from guild privileges, were entirely to supplant the ancient communes and free cities.

Florence and Ghent illustrate this social evolution of the mediaeval city.

At Florence the nobles were excluded from the city government in 1282 and replaced by six *priori delle arte*, who were chosen every two months from among the twelve great workers' guilds in the six sections of the city. It was henceforth the rule of the merchants and manufacturers which oppressed the 'little people'. The result was continual revolts which, in 1341, just missed a tyranny like that of Walter de Brienne. In 1378 a popular revolt seized the power which had been held by the wool guilds but, incapable of governing, it was suppressed in 1382 by the patricians who once again took control of the city.

In Flanders the industrial communes of Ghent and Ypres passed into the

[1] It was, as far as the cities were concerned, a phenomenon analogous to the struggle to obtain universal suffrage led by the democratic parties in the 19th century.

control of the guilds after the battle of Courtrai in which the weavers and fullers of the great cities defeated in 1302 the armies of Philip the Fair who supported the patricians. This was an era of great social claims and dreams of communism. The Flemish cities were then the most ardent centres of revolution. Flemish workers were to be found in all the great reform movements; in England among Wat Tyler's revolutionaries, in Bohemia in the ranks of the Hussites and in the mystical and communistic sect of the Adamites which was widespread among the urban proletariat. In the 14th century all the democratic parties turned their eyes on Ghent. The people of Rouen and Paris rose against Charles V to the cry of 'Long live Ghent!'

The revolutionary movement in Flanders was crushed by the king of France at the battle of Roosebeke, in the same year as the patricians recovered power in Florence (1382). It could not succeed because the adversary against which it was fighting within the framework of the city, large scale capitalism, was an international force with far superior resources. But the constant social struggles which ranged the workers against the patricians, and then divided the workers amongst themselves, weavers against fullers, caused a flight of capital. The merchants and business men looked to the ruler, and industry left the great cloth-weaving cities and took root in the countryside. This was the beginning of the decline of the great cities.

End of the Seigniorial Régime and the Elimination of Serfdom

From the end of the 11th century the activity of the cities, by breaking down the closed economy, condemned the seigniorial régime to gradual disappearance. The great outlets for agricultural produce provided by the cities led the landlords and the cultivators to produce not merely for home consumption but also for sale. But serf-labour did not produce a good yield. On the other hand, the fixed nature of quit-rent and the perpetual character of tenures did not allow the lord to benefit from the new conditions of agrarian economy which gave a constantly increasing value to land. Only the tenant benefited, either by profiting directly from the sale of his harvests or by granting his land on sub-tenure to a third person for a higher rent than he paid himself. To benefit from the increased land values the lord, who could not evict his own free tenants, in order to make use of his funds had no choice but to free his serfs, who either went to swell the urban proletariat or became free tenants. The lords no longer granted the lands which they thus recovered on perpetual tenure. In order to be able to benefit from their increase in value, they leased them for a

stated period only, so that when the term had expired they could adjust the rent to the current value. Leasehold replaced tenure. But leasehold did not establish any personal bond between leaseholder and landlord, so that the bond of subordination which formerly existed between lord and tenant disappeared. The status of perpetual land tenure had reduced the people to serfdom; by restoring fluidity to the land it gave the country people freedom. In the countries which were economically the most advanced, serfdom was rapidly eliminated. At the end of the 13th century it no longer existed in Flanders.

On the church lands, however, where commercial interest and the desire to increase the rent-yield were of less influence, serfdom and seigniorial tenure continued to exist for a long time to come.

The liberation of the serfs and the substitution of leaseholding for tenure were two aspects of the revival of individualism which was shown, from the 13th century, in local customs and social relations, as well as in the spread of Roman law which provided the society then in course of formation with legal principles which corresponded to the new trends.

Naturally enough the royal policy was influenced by the economic evolution of the times. From the 13th century monarchical centralization necessitated a constant increase in resources. Philip the Fair obtained them by confiscating the property of the Templars; his successors tried to find them in the economic reorganization of the royal domains, whose management became a branch of the administration. But the fiscal yield, as well as the principles of Roman law upon which the monarchy was henceforth to rely, tended towards the revival of free labour. In 1315 these principles culminated in the edict by which Louis X freed all the crown serfs.

This was an important turning-point in the history of France; an economic turning-point because it gave fluidity to the king's lands; a social turning-point, because it greatly increased the liberty of the rural population; a political turning-point because it asserted that 'according to the law of nature, every man should be born free'. It was the first return to the ideas of natural law upon which, at the beginning of the Christian era, Roman law had been founded.

In 1318 the king called on the seigneurs to follow his example and liberate their serfs. But just when the new economy was leading to the rapid emancipation of the serfs, an unemployment crisis began to be apparent. The great movement of land clearance undertaken by the monastic orders in the 12th century was over. The German colonial expansion eastward had come to an end. The cities, stifled by the guild

system, closed their gates to newcomers. Everywhere there was a surplus of workers. The lands recovered by the seigneurs after the emancipation of their serfs were sold to rich business men or granted on high rentals which the serfs could not pay. In such conditions freeing the serfs meant only too often driving them from the land which they had cultivated for generations. On the other hand, the replacement of perpetual tenure by leasehold allowed the seigneurs to increase their incomes appreciably; and the disappearance of the seigniorial régime, by excluding the tenant from the manorial collectivity which had existed for four centuries, left him unprotected to face agricultural crises. Freedom left the former serf isolated and without resources in a world where he could no longer find ways to gain his livelihood. The breaking up of social castes gave property a far more exclusive character and made still more striking the contrast between wealth and poverty. It was therefore inevitable that a struggle began both in the cities and in the countryside between the property-owners and the disinherited.

Terrible social upheavals resulted. They appeared first of all in Flanders where evolution was the most advanced; in 1324 the revolt of the *kerels* broke out in the coastal districts. The peasants refused to pay their rents to the seigneurs or tithes to the church. Organized in bands, they hunted down and massacred the knights, till the people's army, which had been joined by proletarians from the cities, was crushed at the battle of Cassel (1328). In France, the *Jacquerie* which drenched the Vendée in blood in 1357 was a similar movement. The massacre of the nobles led to a social war, during which the rebellious peasants, for the most part liberated serfs, were pitilessly exterminated. The rural insurrections in England (1381) were due to similar causes, aggravated by the consequences of the Black Death.

The social situation in the countryside after the great crisis of the 14th century was profoundly changed. Serfdom had almost entirely disappeared, but the fate of the peasant, free but unprotected, was not much better than before. He was exposed to the exploitation of the landowners who, no longer concerning themselves about his protection, only sought to extract the maximum of profit from him; and the economic exclusiveness of the urban guild system, by opposing by force the creation of rural industries which might have created a competition for it, prevented the agricultural workers from supplementing their income by home-industries.

This breakdown of the relation between peasants and lords ended the patriarchal class hierarchy that the Middle Ages had known and drew the

people closer to the king who now appeared as the sole protector of the non-privileged classes.

The Nobility Loses Its Social Role

The social crisis did not affect the peasants only, but also the nobility. The end of the feudal régime, by causing the disappearance of the personal homage of the vassal to his suzerain and placing all the nobles in more or less direct dependence on the king, took from the nobility its status as a ruling class. The royal armies and the security enforced by the king took from chivalry its military role. It became henceforth a simple class of landowners or mercenaries who sold themselves to the highest bidder and set out to adventure by fighting against the Moors in Spain or massacring the Slavs in Lithuania. Cavalry, dethroned by infantry since the battle of Courtrai (1302) and by artillery since the battle of Crecy (1346), ceased to be the most important element of armies. It is very characteristic that the great figure of the Hundred Years War was not a noble, but a peasant girl, Joan of Arc.

Whereas the disappearance of feudalism took from the nobility its military character the disappearance of the seigniorial régime took from it its social mission. The noble ceased to be the leader of a community and became a mere property-holder. He ceased to be the rallying point of society. The social structure of the nobility disintegrated more and more as individual ownership and freedom grew stronger.

The lack of culture among the nobles did not allow them to play any part in the royal government which was being organized. Political authority slipped from their grasp to the advantage of the lawmen whom the king made his collaborators and his agents.

The nobility—like the city patricians—became a class enjoying a secure position and, making use of its privileges, it usurped religious livings. The upper ranks of the clergy were now recruited only from the younger sons of good family. The democratic character of the Church thus little by little disappeared. The result was a great decline in moral and intellectual status among the upper clergy who began to adopt a worldly attitude and to associate themselves with the social interests of the nobility.

In all fields, therefore, the 14th century marks the end of the role of the military and landowning nobility. Under a veneer of elegance and refinement, it became a sterile and parasitic class. But alongside the former military and seigniorial nobility a new class appeared, the 'men of the robe', ennobled by the king. Chivalry ceased to exist. From the end of the 13th century it was no longer possible for one knight to confer knight-

hood on another. The king alone could ennoble and the new nobility of the robe which he created was without links with the land and was essentially civil and royal. It did not continue the former feudal and seigniorial nobility. It was an entirely new class, which represented picked men in the royal service. By infusing new blood into the nobility it was to allow it to survive the régime from which it had emerged and to remain a privileged class, even though its social mission was ended.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PERIOD OF THE GREAT CRISES AND THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR

I. PARLIAMENTARIANISM TAKES ROOT IN THE MARITIME COUNTRIES OF THE WEST

FROM the political point of view the 14th century was especially marked by two facts: the political decline of the Papacy and the advent of parliamentarianism in the Western countries.

Parliamentarianism was a direct result of economic and social evolution. It was economic, because the monarchical policy required resources which the feudal monarchies could only obtain by demanding them from their vassals, nobles, clergy and cities; it was social, because the awakening of public opinion compelled the king to rely upon the unanimous consent of the nation, which played in the elaboration of monarchy the role played by religious feeling in the formation of the temporal authority of the Popes in the Middle Ages.

Throughout the West the *cortes* in Spain and Portugal, Parliament in England, the States-General in France and the Estates in the Netherlands played an essential part in the formation of the royal power and of national feeling.

It was in Spain that the régime of the 'estates' was the oldest. Consultative assemblies had existed there from the 11th century in the kingdom of Leon. At that time they were made up of nobles and prelates only. But the wealth and power of the cities which, from the beginning of the 12th century, formed real autonomous republics, grouped into leagues, led the kings of Leon to introduce, in 1188, their representatives into the *cortes*. It was successively the same in Aragon, in Castile and in Portugal. By the 14th century the cities exercised a predominant influence. From the 12th century the king consulted the *cortes* before making war or peace, and from the 14th century they enjoyed the right of voting the taxes. They thus became organs of government and directly linked the nation with the monarchy. In Portugal it was the three orders who, in 1248, called the

count of Burgundy, Alfonso III, to the throne. In Spain the *cortes* became the real trustees of national sovereignty. When King Alfonso X (1252–1284) in Castile decided to partition his states among his heirs, it was the *cortes* who opposed it (1282) and maintained the unity of the kingdom. The *cortes* took a similar view in Aragon when, after the futile reigns of John I and Martin I (1387–1410), they opposed a division of the kingdom. For two years (1410–1412) they carried on the government in the absence of the king; and in 1412 a commission of the *cortes*, made up of three delegates of Aragon, three of Barcelona and three of Valencia, offered the crown, declared to be indivisible, to Ferdinand of Castile (1412–1416).

In England, Parliament, born in 1214 out of the Consultative Council of the king, became an essential organ of power under Edward I (1272–1307), who recognized its right to impose taxes. It was so powerful that when Edward II (1307–1327) wished to carry out a personal policy, Parliament, supported by a national revolt, pronounced his deposition; national sovereignty was asserted even over the king himself. Edward III (1327–1377) accepted loyally the collaboration of Parliament which in his reign was divided into two Houses, the Lords and the Commons. To escape its too rigorous control, Edward III avoided asking it for taxes and preferred to negotiate for loans with the Florentine bankers. But his resounding bankruptcy in 1339 forced him once more to collaborate with Parliament.

In France, Philip the Fair had not thought it possible to succeed in his struggle with the Pope without appealing for the support of public opinion. This was the origin of the convocation of the States-General in 1302. Doubtless he intended only to ask for their support and not to subject himself to their control. Philip Augustus had already obtained a contribution from the clergy when he had undertaken his crusade. This was a precedent. Philip the Fair did not hesitate to tax the clergy, despite the conflict with the Holy See which resulted, and to set up a customs office. Philip VI (1328–1350) introduced on his own authority the *gabelle* (the salt tax) which weighed so heavily upon the people right up to the revolution of 1789. However the States-General asserted itself as the representative of national sovereignty. Philip V (1316–1322) came to the throne as the successor to Louis X (1314–1316), who left no male heirs,[1] only after the States had made the decision that women were excluded from power. In 1322 the *parlement* was again summoned to decide this point once more, on the accession of Charles IV (1322–1328).

In 1333 the States presented a list of grievances to the king. The defeats

[1] He had a posthumous son who lived only a few days.

of John II the Good during the Hundred Years War compelled him to apply to the States to get the military and financial means to continue the struggle (1355). Having an advantage over the king, they confirmed his right to levy the *gabelle* and agreed to furnish him with the troops and subsidies that he asked for, but they demanded control of the fund by 'elected men' whom they appointed. The States-General thus became a real organ of government. Up till 1484 they regularly voted the taxes, which they controlled by their 'elected' representatives, thus forming a body representative of the nation.

In the Belgian principalities of the Netherlands also, the Estates in the 14th century were directly associated in the governments. In 1356 in the duchy of Brabant their right to vote the taxes was recognized and this right they were to keep until the end of the *ancien régime*: the striking feature of the Brabant Estates was that the two lay orders had a definite predominance and in them—as in Spain—it was the delegates of the cities who played the leading part. In the district of Liège, in 1343, the Prince-Bishop was forced to accept the collaboration of an elected council of twenty-two members, made up of four clerics, four knights and fourteen burghers, which met every month. In Flanders the three orders together voted the taxes from 1339 onwards; but the power of the cities was such that the three greatest amongst them—Bruges, Ghent and Ypres forming the *three members of Flanders*—imposed their co-operation on the count; like the *cortes* of Aragon they claimed to represent the sovereignty of the country. At the beginning of the 12th century, usurping the rights of the king, Louis VI, suzerain of Flanders, they nominated Thierry of Alsace to occupy the vacant countship.

The advent of the parliamentary régime naturally led to a new conception of monarchy, Honoré Bonet, in *L'Arbre des Batailles*, which he devoted to the laws of war, defined sovereignty as a power derived from God but through the election of men. Christine de Pisan,[1] his pupil, the first woman to play a leading part in European letters, considered that before engaging in a war the king should consult the wise men of his country, or even those abroad. These were not mere theories, but the expression of a national feeling which was soon to be shown, in France and in England, during the Hundred Years War.

Thus in all the maritime countries the former feudal institutions, transformed by the influence of the cities, were the origin of a régime that monarchies had never known at any time in history, 'parliamentarianism', which directly associated the nation with the power of the ruler.

[1] In the *Livre des faits d'armes et de chevalerie*.

2. THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR (1340–1453)

Struggle for Supremacy Between England and France

The Hundred Years War was the outcome of the struggle which had been going on since the 12th century between England and France for the possession of Guyenne and Flanders, that is to say for the sea. In the 14th century Flanders was as industrialized as northern Italy. Bruges was the meeting point of the great trade-routes to Venice, the Baltic and Castile. Whoever held Bruges dominated all the traffic-routes linking England with the continent. England, therefore, could not allow the king of France to occupy Flanders since this would mean French economic control. The situation was the more serious in that Philip IV also aimed at finally annexing Guyenne, to which Edward III had no intention of renouncing his claims. Bordeaux was, in fact, the staging-post on the Castile route and the port upon which the whole valley of the Garonne, so prosperous and so rich in wheat, depended.

Thus the war, which was now inevitable, had two objects: Flanders with the port of Bruges, and Guyenne with the port of Bordeaux. It was essentially a war for naval supremacy.

The English kings had never renounced the political aims of the Plantagenets, and if the kings of France aimed at the occupation of the Netherlands they had never given up the hope of establishing themselves on both sides of the Channel. The marriage of Edward II with Isabella, daughter of Philip the Fair, was to give their son, Edward III, the chance to return to these aims. The king of France, Charles IV, had had no male heir. Despite the exclusion of women from the throne, which had twice been pronounced by the States-General, Edward III laid claim to the succession. It was a pretext. It allowed him to unleash the war which had been imminent since the reign of Edward I and which offered a richer reward since victory would unite in his person the two crowns of France and England and thus give him uncontested leadership over all Europe.

First Phase of the Hundred Years War

The policy of hegemony carried on by the kings of France since the times of Philip the Bold was now matched by the policy of hegemony of the kings of England. The war which was now imminent was therefore bound to become a European war. Before declaring war Edward III organized a coalition. Thanks to the support of the Florentine bankers, he took into his pay the Emperor Louis of Bavaria and the counts of Holland and Zeeland. Philip VI at once countered with an alliance with

the Pope, John XXII, who, being resident at Avignon, had become a tool of French policy; in the Netherlands, he obtained the support of the prince-bishop of Liège, and in the empire, that of the king of Bohemia, John the Blind, who was also count of Luxembourg. The Pope, placing his spiritual sanctions at the service of France, excommunicated the emperor. But the Holy See was as decadent as the Holy Empire; both of them now had only the appearance of a power which was in fact enjoyed by the kings of the West. The real alliance which the diplomacy of both sides was seeking to obtain was that of Flanders. The French Count Louis de Nevers, whom the king of France had installed a short time before, wished to remain loyal to Philip. Edward III countered this political influence of the king of France by economic pressure; he forbade the export of wool to Flanders. This meant the paralysis of the cloth industry, which reduced the working population of the Flemish cities to poverty. There was an immediate revolt against French suzerainty. The people of Ghent brought to power the tribune Jacques van Artevelde, who took over the administration of the county, which had now become a sort of republic, and offered its alliance to England. A treaty was signed, by whose terms Ghent supported the claims of Edward III to the crown of France on condition that a standard gold and silver coinage be struck in France, Flanders and Brabant which would have legal currency in England. The Treaty was concluded in 1339—it was to be ratified by Parliament in 1343[1] —and in 1340 Edward III went to Ghent, then the greatest industrial city of the West, to have himself recognized as King of France.

The English fleet thenceforward controlled the Flemish coasts; it destroyed the French fleet at Sluys, and thus the Flemish alliance, for the second time, ensured an English victory. Master of the sea, Edward III published an edict advising all neutral countries that all ships which tried to reach French ports would be burnt. England carried on a blockade of France. But the defeat of the English army at Tournai and the social unrest in Flanders, during which the Flemish tribune was assassinated, led to a truce (1345). Flanders, thus returned to the authority of the count, adopted a policy of neutrality. Edward lost his bridgehead in the north. Forced to make a landing in Normandy, he looked for another ally who would assure him the mastery of the seas. Castile, alarmed by the imperialist policy of Philip the Bold,[2] feared French hegemony. It made an alliance with Edward III and employed its fleet against the French. Thenceforward, mastery of the seas belonged to England. The English national infantry,

[1] It was the first monetary convention to be concluded in the West.

[2] It will be recalled that in 1283 he had tried to seize the crown of Aragon.

supported for the first time by artillery, was taken to France where it defeated the old-fashioned French cavalry, supported by mercenaries, at Crecy, and took Calais (1346). The terrible Black Death which began at this time stopped the war. A truce was signed which lasted until 1355.

Invasion Leads to Constitutional Revolution in France

When the war was resumed, the West was a prey to social ferment. But whereas in England the conflict, taking a national character, closely associated parliament with the royal policy, France was involved in serious troubles. The French monarchy, whose power tended to become authoritarian, was defeated by parliamentary England. The Parisian middle classes, under the leadership of Etienne Marcel, the 'Provost of the Merchants', who acted as mayor, took the lead in a constitutional movement. The treasury was empty when the English landed in Normandy (1355). The king, John II the Good (1350–1364), to obtain the thirty thousand men and the five million Paris *livres*[1] which he needed, was forced to summon the States-General. The middle classes, called upon to make the greatest fiscal sacrifices, took the leading role in the States; led by Etienne Marcel, they only agreed to furnish troops and subsidies on condition that they took over control of the finances, confided to 'elected men' appointed by the States-General. France was thus forced along the path of constitutional parliamentarianism on the model of England and the Netherlands.

The defeat of the French cavalry at Maupertuis (1356), where the king, John, was taken prisoner, made the position of the monarchy still more difficult. The moment seemed ripe to set up a constitutional régime in France and to bring into the field against England not only a dynasty but the French nation. At Paris the Dauphin, Charles (V), took over the regency. The middle classes, under the energetic leadership of the Provost of the Merchants, were organized as a political party. But the States-General did not have the unity of the English Parliament. Its division into three orders, voting separately, made any consecutive policy impossible. Etienne Marcel therefore renounced legal action and, imitating the policy of Jacques van Artevelde in Flanders a few years earlier, aimed at making the kingdom of France a federation of democratic communes. He immediately got into touch with the Flemish cities, by sending them a political manifesto, and organized his party in all the great cities of the kingdom. It took as its distinctive sign a cap with the colours of the city

[1] A considerable sum. At the beginning of the reign of Louis XI the annual income of the kingdom was still only one million three hundred thousand *livres*.

of Paris, red and blue.[1] For the first time in the history of France, the commune of Paris placed itself at the head of a political revolution. But the young prince-regent resisted. The revolt broke out. Led by Etienne, the mob invaded the royal palace, placed the red and blue cap on the head of the regent and executed his principal counsellors before his eyes. (1358). This day of revolution,[2] which made the king a prisoner of the people of Paris, had an immense repercussion throughout the country. In Vendée, the liberated serfs, who were dying of hunger, rose and were joined by the peasants whom the war and the extortions of the armies had reduced to abject poverty. The *jacquerie* broke out against the nobles. A great revolutionary and democratic movement coursed through invaded France. But the nobles, who had not known how to defend their kingdom, rushed to massacre the rebellious peasants who were burning their châteaux. The king managed to flee from Paris. Installed at Compiègne, where he was free of popular pressure, he summoned the States-General. It granted him the subsidies he asked. Etienne Marcel was assassinated. The king was victorious over the revolution. But the English army had advanced into Burgundy. The day was lost. John II, a prisoner in London, had already signed a capitulation. Charles, relying on the States where, as throughout the whole country, a new feeling of patriotism was evident, refused to lay down his arms. But France had need of peace to recover from her internal crisis. The peace was signed at Bretigny (1360). France ceded Gascony, Guyenne, Poitou and Calais to Edward III plus a war indemnity of three million *livres* payable in gold, in return for which he renounced his claims to the French crown.

The English victory was complete. The peace, however, could not assure England its advantages, since it was an anachronism. It might have been possible for Edward III to keep France, on condition that he was recognized as her king; it was not possible for him to dismember her. France could have been overcome by the English offensive, whose companies of archers were recuited from the nation, because instead of countering it with a united internal front she was torn asunder by deep social divisions and her brilliant cavalry used outmoded methods of war; but the French nation was already too homogeneous a whole to be split among different sovereigns, as would have been possible under feudal rule. Peace could only be durable if it were in accord with historical evolution.

[1] In imitation of the democratic party of Ghent, whose members were distinguished by wearing a white cap.

[2] It was a political movement analogous to those which were to take place during the wars of religion (1588), under the Fronde (1648) and during the French Revolution (1789).

By treating France as a feudal aggregate, when a national feeling was already being created, it was condemned in advance. In these conditions, it could be no more than a truce. On the death of John II, Charles V (1364–1380), after consulting the three orders of the States-General, the court of peers, the universities of Bologna, Montpellier, Toulouse and Orleans as well as several Roman jurists, repudiated the Peace of Bretigny and claimed the ceded territories. The war began again.

England had won, thanks to her alliance first with Flanders and then with Castile. But her very triumph, by menacing both Flanders and Castile with English naval supremacy in the Channel which would have controlled the traffic between Bruges and Spain, turned them against her. To obtain the alliance of Flanders, Charles V restored Lille, Douai and Orchies which Philip the Fair had annexed. The States-General granted the subsidies needed for the war. In 1372 the Castilian fleet defeated the English fleet at La Rochelle. Defeated at sea, England was forced to give way. On the death of Edward III (1377) she retained only Calais, Bordeaux and Bayonne.

The Period of Crises

Peace was maintained from 1377 to 1414. This was a period of political, social and religious crises. The war was only the political manifestation of the transition which was taking place—in the midst of the disorders which accompany all changes of balance—between the feudal world and the individualist society then in full growth.

The Black Death, a consequence of the war, had caused terrible devastation and had seriously upset economic life. In England the nobles had taken advantage of the poverty of the peasants to restore a social system which was very nearly serfdom, which had disappeared during the 13th century. A terrible *jacquerie* resulted, led by the demagogue Wat Tyler (1384).

In Flanders, the workers' party led by the Ghent weavers seized power in the great cities (1379), causing a social revolution which was to be crushed by the army of the French king at the battle of Roosebeke (1382). But the contagion had already reached France. In the great cities the people rose against the government of the well-to-do burghers to the cry of 'Long live Ghent!'

Violent social upheavals broke out in the cities and countryside of Portugal at the end of the 14th century (1383–1385).

These social movements coincided with a wave of religious fervour which had been mounting among the people since the time of the Black

Death, causing the formation of sects of flagellants and *penitentes* who, as earlier the Albigenses, professed an ideal of poverty and community of goods.

Crisis in the Holy See: The 'Great Schism'

The crisis through which the Holy See was passing increased the moral confusion. John XXII had forfeited the prestige of the Papacy by the luxury of the pontifical court at Avignon. But luxury is expensive. To obtain the necessary means the Pope, imitating the king, levied taxes. As these taxes affected the granting of high ecclesiastical office, the Pope was accused of simony. On the other hand, by conferring religious benefices against money payments, the Pope caused them to pass into the hands of the nobility which incited the people, fired by social and religious aspirations, against the upper clergy.

In England the war had aroused the hostility of the country against the Pope at Avignon who had openly supported the cause of the French king. Religious fervour, which the war had channelled towards national feeling, turned against the pontifical authority which had formerly been uncontested by the English people. A movement began under the leadership of Wycliffe which was in the nature of a heresy since it held the view that the only head of the Church was Christ and that in England his vicar was not the Pope but the King. The burdens imposed by the war favoured this view and men demanded—for the first time—the secularization of the properties of the clergy.

Thus the war, because of its social consequences and the great sacrifices which it required in France and in England, hastened the transformation of western society and plunged the Church, which had been the great moral force for a thousand years, into serious crisis.

To appease this crisis Gregory XI, taking advantage of the fact that the power of the king of France had been weakened by the war, left Avignon and returned to Rome (1377). He was welcomed there by the voice of St Brigit who pleaded with him to destroy the *lupanar* which the Church had become. On his death (1378) the people of Rome, filled with the prevailing religious fervour, demanded the election of a Roman Pope. But the French cardinals refused to recognize Urban VI (1378–1379) and elected Clement VII (1378–1394). The nations were immediately divided. France and the countries associated with her, Naples, Scotland and also Castile and Aragon, supported Clement VII, while England, and with her the emperor—who was then the powerful king of Bohemia, Charles IV of Luxembourg—the king of Hungary and the count of

Flanders, whom the French victory had brought into the English camp, took the side of Urban VI. Confusion was worse confounded in 1409 by the Council of Pisa which, in order to put an end to the schism, elected Pope Alexander V. But Gregory XII, who succeeded Urban VI at Rome, and Benedict XIII, the successor of Clement VII at Avignon, refused to lay down the tiara. There were then three Popes. A little later (1412), influenced by the ideas of Wycliffe, a new heresy preached by John Huss spread in Bohemia, where urban development was similar to the West. Throughout Europe the cities became centres of religious and social ferment.

Political Crisis

In England and France the political crisis was no less deep than the religious and social crises. Richard II, who came to the throne as a child, wanted as soon as he attained his majority to carry out an authoritarian policy like the kings of France. To free himself from the control of Parliament he needed financial resources. In imitation of Philip the Fair, he obtained them by handing the Templars over to the inquisition and confiscating their wealth. But he met with strong opposition; Parliament, declaring itself the trustee of national sovereignty, sentenced his ministers to death, dethroned him and handed the crown over to Henry IV of Lancaster (1339–1413).

In France, after the peaceful reign of Charles V (died 1380), the minority of Charles VI (1380–1422) delivered the power to his uncles, whose regency was to be prolonged because of the king's madness. One of them, Duke Philip, who had received Burgundy as his appanage, obtained the county of Flanders by marriage (1384–1404). This was regarded as a great success of the royal policy. Flanders under a prince of the House of France would, it was thought, become finally attached to the crown. But Flanders, by the power of its cities and the independence of its people, imposed its own will on its ruler. The king of France had suppressed the charters of the Flemish cities after their defeat at Roosebeke; to conciliate them, the son of Philip of Burgundy, John the Fearless (1404–1419), restored them, openly relying on the democratic parties in the cities to which, since the times of Philip the Fair, the king had been opposed.

The rivalry between the top guardians of the king, John the Fearless and the duke of Orleans, soon degenerated into civil war. Against the Armagnacs, supporters of the duke of Orleans, John supported the popular party, which was represented in Paris by the *cabochiens*, The revolutionary passions which had continued to be active among the people since the

murder of Etienne Marcel were rekindled; a reign of terror broke out, which made the university and the middle classes draw closer to the Armagnacs. John hesitated no longer; in view of the resistance which he met with in France he reverted to the friendship with England which the cloth-weaving cities of Flanders demanded. From the moment when it broke out once more in 1414 the war became a part of the political rivalry between the Orleanist and Burgundian parties and, an even more serious matter, of the social conflict which was then at its height. The king of England, allied to the duke of Burgundy and, through him, to Flanders, was to become associated with the democratic movement of the urban proletariat, whereas the king of France, supported by the Orleanist party, stood for the existing social order.

The Burgundian Phase (1414–1453)

The crises which were paralysing France, rent by civil war and social unrest, decided the king of England, Henry V (1413–1422), to begin the struggle anew. In 1415 the French army suffered a disastrous defeat at Agincourt. Henry V at once put forward his claims to the French throne.

End of the Great Schism

At the same time the Holy See revived. The council convened at Constance (1414) began the struggle against the heresies preached by Wycliffe. John Huss, lured to Constance where he went with a safe-conduct from the Emperor Sigismond, was condemned and sent to the stake (1415). The Church took action both against heresy and against the communist revolution which was beginning to frighten the property-owning classes in all countries. In England, after the death of Wycliffe (1384), his heresy took on a communist character with the Lollards. Parliament, which had shown itself favourable towards the religious and national ideas of Wycliffe, took a strong line against the Lollards. Thus social and political opinion drew closer to the Holy See at the time when, in 1417, the Council of Constance put an end to the Great Schism by installing Martin V as the one and only Pope.

King Henry V took advantage of this to make his peace with Rome. Accepting the views of his Council—which were also those of Parliament—he promulgated a law against the Lollards, who had become a social danger, condemning them to the stake. Thus the king of England, though allied with the democratic party in France, appeared as the representative both of military power and of established faith and order.

But at this time the duke of Burgundy, John the Fearless, who supported

the popular movement, was murdered by a servant of the Dauphin (1419). It was now no longer necessary for his son, Philip the Good (1419–1467), to rely on the popular movement in order to support the alliance with England. He had previously concluded an agreement with the king of England, Henry V, who promised to assist him in his plan for uniting the whole of the Netherlands under his rule. Thus the Burgundian party, and with it Paris, adhered to the English cause, the one for dynastic and the other for social reasons. The situation in France seemed desperate. The king was mad, the country given over to social strife, the queen, Isabella of Bavaria, despised for her misconduct to such an extent that the Dauphin was believed to be illegitimate, and a strong current of opinion called for peace at any price and an understanding with England. This was achieved, with the agreement of the queen, by the Treaty of Troyes (1420). It was a capitulation. The Dauphin, Charles (VII), was disinherited, Henry V of England married Catherine, the daughter of Charles VI, who brought as her dowry the kingdom of France; the heir to be born of this marriage was to become king of both England and France. The university, the *parlement* and the States-General all accepted this solution.

The death of Henry V and that of Charles VI, which took place in 1422, led to the execution of this treaty; Henry VI, a child only a few months old, was crowned King of France at Paris. The States-General was convoked; had it not, in 1316 and in 1322, been accepted by the kings of France as the arbiter of their destinies? The clergy looked favourably on the persecution of the Lollards, the nobles represented in the States were, by their hostility to the centralizing policy of the monarchy, completely devoted to the Burgundians, and the third estate, represented by the delegates of the cities, was dominated by the democratic party of Paris; the States-General therefore recognized Henry VI of England as the successor to Charles VI of France. The great plan of Edward III was achieved.

But the nation did not follow suit. France was rent between the supporters of Henry VI and of Charles VII. Anarchy and banditry were rife in the country. In Paris the duke of Bedford took the administration of the country into his hands and tried to make it forget that he was an Englishman by setting up a tolerant régime. But national feeling was aroused by the humiliation of seeing the country handed over to the invader. The public authorities and those in power collaborated with Bedford but throughout the nation the government met with a passive resistance.

Militarily and politically the cause of the king, Charles VII, who had withdrawn to Bourges, seemed lost. There was, however, one force over which the English had not triumphed—national feeling. It had been created during the war not at the court nor among the nobility but amongst the people of the countryside who had felt most heavily the burden of the invasion and who, in their poverty and misery, without support from the nobles who had abandoned their social role and thought only of getting as much profit as possible out of the peasant, turned to the king. The religious fervour which, among the people of the cities, had taken the form of social claims made the country people rally around the person of their king against the English who held the country to ransom and against the nobles who exploited it. The same movement which had plunged the people into the *jacquerie* of 1358 now rallied them, in the same hope, around the king. Thus it was that salvation came from the people. While the court weltered in unworthy intrigues, a little peasant girl from Domrémy, Joan of Arc, was to save France by uniting it in a great upsurge of monarchical sentiment. The capture of Orleans by Joan of Arc in 1429 led to the revival of France. Captured at Compiègne by Philip the Good, who handed her over to the English (1431), Joan was condemned to the stake as a sorceress by the French bishop Cauchon after consultation with the University of Paris about the visions which she claimed to have had. She underwent torture at Rouen (1432). But the French cause had been won. The popular religious fervour saw in her martyrdom a proof of her sainthood and of the divine mission of the monarchy. Public opinion was unanimously roused against the invader.

In England the king's minority led to conflicts of interest between his uncles, Bedford and Gloucester, which reacted on the conduct of the war. In 1435 Philip the Good, whose plan for the union of the Netherlands principalities was now assured, drew closer to Charles VII in order to escape the tutelage which the union of the French and English crowns would have meant for him. The war was now lost for England. The adherence of the Burgundians meant that of Paris also, which opened its gates to the royal troops. In 1453, after a series of defeats, the king of England retained only Calais and the empty title of King of France, which the kings of England persisted in using until the 19th century.

A century of war had not impeded either the unity of France or the unity of England according to the normal evolution of their peoples. The policy of hegemony, first tried by the kings of France and then by the kings of England. had been in vain. It however led to two results

which neither of the contestants had expected; the formation of the Netherlands and the naval supremacy of Spain.

3. THE FORMATION OF THE NETHERLANDS AND THE NAVAL SUPREMACY OF SPAIN

The Formation of the Netherlands[1]

The creation of the powerful Burgundian state to the north of France was a political factor of great importance. The whole policy of Philip the Fair had been aimed at incorporating Flanders into the royal domain. Instead of that, Philip the Good, thanks to his alliance with England, had been able to unite all the principalities of the Netherlands under his sole rule. Count of Flanders, he had bought the county of Namur in 1421, had had himself recognized as successor to the counties of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland in 1428, had succeeded John IV, duke of Brabant and Limburg, in 1430, while the peace concluded with Charles VII in 1435 gave him Artois and the Somme frontier. He was soon to add the county of Luxembourg and a protectorate over the bishoprics of Liège and Utrecht. Thus united in a single whole, the Netherlands appeared as a monarchy, whose unity was consecrated in 1463 by the creation at Brussels of a States-General representing all the united principalities. Philip the Good became the instrument of the policy carried on for centuries by the principalities, Flanders to free herself from the suzerainty of the king of France and the others to free themselves from that of the emperor. He was supported by all the active forces of the country. The Emperor Sigismund protested in vain against the violation of his sovereign rights and appealed to the Estates of the Principalities to support his cause, but he failed because economic interests and the unanimous desire for independence which they had aroused in the Netherlands coincided with the dynastic ambitions of Philip.

The activity of the Belgian cities and the international role of the port of Bruges made the Netherlands the complement of Italy on the great trade-route linking the Mediterranean to the northern seas.

If the Hundred Years War meant the collapse of the English plans for hegemony, so the formation of the Netherlands meant the failure of the policy of natural frontiers which should have extended France to the Rhine. Thus began the Netherlands question which was to remain one of the vital facets of European policy. Their independence, threatened by all

[1] See map p. 265.

policies of hegemony, was to become the prime factor of all systems based on a balance of power.

Naval Supremacy of Aragon

Since the time of James I (1213–1276) the policy of the kings of Aragon had followed a constant line, aiming at domination of the Mediterranean. All other political considerations were secondary to this great plan, which was supported by the cities of Catalonia. Since the Aragonese conquest of Murcia (1265) and their settlement along almost all the eastern coast of Spain, the kings of Aragon had given up their crusade against the Moors of the interior. Castile had continued the *reconquista*. Thenceforward the religious policy of the Middle Ages was abandoned by the kings of Aragon to the extent that James II, at the end of the 13th century, did not hesitate to repudiate the suzerainty of the Pope. A single goal obsessed them—the conquest of the sea—and they pursued it with untiring singleness of purpose. Once Ceuta had been conquered, Tunis placed under a protectorate, the Balearics occupied (1229–1235), Sicily seized from the Angevins (1285), Athens[1] and the Dardanelles from Byzantium (1326), and Sardinia from Genoa (1354), Barcelona became the great Western port in the Mediterranean and the kingdom of Aragon a magnificent maritime empire. They made only one mistake; James I on his death (1276) had divided his states among his sons. Aragon and Catalonia were thus separated from the kingdom of Majorca which included, as well as the Balearics, Roussillon, Cerdagne and Montpellier. This was the cause of interminable wars between brothers and relatives until in 1344 the kingdom of Majorca was once again united with the kingdom of Aragon.

The parallelism which existed throughout the 14th century between the monarchical policy of the kings of Aragon and the economic imperialism of the cities—whose adventurers combed the seas and served the king's plans—and also the complete religious tolerance shown to the Moslems and Jews who held so great a place in the trade and industry of the country were the causes of the rapid rise of Aragon to power. The kings understood this and let the *cortes* play a greater and greater role. The extinction of the dynasty in 1410 threatened to plunge the country into dynastic feuds; the *cortes* set up a commission to appoint the king. Setting aside the French princes of the House of Anjou, they entrusted the crown to Ferdinand of Castile (1412–1416).

His son Alfonso V (1416–1458) crowned the policy of expansion of the kings of Aragon by the conquest of Naples from the Angevins of Italy

[1] The duchy of Athens remained in the possession of Aragon until 1387.

(1443). Doubtless obsessed by the plans of Frederic II, he at once set up his court in Naples, where he dreamed of reviving the ancient Roman Empire around the Mediterranean. The temporary acquisition of Milan (1447) gave him a foothold in the north of the peninsula. A few years later when Byzantium was taken by the Turks (1453) he prepared a great naval expedition to recover it from them. But he died (1458) before he was able to undertake it.

Since the court of Alfonso V was at Naples, the *cortes* took over the government of Catalonia which seemed, at that time, to be almost a republic. The cities enjoyed almost complete autonomy and were united in a powerful league under the presidency of Barcelona, which was governed by its Council of One Hundred, and whose 'customs and usages' were a sort of Catalan code of laws. The *cortes* met every three years; in the meantime they entrusted the government to a General Council of three deputies and three controllers, one for the nobles, one for the clergy and one for the cities. Alfonso V appointed the crown-prince as his representative in Catalonia, only retaining for himself the right of convening the *cortes*.

Thus the most liberal-minded kingdoms of the West at this time were those most closely connected with the sea: England[1] and Aragon.

Castile Becomes a Sea-Power

While Aragon was carrying out its policy of naval expansion, Castile was uniting the lands of Spain. Ferdinand III (1229–1252) had united the kingdoms of Leon and Castile by inheritance. In 1252 the war against the Moors had extended its frontiers as far as Cordova and Seville. In 1282 Alfonso X reached Cadiz and Cartagena. France and Castile were henceforth to be the largest monarchies in Europe. Castile was the richer and its cities the greater; it had at its disposal the immense wealth of the Moslem civilization with its industry, its advanced culture, its universities and the great city of Cordova, still far more populous than any other European city, though it was no longer what it had been in the 10th century when it had numbered half a million inhabitants. The unifying policy of the king was supported by the *cortes*, and its legislative work endowed its states with the most advanced legal code in Europe, codified in the 'Book of Laws', the only European juridical work which could challenge the Code of Justinian from which, however, it was directly derived.

The Holy Empire had fallen into complete decadence. The Houses of Castile, France and England were to canvass for its succession. Alfonso X

[1] It will be recalled that in 1399 Parliament deposed Richard II.

of Castile and Richard of Cornwall had already tried to purchase the imperial crown with gold, and the Electors ended by granting it to both of them at the same time, while refusing it, in 1272, to the king of France, Philip the Bold. But this was only an attempt whose futility the western monarchies immediately realized. They all turned away from the empire to pursue their own policies of hegemony. The Angevins and the kings of Aragon began a duel in the Mediterranean from which the latter emerged as victors. Soon afterwards the French turned against England and plunged into the Hundred Years War. Aragon, entirely centred on the Mediterranean, remained disinterested. But the merchants of Castile had a position of primary importance at Bruges, where they came into contact with the Hanseatics, whom the Hundred Years War allowed to take a dominant position in northern trade. Castile was bound to be drawn into a conflict which involved control of the shipping in the Channel. Its dynastic quarrels became interwoven with its foreign alliances. Pedro the Cruel (1350–1360), who disputed the throne with Henry of Trastamare, allied himself with England against France, whose too great power he feared.[1] Henry ended by gaining power with the help of the king of France, Charles V, and took the side of France after her first defeats in order to assure freedom of navigation in the Channel for Castilian ships, which a too complete English victory would have jeopardized. In 1372 the Castilian fleet, by defeating the English at La Rochelle, changed the course of the war. Even as the naval victory at Sluys (1345) had allowed England to triumph over France, so her repulse at La Rochelle heralded her defeat. Before resuming the war, therefore, England took pains to draw closer to Castile. John I of Castile (1379–1388), after a serious defeat inflicted on him by Portugal, thought it prudent to be reconciled; his son, who was to become King Henry III of Castile, married the daughter of the duke of Lancaster, regent of the kingdom during the minority of King Henry VI. England thus neutralized the Castilian fleet and made ready for a naval supremacy which was to allow her to recover her losses.

Because of the naval importance of Aragon in the Mediterranean and that of Castile in the Atlantic, Spain became the leading naval power. Rival of Venice and Genoa, she was soon, in order to wrest their oriental markets from them, to send her fleets out to search for new routes to India, by rounding Africa or navigating westward, and was thus to discover the New World.

[1] It will be recalled that Philip the Bold had tried to take possession of the kingdom of Aragon, which had been granted him by the Pope after Aragon had conquered Sicily from the Angevins (1285).

The war waged between England and France for mastery of the seas ended by giving it to Spain which was, at that time, a great trading power. Moorish industry provided a stimulus for her shipping. The sheep formerly acclimatized by the caliphs allowed her to compete with English wool on the Bruges market. Bilbao iron, oil, oranges, as well as luxury products, gold weaves, brocades, silk, incised weapons, which were made in Spain by the Moors and sold there by the Jews, made Spain the rival of northern Italy, Sicily and Flanders as an industrial power. Because of the Arab universities which continued to exist, though converted to Christianity, in all the great cities, Spain was also a vigorous intellectual centre. Besides the High Schools of Moslem origin, Catholic universities were founded from the 12th century onward at Coimbra, Valencia and Salamanca; the cities themselves—such as Valladolid (mid-13th century) and later Barcelona (early 15th century)—founded their own universities. Latin was introduced alongside Arabic as a language of instruction and gradually replaced it. It was this great intellectual development which explains the early development of Spanish juridical institutions.

Quite naturally, the Spanish and Portuguese navigators, driven on by their faith and by their trade interests, took the road to Africa. In 1415 the Portuguese prince, Henry the Navigator, organized a crusade against Ceuta. But the crusade soon became secondary to the thirst for discovery. While the war between England and France was at its height, navigation northward was naturally hampered. The Portuguese looked southward for fresh possibilities. In 1420 they settled in Madeira,[1] in 1431 in the Azores; in 1434 they rounded Cape Bojador, reached Senegal in 1445 and Gambia in 1446, and they took possession of the Cape Verde islands in 1460. This great Portuguese expansion coincided with the development of a centralized policy; the discoveries made in the reign of Alfonso V (1438–1481) were contemporaneous with the publication of the codified customs of the country, edited in the spirit of monarchical sovereignty.

The Iberian peninsula, in all fields of activity, passed into the forefront of international life.

[1] The islands of Madeira and the Azores had been discovered in the 14th century by the Italians.

CHAPTER XIX

THE CENTRALIZATION OF POWER

I. MODERN EUROPE COMES INTO BEING

THE Hundred Years War, with its far-reaching social movements, was the great crisis during which western Europe finally broke away from the Middle Ages.

A new world was coming into being, distinguished from the political viewpoint by the concentration of power, from the social viewpoint by the disappearance of the privileged classes and from the moral viewpoint by individual emancipation. These trends were more evident in those countries which, without being hampered in their free evolution, were the most economically advanced. The result was a greater differentiation of national groups. As long as Europe had been living under the seigniorial régime the great mass of the people, living in close and restricted communities, had had no influence. Only the élite had counted; but this élite, recruited almost exclusively from the clergy, had a single origin, a single law and a single rule of life; it obeyed a single authority, that of the Pope, and spoke a single language, Latin. All social and political power was subject to a single religious ideal, This explains why throughout the early Middle Ages civilization, simple and primitive, had a universal character, in which, however, Byzantium was an exception since its social life, dependent on the sea and international trade, was derived from individual enterprise which was shown in the most varied fields.

At the close of the 11th century the seigniorial system had begun to break down in the West under the influence of trade. Wherever there were cities there was a population of middle class and free workers, and serfdom was wiped out in the countryside. Trade exchanges extended the social framework, property became fluid and the rigid class system upon which all mediaeval society was based was relaxed. Economic and social emancipation led to intellectual emancipation. But the revival of intellectual life and the disorders which it created led to the rise of heresies which questioned the hitherto uncontested power of the papacy.

Relying on the middle classes, the feudal kings centralized their power and organized the monarchical system. The vulgar tongue came into use in literature and in law. Communities began to form; the use of a common language, common economic interests and similar social aspirations laid the foundations of nations. In the 13th century in England and in Spain, in the 14th century in France and in the Netherlands, the kings, in order to govern, had appealed to the national assemblies, parliaments or States-General, which associated the active forces of the people with the monarchy. But the formation of national forces had broken the Christian conception of the universal power of the Holy See. The temporal authority of the Pope, contested on all sides, ended by yielding to the power of the kings supported by the public opinion of their peoples. Thus the seigniorial régime, feudalism and theocratic power disappeared at the same time and for similar causes.

When the Hundred Years War came to an end in the middle of the 15th century the monarchies were already in existence.

2. THE WAY TO ABSOLUTIST MONARCHY IN FRANCE

Organization of Central Government

During this century of wars France achieved her unity. In 1349 Philip VI bought Montpellier from the kings of Majorca, acquired Dauphiné, also bought from its princes (1378), and thus brought his frontier to the Alps and annexed another district torn from the empire. But by a contradiction explicable by the persistence of feudal ideas, the king, who had centralized the country under his direct rule, dismembered it again by conferring large appanages on his younger sons. John II the Good, treating the kingdom as his patrimony, handed over to his sons Burgundy, Maine, Anjou, Berry and Auvergne.

In the midst of these uncertainties the monarchy was stabilized. In the reign of John II and under the regency of Charles V it might have been thought that the middle classes had succeeded in imposing a constitutional status not dissimilar to that existent in England. But the failure of the policy of Etienne Marcel, the necessities of the war and the crises which he had to overcome led Charles V to organize the government under despotic authority. The king, excluding the States-General from politics, surrounded himself with legists who built up, on Aristotelianism and Roman law, a theory of monarchy which, defining the king as the administrator of the public interest, ended in absolutism. The king who was exalted above the nation, and was surrounded by a luxurious court—

perhaps modelled on the papal court at Avignon—collected works of art and a rich library. This tolerant, wise and constructive government was rudely interrupted (1380) by the minority and madness of Charles VI. But Charles VII (1422–1461) reverted to the policy of his grandfather. The terrible crisis he was called upon to face only confirmed him in his absolutist policy. The conduct of the war required resources. Charles VII endowed his kingdom with a financial organization completely free of the control of the States-General, upon which he had been unable to rely for the defence of the country. The royal budget was divided into ordinary revenue, derived from the royal lands and administered by four treasurers of France, and extraordinary revenue derived from the taxes, for whose collection the kingdom was divided into four districts under four 'Generals of the Finances', assisted by 'elected men' who rapidly became royal officials. Two financial courts were founded, the Board of Excise (1425), which was supreme in matters of taxation, and the Treasury Court (1445) entrusted with all decisions connected with the royal domain. Forced to disregard the States-General which had taken the side of Henry VI of England, Charles VII demanded subsidies from the provincial Estates (the former Estates which had been formed in the great fiefs) or levied the property-tax (*taille*)—the royal tax *par excellence*—to organize his army.

The hiring of mercenaries ceased to be a private concern and became a royal monopoly; a regular army was formed, nine thousand men strong, divided into fifteen mounted companies recruited from the lesser nobility, who found in it a source of revenue, and which was provided with artillery. A fleet was built.

Exiled from Paris, and consequently deprived of the *parlement*, Charles formed a *parlement* at Poitiers, and then others at Toulouse and at Bordeaux, which he later allowed to continue to exist as high courts of justice.

The economic and fiscal crisis which followed the liberation of the country led him to intervene in the financial administration of the communes which had become severely encumbered during the war. They thus lost if not their administrative autonomy at least their independence of the crown which made them a part of the framework of the royal administration.

Thus Charles VII managed, despite the serious weakness of the ruling classes of the country, to create out of the needs of the war and the occupation a durable and constructive structure which was to become the basis of the French monarchy.

The Crisis of 'Parliamentarianism'

None the less two forces still existed in opposition to the royal power, the Paris *parlement* and the States-General, which became obstacles to its absolutist policy.

From the 14th century the Paris *parlement*, made up of legists nominated and inalienable, was able to escape all royal tutelage as its ranks were replenished by co-option. Since, in the 14th century, the kings had entrusted it with the task of registering their decrees, in order to be sure that they were not prejudicial to the royal prerogative, and to supervise the concordance of the laws, the *parlement*, basing its rights on its right of registration, was soon permitted to bring grievances before the king and, by demanding modifications in the royal edicts, to concern itself with policy.

As for the States-General, it had become in the 14th century the constant aid to authority and its collaboration with the crown was only broken when, in 1422, it recognized Henry VI of England as King of France.

The end of the Hundred Years War and the liberation of the country posed such serious problems that Charles VII was forced to re-convene the States-General. France had emerged from the war unified under the sole authority of the monarchy, but the former feudal fractioning of the country still existed in the tangle of local customs—there were several hundred of them—which divided the country into a multitude of little societies each living according to its own laws. Furthermore, these customs, which had never been written down, no longer corresponded to the economic needs of the times. The third estate, collaborating with the monarchy, now demanded the codification of these customs. Charles VI issued an edict to this effect at Montils-les-Tours, but it remained a dead letter. In 1468, at the beginning of the reign of Louis XI (1461–1483), the States-General submitted to the king lists of grievances, in which it once again referred to the need to codify the customs. But Louis XI had no intention of sharing his power with the States-General; he no longer followed its advice and even ceased to convene it. The minority of Charles VIII (1483–1498) caused it to be summoned again and this time its meeting resulted in an important reform. Until then the States-General had represented the privileged orders: the clergy, the nobles and the cities. But the seigniorial régime and serfdom had finally disappeared in the 15th century. The former *seigneuries* had become parishes. In 1484, for the first time, the king called on them to take part in the election of delegates, who were themselves entrusted with

the election of deputies to the 'third estate' of the States-General.

Universal suffrage by two stages was thus created by the monarchy. The States became a single assembly, representative not only of the sole will of the privileged orders, often in opposition to the centralizing policy of the king, but of the will of the entire nation and especially of the people of the countryside who had rallied so loyally around the king during the Hundred Years War.

This great reform corresponded exactly to the national feeling which was being created in France. It became evident when a deputy of the third estate, Philippe Pot, a former chancellor of Charles the Bold, stated at the session of the States-General that sovereignty belonged to the nation. It seemed that France might be setting out on the road to parliamentarianism.

The crown, uneasy about the force which was rising against it, ceased to convene the States-General. It was not to meet again except during the wars of religion.

The crisis of 1484 was one of the most dramatic moments in the history of France. As soon as the monarchy had given the people a really representative organ, it withdrew in fright from its own work and renounced collaboration with the nation. The States-General, divided into separate orders, had not the necessary cohesion to make its power felt. The monarchy, which had not felt able to move towards a parliamentary policy based directly on universal suffrage, carried out a policy directly opposed to parliamentarianism. An era of absolutism began which, stage by stage, culminated in the revolution of 1789.

Charles VIII, while no longer summoning the States-General, did not entirely renounce collaboration with it. He was the only king who legislated in accord with the elected representatives of the three orders. In 1495 he undertook the codification of the customs, which they had so pressingly demanded since the reign of Charles VII. But instead of proceeding on his own authority, he entrusted the work to commissions made up of members of the *parlements*. His projects were submitted to them for debate in assemblies of the three orders elected within the jurisdiction of each custom, who voted on them article by article, after which they were officially sanctioned by the *parlements*. Ths first codified customs appeared during the reign of Louis XII (1498–1515). The work, which was immense, was only to be completed in final form under Francis I and Henry II.

The codification of the French customs was accompanied by the creation of a supreme court (1497), whose task was to assure the uniformity

of jurisprudence throughout the kingdom, and the organization of a system of appeals, entrusted to six *parlements* organized on the model of that of Paris.

The royal administration was greatly developed. For fiscal reasons Louis XII sold posts in the finances. The venality which was thus begun and which was subsequently to lead to such serious abuses had at first excellent results; it meant, in fact, that such offices were inalienable, thus freeing them from arbitrary authority, and led to the creation of families devoted to the legal profession which gave excellent administrative personnel.

Beginnings of a National Economic Policy

The end of the Hundred Years War found France economically disorganized and in the midst of a crisis. The great French fairs were deserted; in Champagne they were never again to recover their prosperity, and Lyon was abandoned by the foreign merchants for Geneva. By contrast, the English occupation had given great impetus to the ports of Bordeaux, Rouen and La Rochelle. The financial needs of the war had brought to Paris Italian bankers who lent money to the king, and the Paris merchants began to form companies on the Italian model. But the war had led to a devaluation of the coinage which had paralysed trade and in order to supplement the lack of fiscal resources a large number of tolls had been set up. There were a hundred and thirty of them on the Loire alone.

In the Midi, sheltered from the war, trade with the Levant had greatly increased. Limited companies were formed. Sea-borne trade created a capitalist class. New men like Jacques Coeur made fortunes rapidly and founded commercial agencies as far afield as Cyprus.

When peace had been restored and Charles VII was again in possession of his kingdom, he set out to restore its commercial prosperity. A new era was to open in the history of the monarchy—the era of national economy. As soon as the Peace of Arras had been signed, Charles VII attempted to restore a sound currency; he appealed to Jacques Coeur, the greatest capitalist of France, and granted him a monopoly of minting. At the same time he abolished a number of tolls, revived the Lyon fairs and signed trade treaties with Scotland, Denmark, Aragon and Venice. But, for political reasons, he forbade trade with England. Louis XI was to make economic policy his main aim. For the first time, the king, giving pride of place to commercial interest over political considerations, authorized trade with foreign countries even if, like Flanders under

Charles the Bold or Maximilian, they were at war with France. Mercantilism reasserted itself; above all else, the king wished to give the country a favourable trade balance. He sought, first of all, to conquer the internal market and forbade Frenchmen to go to the fairs of Geneva and the Netherlands, substituting, under the inspiration of the economic liberalism which was being practised at Antwerp, free fairs at Lyon, Caen and Rouen. To assure France the advantages of return freights and to maintain and develop its merchant marine, he forbade[1] the import by sea of any article which had not been carried in French bottoms, a measure which, however, he later annulled because of the protests of the great cities and the States of Languedoc.

France was losing five hundred thousand crowns a year by buying silk in Italy; Louis introduced silk-weaving at Tours. To make himself independent of metal imports from Germany, he appointed an Inspector-General of Mines, who was entrusted with prospecting within the country. He protected printing and assisted the cloth-manufacturers of Montpellier and Poitiers.

While he practised protectionism, Louis XI made every effort to win foreign markets. He openly favoured maritime expansion. In order to re-enter the English market, he re-established relations with England in 1470 and organized an exhibition of French products in London. He enlarged the port of Bordeaux. Marseilles, bequeathed to France with Provence by King René in 1481, became the centre of his economic policy. To make it the greatest port of the Mediterranean, he signed commercial treaties with the king of Portugal and, in Algeria, with the king of Bône. He tried to attract foreigners by granting them privileges. In advance of his time, he planned to form a great company for overseas trade,[2] and for this purpose summoned all the principal merchants of the kingdom to Tours in 1482. But he could not persuade them to support him.

His economic policy was hampered by the outmoded methods of city trade. The cities formed privileged and isolated economic communities. By the end of the 15th century a rich middle class had been formed among the butchers, the cloth-dealers and the jewellers. In Paris the six 'guild companies'—cloth-dealers, pastrycooks, furriers, merchants, money-changers and jewellers—became a middle class aristocracy. They were not capitalists such as were to be found in the industrial cities of Italy, Flanders and the Danube; they were well-to-do burghers, made wealthy

[1] As Cromwell was to do in England (1651).

[2] He thus anticipated by more than a century the plan of Elizabeth I of England (1600).

by local trade. By contrast, the shipowners in the ports, the high officials, and the Italian bankers already formed a class which was not urban but national. The companies formed to protect the interests of the workers, whom the guilds strove to restrain in order to reserve the title of master for their families alone, also burst through the city framework and spread to the whole kingdom. French economy thus expanded from the cities to the nation. But the middle classes resisted. It was their particularism that caused the failure of the king's plan for a great trading company.

He therefore resolved to break down this particularism. The cities were no longer able to withstand him. Louis XI subjected them to royal officials and, while allowing their administrative autonomy to continue, he placed them under the higher authority of the crown. From then on, he was able to impose his economic control over them by organizing their corporative life according to a royal legislation which was uniform for the whole of France. The policy of the Sullys, the Laffémas and the Colberts was being foreshadowed. The economy of the Middle Ages was finally at an end.

3. THE POLICY OF MONARCHICAL CENTRALIZATION IN ENGLAND

Struggle Between King and Parliament

The defeat which ended the Hundred Years War had very serious repercussions on public life in England. The supporters of the family of York, excluded from the throne since Parliament had deposed Richard II, found a pretext to rise against the Lancastrians, then represented by Henry VI who, as grandson of the king of France, Charles VI, had inherited his mental weakness.

Civil war broke out between the two factions (1460), one using as symbol the white rose of York and the other the red rose of Lancaster. This was the terrible Wars of the Roses, during which the English nobility was exterminated and which ended by the restoration of the Yorkist family in the person of Edward IV (1471).

During the civil war which several times led to the restoration or dethronement of the king[1], Parliament played a more and more active part in the government and, the nobility being decimated, the House of Commons became more important than the House of Lords.

On the death of Edward IV without descendants (1483), Richard III

[1] Henry VI was dethroned in 1461 and replaced by Edward IV; in 1470 Henry was restored to the throne and in 1471 Edward IV was finally restored.

reigned for two years (1483–1485). The crown then passed to Henry VII (1485–1509), the heir of both the Yorkists and the Lancastrians.

His accession, which inaugurated the Tudor dynasty, put an end to the feudal crisis and restored peace. The nobles no longer had any real power against the king. Only twenty-nine lay peers remained in the House of Lords. Henry replenished it with his creations; a new nobility was formed, of royal origin, which was to support the monarchical policy in Parliament.

The royal prerogatives had been usurped by the nobles during the Wars of the Roses. Henry VII re-established his authority by instituting a High Court of Justice, the Star Chamber, which was to play in England a role very similar to that played in France by the *Parlement de Paris*. A reformed procedure introduced the use of torture, which was in use on the continent, and, following the trend of the times, the principles of classical Roman law. A council was set up in Wales and invested with a similar competence. In 1537 Henry VIII created a third body, the 'Northern Court', for the northern counties of England.

The reorganization of the House of Lords involved also that of the House of Commons. Parliament, as organized by Edward III, had represented—like the States-General in France—the privileged bodies, the clergy, the nobles and the cities. But in the course of the Hundred Years War the seigniorial régime had been wiped out. Among the people of the countryside liberty had replaced serfdom. As in France, perpetual tenure had been replaced by leasehold. The land, acquired by the middle classes, began to be the object of speculation in rising values. The development of the cloth industry and the export of wool to Flanders impelled both old and new landowners to go in for sheep-farming; profiting by the civil war, a number of them had seized the village commons and enclosed them, thus depriving the peasants of the rights of usage which they held. The yeoman class, liberated from serfdom, found itself menaced by a fresh danger which foreshadowed the growth of capitalism.

But Parliament, made up of landowners and business men, many of whom lived from cloth manufacture and the wool trade, was not interested in the peasants. The king made himself their protector. He forbade the demolition of their houses, in order to prevent the illegal seizure of their land. And, to make them a social force, he introduced them into Parliament.

As in France, where a similar reform had been carried out a little earlier (1484), the middle classes now ceased to be the sole representatives of the third estate; not only the cities but the counties now elected their members. The right to vote was granted to every man holding land of

forty shillings annual revenue. Public law made an important step forward, granting political rights not only to birth but to property. The régime of property qualification had been born.

By introducing representation of the country people into Parliament, Henry VII tried to create a party favourable to his interests in the House of Commons, not so much to make Parliament the representative organ of the country as to paralyse its activity. He summoned it as little as possible. In Ireland he went even farther and imposed on Parliament a statute (1494) forbidding it to vote any decision which had not previously been approved by the king. His reign, as that of Charles VIII in France, inaugurated the monarchical policy. To put it into effect Henry VII governed with the help of new men of lowly origin, whom he allowed to traffic in justice and in reprieves and to impose heavy taxes on the corporations in exchange for recognition of their privileges, so that he could obtain revenues without having to ask them of Parliament. These abuses permitted him to govern without having to ask for fresh aid from the country; on his death he left a reserve of one million eight hundred thousand pounds sterling.

It was possible for Henry VII to draw such great sums from fiscal resources, because his reign coincided with the great material development which marked the beginnings of capitalism in England. To maintain its centralizing policy the monarchy naturally favoured the economic interests of the merchant middle class, which became the basis of the financial power of the kingdom.

On the other hand the serious defeat which ended the Hundred Years War had finally dissuaded England from carrying on wars for continental leadership. Every thing now tended towards a policy of commercial expansion, which was never again to be renounced.

Such a policy presupposed a close alliance with the Netherlands, the gateway of England to the continent. Willy nilly England had to keep watch, even at the price of war, to prevent France from laying her hands on Flanders. This policy also led her to keep a bridgehead on the Channel—Calais, Boulogne or Dunkirk—not for military reasons but for economic ends.

This was the reason for Henry VII's intervention in the Netherlands after the defeat of Charles the Bold in support of Maximilian of Austria against Louis XI, and for his desire to obtain recognition, by the Treaty of Etaples (1492), not only of his possession of Calais but also of Boulogne. By her support of the Netherlands, England also aimed at obtaining advantages there. Flanders and England had become competitors in the cloth

industry. As soon as the war with France was over, Henry VII extorted a favourable trade treaty from the Netherlands (1493) and when they demurred he forced their hand by temporarily removing the wool staple from Antwerp, where it had not long been set up, to Calais.

When Henry VII came to the throne England had still been essentially an agricultural country. But if its four million inhabitants were now beginning to play a great role in the world, it was thanks to its strong middle class which, by developing the cloth industry and by establishing ever wider trade relations with Venice, the Netherlands, the Teutonic Hansa cities and Castile, never ceased to increase the prosperity of the kingdom, in whose government it was getting ready to play a predominant role.

Already England was taking her place with Spain and Portugal as a maritime nation. The Bristol shipowners, in their search for markets, took the initiative in expeditions to West Africa; and Christopher Columbus had scarcely discovered America when the Genoese John Cabot, who had become an English admiral, landed in Labrador and Nova Scotia (1497–1498).

4. THE IMPERIAL POLICY OF CHARLES THE BOLD

During the Hundred Years War the Netherlands, whose trade interests linked them with England whence they imported the wool which was the raw material for their valuable cloth industry, were closely united around the dukes of Burgundy. A new state was formed, of differing races and languages, whose common aspirations for freedom, born of their trade, had already made a nation.

Philip the Good (1419–1467) had respected the institutions of the different principalities of the Netherlands, leaving the cities their privileges and the principalities their 'estates', which were summoned to receive the oath of loyalty to their national institutions which was sworn by the sovereign, and to vote the taxes. But he had subordinated them to a central government. From 1463 a States-General, made up of deputies elected by the various provincial estates, had had its seat at Brussels; the monarchy was founded on national cohesion. An Audit Chamber was set up at Lille to centralize the financial administration. Charles the Bold (1467–1477) completed these institutions by making Malines the administrative centre of the Netherlands and by setting up there, above the courts of justice of the principalities, the Great Council which acted as a Supreme Court.

By the Peace of Arras (1439), which had reconciled Philip the Good and Charles VII, the frontier of the states of Burgundy had been advanced to

the Somme. Stretching over the Netherlands, the duchy of Burgundy and Franche-Compté, they encircled France on the north and east.

The Netherlands were, with northern Italy, the wealthiest countries of western Europe; Bruges was the great northern, as Venice the great southern, port. Antwerp was beginning to come to the fore. The ships of Holland and Zeeland were disputing the mastery of the Baltic with the Teutonic Hansa. A concentration of trade, and consequently of wealth, coincided in the Netherlands with an astonishing artistic and intellectual renascence. Painting, with van Eyck, Memling, de la Pasture, letters with Commines and Chastelain, shone there with a brilliance as vivid as in Italy, where the Renaissance was being heralded by the frescoes of Fra Angelico, Ghirlandaio, Botticelli, Benozzo Gozzoli and many others, and where the return to antiquity was already confirmed in the busts of della Robbia and the philological learning of Marsilio Ficino. In the second half of the 15th century the Netherlands and Tuscany were the most influential centres of civilization, which found worthy surroundings in the refined and lettered courts of the 'Grand Duke of the West' at Genappes and of Lorenzo the Magnificent at Florence.

During the Hundred Years War, the alliance of England and the Netherlands had nearly been fatal to France. A duel was imminent between Louis XI, who wanted to complete French unity by annexing Flanders and Burgundy, and Charles the Bold, who formed the vast plan of building up a great Lotharingian kingdom between France and Germany.

To carry out his plan Charles occupied Alsace and Lorraine. The population of his states then amounted to about six million inhabitants, as much as Spain and more than England. The ancient Lotharingia, formerly created by the Treaty of Verdun, was restored along the great trade-route from Venice to Bruges, which had originally given it birth.

The policy of Charles was to meet opposition from the king of France and the emperor who barred his way. He did not hesitate to defy both. He set himself up as leader of the revolt of the great vassals against Louis XI by forming the League of Public Good with the duke of Brittany, the duke of Bourbon and the king's brother himself, who held Berry as an appanage. But Louis's victory over the Burgundian army at Montlhéry (1465) broke up the League; and it was the diplomacy of the king to incite resistance to the duke among the Flemish cities, which were hostile to his radical centralizing policy, and the free burghers of Liège who wanted to keep their independence.[1]

To counter the hostility of the emperor, Charles formed the plan of

[1] Liège was an independent episcopal principality.

getting himself elected King of the Romans by bribing the electors. He sought, quite naturally, support for his imperialist policy in the traditional alliance of the Netherlands with England and in 1468 married Margaret of York, sister of King Edward IV. England was then engaged in the Wars of the Roses. Charles supported Edward IV, while Louis XI, to oppose him, intervened in support of Henry VI of Lancaster. When in 1470 Henry VI won, his restoration led to the first Anglo-French entente, an important date in the history of the West. But it was only a momentary flash. The final victory of Edward IV in 1471 restored England to the Burgundian alliance. A policy of joint hegemony was then determined upon by the king of England and the powerful duke of Burgundy. By the Treaty of London (1474), they planned the partition of France. Edward IV was to get the crown, but he was to cede Normandy, Champagne and the county of Nevers to Charles the Bold.

Charles had great financial and military resources at his disposal. They encouraged him in his imperial ambitions, like the Hohenstaufen, the Angevins and the House of Aragon before him. The empire could no longer be conceived save based on the sea, the source of wealth and consequently of power. Charles possessed the Netherlands and Burgundy, and he formed the plan of linking them with the Mediterranean by forcing the old king, René of Anjou, to cede him the kingdom of Naples. A new conception was formed of a continental empire, relying upon the sea both in the Netherlands and in Italy. It foreshadowed the empire of Charles V.

The war with France, foreseen by the Treaty of London, broke out in 1475. Edward IV landed in force at Calais. But Charles, instead of supporting him, embarked on an expedition intended to intimidate the emperor and invested Neuss on the Rhine. Edward IV, who was counting on a revolt of the French nobles against Louis XI, found himself isolated, gave up the campaign and, after paying a heavy indemnity, re-embarked his troops (Treaty of Amiens, 1475), while, having failed before Neuss, Charles occupied Lorraine. But the Swiss cantons at this time undertook a policy of westward expansion. Charles marched against them, but was defeated at Grandson and at Morat. The duke of Lorraine hastened to return to Nancy, where Charles was killed fighting against him in 1477.

The imperial dream of the 'Grand Duke of the West' collapsed. The moment was favourable for Louis XI. The centralizing and imperialist policy of Charles the Bold had aroused the hostility of the communes and the Estates in the Netherlands. The States-General demanded the restoration of the autonomy of the cities and principalities. The Bur-

Map No. 18

THE STATES OF CHARLES THE BOLD (1467-1477)
Frisia
See of Utrecht
Amsterdam
See
Holland
Utrecht
Guelders
Rotterdam
Zeeland
Munster
Cleves
HOLY
Ecloo
Damme
Bruges
Antwerp
Brabant
Neuss
Calais
(Engl.)
Ghent
Malines
ROMAN
Cassel
Flanders
See of Liège
Boulogne
Ypres
Courtrai
Brussels
Cologne
Lille
Aix-la-Ch.
EMPIRE
Artois
Tournai
Limbourg
Orchies
Douai
Namur
Hainault
Liège
Dinant
See of Cambrai
Arras
Maintz
Abbeville
Luxembourg
Amiens
Peronne
Bouillon
Luxemburg
Trier
Rouen
Laon
Beauvais
Rheims
See of Verdun
See of Metz
KINGDOM
OF
Paris
Chalons
Montlhéry
Bar
See of Toul
Alsace
FRANCE
Seine
Strasbourg
Montereau
Troyes
Lorraine
Orleans
Fribourg
Mulhouse
Franche
Loire
Duchy of
Basle
Dijon
Besançon
0
100 Miles
Neuchâtel
Burgundy
Grandson
Berne
Morat
Low Countries
Chalon
Comté
Vaud
Burgundy and Franche-Comté
Lausanne
SWITZD.
Countries occupied or conquered
Geneva
Frontier between France and the Holy Roman Empire
Savoy
Lyon
E.G.M.

gundian states fell to pieces. Charles left as heir only a young girl of nineteen, Mary of Burgundy, to defend them. Louis hastened to seize the cities of the Somme, of Artois and of Burgundy. He might also have tried to annex the Netherlands, but realizing perhaps that this would have aroused national reactions which would have involved him in a war whose outcome was uncertain, he preferred to partition them between French and German princes, so that at least their unity was destroyed.

Mary of Burgundy put an end to his plans by offering her hand to Maximilian of Hapsburg (1477). The dream of Charles the Bold began to come true, the very year of his death, to the profit of the Hapsburg dynasty. A new balance of power in Europe was being prepared.

The Hapsburgs Gain a Foothold in the Netherlands

The House of Austria, which had hitherto pursued a policy of expansion eastwards, thus suddenly gained a foothold in the Netherlands, the richest industrial country of the West.

By contrast to the national states, such as England, France and Spain, there was now created across the whole continent of Europe a purely dynastic empire, made up of politically, socially and economically disparate elements.

This was to have very serious consequences for Europe; established both in central Europe, still seigniorial and feudal, and in western Europe, monarchical and urban, the House of Hapsburg was forced to carry on an anachronistic imperial policy inherited from the Holy Empire, which was to lead to great general wars. And the national monarchies of the West, involved in constant struggles on the continent, were to be deflected from their normal evolution which more and more looked seaward.

The marriage of Mary of Burgundy with Maximilian of Austria, which was the most important political event of the 15th century, did not immediately appear in its true light either to the Netherlands or to the neighbouring powers. In reaction against the centralizing policy of Charles the Bold, the Belgian and Dutch provinces dreamed only of recovering their local privileges which had fallen into disuse. It was only on the death of Mary of Burgundy (1482) that Maximilian seemed to them an intruder and they tried, too late, to shake off his guardianship.

Drawn seaward, the policy of Maximilian was henceforth to be dominated not by his ancestral states of Austria but by the Netherlands, which made him one of the most powerful princes of Europe. Quite naturally he reverted to the Burgundian tradition of alliance with England. To try to recover the cities of the Somme and Burgundy which Louis XI had

seized, he engaged in the first of the Hapsburg wars against France, with the support of England. It ended without result with the Peace of Senlis (1493). But it began a new era in the history of Europe.

5. BIRTH OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION

The Gothard Route Creates Switzerland

Switzerland emerged from the war against Charles the Bold as a military power. It represented a completely new type of state in Europe; it was a federation of republics.

It was created by the direct influence of the great trade-route formed in the 11th century from Venice to Bruges. The Gothard Pass, opened in the 12th century, had risen to great commercial importance by the 13th, when it had been possible to build a bridge over the Reuss. The peasants of the Uri district, who lived in poverty among their mountains, forsook agriculture to devote themselves to the transport of the goods sent by the Italian merchants over the Gothard Pass. Like the men of Schwyz, the poverty of their lands had enabled them to escape the manorial régime. They formed, under the political rule of their Hapsburg lords, a rural community. The profits of their carrying trade soon permitted them to buy themselves out of their seigniorial services.

In the Unterwald, on the contrary, the seigniorial régime, which had reduced the peasants to serfdom, did not permit the people to ransom themselves as the people of Schwyz and Uri had been able to do.

When he became emperor in 1273 Rudolph of Hapsburg wanted to consolidate his resources. He sent tax-gatherers into the Swiss lands to levy tolls on the caravans crossing the Gothard. He thus aroused a lively opposition which at the time of his death (1291) had degenerated into a revolt. The serfs of Unterwald formed a coalition with the free communities of Uri and Schwyz and the three cantons formed a 'sworn confederation' to safeguard their common independence.[1]

In 1315 Leopold of Austria, who wished to put the cantons under his seigniorial rule was defeated by the insurgent peasants at Morgarten; Switzerland had been created.

The Gothard route ended at Lucerne where a town of burghers had been formed in the 13th century. By the beginning of the 14th century it was drawn into the main democratic current, which was shown along all the international trade-routes, from the great cities of the Netherlands

[1] It was a similar phenomenon to the 'sworn communes' of Flanders and had a similar cause, the need of freedom demanded by the movement of trade. What gave it a special character in Switzerland was that it affected not a middle class but a rural population.

Mulhouse
ALSACE
SEE OF BASLE
FRANCHE
COMTE
Doubs
Besançon
Neuchatel
Grandson
Morat
Fribourg
DUCHY OF Vaud
Lausanne
Geneva
SEE OF GENEVA
SAVOY
Rhône
Basle
Rhine
Habsburg
Aare
Berne
Lake of the Four Cantons
Lucerne
ZURICH
Schaffenhausen
DUCHY OF SWABIA
Constance
St. Gallen
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
St. Morgarten
St. Gotthard
Ticino
Sion
(Villages)
SEE
Rhône
SEE
Chur
GRISONS
(Villages)
TYROL
COUNTY OF
SEE OF AUGSBURG
DUCHY OF BAVARIA
Lech
DUCHY OF Valtellina
Lugano
Como
MILAN
REPUBLIC OF VENICE
SEE
Trieste
Adige
THE EIGHT CANTONS OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION BEFORE 1481
Cantons of:
1. Uri 2. Schwyz 3. Unterwalden
4. Lucerne 5. Zurich 6. Zug
7. Berne 8. Glarus
International route of Italian trade
0
60
Miles

Map No. 19

to Paris and northern Italy and then to Rome and even the Byzantine Empire. Up till then Lucerne had been governed by the leading burghers who relied upon the Hapsburgs against the popular party. But in 1332 the democrats seized power; they at once looked for support from the Swiss cantons, to whose alliance they made Lucerne adhere.

At Zurich silk-weaving, imported from Italy over the Gothard Pass, brought wealth to the city which led to the appearance of a rich business middle class as well as a numerous population of workers. Both the former aristocracy and the popular party rose against the dominant influence of this middle class and in 1336 the popular party in revolt seized power. As at Lucerne, the democratic government made Zurich adhere to the Swiss Confederation (1351).

Berne was founded earlier as a military and feudal fortified city, manned by knights. Situated on the route from the Gothard to the Rhine, a middle class community had been formed within its walls. In 1350 this class had seized power from the nobles. In their turn they joined the confederation, thus assuring themselves support against seigniorial reaction, the safety of their trade relations and peace with Zurich, whose commercial competition they feared.

The trade-route thus reconciled the rural population and the middle class who lived from trade in a common league for the defence of their liberties.

By forming a federation the Swiss cities and cantons affirmed their independence of the Hapsburgs, their lawful seigneurs. In 1386 Leopold III of Austria undertook a campaign against them, but his cavalry was defeated at Sempach by the Swiss militia, as the cavalry of Philip the Fair had been beaten in 1302 at Courtrai by the Flemish militia. Thenceforward, the alliance became a real political community which organized a Diet to guarantee the safety of traffic on the routes upon which their prosperity depended. A republican state was created, by the union of eight cantons; the war against the powerful Hapsburg family compelled it to organize a military force which, relying on the democratic militias, could put an army of eighty thousand men into the field.[1]

Struggle With the Duke of Burgundy for the Rhine

Forced by the need for defence and of securing its economic prosperity and the necessity of obtaining food, the confederation now became a

[1] Similarly, in the 16th century, along the same trade-route, the United Provinces, in revolt against the Spanish Hapsburgs, were to form a federative republic, while the need to fight the Spanish fleets was to make them a great naval power.

state, extending along the Italian trade-route to the Rhine which was both its origin and the reason for its existence. To confirm its control of the Gothard Pass, it occupied Valais to the south and extended westward as far as the Rhine, laying hands on the Aargau and trying to reach Mulhouse.

The great economic prosperity which accompanied the beginnings of capitalism in the 15th century had necessarily a reaction on Switzerland which lived from transit trade. The cities grew wealthy. Berne, close to the Rhine, took the lead. But if the rural cantons of Lucerne were centred on the Gothard, Berne looked towards the Rhine. Its interests lay in Alsace. It coveted Strasbourg. But at that time, at the northern end of the Italian trade-route, in Flanders, the dukes of Burgundy had built a powerful state on the wealth of the cities of Flanders and Brabant which, attached to Burgundy, also coveted the Rhine. Charles the Bold had already occupied Lorraine and Alsace; he then aimed at acquiring Naples. Once installed in Italy and Strasbourg, he held the trade of Switzerland at his mercy. Berne declared war upon him which was to end with the Swiss victories of Morat and Grandson. The death of Charles at Nancy (1477), which meant the collapse of his great plans, allowed the Swiss Confederation to incorporate Fribourg and Soleure.

The victory of the confederation coincided with the zenith of the prosperity of the cities. Throughout Europe the capitalist class was taking control of affairs. It was the same in Switzerland, where its ascendancy was shown in an attempt by the cities to subjugate the country districts. The result, in 1477, was a very serious internal crisis. The country people rushed to pillage the cities, but they were finally crushed (1481).[1] Poverty forced the peasants to enlist as mercenaries in the service of the kings of France, who were then carrying on the imperialist policy which was to lead to the Italian wars.

Swiss Independence Recognized by the Emperor Maximilian

The death of Charles the Bold had put an end to his plans, but they were to be revived in a wider framework after the marriage of Mary of Burgundy with Maxmilian of Hapsburg. Thanks to the power he got from the Netherlands, the Holy Empire recovered in his reign (1493–1519) a lustre which it had not known since the times of Frederic Barbarossa. In 1495 the Diet of Worms approved, on his demand, a tax which all the subjects of the empire had to pay. The Swiss Confederation refused to

[1] It was the prototype of the Peasants' Wars which were to break out in Swabia at the beginning of the Reformation (1524).

pay it and did not hesitate to open hostilities against the emperor. It won. Defeated in the Swabian war, Maximilian was forced to recognize the independence of the confederation (1499), which was soon increased by two fresh members, Basle and Schaffhausen (1501).

Victorious over both the duke of Burgundy and the Emperor Maximilian, with a foothold on the Rhine at Basle, and mistress of the Gothard route, Switzerland took her place among the military and economic powers. She did not hesitate to plunge into an imperialist policy, like France and Spain, which aimed at both Milan and Dijon.

6. MONARCHICAL CENTRALIZATION IN SPAIN

Policy of Dynastic Union

French policy, while aiming at incorporating Flanders in the north, wanted, in the south, to drive back the kingdom of Aragon to the far side of the Pyrenees. The revolt of Barcelona against the centralizing policy of King John II allowed Louis XI, first by declaring himself the protector of the Catalans, and then, when faced with the proud refusal of Barcelona to let itself be protected, by an alliance with John II against his subjects, to prepare for an intervention which was to lead to the annexation of Catalonia by France (1462).[1] But John II was fully aware of this; he approached England, Burgundy, Milan and Naples. Louis XI, surrounded by enemies, temporized.

Pursuing in Spain a policy identical to that which Philip the Good had carried on in the Netherlands, John II tried to achieve the unity of his states by dynastic marriages. The marriage of his son Ferdinand with Isabella, heiress of Castile (1469), was its master-stroke. A last effort had however to be made—in Spain as in France—to break the resistance of the nobles. Whereas Louis XI found himself compelled, in order to complete the unity of France, to destroy the League of Public Good formed by the last of the great vassals, so John II had to struggle against the nobles for several years to assure the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella. During this struggle, in order to assure the neutrality of Louis XI, he ceded to him Roussillon and Cerdagne.

When Ferdinand V (1479–1516) ascended the throne of Aragon, the unity of Spain had been achieved; only Navarre and Portugal were outside his authority. United under a single rule, the Spanish kingdoms of Castile, Leon, Aragon, Valencia, Majorca and the county of Barcelona

[1] It will be recalled that the county of Barcelona had been a part of the French kingdom until the reign of Louis IX, who ceded it to the king of Aragon.

preserved their autonomy and, with their institutions, their own *cortes*.[1]

Monarchical Unity Through Catholic Unity

Ferdinand and Isabella sought to unite their various kingdoms in a single political entity; two institutions only were common to all the Spanish states—the monarchy and the Catholic church. Ferdinand, breaking both with political autonomy and religious tolerance, was to make them the twofold basis of Spanish unity.

This could only be conceived under a single sovereignty; it was necessary, therefore, to destroy, first of all, the last vestiges of power still possessed by the higher nobility. Ferdinand denied it the right of private war and subordinated it to the royal justice; to eliminate private wars a court of summary procedure was set up presided over by the king's council assisted by two assessors. In order to reduce the social authority of the nobles and to favour the peasants, feudal rights were systematically reduced and the last traces of serfdom suppressed.

The Church too did not escape the centralizing policy of the king, who reserved for himself the appointment of high clerical dignitaries and limited the competence of the ecclesiastical courts.

The *cortes*, where the city deputies now sat alone, which had revolted against the monarchical policy of John II were only occasionally summoned. A sales tax was imposed for all transactions in the cities, customs dues were levied and ecclesiastical tithes were paid to the crown; these charges and the confiscation of the estates of the military orders allowed the king to avoid recourse to the *cortes*, without however openly denying them the right to vote subsidies.[2] Financially independent, the crown attacked the autonomy of the cities: the Council of One Hundred which governed Barcelona was divested of authority, and royal counsellors were appointed to all urban administrations.

The royal power, entrusted to councils of legists, was organized on the ruins of the former mediaeval institutions. Jurisdiction and finances were centralized under the royal authority. A regular army was formed, on the basis of military service for one man in twelve, where the lesser nobility found a source of employment.

The First Religious Prosecutions

So great a reform of institutions, whose repercussions were felt among

[1] The political composition of Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella recalls very closely that of the Netherlands under Maximilian of Hapsburg.

[2] It was a similar policy to that carried out by Henry VII in England.

all social classes, must necessarily have been supported by a strong public opinion. As all absolutisms, monarchical absolutism must rely upon some ideology in order to be accepted and must set itself up as the champion of a collective fanaticism. Religious feeling was very lively in Spain, where it had inspired the *reconquista*. It was to be exploited by the monarchy. From the 12th century the kings of Aragon, despite their very lively faith, had made religious tolerance the mainstay of their policy. It would in any case have been impossible, during the 13th and 14th centuries, to persecute the Jews who controlled trade, or the Moors, craftsmen and husbandmen, without ruining Spain.

But little by little the Christians had begun to take part in trade activities; coming into competition with the Moors and the Jews, who formed the wealthy middle class, they had come to look on them as exploiters, and an opposition to them had become apparent in the cities. It was essentially a social movement, like that which ranged the proletariat against the burgher patricians in the Flemish cities. But all social movements in the Middle Ages had a religious aspect. In Spain, the opposition of the man in the street to the wealthy Jews and Moors took the form of religious conflict; in 1431 the first anti-Semitic troubles had broken out in several towns.

The Spanish sovereigns quite naturally sought to exploit this hostility, both social and religious, in order to make it a ferment of national unity. Breaking with the tradition of tolerance, they embarked on a policy of religious absolutism which was to support the royal authoritarianism. In the 13th century the kings of Aragon had refused to allow the Papal inquisition to be introduced into Spain; in 1481 Ferdinand himself created inquisitorial courts, not at first against infidels but against the 'ill-converted'. Once the principle had been admitted, it was bound to spread rapidly; half a century later it involved the crown in a racial policy.

After the appointment of Torquemada as Grand Inquisitor, the first pyres of the *autos-da-fé* were lighted. In Aragon the Jews and the Moors, who held a leading place in the trade of the cities, rose in revolt. The crusade against the infidel was revived. In 1492 the great and wealthy city of Granada was attacked and surrendered. This triumph of Spain over Islam at a time when Christianity was suffering such terrible setbacks in eastern Europe—in 1453 Constantinople had been taken by the Turks, who invaded the Balkans and Hungary—won for Ferdinand the title of 'Catholic King' which was conferred on him by the Pope, Alexander VI Borgia. The surrender terms guaranteed the Moors of Granada free

exercise of their religion and the safety of their persons and their goods. But what was the worth of an oath given to infidels? The same year an order was given that all Jews must be converted or leave Spain. They emigrated in great numbers to Portugal, where the people nourished a similar hatred for the Moorish craftsmen and the Jewish merchants as in Spain. In 1496 Manoel the Fortunate took similar measures against them as had Ferdinand. This was to have the same disastrous consequences for Portugal as it had had for Spain. In 1502 it was applied in all Ferdinand's states, Granada included, to the Moslems.

Faith, however, played only a secondary role in these persecutions. For the crown, which was aiming at standardizing institutions throughout the country, the Moslems were a foreign and in some respects an unassimilable body since, after the *reconquista*, they had been living under their own laws. This had not been any hindrance to the system of autonomous states and privileged classes known to the Middle Ages; but the existence of a Moslem class was a real obstacle to the unifying work of a monarchy founded on religious unity. That was why it was the king, and not the Church, who had inaugurated the inquisition, supplementing it by racial measures intended to exclude from state service anyone who had a Moorish or Jewish ancestor. The emigration of the Moors and Jews to Africa, which had begun as soon as the inquisition courts had begun their work, increased. Three hundred thousand of them left Spain.[1] From the economic viewpoint this was a disaster. Up till then Spain had competed with Flanders and Italy as an industrial power. It was to see its brilliant industries of silk, cloth of gold and silver, velvets, leather, jewellery and ceramics, in which the Moors had excelled, rapidly decline, as well as the exploitation of the silver and lead mines of the Sierra Morena.

But the royal treasury was enormously enriched. The properties of the persecuted, as well as those of the emigrants, were to all intents and purposes confiscated to the advantage of the treasury. The policy of monarchical centralization upon which the king was engaged demanded huge resources. The confiscation of the properties of the Jews and Moors was the best means of procuring them without having to ask them of the *cortes*. Instead of practising a financial policy which would have aroused opposition throughout the country, the king enflamed the fanaticism of the people by his persecutions and at the same time filled his own treasury. The royal revenue when Ferdinand ascended the throne was eight hundred thousand *reals*; thanks to his racial policy the treasury, at the

[1] Spain had then about six million inhabitants.

close of his reign, held the immense sum of twenty-six million *reals*.[1]

To replace the expelled Jews and Moors, Ferdinand appealed to Italian and Flemish craftsmen who were, naturally, far from able to compensate for the economic losses of the country. But foreigners began to come into Spain and less than a century later all the trade and all the financial business of the country passed through their hands. The monarchy, moreover, had never renounced the policy of economic expansion which had been carried on by Aragon and Castile. But by the middle of the fourteenth century Castilian shipping had declined in importance because of internal wars; and Barcelona, after the Turkish conquests, saw the decline of the great trade which the occupation of Africa had allowed it to build up in the Levant.

Ferdinand and Isabella did all that they could to find fresh outlets for their sea-borne trade. Like Portugal, whose caravels set out to discover the coasts of Africa and which opened up, by doubling the Cape of Good Hope, a route to India which was free from Turkish control, they supported the expedition that Christopher Columbus was to undertake to try and reach India by sailing westward and which, in 1492, was to lead to the discovery of America.

[1] At the same time in England Henry VIII could only raise, by normal means, a reserve of one million eight hundred thousand pounds sterling.

CHAPTER XX

THE MONARCHICAL POLICY OF THE HOLY SEE AND ITALY

I. THE MONARCHICAL POLICY OF THE PAPACY

The Government of the Avignon Popes

THE monarchical policy which was to form all the Western states in the 15th century had far-reaching repercussions on the policy of the Holy See. During their residence at Avignon (1305–1377) the Popes gave the Church a centralized government of monarchical type. To assist the Pope there was a Privy Council, the Curia; the administrative services were presided over by a vice-chancellor and a wise judiciary organization was created—Consistory for matters of high policy, Cardinals' courts for current cases, the Audiences for questions of ecclesiastical benefices,[1] Penitentiary for matters of spiritual jurisdiction (for example, absolution for certain sins). The most important of all was the financial administration known as the Apostolic Chamber. It was directed by a chamberlain. As well as the revenue from the church estates, the Peter's pence levied throughout Christendom, the tenths collected for the crusades and the quotas paid by the princes who were vassals of the Holy See, there were fresh imposts; the *expectative*, paid for the promise of future benefices, the *annate*, representing one year's revenue due to the Holy See at every vacancy of a benefice, the *relicts*, by virtue of which the Pope inherited from the prelates who had not left a will, and the common services paid on the occasion of a Papal blessing.

For the collection of these numerous imposts Christendom was divided into *collectorates* (there were fifteen of them in France); the sums collected were deposited with bankers who remitted them to the Pope through letters of credit. The pontifical finances, extending over all countries, were one of the principal factors in the development of credit facilities in the 15th century.

[1] Later to take the name of the Sacred Rota.

The regal luxury of the court at Avignon resulted in a fiscal harshness in the pontifical administration which aroused the vehement protests of Dante, of Petrarch and of St Brigit. It was the beginning of the downfall of the moral prestige of the Holy See, which was to plunge the Church into the crisis of the Great Schism.

The Avignon Popes, imitating the kings of France, inaugurated a policy of personal authority. From 1311 they no longer summoned Councils.

Anarchy at Rome and the Great Schism

Meanwhile in the Papal states, which were prey to almost total anarchy, the local feudal lords had seized power. But the people of Rome reacted. In 1347, at the time of the great revolutionary movements which were constantly troubling the Flemish cities and Florence, a popular tribune, Cola di Rienzo, after expelling the nobles, set up a democratic tyranny in the ancient imperial city which aimed at making Italy a federation of communes, as a few years earlier Jacques van Artevelde had done in Flanders and as Etienne Marcel was to try to do in France a few years later. Cola di Rienzo was killed in 1354 during a counter-revolution—like van Artevelde and Etienne Marcel—and Rome fell back into anarchy once more.

The return of the Pope, Gregory XI, to the city of St Peter in 1377 was not enough to put an end to this. For a long time Rome continued in political chaos, often drenched in blood by the conflicts between influential families.

Anarchy found its way into the Church itself when the French cardinals refused to recognize Urban VI, elected Pope at Rome in 1378, and set up Clement VII against him at Avignon. This was the beginning of the Great Schism which was to last for forty years (1377–1417). The existence of two Popes, one at Avignon, the other at Rome, both of whom claimed to administer the Church, to control the revenues of the Holy See and to appoint bishops, plunged Christendom into indescribable confusion. The king of France and the University of Paris tried in vain to heal the schism. The Council of Pisa (1409) tried to put an end to it by electing Alexander V as the only Pope; but the Popes of Rome and Avignon both refused to abdicate. There were then three Popes. Christianity, faced with so great a scandal, broke with Rome. In England, Wycliffe, a professor at Oxford University, demanded that the Papal authority be rejected, as well as the sacraments and everything which had been added to the gospels (1382); in Bohemia, John Huss, rector of Prague University, professed similar ideas.

At this time the Czech people were a prey to social movements which recalled those which, for more than half a century, had been agitating the cities of Flanders and Tuscany, before reaching Rome and Paris. The dogmatic heresy of Wycliffe and Huss, combined with the popular religious fervour, began to resemble a communist revolution. Anarchy threatened to dissolve all social ties. Faced with these social dangers, the Church reunited.

Struggle Between the Pope and the Councils

The Council of Constance sent John Huss to the stake (1415), re-established the unity of the Papal authority in the person of Martin V and set out to give the Church a constitution which would prevent the recurrence of any similar crisis. England, which had just triumphed in the war with France and was the greatest political force of the times, drew closer to the Holy See and took up the struggle with the Lollard heresy. But England was a parliamentary monarchy. In the times of French supremacy the Avignon Popes had copied the monarchical policy of Philip the Fair. In reaction against this policy, the Council of Constance proclaimed the superiority of Councils over the Pope and decided that a Council should meet every ten years. The French members proposed that the cardinals be chosen from lists drawn up by the different nations; the cardinals were grouped in the Council according to nationality. This was the distant origin of national tendencies within the Church which led in the end to Gallicanism. It was decided that each state must henceforward be represented in the Sacred College. Parliamentarianism and the idea of nationality penetrated into the Church, replacing mediaeval universalism. The Pope, however, refused to be kept in leading strings and began the contest with the Council. The Council was supported by the kings, and especially by Charles VII who, now victorious, aimed at freeing himself from Papal authority and at ruling the Church within his own kingdom. But the Council, who wished to govern the Church, had no wish to abdicate in favour of the rulers. It replied to the pretensions of Charles VII by assuming the administration of all church revenues. The monarchies claimed precisely this right of disposing of the ecclesiastical revenue and from then onward ceased to support the Council.

Triumph of the Monarchical Policy of the Holy See

At that time (1438) the emperor of Constantinople, John VIII, came to the Council, which was then sitting at Florence, with a large suite of

prelates and doctors, to ask for Papal aid against the Turks and to bring the Pope the immense success of the return of the Greek church to the authority of Rome. It was a success without morrow, for the people of Byzantium were to disavow their emperor, but at the time it assured the triumph of the Pope over the Council. The Council broke up without expressing its views on the plan for the reorganization of the Church. The monarchical policy of the Pope had triumphed.

But the power of the kings, ever greater, continually reduced the temporal authority of the Holy See. All its political fiefs, one after the other, became detached from it. The English parliament formally proclaimed the independent sovereignty of its kings; the kings of Aragon rejected the pontifical authority which extended over their lands and also over Sicily and Sardinia. As for the Holy Empire, its collapse involved that of the universal supremacy of the Pope. In France the royal authority, going beyond the political structure, claimed to control the temporal administration of the Church. At the same time as the Pope was triumphing over the Council, he was everywhere in conflict with monarchical power.

After a short struggle with Charles VII, who on his own authority summoned the French clergy to Bourges (1438) to get them to hand over to him the revenues from the ecclesiastical benefices, the Holy See resorted to compromise. In order to preserve its spiritual authority, it consented to share with the temporal rulers the revenues which the Avignon Popes had levied on the Church benefices. Concordats were signed, in 1447 with the emperor and in 1472 with Louis XI. The Church became reconciled to the political régime of the national states. At the same time it reorganized itself on a more and more centralized basis. Martin V made the Curia a real government. Order, now restored in Christendom, favoured the pontifical authority. The agitation aroused by the Councils was replaced by a great upsurge of faith; a fresh religious fervour appeared, adapted to the life of the times and without those social excesses which it had known since the 13th century. It found its expression in *The Imitation of Christ* (1430).

However, if the Pope had been unable to assure the triumph of his monarchical authority within the Church, he was still unable to seat his government in Rome itself. The immense financial power of the Holy See made it far too tempting a prey for the great Roman families not to try and seize it. The accession of one of their members to the tiara was an inexhaustible source of wealth. Even Martin V (died 1431), who had restored order in the Church, inaugurated, to the advantage of his rela-

tives of the Colonna family, a system of nepotism which was from then on to become firmly established at Rome. A struggle began between the Colonna and the Orsini families for the possession of the Holy See; the Colonna Pope Martin V was succeeded by Eugenius IV (died 1447), whose oligarchic government led to a fresh popular rising in Rome (1434). About that time a new movement was penetrating the Church: humanism. The Church followed in the footsteps of the renaissance of art and thought which was so vigorous in Italy at the beginning of the 15th century. The pontificate of Nicholas V (died 1455) was the first attempt to introduce humanism into the Church. It failed. The naval supremacy of Aragon was to install King Alfonso V at Naples (1443). Reverting to the imperial policy of the Hohenstaufen and the Angevins, he aimed at subjecting all Italy to his rule. Rome had always placed obstacles in the way of any political hegemony over Italy. To avoid this, Alfonso V managed to ensure the election of a Spanish Pope, Calixtus III Borgia (1455–1458).[1] This was the triumph of nepotism. Rome and the Curia were handed over to the Spaniards and, in particular, to the Borgia family.

Despite political trends humanism gained ground. In reaction against the nepotism of Calixtus III, Pius II Piccolomini obtained the tiara in 1458. Under his pontificate Rome became the great intellectual and artistic centre which it was to remain for more than a century.

2. THE FAILURE OF MONARCHICAL POLICY IN ITALY

Attempts at Monarchical Unity

Alone of the countries of the West, Italy escaped monarchical centralization. None the less, all the great sovereign families of Europe had tried unceasingly to unify it since the 13th century. After the dramatic struggle between the Hohenstaufen and the Holy See, the Angevins had revived the monarchical policy of Frederic II, but instead of working against the Pope they had hoped to achieve it with his support. The rivalry of the Aragonese, who took Sicily from them in 1285, prevented them from doing so. In the 14th century it was the Emperors Henry VII of Luxembourg (1308–1313) and Louis of Bavaria (1314–1347) who, unable to impose their rule on the Germanic feudal chaos, launched out on a monarchical policy for Italy. But Henry VII, despite the support that he found in the party of which Dante made himself the immortal champion,

[1] It was a revival of the Angevin policy which, to increase its hold on Italy, had had a French Pope, Clement IV, appointed (died 1268).

was halted by the opposition of the powerful city republics. Louis of Bavaria clashed with the policy of the king of Naples, Robert of Anjou, who, with the support of the Avignon Popes, tools of French policy, also tried to extend his rule over the whole of Italy. But in its turn, his policy was to meet with opposition from the Holy See and the cities; he too failed.

When the Holy See was resident at Avignon, Pope John XXII (1316–1334) conceived the plan of making Italy a conglomeration of fiefs directly dependent on the Papacy. For this he relied on the House of France which through the Angevins held Naples and Hungary, and on the House of Luxembourg which held the crown of Bohemia. War against England was imminent. The king of France, Philip VI, had made an alliance with the king of Bohemia, John the Blind, against Edward III of England, allied to the Emperor Louis of Bavaria. Naples was a fief of the Holy See. John XXII excommunicated Louis of Bavaria and, asserting his suzerainty over northern Italy, gave it in fief to the king of Bohemia, John the Blind. A joint hegemony of the Houses of France and Bohemia[1] was being prepared under the aegis of the Pope. But the cities, to prevent John the Blind from unifying northern Italy, formed the League of Ferrara (1331) against him, and the plan of John XXII failed.

The Hundred Years War and the Hussite revolt destroyed the hegemony of the kings of France and the kings of Bohemia. In 1443 Alfonso V of Aragon seized the kingdom of Naples from the Angevins and, having had a Spanish Pope—Calixtus III—elected in Rome, revived their Italian policy.

Till that time every monarchical policy, for the past two centuries, had proved to be impossible in Italy, partly because of the existence of the States of the Church and partly because of the power of the city republics. Lacking a national royal house, which would have centralized Italy under its rule, to make a nation of it as the monarchy had done in France, England, Spain and the Netherlands, Italy, whose immense wealth made her an enviable prey, was to become the centre of attraction for all policies of dynastic hegemony.

Monarchical Evolution of Milan and the Italian Cities

It was not so much the cities as the Popes who were the main obstacle

[1] The House of Luxembourg-Bohemia held the imperial crown with Henry VII (1308–1311), and after the reign of Louis of Bavaria (1314–1347) recovered it again with Charles IV (1347–1378).

to the unification of Italy. In fact, from the end of the 13th century, the cities, which had become territorial states, were themselves involved in the monarchical current which was everywhere triumphant in the West. At Milan the Visconti seized power in 1276; after exercising a sort of republican tyranny for a hundred and twenty years, they became dukes in 1396. From then on, Milan was a monarchical state.

In the course of the 14th century the Gonzagas at Mantua, the Estes at Ferrara and the della Scala at Verona imposed their personal and hereditary rule. Even the powerful republic of Genoa passed under the semi-monarchical authority of a doge.

So, one after the other, the cities of northern Italy, though remaining republics in theory, became in fact petty monarchies which divided the country among themselves.

In the 15th century the democratic régimes finally disappeared, at the time when, in France, Charles VII and Louis XI set up royal commissioners in the cities and when, in the Netherlands, the dukes of Burgundy were progressively reducing the autonomy of the great Flemish communes. Thus, in the 'Kingdom of Italy' attached to the German crown, the monarchical policy which the emperors had never been able to make practicable none the less triumphed, but within the framework of republican institutions which did not allow it to merge them into a single national entity because of the particularist traditions of the great cities.

Venetian Imperialism

Venice, the greatest Italian power, mistress of a Mediterranean empire extending over Istria, the Dalmatian coast, the Ionian islands and Crete, also abandoned, in 1423, the parliamentary régime. The parliament, instrument of the merchant middle classes, was suppressed and replaced by a Great Council of a hundred and eighty notables, entrusted with the election of the doge, within which the Council of Ten soon usurped the power. Governed thenceforth as an elective monarchy, Venice undertook a policy of expansion not only by sea but by land.

After the capture of St Jean d'Acre (1291), the island of Cyprus under the Lusignan kings[1] was the centre of Christianity and Latinity in the East. It had a considerable trade with Venice, Genoa and Barcelona in sugar-cane, gold embroidery and wine; it was, moreover, an important banking centre which exercised an incontestable trade hegemony over the feudal French and Catalan states of Greece. But Venice, which occupied

[1] The Lusignans had bought Cyprus in 1129 from the Templars.

the island of Euboea and which, throughout the existence of the Latin Empire of Constantinople, held all Byzantine trade in its hands, became more and more its rival. Italian finance made its way into Greece and became so powerful there that in the 14th century the French dukes of Athens had to hand over their power to Italian bankers who set themselves up as their successors. This Italian ascendancy soon spread to the island of Cyprus. In 1374 Genoa set up a bank at Famagusta and entrusted its administration to a limited company, whose power soon became greater than that of the kings of Cyprus. But Venice would not allow Genoa to reap all the benefits; by crushing the Genoese fleet in 1381 it finally seized the mastery of the seas.

The Genoese, who had supplanted the Venetians at Byzantium after the restoration of the Greek Empire (1261), were finally expelled in 1453 when the Turks took the city. Venice at once came to an understanding with the sultan and obtained from him a virtual monopoly of trade within the Ottoman Empire. In 1489 Venice annexed the island of Cyprus. Thenceforward she dominated the whole eastern Mediterranean without a rival. Her fleet numbered three thousand six hundred ships and her exports reached the enormous sum of ten million gold ducats annually.

But Milan, which had become a monarchy of absolutist type since the advent of the *condottiere* Francesco Sforza (1450), undertook a policy of expansion which aimed at incorporating all Lombardy. To keep Milan away from the coast, Venice decided to extend her rule over the mainland. Thenceforward there were continual wars between Venice and Milan, during which a Venetian state was created on terra firma, which extended over Vicenza, Verona and Padua. Milan, repulsed from the Adriatic, turned westward and enforced her rule over Genoa.

In the 15th century Venice played the role of a first-class power in Europe. It was the first state to accredit ambassadors to the European courts, who introduced diplomatic usages into international life.

Florence Under the Medici

At Florence republican institutions held out somewhat longer. After the social upheavals which had transferred the power from the popular party (1375) to the middle classes (1382) the banker Cosmo di Medici, without changing the forms of government exercised a *de facto* dictatorship (1434–1464) which, like the government of Pericles at Athens, marked the zenith of Florentine history. Like Milan, Florence became a real principality under the Medici dynasty and at the time of Lorenzo

the Magnificent (died 1492) had an incomparable artistic and intellectual splendour.

In 1494 the downfall of the Medici plunged Florence into violent crisis. In reaction against the oligarchic régime the people in a wave of religious fervour were led by the Dominican friar Savonarola, who tried to make Florence a fanatically pietist democracy. But Savonarola (1498) was condemned by the Pope and perished at the stake, and an authoritarian régime replaced the religious democracy. Florence came under the rule of a *gonfaloniere* appointed for life, recalling the rule of the Venetian doge. It then seemed, under Piero Soderini (1502–1512), in whose government Macchiavelli served as first chancellor of the Council of Ten, like an elective monarchy. But in moving towards a monarchical type of government Florence, like Milan and Venice, became involved in a territorial policy and annexed Arezzo, Livorno and finally Pisa, her traditional enemy who barred her way to the sea.

Thenceforward almost all northern Italy belonged to three states: Venice, Milan and Florence. All three bordered on the States of the Church which separated them from the kingdom of Naples.

Breakdown of the Monarchical Régime in Sicily and Naples

In 1412 Sicily had ceased to be a separate kingdom and was annexed to the kingdom of Aragon. Its economic importance, already greatly diminished by the fall of Byzantium (1453), declined rapidly to the advantage of Barcelona. After the downfall of the Hohenstaufen the monarchical institutions of Sicily withered away. The Angevins had brought with them in the 13th century a feudal conception of power and under the Aragonese, who were represented by viceroys, the influence of the nobles gained ground. The kingdom of Naples had a similar evolution. After it had passed into the power of the House of Aragon, after the death of René of Anjou (1443), it became more and more feudalized as its economic prosperity declined.

Failure of the Policy of Monarchical Unity Involves the Decadence of Italy

Thus, despite the splendour of its civilization and despite its wealth, Italy, torn between foreign dynasties and wearied of internal struggles, began to decline in the 15th century.

The capture of Constantinople by the Turks rallied the Italians for a time and, on the appeal of Pope Nicholas V, they signed the peace of Lodi (1454). But the rival interests of the petty sovereigns and their weakness in face of the social forces, urban and feudal, which preserved the

Map No. 20

ITALY AT THE PEACE OF LODI (1454)
Possessions of the Aragons
id. Venice
id. Genoa
Towns of more than 100,000 inhabitants
Swiss Confederation
Hapsburg States
Dy of Milan
See
REP. OF VENICE
Trento
Treviso
Trieste
KINGDOM OF HUNGARY
Duchy of Savoy
Milan
Brescia
Verona
Padua
Venice
Turin
Cremona
Mantua
Ferrara
Ravenna
Salazzo
Genoa
Modena
Bologna
SERBIA
FRANCE
Ligurian Sea
REP. OF GENOA
REP. OF LUCCA
Pisa
REP. OF FLORENCE
Zara
Dalmatia
Bosnia
Urbino
Ancona
Spalato
Sienna
PAPAL
Adriatic Sea
Montenegro
Bastia
STATES
Ragusa
Cattaro
Corsica
Rome
KINGDOM OF NAPLES
Durazzo
Bari
Gaeta
Naples
Tarento
Salerno
Otranto
Tyrrhenian Sea
Sardinia
Cagliari
Ionian Sea
Palermo
Messina
Reggio
Mediterranean Sea
SICILY
Malta
0
300
E.G.M.

autonomist traditions of the Middle Ages, were to prevent any common policy of the Italian states. In 1467 a league was formed against the Turks. But in 1478 the *coup d'état* of the Pazzi at Florence aroused the hostility of Naples and the Pope; in 1482 Venice attacked Ferrara; in 1485 the Angevin barons revolted at Naples against the Aragonese and war at once broke out, the Pope and Venice taking the side of the rebels against the king of Naples, who was supported by Florence and Milan. All Italy, involved in the war, was divided into two parties and each side appealed for foreign aid. The Italian wars had begun.

Whereas in France, England, Spain and the Netherlands monarchy led to national unity, and centralized institutions favoured economic development, Italy, dominated to the north by feudal Germany and to the south by the kings of Aragon, divided into three parts by the States of the Church, was unable to emerge from its mediaeval dismemberment. Endowed with the greatest and wealthiest cities of Europe, more cultured, more prosperous and more populous than any other state, Italy began to decline, since it was not possible for it to carry out a monarchical policy which would have given it unity and would have assured its defence against the hegemonic aims of the Western monarchies which were attracted by its wealth.

CHAPTER XXI

THE IMPOSSIBLE UNITY OF GERMANY

I. WESTERN INFLUENCE ON THE CITIES

Influence of the Great Trade-Routes

THE whole social configuration of Europe since the downfall of the Roman Empire had been dominated by the international trade-routes.

In the 7th century the Moslems, by closing the Mediterranean to the trade of Gaul, had finally ruined city civilization there, Thrown back on its own resources, Gaul was able to develop only a strictly agricultural system which had parcelled it out into manorial cells, each with its own closed economy.

The cities of Spain, on the other hand, which had been much weakened first by Roman autarchy and then by the Visigothic invasion, revived as soon as the Moslem conquest again gave them free access to the sea. The great trade-route which had been established from the Syrian ports and Alexandria to Almeria had resulted in a burgeoning of industrial and commercial activity in Spain which had made the country, in the 10th century, one of the most important centres of the civilized world.

At the same time Constantinople, which had kept, thanks to its naval power, supremacy in the Aegean and Black Seas, had become the great international mart between Asia and Europe. Its influence had led to the opening of a new trade-route for international traffic on the continent, causing the rise of a whole chaplet of merchant cities along the Russian rivers, which reached the Baltic where the ports of Tallin, Wollin and Luebeck were founded and where Scandinavian shipping abandoning piracy for trade led to the rise of London and Bruges.

The Danube, whose role as an international waterway had been interrupted by successive invasions of Germans, Huns and Slavs, had

begun to revive, involving the revival of Ratisbon; at the call of the sea the mines of central Europe, deserted since the great movement of migration which put an end to the Roman Empire, were again opened, giving birth to Prague and Leipzig.

But in the 11th century the Turks, by overrunning the Empire of Baghdad, had dealt a mortal blow to Moslem prosperity and at the same time destroyed the naval supremacy of the Moors in the Mediterranean. Invading southern Russia, they had interrupted the trade along the great rivers—the Volga which put Europe into touch with the Asiatic continent and the Don and Dnieper—from which the Russian cities lived and by which trade reached London and Bruges. From that moment all the ancient trade-routes were endangered.

But there was such a need for trade throughout the world that merchants, driven from their traditional routes, opened new ones. The Italian sailors launched out on the conquest of the Mediterranean and, appearing at Byzantium, at Alexandria, in Syria and in the Black Sea, turned Byzantine and Asiatic trade towards Venice and Genoa whence, by the Alpine passes, the Corniche, the Rhône and Champagne, it reached Provence and Languedoc and, finally, Bruges and London.

The sea, thenceforward, exercised an irresistible influence on the West. In Italy, in southern France, as in Flanders and England, city civilization had a tremendous upsurge. Soon ships mooring in the episcopal cities of the Rhine led to the formation of a merchant middle class there. The Danubian traffic, repulsed from the east, turned westward. In the Baltic the former Slav ports, now Germanized, forgot Byzantium, to which they owed their existence, and joined the powerful Teutonic Hansa League which traded with Bruges.

The shifting of the great trade-routes, which abandoned the Russian rivers for the Mediterranean, changed the whole economic structure of Europe, whose main trade axis was now the Venice-Bruges route, on which converged the Rhône, the Rhine and the Danube.

England, with her open coastline, and France, influenced by the Rhône, the fairs of Champagne, the Netherlands cities and its Atlantic ports, had both broken the régime of closed economy to form economic units which were strengthened by their monarchies. In Germany on the other hand the trade of the Baltic, the Rhine and the Danube tending towards Bruges and Venice did not penetrate into the central European plain, where the territorial régime was attracted by the vast empty spaces of the east. Far from developing as England and France had done under a

single impulse, Germany was divided by the action of two divergent movements which were inevitably to turn it on the west and south towards the maritime and urban civilization which was being built up in the West, and in the centre and on the east towards the creation of a landowning and continental society.

Under the all-powerful influence of the Mediterranean, the ancient Roman world, bounded by the Rhine and the Danube, was being fashioned anew.

Development of Urban Civilization in Germany

Under the double influence of Bruges and the Hanseatic League, urban civilization developed rapidly along the Rhine.

Similarly, on the Baltic, the Hanseatic League had become a considerable power. In the 14th century its influence spread widely westward, to the principal cities of the Rhine and as far as Dinant on the Meuse. Trading posts set up at Novgorod, Bergen, Bruges and London assured its trade with all parts of Europe. It numbered eighty cities, whose representatives met annually at Luebeck, it had a powerful fleet at its disposal and had its own militia.

From the 13th century when it had seized the monopoly of navigation in the Baltic, the Hansa had put an end to Danish sea-power. Driven back from the sea, the Scandinavian countries had become exclusively land-holding and seigniorial. Denmark, however, kept a strong maritime position because of its command of the Straits. The Hansa set out to snatch this mastery from it. In 1370 the Peace of Stralsund confirmed the triumph of the Hansa, by assuring free navigation in the Straits and giving the League the right of intervention in the election of the king of Denmark.

The Hundred Years War, by ruining French trade and curtailing English shipping, gave the Hansa League economic preponderance in the northern seas. Low German—which was spoken in various dialect forms from Dunkirk to Koenigsberg—replaced French for fifty years as the international language of trade in the Netherlands.

Despite their importance the Hansa cities did not have the influence on the development of Germany that the cities of the West had on the countries in which they were situated. They were united among themselves but remained isolated from the countryside. Their export trade was mainly in wheat, wood and furs but no manufactured products; they were the markets of the great seigniorial domains of northern Germany. And it was because they could not form part of that seigniorial society, from

which they earned their livelihood, that they remained, up to the 19th century, free cities. Whereas in the West a national economy replaced an urban economy the Hansa cities, which were not part of any monarchical state, had perforce to preserve their mediaeval urban economic institutions. Thus at the beginning of the 15th century they began to fall rapidly into decline, to the advantage of the shipping of Zeeland and Holland which, relying on the free force of nascent capitalism, assured itself an ever stronger position in the Baltic.

In Danubian Germany the influence of Venice was similar to that of London and the Netherlands on the development of economic life in the Rhine and Baltic regions. The route from Luebeck to Venice, replacing the former Luebeck-Kiev-Byzantium route, had caused the rise of the cities of Leipzig, Nuremberg, Augsburg and Ratisbon, where the economic currents from the Mediterranean, the Rhine and the Danube met. The mines of the Harz, of Bohemia and of Styria—which, twenty-five centuries earlier, had supplied copper to the Cretans—were once again prosperous. The mines of the Freiberg massif, of Bohemia and Moravia became the principal silver-producers of Europe. Silesia and especially Hungary produced gold. Quite naturally, there was great activity around these mining centres. Augsburg became the staging-post for spices for Germany; a metallurgical industry was created at Nuremberg; Innsbruck manufactured weapons. At Buda, a sailors' guild maintained contact with the East whose products, coming up the Danube, were sold at the fair of Pest.

In southern Germany, in the whole duchy of Swabia, where the trade currents from the Rhine, France and the Danube met, an urban civilization sprang up in the form of little cities of free burghers.

Thus along the shores of the Baltic, along the Rhine and the Danube and around the mines of Bohemia and Saxony, city civilization grew, due to the influence of Bruges, of Venice, of France and of the East, even as it had grown in the 10th century along the Russian rivers, due to the influence of Byzantium. Certainly the German cities remained small. Frankfurt-am-Main, which had become the principal market where the merchants of the Rhine and Danube met, did not exceed ten thousand inhabitants. But it was their activity which, together with the influence of the Church, was to civilize Germany.

Like the western cities, the cities of the Rhine had to struggle to win their autonomy. At the request of their bishops, Frederic II had tried to destroy their liberties and dissolve their leagues and to subject them to his monarchical authority (1232). It was in vain. By the end of the 13th

century the principal German cities, like those of the Netherlands, freely administered their own affairs and had replaced the government of the bishops by patrician mayoralties. In the 14th century the Hundred Years War, by shifting international trade from Champagne to the Rhine, gave the Rhineland cities their period of greatest development; they were not to be as important again until the 19th century.

The people of the German cities were carried away by the current of religious fervour which traversed the West in the 13th century; heresies, allied with social claims, penetrated there, soon to be countered by the Inquisition which was entrusted to the Dominicans. But the mendicant orders, which by then had settled in the towns, supported the popular parties against the nobles and the patricians. As in England, the Black Death set in motion a wave of religious fervour which reached its peak in Bohemia—then the most active and developed part of Germany—among the people of the cities and among the miners.

Up till the 13th century the trade of Germany had been mainly concentrated in the Rhine and Baltic regions; but the importance which the revival of trade gave to the mines of Styria, Saxony and Bohemia shifted the centre of German economy to the Danube and Bohemia. The Danube, which linked the mining areas with the West, became the great trade-route of central Europe; the precious metals mined there led to the appearance of capitalism. From the 14th century limited companies of Italian type were founded there.

At this time the Holy Empire had ceased to exist as a political entity and Germany was dissolving in feudal chaos. The attraction of the West, by contrast, was continually increasing, and involved all those parts of Germany where city civilization had developed. The Rhine—dominated by the prince-bishops of Trier, Cologne and Maintz and by the League of the Cities—was organized as a completely separate political whole, looking towards the Netherlands and France. The Lotharingian districts and Luxembourg, which shared the social and political evolution of the Netherlands, were attached in the 15th century to the state of Burgundy. Swabia was exposed to the attraction of France and Lombardy, and there was soon formed in Switzerland a federation of cities and free cantons, grouped around the trade-route which, by the Gothard Pass, linked Italy with the Rhine (1291).

All along the Danube autonomous cities were founded, which formed a narrow zone of freedom in the midst of the seigniorial estates or the mountain villages which preserved the traditions of a primitive com-

munity. In the mining areas, in the neighbourhood of Eisleben, south of Dresden, in the Burgenland and Salzburg, the people of the villages were grouped in associations of free miners, who took possession of the mines;[1] and in Bohemia, around Prague, trade developed in the small towns and in the mining districts, which led to a rapid social evolution.

Thus, penetrating into Germany along the trade-routes, the influence of the West encouraged city civilization which, in the basins of the Rhine and the Danube, breached the closed economy of the manorial régime.

Thenceforward Germany was divided into two distinct zones; one, formed of the basins of the Rhine and Danube and stretching into Austria and Bohemia, developed along Western lines; the other, formed by the vast spaces of Central Germany, limited by the political forms of feudalism and by the social and economic organization of the seigniorial system, looked eastward, where the struggle was imminent between Germans and Slavs for the conquest of the soil.

2. THE ATTRACTION OF THE EAST ON SEIGNIORIAL GERMANY

Seigniorial Ascendancy in Central Germany Enslaves the People

Though surrounded by the trade currents which had given birth to the cities of the Hansa, the Rhine and the Danube, all central Germany lived only from the land. The disintegration of Imperial power after the War of the Investitutures transformed the landowning squires into petty potentates. The former class of yeoman farmers was wiped out by the seigneurs. The assemblies, which had met in the principalities in Carolingian and Ottonian times, became feudal courts where only the landowning seigneurs appeared and under whose rule the whole population was reduced to serfdom. In the 14th century, at the time when chivalry was disappearing in the West, it took in central Germany the character of a closed and rigid caste. All offices were hereditary and held in fief. Outside the episcopal cities, few and of small importance, the entire population was divided almost exclusively into nobles and serfs or tenants in a rigid class system based on the land. The former commonlands of the villages were confiscated by the seigneurs. The population of free peasants, for whom in the 13th century the customary codes of

[1] In the 14th century the extension of the feudal régime gave possession of the mines to the rulers; the associations of miner-proprietors were transformed into workers' guilds.

the *Saxenspiegel* and the *Schwabenspiegel* had been edited, no longer existed.

The Baltic provinces, however, evolved differently. The Hansa cities carried on an important trade in wheat, supplied by the great estates set up after the colonization of the Slav lands. These lands, it will be recalled, were settled with free workers; they were not cells of closed economy. The possibility of selling wheat to the outside world had led the land-owning seigneurs to organize their lands on a mercantile basis with an eye to production; and to procure the necessary workers they used the political authority at their disposal to impose on the workers forced and unpaid labour, which ended by reducing them not to the patriarchal serfdom known to the seigniorial régime in the West but to so close a dependence on the seigneur that it was virtual slavery.

The yields of this system were considerable and impelled the knights of the Teutonic Order to undertake constant campaigns eastward to increase their domains until they were halted, at the end of the 13th century, by the crushing defeat inflicted on them at Lake Peipus by Prince Alexander Nevsky at the head of the Novgorod militia.

The Teutonic Order had thus become a great economic force which, like the Templars in France, lent at high interest the monies that it drew from its enterprises which were based on war and slavery.

Central Germany thus passed through an evolution exactly opposite to that of the West, where the expansion of the active classes of the population, engaged in trade, had led to the curtailment of serfdom before the new economy which continually increased, passing from the urban to the national plane. In central Europe, on the contrary, it was land that the nobles wished to conquer, extending their seigniorial ascendancy over it and reducing the population to slavery which grew harsher as the opportunities for sales grew greater.

The End of City Civilization in Russia and the German Drive Eastward

While the Germans were setting out for the conquest of the East, the ruined Novgorod-Kiev state was broken up into many separate principalities. Islam became master in southern Russia and the khans extended their rule over the former merchant cities, already greatly in decline. In 1371 a final attempt at revolt against the suzerainty of the khans was followed by a terrible repression, which completely annihilated the power of the Russian cities. Their population emigrated south-west into the German marches or towards the great forests of the east in Suzdal, Volhynia, Podolia and Galicia, which had once been within the orbit of

the Russian cities but were now under the rule of Polish dukes. The Teutonic conquests resulted in the creation of Lithuania in the basin of the Dnieper. All western Russia passed under Germanic or Polish rule.

The centre of Russian civilization shifted towards the upper Volga, where it became completely landholding. Between the Dnieper and the Urals, Russia was entirely under the political suzerainty of the Moslem Tatars of the Golden Horde. Moscow first appears in history under the aegis of the khans of Sarai.

The ruin of the Russian cities led to the total disappearance of Byzantine influence, which had been so greatly evident as far as Prague and Luebeck, and its replacement by German influence. The sea was driven back by the continent; and, consequently, urban by seigniorial civilization.

Byzantium, finally dethroned as the great maritime centre by Venice, Genoa and Barcelona, abandoned the role of international metropolis which it had played for more than a thousand years. In the immensities of Russia, the cities born of its influence were succeeded in the south by the Tatar khans and in the north by the German knights.

The republic of Novgorod alone remained a fur market frequented by the Hansa merchants.

The Mongols Check Hungarian and German Expansion Eastwards

Whereas in the north the German thrust was to die out before the resistance of Novgorod, in the south the advance of the Hungarian cavalry, which paved the way for German colonization, clashed, in the middle of the 13th century, with the Moslem wave coming from Russia. Moldavia and Valachia were incorporated in the Kipchak Empire of Genghis Khan and, by its links with eastern trade, the Danube again became an important trade-route. About 1300 the village of Braila became an important port, in touch with the Genoese of the sea-coast cities of the Crimea. Merchants coming from the Black Sea settled in the country. For the first time the Rumanian villages, united under Mongol rule, formed a sort of national state. The Mongols opened the way for Armenians, Greeks and orientals who appeared on the Danube as the standard-bearers of international civilization. Christianity, however, was organized to withstand their incursions. To ensure the protection of Transylvania after the departure of the Teutonic knights[1] the Pope in 1251 sent there knights of the French Order of the Hospital, who had been forced to leave the Holy

[1] After a conflict with the King of Hungary the Pope ordered them to leave the country.

Places then reconquered by Islam. They were followed into Hungary by French and Italian monks who brought Western influence with them and paved the way for the advent of the Angevin dynasty. The Germanic wave, thrown back, was halted on the east by the Mongols and on the south by Western influence.

Disappearance of the Imperial Power

The appearance of the Western monarchies and the disintegration of the imperial power after the War of the Investitures had deprived the Holy Empire of its universal character. The emperor was now a sovereign on the same political level as the kings of France and England. Despite the supremacy that he continue to claim, he was nothing more, in fact, than king of Germany.

But there was nothing in common between Germany and the Western monarchies. From the 12th century onward the Western countries had followed an evolution which consolidated them under the authority of their kings; Germany had had a quite different evolution; it had disintegrated more and more among the feudal princes. This political disintegration, which was above all characteristic of the regions east of the Rhine and north of the Danube, was parallel to the social evolution which continually strengthened the seigniorial régime and once more reduced the people to serfdom.

There was a constant balance between the development of the monarchical régime as conceived in the West and the social emancipation of the people. The dislocation of the seigniorial régime which freed the individual also broke down the feudal framework, of which the great estates were the basis, and strengthened the monarchy. In the West individualism and monarchy marched side by side.

But in Germany social evolution was the opposite to what it had been in the West. It increased the seigniorial ascendancy and in consequence accentuated the feudal régime and destroyed the monarchical structure.

The seigniorial-feudal régime, by separating the population into small closed units, was also opposed to the formation of a national sentiment which could alone create a community of interests, of institutions and of aspirations impossible to realize in a feudal framework.

By evolving towards monarchical centralization France and England became nations. Monarchy is, *par excellence*, a national institution. In Germany there was no nation; there were only feudatories. The monarchy could therefore only be feudal. By becoming national in the West, monarchy made itself hereditary and thus superimposed itself on the

feudal structure. In Germany, where it remained the emanation of feudalism, it necessarily preserved its elective character. It was around the feudal lords, and not around the king, that power had to be organized. A feudal oligarchy was formed which, quite naturally, claimed the right of electing the king. Force of circumstances led to the creation of an Electoral College (1273), whose members, the prelates of Maintz, Trier and Cologne, the king of Bohemia, the count-palatine of the Rhine, the duke of Saxony and the marquis of Brandenburg, made it a legal reality by signing, in 1338, a pact which united them in close alliance and subjected each one of them to the judgment of his peers. The power that they drew from this alliance allowed them, in 1356, to impose themselves as sole electors.[1]

The Empire was thenceforward organized as a sort of federation of feudal states. From 1356 the electors met every year at the same time as the *Reichstag*, where all the rulers of the empire gathered and, from 1255 onward, the representatives of the free cities which were directly dependent on the emperor. As the electors were the equivalent of the Twelve Peers of France, so the *Reichstag* was of the western 'Estates'. But whereas in the West the peers had been created by the king to support his policy of unification and the States to assist him by providing the means to organize a more and more powerful and centralized government, in Germany the electors and the *Reichstag* had no other aim than to defend local privileges against the authority of the emperor. That explains why the *Reichstag* succeeded in wresting from Frederic II in 1235 the right to constitute a high court under the presidency of the count-palatine to judge the emperor and even to depose him if he broke his oath to respect the privileges of the feudal lords and the free cities.[2]

In the West the kings had concentrated in their own hands the powers taken from the feudal lords. In Germany, the feudal rulers had despoiled the king of his sovereign powers. The customs dues and tolls, the rights over the Jews, the yield of the salt tax and the produce of the mines all passed to the local rulers. The emperor had no other resources than the subsidies which were only given to him reluctantly for the war against the Hussites.[3] The rudimentary imperial government had disappeared to the point where the count-palatine, set up by Otto I as a fiscal agent of

[1] It was, on the feudal plane, an evolution analogous to that which ended, on the royal plane, in the creation of the Twelve Peers in the reign of Louis VII.

[2] It was the equivalent of the Golden Bull given to the diet of the Hungarian nobility by Andreas II in 1222.

[3] The anti-seigniorial character of the Czech revolt definitely threatened the interests of the feudal nobility.

the crown, had become the president of a court which could depose the king and which in fact was to depose Wenceslas of Luxembourg in 1399. The imperial title had ceased to represent an effective power. The emperors only used it, henceforward, as an instrument of their personal dynastic policy.

CHAPTER XXII

THE FAILURE OF MONARCHICAL POLICY IN CENTRAL EUROPE AND THE FORMATION OF GREAT SEIGNIORIAL STATES

I. THE BEGINNINGS OF HAPSBURG POWER

Struggle for Leadership Between the Kings of Bohemia and the Hapsburgs

HALTED in the east by the Mongols, the Hungarians, instead of trying to drive them back, gave up the 'crusade' which they were carrying on against the Rumanians and turned westward. Their policy was that of all primitive landowning states; to conquer land, no matter where and no matter from whom. They therefore invaded the duchies of Austria and Styria. To drive them back, the nobles appealed to the king of Bohemia, Ottokar II (1253–1278), who, thanks to the resources which he got from the Czech cities, was the only real force in central Europe. He drove back the Hungarians and took for himself the ducal crowns of Austria and Styria. He thus became the most powerful prince of the empire. In rivalry with the king of France, Philip the Bold, who was then carrying out a policy of hegemony, he became a candidate for the imperial throne. It was then that the feudal lords, afraid of granting the crown to too powerful a king of Germany, by-passed both of these candidates and conferred the title on Rudolph of Hapsburg, one of the least powerful amongst them. Rudolph approached the Hungarians and in alliance with them took up the struggle against the king of Bohemia. Ottokar II was killed at Marchfeld in 1278. Rudolph at once declared the duchies of Austria and Styria to be vacant and, by virtue of his imperial prerogatives, granted them to his son Albert. The Hapsburg family thus acquired a powerful patrimonial state, a half-German half-Slav march, in competition with the powerful king of Bohemia against whom an alliance was concluded between Austria and Hungary.

Wenceslas II of Bohemia (1278–1305), in order to withstand the imminent Hapsburg menace, conciliated the Hungarian nobles and in 1300 obtained the Hungarian crown for his son Ladislas IV (1300–1308). He also obtained the crown of Poland for himself. The House of Bohemia thus united the three crowns of Bohemia, Poland and Hungary. The Bohemian dynasty together with the House of Anjou, at that time reigning in France and Naples, with which it was united by the marriage of Ladislas with the daughter of King Charles II of Naples seemed the most powerful in Europe. But its triumph was ephemeral. Wenceslas III, who succeeded his father as king of Bohemia and Poland (1305), was assassinated in 1306. The Polish nobles brought to the throne one of their own members, Vladislav I, who inaugurated the Piast dynasty (1306–1370). Ladislav IV, king of Hungary, died childless in 1308.

The Czech dynasty was extinguished just when it had reached the zenith of its power.

Rudolph of Hapsburg at once tried to add Hungary to his states. As emperor, he claimed to dispose of it as a fief of the empire, and granted it to his son Albert, who was already duke of Austria and Styria. But the Pope, Nicholas IV, intervened and claiming it as a fief of the Holy See granted Hungary to Charles of Anjou, son of the king of Naples, Charles II, and brother-in-law of King Ladislas IV. The Hungarian magnates paying no heed to the decision of the emperor or of the Pope, crowned a Hungarian noble as Andreas III. But on his death they recognized Charles-Robert of Anjou as king (1308–1342). In Sicily and in Naples, the Pope had set up the Angevins as a counterpoise to the power of the Hohenstaufen; in Hungary he supported them against the Hapsburgs who, by building up such vast domains, threatened to become an imperial power in opposition to the Holy See, which feared it as a rival.

Meanwhile Albert of Austria had become emperor (1298–1308), and as the House of Bohemia was extinct, he proclaimed the fief vacant and granted it to his son Rudolph. The imperial power thus became the tool of the dynastic policy of the House of Hapsburg. But Rudolph died a few months later and the Czech nobles elected as king the son-in-law of Wenceslas III, Duke Henry of Carinthia, who being a German prince soon aroused the hostility of the Bohemian aristocracy.

At this time the House of Luxembourg entered the arena, with the election of Henry VII as King of the Romans (1308–1313). Elizabeth, daughter of Wenceslas III, demanded as her husband his son, John the Blind, and obtained for him the crown of Bohemia (1310). Thus at the very moment when a French dynasty was to ascend the throne of Hungary

Map No. 21

KGDM. OF NORWAY
KINGDOM OF SWEDEN
Finland
L. Ladoga
Narvia
REPUBLIC OF NOVGOROD
Novgorod
Esthonia
Knights of the Sword
Riga
Livonia
Stockholm
Gothland
Courland
K. OF DENMARK
Copenhagen
Lund
Stralsund
Konigsberg
Prussia
Teutonic Order
GRAND DUCHY OF Moscow
Principality of
Russian Principalities
Lübeck
Rostock
Stettin
Pomerania
Brandenburg
HOLY ROMAN (GERMANIC) EMPIRE
KINGDOM OF POLAND
KGDM. OF BOHEMIA
Prague
Cracow
Volhynia
Galicia
Kiev
Ukraine
LITHUANIA
Podolia
Austria
KINGDOM OF HUNGARY
Pty of Moldavia
KHANATE OF THE CRIMEA
Tirol
States of the Hapsburgs
Styria
Carinthia
Buda
Pest
Transylvania
Trentino
Pecs
Brăila
Balaclava
Venice
Milan
Bosnia
Principality of Wallachia
Florence
PAPAL STATES
Zara
Dalmatia
Serbia
Nicopolis
Bulgaria
Varna
Spalato
Ragusa
Montenegro
Andrianople
Constantinople
OTTOMAN EMPIRE
Rome
K. OF NAPLES
Albania
Salonica
Nicaea
Ankara
Naples
Corfu (V.)
Salona
C. of Cephalonia
Corinth
D. of Athens
SELJUK SULTANATE
Konya
Armenia
KGDM OF SICILY
D. of Achaia
Mistra
Crete (V.)
KGDM. OF CYPRUS
THE GREAT SEIGNIORIAL STATES CIRCA 1380
Expansion of the Anjou dynasty in Poland (1370-1386); in Hungary (1308-1386); in the Kingdom of Naples (1266-1442).
Byzantine Empire
0
300
Miles
EGM

with Charles-Robert of Anjou, a Walloon prince assumed the crown of Bohemia.[1]

The Dynasties of Luxembourg in Bohemia, of Anjou in Hungary and of the Piasts in Poland

Charles-Robert of Anjou (1308–1342) and John the Blind (1310–1333), kings of Hungary and Bohemia, were both of French language and culture. In their reigns German influence was replaced by French. The Luxembourgs, bringing western ideas into Bohemia, at once showed themselves great innovators. John the Blind brought a whole court with him to Prague from the Netherlands, and gave his kingdom institutions modelled on the French. It was under his son, Charles IV (1333–1378), who was also French in education and language, that the Czechs freed themselves from German influence. In Bohemia Charles was supported by the burghers of Prague, a great economic community devoted to trade and mining and with a very ancient city tradition distantly derived from the civilization of the Russian cities. In 1348 he founded at Prague the first university of central Europe, and made his capital one of the most beautiful cities of the times. Prague became the leading economic, political and intellectual centre of the empire. Bohemia seemed like a monarchic and national state, based on the Czech burghers, rich, active and cultivated; it was the equivalent in central Europe of the Western states. The similarity between the Netherlands and Bohemia was striking. As in the Netherlands, it was on the city middle classes that the new state of Bohemia was founded; and it was because Prague was the great market of central Europe that Bohemia seemed the most advanced country of that region in the 14th century.

The foreign policy of Charles no longer aimed, as had that of Ottokar, at acquiring lands by uniting crowns; it aimed quite definitely at reaching the sea. It pushed northward with remarkable perseverance. Charles annexed one after the other Silesia, Lusatia and, in 1372, the Mark of Brandenburg. He thus became master of a large part of the course of the Oder. Only the duchy of Pomerania still separated him from the port of Stettin.

While Bohemia was becoming a monarchy and assuming leadership in the Holy Empire, the Angevin dynasty was trying to bring Hungary into world trade. After occupying Moldavia and Croatia, abandoned by the Mongols, Louis of Anjou (1342–1382) pushed seaward. Hungary, landowning and seigniorial, did not provide the king with a basis for his

[1] The Luxembourgs were princes of essentially French culture; the duchy itself was bilingual.

monarchical policy; the sea provided it for him. In order to rouse his kingdom by the activity of coastal cities, he forced Venice to cede him the Adriatic coast as far as Durazzo. At the same time, in order to create a literate middle class, without which he could not carry out his policy, he founded a university at Pecs.

So artificial a creation, founded on Western ideas transported lock, stock and barrel into central Europe, could not succeed. Hungary did not possess a burgher class like Bohemia. The Angevin policy could not be monarchical except by breaking with Hungarian national tradition. This explains why Louis, a French prince with a foothold on the Adriatic coast, kept his eyes turned westward. The assassination of his brother André, king of Naples, involved him in an expedition into Italy. He was to revive, for his own advantage, the great dream of the Angevin dynasty.

The Western and monarchical influence of the Luxembourg and Anjou dynasties was bound to be felt in Poland also, where the nobles had enthroned the national dynasty of the Piasts in 1309. The second of the Piasts, Casimir the Great (1333–1370), carried out a policy directly inspired by that of Charles IV of Bohemia. He fixed his residence at Cracow, tried to make it a great city and endowed it with a university (1364); he created a royal administration and a central court of justice. But Casimir lacked the support of an active and cultured middle class. His monarchical and centralizing policy met with vigorous opposition from the nobles; he could only be, as he was called disdainfully, 'King of the Peasants'. Poland, aristocratic, seigniorial and servile, was not ripe for a monarchical policy. Only the Jews formed a cultured merchant middle class there and it was not possible to base the royal policy on them. The opposition of the nobles, which nothing could counterbalance, ruined the work of Casimir the Great. With him, the Piast dynasty was extinguished.

On Casimir's death, the king of Hungary, Louis of Anjou, came to an agreement with the nobles and obtained the crown of Poland for himself (1364–1382). It seems that he had, at that time, the idea of forming a great empire stretching from the Adriatic, whose coast he touched in Croatia, and the Black Sea, which he had reached by his conquest of Moldavia, as far as the Baltic from which he was separated only by the fiefs of the Teutonic Order.

His policy failed, since it was not based on a great trade-route nor on an urban middle class nor on a national feeling. Monarchic in institutions, it became bogged down in feudal tradition. The dynastic empire of Louis

of Anjou was nothing more than the union, in his hands, of landowning states where the nobles were dominant; it was a temporary aggregate of kingdoms without cohesion. It naturally fell to pieces on his death in 1382. The nobles resumed their ascendancy and the monarchical work of the Angevins collapsed. However, western influences left their traces among the Hungarian magnates, whose manners were copied from those of the French nobility. In Hungary and in Poland the monarchical policy failed because it did not correspond to the social evolution of the peoples, still enclosed within an archaic régime based on serfdom and relying on a closed economy.

In Bohemia, on the other hand, where it found a solid foundation in the urban middle classes and in the economic development of the country, it grew stronger and stronger.

The Hussite Crisis in Bohemia and the Triumph of the Hapsburgs

Under Wenceslas IV (1378–1419) Bohemia was to be faced with a serious crisis.

Charles IV had carried out an imperial policy not very striking but very clever. It had aimed solely at strengthening his position as king of Bohemia. By confirming the privileges of the electors by the Golden Bull of 1356 he had conciliated them, and obtained from them in 1376 the concession that his son be appointed his successor as king of Germany during his own lifetime.

Wenceslas, however, was so exclusively king of Bohemia that he did not even bother to have himself crowned emperor. In 1400 the four electors of the Rhine declared him to be deposed and appointed in his place one of themselves, Ruprecht of Bavaria, the count-palatine of the Rhine (1400–1410). His reign was so weak and all his efforts to restore the imperial authority in Italy failed so lamentably that in 1410 the electors turned once more to the House of Luxembourg, which at that time dominated all central Europe. Wenceslas had two brothers, John, margrave of Moravia, and Sigismond who, by his marriage with the daughter of Louis of Anjou, had obtained the crown of Hungary. The electors, some of them bribed by John and others by Sigismond, appointed both of them to the empire. The three brothers, Wenceslas, John and Sigismond of Luxembourg, were thus, all three of them, kings of Germany. John died in 1416 and after the death of Wenceslas (1419), Sigismond once again united the crowns of Bohemia and the Holy Empire.

While these dynastic intrigues were going on, the people of Bohemia were involved in the democratic and religious movement which had

aroused the proletariat of the western cities. The heresy of the Lollards in England spread to Bohemia where, since the Papacy was in decadence, John Huss, a religious democrat and a fervent upholder of the Czech national revolt, was then in full reaction against Germanism. In 1412 John Huss was excommunicated and Prague placed under an interdict. But already the heresy was spreading in Poland, in Hungary and in Croatia where it aroused the enslaved peoples in a great movement of emancipation.

The Council of Constance (1414), convened to put an end to the Great Schism, summoned Huss before it. It is well known how he appeared, furnished with a safe-conduct of the Emperor Sigismond, before the Council which condemned him to the stake (1415). His martyrdom enraged the Hussites whose movement assumed a revolutionary character. His supporters, destroying churches and convents, aimed at re-establishing the Kingdom of God in all its purity and giving Bohemia, around its new capital of Tabor, a patriarchal constitution derived from the Old Testament.

Bohemia, at the same time as the English Lollards, the Flemish communes and the Parisian *cabochiens*, was plunged into a great democratic and religious revolution, favoured on the one hand by the scandal of the Holy See still a prey to the Great Schism and on the other by the interminable war which had ranged the two great western monarchies, France and England, against one another.

But in 1417 the Great Schism came to an end with the election of Martin V as sole Pope. The king of England, Henry V, condemned the Lollards to the stake. The duke of Burgundy, John the Fearless, ended the democratic upheavals in Flanders. The persecuted revolutionaries made their way from all these countries to Bohemia, where the social and religious ferment was degenerating into communism. A Flemish weaver, wanting to return to the simplicity of the first man, founded there the sect of the Adamites, nudist and edenic. In Poland, in Silesia, in Moravia, the contagion spread to the poverty-stricken mass of the enslaved people, who rose against the nobles.

The German knights, feeling themselves threatened, organized expeditions against the heretic revolutionaries, who had been condemned by the Pope. But they were met by the feeling of nationality which was then taking shape throughout Bohemia, and were cut to pieces by the Czech cavalry led by John Ziska and Prokop.

The Hussite beliefs, national among the nobles, revolutionary among the people, soon led to a split among the Czechs themselves. Ziska, who

represented the nobles, attacked the communist wing and massacred the Adamites (1421). Two hostile groups were formed; the Taborites who, grouped around their new capital of Tabor where they wanted to set up a theocratic government, demanded a total remoulding of society, and the *Utraquists*,[1] who only wanted a reform of the Church. A great part of the Czech nobility, frightened by the social excesses of the Taborites, returned to catholicism and to Papal obedience, on the condition that they kept the Church goods and lands which they had seized. From then onward the struggle was too uneven. Crushed by the knights, like the followers of Wat Tyler in England or the *Jacques* in France, the Taborites were forced to submit. Their reconciliation with Rome was negotiated at the Council of Basle (1434) on the basis of a certain autonomy granted to the Czech church. Sigismond was at last able to make his entry into Prague and take his seat on the throne left vacant since 1419 by the death of Wenceslas.

The crushing of the Hussite movement was the signal for a strong social reaction. The nobles, profiting by their victory, reduced the peasant masses to an even greater slavery than before. With the loss of freedom, national sentiment was extinguished. The period of greatness which the House of Luxembourg had given to Bohemia was over.

To obtain the support of the Austrian knights, Sigismond had married his daughter to Albert of Austria. On his death (1437), Albert succeeded him as king both of Hungary and Bohemia. The Hungarian nobles had earlier tried to keep the throne for a Hungarian, but the social upheavals through which they had passed caused them to accept Albert of Austria without opposition. It was the same in Bohemia, although Albert represented that German nobility against which the Czech people had risen unanimously twenty-five years earlier. The Czech nobility, after the social revolution in which it had triumphed, now thought only of its class interests. The national policy of the House of Luxembourg ended with the triumph of the Hapsburgs.

Formation of the Polish-Lithuanian Kingdom

While the Hapsburg family was patiently building up its fortunes on a matrimonial policy, another great state, almost exclusively seigniorial, was formed, on the death of Louis of Hungary (1382), by the union of Poland and Lithuania.

Since Casimir the Great had conquered Galicia and Volhynia, Poland had had a common frontier with Lithuania. The Lithuanians, driven back

[1] So called because they took communion through the elements of bread and wine.

from the Baltic by the Teutonic Order, had spread southward and had reached the Black Sea. They were still pagans. On contact with the Russians they had begun to be converted to Christianity, adhering to the Orthodox rite. In 1382 the Polish nobles, violently hostile to the monarchical policy of the dynasties of Luxembourg and Anjou, had hastened to offer the hand of Elizabeth of Hungary, the daughter of King Louis, to Jagellon of Lithuania. He was a pagan prince who would have been quite unable to carry out any policy other than that wanted by the seigniorial aristocracy. In order to marry Elizabeth, he was converted to Catholicism and was crowned king of Poland under the name of Vladislav II. Like their king, the Lithuanian people also adopted the Catholic creed.

But at this time they were still exposed to the raids and massacres of the knights of the Teutonic Order. The evangelization of this people—who became Catholic so easily—was only a pretext which allowed the Order to take possession of their lands after exterminating them. Every winter great Slav-hunting expeditions were organized, to which the Teutonic knights invited the seigneurs of the West. The lands which they thus seized were exploited on the mercantile system intoduced into the Baltic lands by the knights of the Teutonic Order, who pitilessly enslaved the people. But the hate that they aroused ended by making the people of their estates and of the little coastal cities rise against them. Vladislav II, a Lithuanian prince, hated the Teutonic knights. When he became king of Poland, he led a Polish army against them which, in 1410, inflicted a terrible defeat on them at Tannenberg. This was the signal of resistance in the Baltic lands. After forty years of struggle against the exploitations of the Teutonic Order, the cities and the local nobles of Prussia, in order to escape them, placed themselves spontaneously under Polish suzerainty (1454) and, in 1466, the Grand Master of the Order was forced to cede to the king of Poland, Casimir II, all eastern Prussia with the cities of Thorn, Marienburg, Elbing and Danzig. Save in the coastal cities where the population, Germanized in the 13th century, remained German, the country rapidly reverted to its Slav nature. An immense Polish state thenceforward stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea. It was a land-holding empire, an assemblage of lordships without cohesion, and was made up of many petty sovereign principalities; save for the decadent Russian cities which it had engulfed in the east, it had no cities outside the royal residence of Cracow, no middle class, save that formed by the Jews who held the trade of the country, such as it was, in their hands. As for the king, who had no means of government and no army save that composed of the nobles, he was in reality only the first among them.

The nobility, who held the real power, was represented by two assemblies, a senate where the princes sat, and a diet, elected every two years from among the lesser nobility. In 1505 the Constitution of Radom established that no law could be promulgated without the consent of the senate and the diet. It was the final failure of the monarchical movement attempted in the 14th and 15th centuries by the dynasty of the Piasts.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE OTTOMAN ASSAULT ON EUROPE

I. FORMATION OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE DOWNFALL OF BYZANTIUM

The Mongols, Byzantium and the Ottoman Empire

WHILE the elective monarchies were trying to construct vast dynastic empires out of such amorphous states as were then Poland, Bohemia and Hungary, perpetually dissolving in the chaos of seigniorial anarchy, the Balkans, threatened by Hungarian expansion, the Mongol invasions and the Byzantine Empire, experienced similar vacillations, which led to the appearance and disappearance of ephemeral empires, Bulgar and Serb.

In the middle of the 13th century the Hungarian knights had been halted in their conquests by the impact of the Mongol khans of Sarai. But when it seemed that there was nothing left to stop their advance, the Mongols halted on the Danube and, about 1330, attracted by events in the Near East, retreated.

The Rumanians, who had become united under Mongol rule, formed two principalities, one in Moldavia, another more powerful in Valachia. The Valach Church, profiting by the dissolution of the Bulgar Empire, broke away from Trnovo and became directly linked with Constantinople, as did the Church of Trnovo itself.

The Mongol retreat coincided with the union of the Serbian tribes which under Tsar Stefan Dushan (1333–1355), succeeded the Bulgar Empire which had foundered under the blows of Byzantium. Stefan became the great leader of the united Slavs. Byzantium was threatened in Asia Minor by the Turks, and Stefan, dreaming of making Constantinople the capital of a great Slav state, launched an assault on the Greek Empire.

Decadence of Byzantium

The Byzantine Empire was no longer to be reckoned with. Restored

by Michael Paleologus in 1261, it had not been able to recover Greece, which was still occupied by French and Catalan feudal lords. Since then it had lost almost all its possessions in Asia; it retained only a string of cities on the shores of the Sea of Marmara; Brusa, Nicaea, Nicomedia. Some Catalan *condottieri* still remained in the Troad. The rest of Asia Minor was occupied by the Seljuk Turks and by the Ottomans. Ruined by the Latins, Byzantium lived from hand to mouth. The emperor, whose revenues in the 11th century had still amounted to fourteen million gold pieces, was reduced in the 14th century to selling the crown jewels and supplementing the treasury by sacking the churches and debasing the coinage. The emperor had no army at his disposal save bands of mercenaries drawn by the smell of booty. This was the only force that he had to meet the Turks in Asia and to counter the ambitions of the Serbian tsar, Stefan Dushan, in Europe. Decadent militarily and politically, Byzantium was no better from the economic point of view. The feudal Latin Empire had had no interest in the sea. Byzantium no longer had a fleet. Its ancient naval supremacy had passed to Venice, which dominated the trade and shipping of the Adriatic and Aegean, to Genoa, which had installed itself on the Straits and held the monopoly of the Black Sea traffic, and to the Latin kingdom of Cyprus, which acted as staging-post and financial centre between the Levant and the West.

Constantinople and the few great Greek cities of Asia were still wealthy, despite their decadence, and were an easy prey.

None the less Byzantium remained an ancient and civilized state with a sound administration. It was to continue to exist like an island in the midst of the chaotic flood of enormous seigniorial empires which surrounded it on all sides with constant wars. Nothing was more opposed to the refined society of Byzantium than these semi-barbarian peoples dominated by a military aristocracy, which covered Poland, Hungary, Serbia, southern Russia and all Asia Minor where the Turks had settled.

In the midst of these political upheavals caused by the wars and clashes of these scarcely civilized peoples, the great religious and social unrest which was shaking all Europe at this time, from the Flemish cities to Salonica, penetrated to the semi-enslaved peoples who lived in Serbia on the boyars' estates. Revolts broke out, religious and communist in character; by plunging the Serbian Empire into anarchy, they saved Byzantium.

Formation of the Ottoman Empire

The danger from the Ottomans was even more pressing for Byzantium.

The Ottomans were not a state but a military clan. They were to set out to conquer the Byzantine Empire as formerly the Norman knights had set out to conquer Sicily, in search of booty and adventure, supported by Turkish volunteers whom the hope of gain had drawn from the centre of Asia.

Blockaded by the Turks, Brusa, Nicaea and Nicomedia wasted away. They could not, in such conditions, offer a serious resistance. Brusa surrendered in 1326; and then Nicaea; Nicomedia was taken in 1338. Now master of the Greek cities, the Ottoman beg withdrew towards Asia Minor and occupied Anatolia. The Ottoman state was founded. It immediately cast its eyes on the Balkans.

The political decomposition of the Byzantine Empire was to make its task easier. Byzantium, delivered over to the great landed proprietors, was no longer a homogeneous state. Private interests were all-powerful there; no one cared any longer about the empire or about Christendom. On the death of Andronicus III (1341) John Cantacuzene, the 'Great Domestic',[1] dethroned the young emperor, John V Paleologus, and civil war broke out (1341–1347). The court appealed against him to the Bulgars and the Venetians; Cantacuzene replied by turning to the Serbs and by allowing the Ottomans to cross the Bosphorus. Thus was repeated the action of the Pretorian Prefect Rufinus who, in 410, had called the Goths into Italy to overthrow his rival Stilicho. The consequences were equally disastrous. Thrace fell into the hands of the Ottomans. Thenceforward, Constantinople was entirely encircled by the Turks.

But just then a terrible social crisis was to break out in the great Greek cities of Thrace, a manifestation of that same democratic urge then coursing through the Flemish cities under Jacques van Artevelde, and which was evident in Rome with Cola di Rienzo, in Paris with Etienne Marcel and had made the Serbian people revolt against their boyars. In 1345—the year of the assassination of van Artevelde—a popular revolution drenched Adrianople in blood. The party of the Zealots massacred the nobles, whose property they confiscated, and, inflamed by religious fervour which aimed at restoring the pure and simple tenets of the Gospels, threw off the authority of the emperor and declared Adrianople a city republic. The Ottoman beg, Murad I (1360–1389), took advantage of this to seize the city and set up his capital there (1366).

From Adrianople Murad I set out for the conquest of the Balkans, where the heroic resistance of the Bulgars and Serbs prevented him from turning his forces against Constantinople.

[1] This was the title of the Minister of War.

Closely encircled by the Ottomans, the Greek Empire, reduced to the cities of Byzantium and Salonica and a part of the Peloponnese, was in its death throes[1]

Murad was an illiterate conqueror. Bajazet, who succeeded him, was an emperor who united hatred of Christianity with a great plan to restore the Roman Empire and convert it to Islam.

One hope of salvation still remained for the Greek Empire; to return to the fold of the Roman Church and obtain from the Pope the support of the West.

The Emperor John V, to ask this aid, went to Rome and made a profession of the Catholic faith (1369). But the Greek clergy, meeting in council, disavowed him. It only remained for Byzantium, shut up in its religious fanaticism, to recognize, in 1373, the suzerainty of the sultan of Adrianople.

The Pope however, overlooking the differences among the Christians, tried to save Constantinople. In 1377 the war between France and England had come to an end. Gregory XI, leaving Avignon, had restored the Holy See to Rome. Boniface IX called Christendom to a crusade against Islam. The emperor, Sigismond of Luxembourg, and the duke of Burgundy, Philip the Bold, who was then acting as regent in France in the name of the mad King Charles VI, organized an expedition. But this final upsurge of Christian chivalry was halted by the Turks before Nicopolis (1396), the same year as they finally crushed the resistance of the Bulgars.

Moslem Asia was now supreme in the east of Europe. It was immediately recognized as such by the Greek church, which was quite ready to ally itself with Islam to drive the Roman Church, which had been introduced by the hated French and Catalan feudal lords, out of Greece. Only Constantinople, Salonica and the Dalmatian coast, reliant on Venice, still formed small Christian enclaves. Bajazet resolved to take possession of them and laid seige to Constantinople (1399).

But France, despite the failure of the crusaders at Nicopolis, sent to the aid of Constantinople a small army of twelve hundred men which, with the aid of the Genoese ships, destroyed the Ottoman fleet and lifted the siege of the city.

Constantinople, decadent, depopulated—it had lost more than a half of its population—exploited by the Genoese who had seized the customs houses for their own profit, could only await the final moment of its downfall. Bajazet was already playing the part of emperor of the 'Roums'. His

[1] See map, page 300.

army, supported by Byzantine, Serb and Bulgar auxiliaries, began the conquest of the Seljuk emirate of Konya in Asia Minor. Venice and Genoa, by holding the seas, could still have broken the Turkish power. But they preferred to come to terms with the sultan, in order to restore the trade relations with the East without which they could not exist.

The Porte was now a European power.

Tamerlane

But just at the time when the Ottomans set out on their conquest of the Balkans, another Turkish power was being formed in Central Asia. The Mongol khanate of Turkestan, like those of Kipchak and Persia, was converted to Islam at the beginning of the 14th century and, like the Mongol states of Nearer Asia, was parcelled out among the Turkish feudal lords who had settled in the country before the Mongol invasion. Tugluk Timur Khan had tried to resist the Turkish feudatories by relying on the cities of Samarkand and Bukhara and had appointed as viceroy the prince of Kish, Tamerlane, who had rallied to his cause. Tamerlane, after subduing the other Turkish feudatories (1363), himself seized power and, having become king of Transoxiana, set up his capital in the ancient merchant city of Samarkand (1370). The Mongol khanate was not abolished, but a Turkish dynasty replaced the Mongol one. Tamerlane was able to proclaim himself legitimate ruler; an orthodox Moslem, he set out on a career of conquest, under the pretext of a Holy War.

There was no power in western Asia able to oppose him. The Kipchak khanate and the Persian khanate were in the throes of feudal dissolution. Both of them Moslem, they were none the less attacked by Tamerlane's hordes. Between 1379 and 1383 Kwarizm, the kingdom of Herat and Seistan—that is to say almost the whole of the Persian khanate—were conquered. It was a terrible massacre. The caravan cities were put to fire and sword. In all Central Asia the system of water canals was destroyed and the country again became a desert; it was to remain so thenceforward.

From Central Asia Tamerlane reached the Volga and, after having crushed the Mongol Kipchak khan—who held a protectorate over the whole of southern Russia and received tribute from the king of Poland, Jagellon—he moved towards the Caspian, where he destroyed the great market-town of Sarai, and then pushed onward to the Crimea, where he wiped out the Genoese trading posts.

But the Kipchak lands did not interest him. It was the great cities of India, Mesopotamia and Syria, gorged with wealth, that attracted him. Crossing the Hindu-Kush he appeared in India in 1398. Delhi, the splendid

capital on the Ganges, was sacked and its population massacred. Then, returning towards Nearer Asia, he took Baghdad (1401). The luxurious metropolis of Islam was burnt to the ground and ninety thousand of its inhabitants were put to death.

Pushing westward, Tamerlane attacked the empire of the Egyptian Mamelukes; he took first Aleppo and then Damascus, the two great markets of the Levant, and delivered them in their turn to sack, massacre and fire.

Wherever Tamerlane passed, there remained only desert, ruins and tall pyramids of severed heads which were erected as signs of victory. Masses of slaves, including all the craftsmen he could capture, were sent to Samarkand.

Only one Moslem power remained unconquered to face Tamerlane—the Ottoman Empire. Tamerlane invaded it. Bajazet, who had laid siege to Constantinople, was obliged to raise the siege and turn to meet the invader. The Ottoman army was crushed at Ankara (1402); Brusa was taken and razed to the ground. All Asia Minor suffered the terrible fate which Central Asia and Persia had already undergone. The Genoese, settled in Phocaia and the island of Chios, ransomed themselves from massacre and paid homage to Tamerlane.

But Chinese ambassadors were to demand that he recognize the suzerainty of the Ming emperors over Jagatai (Chinese Turkestan). Tamerlane paid tribute to China but resolved on war. He was about to attack China when he died in 1405.

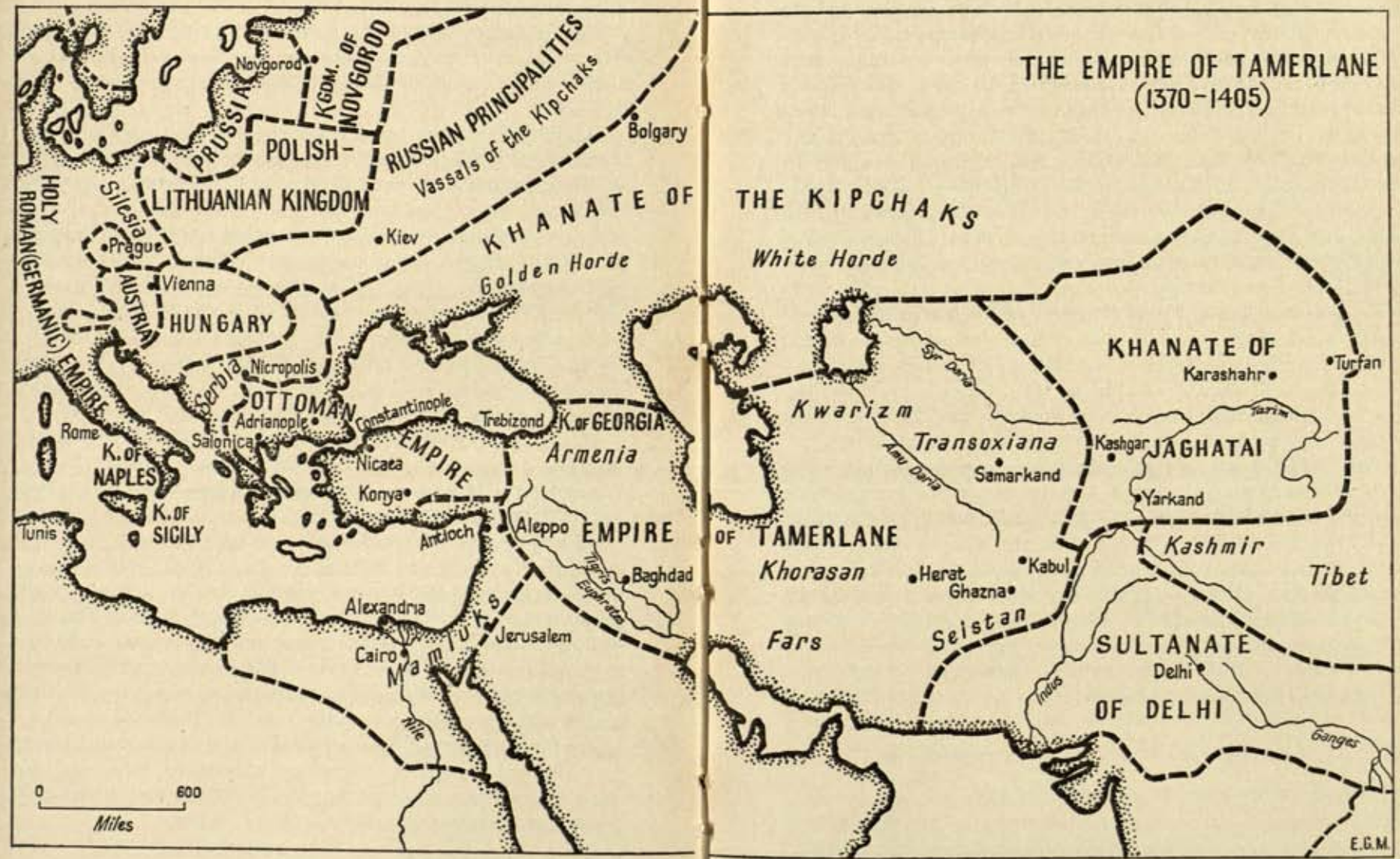
His empire at once fell to pieces.

Thirty years had been enough for Tamerlane's Turkish hordes to complete the ruin of Moslem civilization in Asia. It was a work of destruction more terrible even than that of Ghengis Khan. Central Asia with its caravan cities, decadent it is true, northern India, already terribly mutilated by the Huns and then the Turks, Persia, Asia Minor, seriously devastated by the Turk and Mongol invasions, suffered a like terrible destruction. The great and wealthy cities of Delhi and Baghdad, the international markets of Sarai on the Volga and Aleppo and Damascus in Syria were annihilated. The greatest civilizations which had met in Central and Nearer Asia, the Hindu, the Persian, the Moslem and the Greek, were all stricken with irremediable disaster.

The Ottomans Take Constantinople (1453)

The death of Tamerlane saved the Ottoman Empire. Soliman (1402–1410) did his best to raise Asia Minor from its ruins and, with Murad II

Map No. 22


THE EMPIRE OF TAMERLANE
(1370-1405)
PRUSSIA
Novgorod
KGDM. OF NOVGOROD
POLISH-
LITHUANIAN KINGDOM
RUSSIAN PRINCIPALITIES
Vassals of the Kipchaks
Bolgary
HOLY ROMAN (GERMANIC) EMPIRE
Silesia
Prague
AUSTRIA
Vienna
HUNGARY
Kiev
KHANATE OF
Golden Horde
THE KIPCHAKS
White Horde
Serbia
Nicropolis
OTTOMAN
EMPIRE
Adrianople
Constantinople
Trebizond
K. OF GEORGIA
Armenia
Salonica
Rome
K. OF NAPLES
K. OF SICILY
Nicaea
Konya
Tunis
Antioch
Aleppo
EMPIRE
Baghdad
Alexandria
Cairo
MAMLUKS
Jerusalem
Nile
Tigris
Euphrates
Sir Daria
Kwarizm
Transoxiana
Amu Daria
Samarkand
KHANATE OF
Karashahr
Turfan
Kashgar
JAGHATAI
Yarkand
Yarkand
OF TAMERLANE
Khorasan
Herat
Ghazna
Kabul
Kashmir
Tibet
Fars
Seistan
SULTANATE
OF DELHI
Delhi
Indus
Ganges
0
600
Miles
E.G.M.

(1421–1451), the Turkish conquests began again. Salonica fell. Constantinople was now only an enclave in the Turkish Empire.

Europe did not react. It would not have been able to do so. France and England had again resumed their interminable war. Bohemia and the German knights had not yet recovered from the Hussite crisis. The Church was deeply troubled by the struggle between the Popes and the Councils. None the less, salvation could only come from the West. The Emperor John VIII, with a suite of seven hundred Greek prelates and doctors, came in 1439 to the Council of Florence to offer to restore the Greek church to Papal obedience. The repercussions of this offer were widespread throughout all Christendom. But, blinded by hate for Rome, the people of Constantinople refused to follow the emperor and the bishops preferring the rule of the sultan, who allowed full freedom of religion to the Orthodox in the conquered countries, to unity with Rome. The final struggle was at hand.

The same year disaster struck Christendom; the emperor, Albert of Austria, who had set out to meet the Ottoman army which was then invading Hungary, was killed in the fighting. The Pope preached a crusade. Murad II closed the Bosphorus, had a fleet and heavy artillery built by Christian engineers, and on April 6, 1453 drove back the Venetian, Genoese, Provençal and Catalan warships sent to aid Byzantium. On May 29th the famous capital was taken by storm by the Sultan Mohammed II, who had succeeded Murad II. The city, which then counted a hundred and eighty thousand inhabitants, was defended by only seven thousand, of whom a great number were foreigners. It fell, one might say, without an effort to defend itself, though the Emperor Constantine XI died on the ramparts. The thousand-year capital was put to the sword and terribly sacked by the Turks. Santa Sophia, the greatest and most splendid church in Christendom, became a mosque.

The Turkish flood, after destroying the civilization of Asia, submerged the last traces of the Roman Empire.

2. THE TURKISH INVASIONS OF EUROPE BEGIN

The Central European States and the Turkish Invasions

Albert of Austria, killed in 1439 while trying to halt the Ottoman invasion of Hungary, was the most powerful monarch of central Europe. He had been emperor, hereditary master of the Hapsburg duchies, and elected king of Bohemia and Hungary. His death once again posed the question of Hapsburg leadership. He left only a son, Ladislas, who was

still a minor. It was impossible to confer the imperial crown on him. The College of Electors appointed as emperor Albert's brother Frederic III (1440–1493). Ladislas, in compensation, inherited the patrimonial duchies, and the Bohemian diet accepted him as king, but granted the Czech regency to a local noble, George Podiebrad. In Hungary, the diet set Ladislas aside and conferred the crown on the Lithuanian king of Poland, Vladislav II. But the Turkish invasions were developing and Vladislav II perished at Varna in 1444 while defending his states. The Hungarian nobles then granted the title of king to Ladislas of Austria, but conferred the regency on a Hungarian noble, John Hunyadi. The Turkish menace thus rallied around the Hapsburg family, whose heredity was an element of stability, the kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary.

The Ottoman menace was becoming more and more insistent. In 1453 Constantinople was taken and the Ottoman army started on its conquest of the Danube lands. In 1456 John Hunyadi in his turn was killed while relieving Belgrade. The next year the death of the young King Ladislas of Hapsburg broke the unity of Austria, Bohemia and Hungary which had been formed around his person.

Crisis of Hapsburg Power (1440–1493)

The heir of Ladislas was his uncle, the Emperor Frederic III. Relying on the uncontested dynastic leadership that Albert of Austria had enjoyed, the Hapsburg family had come to regard the imperial crown as their hereditary right. Certainly, the imperial power was now no more than a fiction. But when placed at the service of the duke of Austria, now a powerful monarch, it could become a potent instrument of imperialism. That was what the Emperor Frederic III (1440–1493) wished to make it.

In his reign Austria, and no longer the Holy Empire, became the support of the universal power at which he aimed. The empire ceased to represent the unity of Christendom and assumed a purely dynastic character. Frederic III did not aim, as had the Pope, at affirming the authority of a prince but of a family, the House of Hapsburg, holder of the imperial power and called upon, therefore, to rule the world. *Austria est imperare orbi universo*—A.E.I.O.U.—was the proud motto which summed up his political aspirations, and to which the Hapsburgs were to remain faithful until 1648.

The immediate consequence of the imperialism of Frederic III, by arousing the mistrust of the Hungarians and Czechs, was to break up the bloc which had been more or less maintained under Ladislas. The Hungarian diet, passing over Frederic III, brought to the throne Mathias

Corvinus, son of the national hero John Hunyadi; and the Bohemian diet raised the regent, George Podiebrad, to the throne.

George Podiebrad Tries to Form a European Federation Against the Ottoman Empire

While these upheavals were taking place in Bohemia and Hungary the Turkish onslaught on Europe reached tragic proportions. After the conquest of Constantinople, the Ottoman Empire extended its rule over Albania (1479), reached Bosnia and Hercegovina, made Moldavia and Valachia tributary and got a foothold on the Adriatic coast. Soon it dominated the mouths of the Danube.

The Hungarian and Czech nobles, exclusively preoccupied with safeguarding their political independence and their social prerogatives, paid no heed to the vital importance of the areas just conquered by the Turks. The threat of the monarchical rule of Frederic III was a more immediate danger in their eyes than the Ottoman invasion.

Alone among the princes of the time, the king of Bohemia, George Podiebrad, tried to organize Europe to meet the Ottoman threat. In 1464 he proposed that Poland, Hungary, France and Bavaria form the nucleus of a league, to which all European states would later adhere. Faced with the Ottoman danger, Podiebrad wanted all the Christian states to renounce war among themselves and to form a federation under the authority of a General Assembly in which every nation would have a voice. This plan, the first ever to try to form a League of Nations, was clearly revolutionary in that it only assigned to the Pope and the emperor a place equal to that of other sovereigns, while it gave the king of France a position which made him, to some extent, the president of the federation. It was at once evident that it was impossible to secure the adherence of the Pope in such conditions. Podiebrad therefore tried to form the league without him. The mission which he sent to France failed because of the opposition of the Catholics. Europe remained divided before the menace of the Turks.

At the same time as he tried to unite Europe, Podiebrad tried to revive national feeling in Bohemia. Quite naturally, he found himself forced to rely on the anti-seigniorial and democratic forces which still preserved the ancient Hussite tradition and which, by their adherence to the religious sect of the *Utraquists*, still adhered to Hussite national and social convictions. The Pope, fearing a rebirth of the Hussite heresy, excommunicated him, thus once more breaking the Czech bloc into two mutually hostile parties. The king of Hungary, Mathias Corvinus, without troubling about defending his kingdom against the Ottoman armies, profited by the Czech

crisis; he invaded Bohemia and, supported by the Catholic nobles, had himself crowned king in 1469. The Hungarian-Czech bloc was re-created under a Hungarian prince, a champion of the seigniorial nobles, in opposition to the Hapsburgs who represented the monarchical tendency.

When Mathias Corvinus died in 1490 the Hungarian nobles granted the crown to a Polish prince, Vladislav, whom the Czech *Utraquists*, for their part, had already crowned king of Bohemia. The parties were reconciled in order to preserve intact the union between Hungary and Bohemia in opposition to the Turks and the Hapsburgs. But the very system of elective and seigniorial monarchy which triumphed with the election of Vladislav took all cohesion from the Danube states at a time when they were faced by the absolute power of the Ottoman emperor.

3. RUSSIA TAKES UP THE HERITAGE OF THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

The Russian Cities Under Tatar Rule

While the monarchical policy was losing ground in central Europe before the amorphous mass of the seigniorial régime, and when Constantinople, last vestige of the Byzantine Empire, succumbed before the irresistible onslaught of the Ottoman army, a new power appeared in the distant spaces of the east, with which Europe at that time had no relations at all—Russia.

After the downfall of the Novgorod-Kiev civilization, Russia had not lost all connections with Byzantium. Up till towards the end of the 13th century the Russian cities had struggled to preserve an outlet to the sea. Since Kiev was continually menaced, the centre of power was shifted northward to the principality of Vladimir. In the end, left to themselves, for Byzantium was no longer able to help them in their struggle against the Mongols, they had succumbed. Traffic along the Russian rivers ceased altogether. The cities were depopulated and Russia, losing the unity given it by the great trade-route, was split into principalities which had become essentially rural. It had however preserved some traces of its ancient urban civilization. With the exception of Novgorod, which remained an important market looking towards the Hansa towns, the cities had fallen into decline, like the Roman cities of Gaul in Carolingian times; but they had not entirely disappeared and the Orthodox clergy perpetuated the Byzantine tradition.

The whole country, up to Kiev and Moscow, had been forced to accept Tatar suzerainty while the regions of the Upper Dnieper had passed, in

the 14th century, under the rule of the dukes of Poland or under the influence of the knights of the Teutonic Order.

It was in northern Russia, between the Upper Volga and the Oka, around the ancient city of Suzdal, that a new Russian state was formed, purely landholding in character, which was free of the protectorate of the Kipchak khans.

The Kipchak khanate—the Golden Horde—which had continued to extend its conquests throughout the 14th century had been so greatly devastated by Tamerlane that it had broken up among various khans continually at war with one another (1423–1459). Independent khanates were formed in the Crimea (1430), at Kazan (1445) and at Astrakhan (1466). For a long time the princes of Moscow, paralysed by family dissensions, were unable to profit by this Tatar decadence. But in the reign of Ivan III (1462–1505), who had married a Greek princess, Sophia Paleologus, Moscow was to begin its expansion.

Moscow Frees Russia from Mongol Suzerainty

Ivan, who ascended the throne a few years after the fall of Constantinople, declared that he was restoring the line of the Byzantine emperors, both as head of the Orthodox church and as perpetuator of the Roman Empire. The Russian people inherited the sacred mission of Byzantium; Russia became 'Holy Russia', the 'New Israel', destined to ensure the triumph of Christ's kingdom on earth. Moscow would henceforth be 'the Third Rome'.

Meanwhile, Ivan III conquered the principality of Tver, purged the republic of Novgorod of German influence and added it to his states. Concluding an alliance with the khans of the Crimea and Kazan against the Golden Horde, Ivan established relations with the king of Persia and, having thus assured himself of powerful support, refused to pay tribute to the khan of Sarai, who countered by an alliance with the king of Poland, Casimir IV, against Moscow. But in 1501 Ivan III, with the help of the Crimean khan, took Sarai and razed it to the ground. Russia was free of the Asiatic yoke. Now that the Golden Horde was destroyed, the three khanates of the Crimea, of Kazan and of Astrakhan were the only vestiges of the Turk and Mongol invasions.

Thus, while the Ottoman Empire was establishing its supremacy over central Europe, the Moscow princes, embarking on a Holy War against Islam, drove it out of Russia. At the time when the Byzantine Empire ceased to exist, the Muscovite state, whose princes had adopted from the emperor the title of Tsar (Caesar), took their place in European history.

Map No. 23

RUSSIA UNDER BASIL III (1505-1533)
Expansions of 1261 to 1462
Arctic Ocean
KINGDOM OF NORWAY
White Sea
KINGDOM OF SWEDEN
FINLAND
KARELIA
L. Onega
L. Ladoga
RUSSIAN EMPIRE
KHANATE OF SIBIR
Ural Mountains
ESTHONIA
LIVONIA
Knights of the Sword
COURLAND
L. Peipus
Novgorod
L. Ilmen
Yaroslav
Tver
Suzdal
Vladimir
Moscow
Kazan
Belgary
PRUSSIA
Teutonic Order
Polotsk
Vilna
Minsk
Smolensk
Ryazan
KHANATE OF KAZAN
Samara
KINGDOM OF BOHEMIA
KINGDOM OF POLAND
Cracow
Kiev
Volga
Ural
Saratov
KTE.
NOGAI
KIRGHIZ
Kharkov
KHANATE OF CRIMEA
Sarai
Saraichik
Dniester
Dnieper
TRANSYLVANIA
MOLDAVIA
Braila
KALMUKS
Astrakhan
Azov
Danube
WALLACHIA
Taman
OF ASTRAKHAN
Balaklava
OTTOMAN EMPIRE
Varna
Adrianople
Salonica
Constantinople
Derbent
Sinope
Trebizond
Miles
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From her earliest beginnings Moscow set herself up as the centre of a universal state and this was to become an essential feature of her history. It aimed at the restoration of the empire and the faith. From then on, Russian policy never ceased to be both imperial and Messianic, because of its direct links with the Byzantine Empire.

Russia was thus very clearly differentiated from the countries of central Europe. It was Russia, henceforth, which was to take over the role of universal empire. The Carolingian Empire, and after it the Holy Empire, had inherited their oecumenical mission from Rome; Russia inherited it from Byzantium. But there was this enormous difference; the tsar of Moscow from the start aimed, like the Roman emperors, at an absolute power which, from the reign of Basil III, was shown by the pitiless repression of the attempts of the boyars to assert their independence.

It was a curious reversal of the structure of Europe. After the downfall of Rome, the imperial idea had passed to the Holy Empire, Germanic, landowning and continental, whereas Byzantium had become a Greek mercantile and maritime monarchy, whose influence led to the rise of a great urban civilization in Russia.

At the end of the 15th century, after the fall of Byzantium, it was landowning and continental Russia that spread the imperial idea, while the West became the heir of Byzantine trade and saw the development of national monarchies based on commercial and maritime activities.

4. THE HERITAGE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Though it had been preceded by a long period of decline, the disappearance of the Byzantine Empire was none the less a turning-point in the history of the world. For two thousand years the Greeks had held the Straits and made the Black Sea a zone of their economic expansion. Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt and Syria had been the cradle of Hellenism and Christianity. The Roman Empire, won over to the civilization of its Greco-oriental provinces, had diffused throughout the Mediterranean world and as far as the shores of the Atlantic Ocean the culture that they had built up over forty centuries. And when Rome, now decadent, had been submerged by the barbarians from the depths of Germany, Constantinople had rescued the traditions of the ancient world. In the midst of the barbarized Europe of the first centuries of the Middle Ages, Constantinople had retained the splendour of a great modern state, cultivated and wealthy, rich in art and thought. By barring the path to Islam, it had saved Christendom and Christianity. For centuries it had

remained the mistress of the seas, the lode-stone of sailors and merchants from the Mediterranean, the Black Sea and the distant countries of Russia and Asia. It had caused the burgeoning of Russian civilization by initiating it into the principles of Rhodian commercial law and of Christianity. Its immense economic influence had led to the foundation of Luebeck, London and Bruges; and thanks to it, Venice had kept in touch with the ancient traditions of the sea. When the Turks had put an end to the international activity of the Russian cities, and Byzantium, no longer having a fleet, had begun to lose its great prestige at the same time as it lost control of the seaways, it was there that the Italians went, one and all, to seek the art of building cupolas, the making of mosaics, stained glass, miniatures and manuscripts, and the rules of finance, trade and law. Decadent Byzantium handed on to the West all that it had retained of a culture thousands of years old. It was on the foundation of sea-law, taken over by the Rhodians in the IIIrd century BC from the long Babylonian tradition, that Western capitalism was built in the 15th century, and it was on the foundation of Roman public law, taken over by the Byzantine Empire from the long Egyptian tradition, that the monarchies of France, England and Spain were built.

In 1453 the hearth which had for so many centuries warmed the world and which was for all Asia the true image of Europe and of Christianity was extinguished. Two vast land states—Russia and the Ottoman Empire—exclusively interested in territorial conquest and in preoccupations in which the sea played no role, succeeded the empire which Byzantium had founded on the sea, on trade, and on the independence of the individual. Constantinople had been, for centuries, a great Christian centre whose influence and authority had been felt both in Europe and in Asia. Henceforward it was to become the gate by which Asia, now barbarized by the Turks, invaded Europe.

The balance of Europe was disturbed. Its centre shifted from Constantinople to the West. The tide had turned. From the 7th century it had flowed towards Constantinople, Alexandria, Asia Minor and Syria; now it turned towards Venice and Genoa and was already lapping at the gates of Barcelona and Cadiz.

But the civilization that it brought remained the same; it was the Mediterranean tradition, individualist and cosmopolitan, wide open to the outside world. The Ottomans occupied the former territory of the ancient Roman Empire of the East, but they were to end by making it barren. The tsars of Moscow proclaimed themselves the heirs of the Roman Caesars but even though they inherited their imperial and

universal vision, they recalled, rather than Rome or Byzantium, the great land-empires which, from the VIIIth to the IVth century BC, had been based on the vast spaces of Nearer Asia.

The Germanic Holy Empire, which still existed as a fiction over the feudal chaos of Germany, never ceased to claim to continue the Roman tradition, though its only connection with it was through the universalism of the Catholic church. Since it had ceased to be a theocracy it had broken every link with the imperial tradition of ancient Rome, and its land-owning, seigniorial and feudal way of life in no way represented the former Roman civilization.

The Roman Empire was born of the sea. Its civilization lived only from the sea breezes. It would be the Western peoples who, by seizing the mastery of the seas, garnered its heritage. The empire of the seas belongs only to free peoples whose strength is measured not by their size but by their intelligence, their boldness and the free-will which makes of men so many independent creators. The West was making ready to play its role and was to round off its emancipation by granting to human personality the full value that it had been able to attain in Hellenic times, in the field of material activity by capitalism and in the field of intellect by freedom of thought.

BOOK V

America and Africa to the 16th Century AD

CHAPTER XXIV

PRE-COLUMBIAN AMERICA

The Aztecs

BEFORE the great voyages of discovery which the Portuguese and Spanish were to undertake, America lived apart with no communication with the outside world.

America seems to have been inhabited by man for tens of thousands of years. But if we estimate the existence of man in the ancient world at from a hundred to a hundred and twenty-five thousand years, it seems that it was only about fifteen thousand years before our epoch that human migrations reached America by way of the Behring Strait and the Aleutian islands. There must have been several waves of these migrations coming from Asia. Amongst them, there were several which do not seem to have developed. In the north-west of the United States, the Pueblos have lived for centuries in shelters built in the rocks and containing several hundred dwelling-places. They have preserved this way of life unchanged up to our own times.

Other ethnic groups developed several civilizations of a high order; in Mexico, in Central America, in the Antilles and in the Andine system of South America (Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, a part of Argentina and northern Chile).

It was in Mexico, around Lake Texcaco, that the first civilization seems to have been formed, after at least ten centuries of an evolution during which there perhaps existed a cult devoted to a mother-goddess, recalled by figurines of steatopygous women. Towards the end of this primitive period massive stone buildings were erected; these were circular in form and about sixty feet high and had altars on top of them.

During the next few centuries a great civilization developed to the north-east of Lake Texcaco, of which Teotihuacan was to be the religious centre for two thousand years. It seems that this was the work of the Olmecs who came from the coasts of the Gulf of Mexico.

Teotihuacan is a huge and amazing group of monuments belonging to

a number of quite distinct styles, dominated by two truncated pyramids serving as platforms, one for a temple of the Sun, the other for a temple of the Moon. The older, the Sun Pyramid, was probably built about 1000 BC. About two hundred feet high, it was built alongside a great highway a hundred and thirty feet wide and a mile and a quarter long, entry to which was flanked by a huge citadel.

These monuments whose ruins still exist were decorated with sculptures and frescoes which reveal an already developed technique.

It seems that at Teotihuacan a religious cult dominated by a great solar god replaced a far more ancient cult devoted to a mother-goddess.

The frescoes show that man, after death, entered an after-life in the paradise of the Rain-God Tlaloc, which he reached after crossing a great river, where men chant the praises of the god.

Other divinities which appear at Teotihuacan include the moon, a plumed serpent-god, a goddess of water and a god of fire. Perhaps these gods were, as in the Egyptian religion, personifications of stages in the creation of the world.

After a dozen centuries Teotihuacan entered a period of decline, the reason for which we are unable to discern. The Olmecs were replaced there by the Toltec peoples, who introduced a calendar and had graphic symbols which enabled them to keep a register of dates. After a period of tribal warfare, the Toltecs set up their capital at Tollan (Tula) where they built pyramids, stadia and gigantic statues. Their chief, the High Priest, claimed to be the incarnation of the plumed serpent.

The Toltec civilization, which continued that of the Olmecs, reached its zenith in the 10th and 11th centuries and then began to decline, because of tribal dissensions which allowed barbarians from the north to invade the Toltec Empire in the 12th century. Several city-states were founded on its ruins. They retained the Toltec language and customs, fought amongst themselves for leadership and founded leagues. At the beginning of the 15th century a league of three cities—Mexico, Texcaco and Tlacopan—was founded by the tribe of the Aztecs, who had been settled on the site of Mexico from about 1325. Of these three cities, Mexico rapidly took the lead.

By the beginning of the 16th century Mexico exercised an incontestable supremacy. The sovereigns of the other cities, now become its vassals, were to all intents and purposes imperial officials. Mexico was built up by the conquest of a vast empire. At the end of the reign of Motecuhzoma II, the empire comprised thirty-eight tributary provinces and several protected states. Its frontiers stretched to the two oceans, the Atlantic

and the Pacific. Several seigniories and tribal confederations formed independent enclaves within the empire.

The provinces were essentially fiscal units. Within the fiscal structure imposed by Mexico they kept their very varied local administrations. Constant revolts compelled Mexico to have a strong military organization.

The capital of Mexico, built on a lake, was by the end of the 15th century a great city nearly two miles square and covering about two thousand five hundred acres.[1] It numbered about seven hundred thousand inhabitants, grouped around the great temple of Huitzilopochtli, the sun-god, around whose pyramid stretched a Holy City, crowded with temples, places of prayer, penitence and sacrifice. Other great temples were those of a mother-goddess, of the Rain-God Tlaloc and of numerous other divinities whose worship was centred in a pantheon.

The king lived in an immense palace which housed, other than his private household, the administrative services, the supreme court, the state treasury, the state granaries and the prisons.

The city was provided with a drinking-water system and had a public street-cleaning service.

At the time of their southward migration, the Aztecs had been grouped in clans which formed tribes under the rule of priests elected by the heads of families, who celebrated the cult of their god Huitzilopochtli—the sun—and held military command.

Once settled on the site of their future capital, Mexico, the Aztecs went through an evolution similar to that which all nomad peoples go through when they become stabilized. In addition to the unity imposed by blood-relationship, the unity based on land ownership rapidly made itself felt. Power became organized in the hands of a ruling class. In the city of Mexico, founded in 1375, the clans became quarters, grouped into four sections. The endemic war out of which the Aztec Empire had emerged had created a class of warriors. A single power was set up over the assembled clans, that of the emperor, at first elected by the oligarchy of the ruling class formed by the priests and warriors, but which soon became hereditary. The emperor was supreme commander-in-chief, incarnation of the sun-god, fount of justice and head of the administration.

In the 15th century every quarter was under the rule of an official appointed by the emperor and maintained by those he administered. He exercised his authority with the aid of a council of elders, a development of the former council of heads of families of the primitive clans. The chief of the quarter, priest of the god of the quarter, commander

[1] Rome under Aurelian covered about three thousand four hundred and twenty acres.

of the military contingent which was levied on it, named his subordinates, each entrusted with the surveillance of a group of families. The chief, assisted by these subordinates, divided amongst the families the use of the lands which the central power had placed at the disposition of his quarter. Thus the authority of the emperor, by delegation, was subdivided to control the whole population of the capital.

The family was therefore the primary unit of the Aztec people. It was polygamous. Women, though subject to the authority of their husbands, possessed a separate legal personality and could dispose of their property; but whereas the husband was not restrained by any conjugal fidelity, adultery by the wife involved her death and that of her paramour. Divorce could be pronounced by the courts to the advantage of the husband if his wife were barren or a bad housekeeper; to the advantage of the wife if her husband did not maintain her properly. In cases of divorce, the court divided the household goods between the parties and decided the custody of the children.

A woman who died in child-bed was regarded as similar to a soldier who had died on the field of battle; she would accompany the sun in its triumphal circuit until the day when she would be born again, for eternity, as a humming-bird among the flowers.

Certain women did not marry and devoted themselves to being the temporary companions of the soldiers. Old men were given the utmost respect; they were entitled to live a life of ease, even to the extent of getting drunk, though for men in the prime of life drunkenness was punishable by death. The most worthy of the old men formed the council of the chief of the quarter.

The population, divided into classes whose status we shall consider later, provided (it was its principal civic duty) the military contingents. Boys received a military education from the age of six. Once enrolled in the army they were graded in a hierarchy according to their deeds of courage. Endowed with lands and honours, they could then attain, even if they were from the lowest class, the highest official posts.

The military contingents, levied by quarters, were united in four regiments under the command of the great dignitaries, close relatives of the emperor.

The army leaders, like the officials and judges appointed by the king, formed a privileged class, exempt from taxes, forced labour dues and personal services, and enjoyed appanages in lands and honours, but they did not form a hereditary nobility. These prerogatives were attached to the office and not the person.

It was similar for the priests who, when they finally entered the sacerdotal career by taking vows of celibacy and purity of life, participated in the privileges of the clergy, grouped under the authority of the two high priests of Huitzilopochtli, the sun-god, and of Tlaloc, the rain-god. Women who made temporary (never perpetual) vows of celibacy, could also belong to the clergy as priestesses of the mother-goddess, who was adored as such under various names. But the clergy too, though exempt from taxation and personal service and endowed with lands and honours, did not form a hereditary nobility. Furthermore, although privileged, the priests—whose countless gods possessed immense wealth—lived in austerity and poverty.

Certain persons were akin to the priests without belonging to the clergy. These were the diviners—who held a high place in Aztec life and who were frequently consulted—the doctors, men and women, who were akin to magicians, and finally the sorcerers, who called upon the powers of evil and whose practices were punishable by death.

By the beginning of the 16th century, the ruling class was in the process of becoming a hereditary nobility through the custom which had grown up of handing over to the sons of high officials the offices held by their fathers. There existed, moreover, special colleges for the sons of high officials, where they were trained to carry out the high offices of state.

As these high offices were accompanied by large donations in land, the transmission of duties in certain families tended to render their appanages hereditary and thus they gradually became transformed into private estates. This led to the formation of a class of nobles, privileged, hereditary and endowed with private landed estates.

Aztec society was, moreover, about this time undergoing a profound change. Even as a hereditary nobility was created, so too was a merchant middle class.

The merchants, a recent appearance in Aztec life, held an important place in the cities of the Aztec Empire. They formed powerful guilds devoted to foreign trade. It is a curious thing, since the empire touched both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, that these merchants do not seem to have gone in for coastwise shipping and had no relations either with the Mayas of Central America or with the Incas on the Pacific coast of South America. They formed armed caravans and ventured outside the frontiers of the empire, where they exported manufactured goods and imported exotic and luxury foodstuffs. But they did not concern themselves with supplying raw materials for the empire; these were provided by the tributary provinces or the protected states.

Each of the guilds was in the charge of two chiefs; each had its own religious cult and its own court, whose competence covered all commercial and civil matters concerning the merchants and even criminal cases in which they were involved.

Since their position was hereditary, the merchants became a closed class which amassed great wealth and occupied a more and more important place in society as it became richer. Their children were allowed to enter the high schools attended by the children of the ruling class, and not infrequently high officials married merchants' daughters.

The merchants were subject to taxation but were exempt from forced labour and from military service.

The craftsmen too formed a social class, distinct from the merchants. Organized in guilds which possessed a legal personality, they lived in special quarters, had their own gods and their own institutions. Their children succeeded them in their professions. Their social level varied greatly according to their trades. The most respected and the best paid were the goldsmiths, the jewellers and the workers in feather mosaics.

Like the merchants, the craftsmen were subject to taxation, but they were exempt from agricultural labour and personal service.

The great mass of the people formed the agricultural plebeians. All the land belonged to the community, but every Aztec had the right to the yield of a plot of land which he cultivated for himself. He also received distributions of food and clothing. In each quarter all the inhabitants participated in the election of the local chiefs, who were nominated by the emperor. They were subject to taxation which was apportioned by the chief of the quarter and the council of the elders, to forced labour for the benefit of the state and to military service, thanks to which those who distinguished themselves by their exploits were able to move into the upper classes.

The common people settled in the cities of Mexico, Texcaco and Tlacopan were privileged above the others, and especially above the peasants, since they benefited by more frequent and larger distributions.

They could not be deprived of the enjoyment of their land on any pretext; yet there were landless peasants who lived on the lands of others, paying a rent which took the form of rent in kind or metayage. Perhaps these were displaced persons, former prisoners of war or freed slaves.

The peasants were bound to cultivate the lands of the emperor, of the gods and of the high officials. They had also to do forced labour for road-making, the construction of public buildings and the maintenance of canals.

There were in the Aztec Empire a great number of slaves who, however, were for the most part well treated. They could possess property, acquire a house and even possess slaves. There were some who acted as bailiffs for their masters on estates where there were free men. Marriage between slaves and citizens was allowed. The child of a slave and a free woman was born free. Slaves were often emancipated by will; others purchased their freedom. If they ran away and managed to enter the gates of the emperor's palace, they became free by the mere proximity of the supreme head of the state.

The slaves were prisoners of war captured during military campaigns, foreigners kidnapped by the merchant caravans, certain common-law criminals and even men who, to assure their existence, sold themselves into slavery. As the wealth of the people, and above all of the ruling class, increased, so too did the number of slaves.

The whole political, military and social structure was dominated by the figure of the emperor. Chief of the warriors, the Mexican emperor had originally been elected by the heads of families and later, in the 16th century, by an electoral college made up of about a hundred high officials. But evolution tended towards a stabilization of power. First at Texcaco and then at Mexico—after Motecuhzoma I—the emperor became, in the 16th century, hereditary.

In any case he was regarded as the elect of the gods, to whom his first duties bound him. Thus his first act, after his enthronement, was to do penance. Responsible before the gods, the emperor owed justice to his people; he had also to ensure their subsistence by struggling against scarcity.

The emperor governed with the aid of a council composed of his closest relatives which co-opted several other counsellors. The president of this council acted as vice-emperor.

The emperor was not only the head of the army and the administration. He was also representative of the will of the gods, which played an essential role in Aztec civilization. All the manifestations of popular life were conditioned by religion.

This was formed by the union of the ideas and the gods of the various civilizations which had preceded the Aztecs and which had been absorbed by them.

The Aztecs believed that several worlds had existed successively before the one in which they lived; all these worlds had ended in catastrophe, and the present world also would end in some vast upheaval. Like almost all peoples, it seems that the Aztecs had first of all celebrated the cult of a

mother-goddess, who was both earth and sky, beneficent and maleficent, and who was worshipped throughout the empire under various names. The mother-goddess then seems to have been replaced as the origin of all life by a primordial couple who gave birth to the gods who created the universe. The first creation of these gods was the sun. The Aztecs believed it to have been born from the sacrifice of these gods, which seems to associate it with the ideas of nature worship. So that the sun, which dies every evening, should be reborn the next morning to continue its course it must be given sacrifices. The Toltecs sacrificed animals and made offerings of flowers; the Aztecs sacrificed men. The idea that life can be replenished only by death was the essence of the Aztec religion. The men sacrificed, slave-prisoners or voluntary victims, were regarded as representing the gods sacrificing themselves.

These sacrifices were made not only to the sun-god, Huitzilopochtli, the supreme god of war, but also to the rain-god, Tlaloc, who was worshipped mainly by the peasants, and to the god of eternal spring who is shown as clothed in the skin of a flayed man, the god of youth. A number of other gods from the countless pantheon of the Aztecs also received human sacrifices. Perhaps this should be interpreted as the expression of the inexorable law of nature which demands that the world live by constantly consuming itself. Or it may have been based on an idea of the continual redemption of the world by the death of man.

These sacrifices of men, women and children daily offered on the summits of the temple-pyramids involved great festivals with thousands of victims. They were accompanied by ritual cannibalism; the flesh of the victims—regarded as sacrificed gods—was eaten by the priests.

To provide the tens of thousands of victims sacrificed in Mexico each year, it was necessary to procure prisoners by continual war. Perhaps it was this religious necessity for making war that led to a fixed set of rules governing armed conflicts. Total war was unknown. War was only begun after a formal declaration. As soon as one of the belligerents lost its leader or its capital, it declared itself beaten and the conflict ended.

Montezuma I went still further and tried to elude the stern necessity of making war by organizing 'flower wars' in honour of the gods. These were a sort of tournament in which the vanquished were sacrificed to the gods.

The victims offered to the gods, like the warriors killed in battle and the women who died in childbirth, were destined to a glorious after-life passed, for the warriors, with the sun-god whom they accompanied in his course through the heavens or, for the peasants, in the Elysian Fields

of the god Tlaloc. Other human beings after death were destined to a life of lesser splendour in the kingdom of the shades.

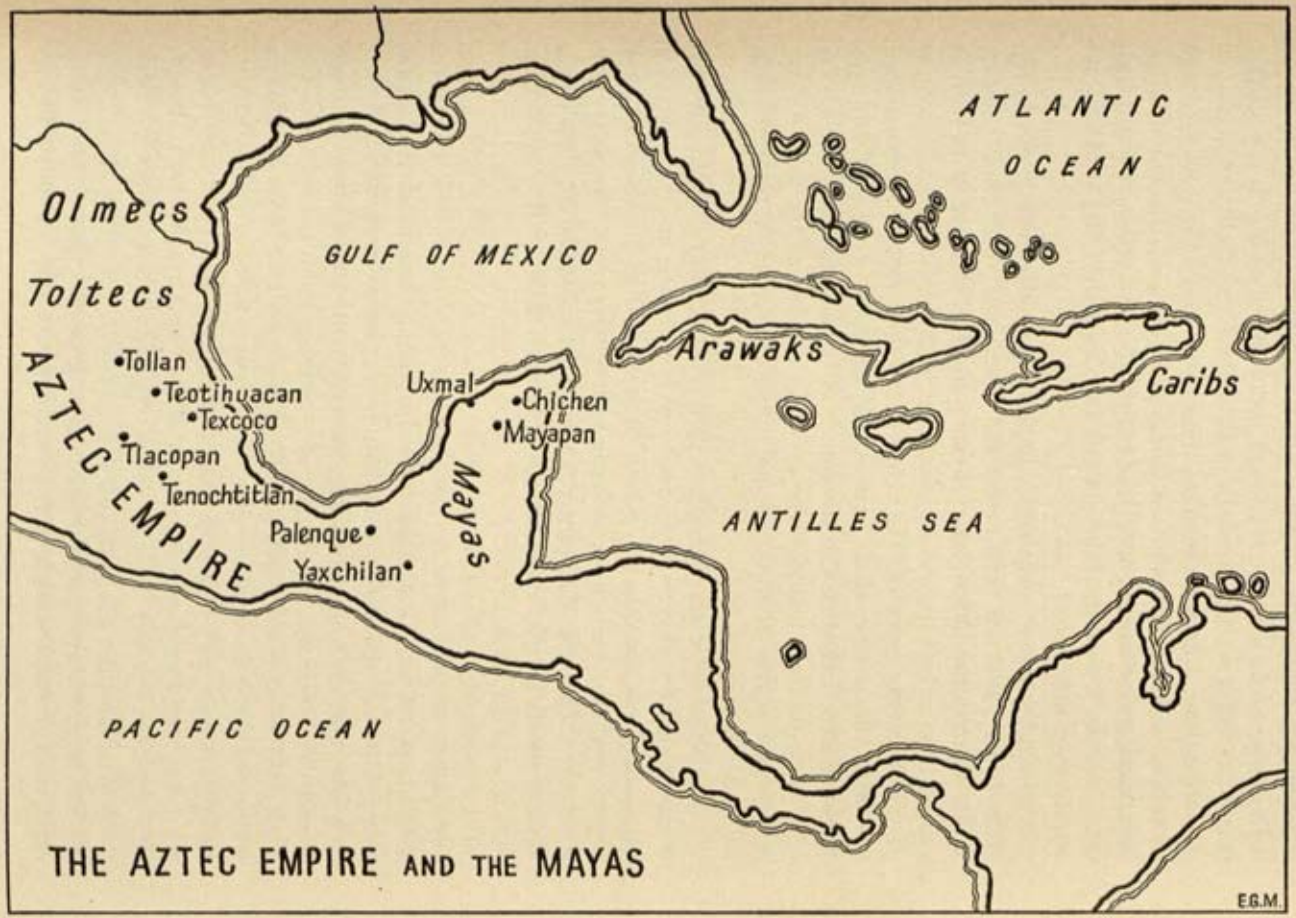
Probably we do not know enough about this after-life. It is probable that the emperor would rejoin the gods in the other world and that there would be some difference between those who served the gods well and those who did not. Otherwise it is not possible to understand why the Aztecs attached so much importance to penitence and confession, to which they could have recourse once only during their lives and which meant remission of sins.

In the 16th century, when the Aztec Empire collapsed under the blows of the Spaniards it was in full evolution. There was a hereditary nobility and a merchant middle class. Private property had begun to appear amongst the nobles, power had become more and more centralized in the hands of the emperor, and religion, by the influence of syncretism to which the priests were devoted, had assumed a strongly imperial character associated with the absolutism of the emperor and was trying to disentangle from amongst the countless number of the gods a great creator-god, maker of all things, unknown and not to be represented in any concrete form.

The civilization of the Aztecs, though it produced immense monuments of highly skilled architecture decorated with sculptures and paintings of a high order, was none the less poor in technical skills. But it had a pictographic writing, both ideographical and syllabary. Unfortunately the Aztec chronicles and manuscripts, usually illuminated, were systematically destroyed by the Spaniards who regarded them as the works of a demoniac civilization.

The Mayas

While the Aztecs in Mexico were developing their harsh civilization founded on war, the Mayas—of whom two million descendants still exist today speaking the language of their ancestors—in Central America, from Yucatan to Guatemala, were the most cultivated and refined of all the redskins. The territory which was to see the flourishing Maya civilization was settled about three thousand BC. About 350 BC stone buildings, terraces and pyramids were being built there; and in the 4th century AD began what has been found convenient to call the Maya era. Between the 4th and the 10th century a great urban civilization was formed, which reached its zenith in the great cities of Palenque, Yaxchilan and Piedras Negras, where Maya sculpture attained its greatest expressiveness. These cities, each of which was a little state, were governed by hereditary princes


ATLANTIC
OCEAN
Olmecs
GULF OF MEXICO
Toltecs
Tollan
Teotihuacan
Texcoco
Tlacopan
Tenochtitlan
AZTEC EMPIRE
Uxmal
Chichen
Mayapan
Mayas
Palenque
Yaxchilan
Arawaks
Caribs
ANTILLES SEA
PACIFIC OCEAN
THE AZTEC EMPIRE AND THE MAYAS
E.G.M.

Map No. 24

assisted by a Council of State made up of notables, priests and special councillors. The prince conducted internal and external policy, levied taxes and appointed village headmen, after making them pass an examination. The village headmen were supported by those they administered, but they did not collect the taxes. They were assisted in local affairs by two or three councillors, each of whom administered a quarter and without their consent the headman could not take any decision. The headmen administered justice in their villages and commanded the militia, but they were subordinate to the military commander of the city. This leader, elected for three years, was sacred in character; during his years of office he had to abstain from eating meat and from sexual relations.

In each city the people were divided into four classes; the hereditary nobles who provided the local chiefs, the priests who formed a body of clergy under the authority of a hereditary high priest, the husbandmen, craftsmen and workers and, last of all, the slaves, prisoners of war or common-law delinquents, who were bought and sold like merchandise. The husbandmen formed the mass of the population.

This urban civilization collapsed, for what reason we are unable to discover, at the end of the 10th century, possibly because of inter-city conflicts. At this time fresh immigrations gave the Mayas a new dynasty and introduced new religious ideas, but without changing the political organization of the country, which continued to be based on the great cities. Leagues of cities were formed which struggled for leadership. From the 10th to the 12th century this leadership was held by the league formed by the powerful city of Mayapan with the two cities of Chichen and Uxmal. In the 12th century Mayapan destroyed the other two cities of the league and ruled alone from the 12th to the 14th century. But in the 15th century Chichen revolted and seized Mayapan; the rest of the Maya lands which were again divided under the rule of rival cities fell into an anarchy which was to last until the Spanish conquest.[1]

The Mayas used a hieroglyphic and extremely complicated writing[2] which still covers the walls of their temples.

At the time of the Mayapan leadership the cultural level of the Mayas seems to have been about the same as that of the Sumerians in the IIIrd millenary BC. They made exact astronomical calculations, were familiar with an arithmetic based on the vigesimal system and had a 360-day calendar: eighteen months of twenty days plus a short month of five days.

[1] There is a clear parallelism between the evolution of the Maya lands and that of the lands of Sumer up to the leadership of the IIIrd Ur dynasty. See Book I, p. 54.

[2] It has not yet been deciphered.

Furthermore, they reckoned according to a chronology beginning, it seems, in the year 3113 BC.

The people lived in adobe houses or in huts grouped around the temples built on the tops of stepped pyramids recalling the Sumero-Babylonian ziggurats; the residences of the prince and the priests were palaces built on rectangular terraces. The façades of these temples and palaces were decorated with reliefs and statues, essentially decorative before the 15th century but later in symbolic and abstract forms—a whorl represented the rain-god—and painted frescoes.

Not much is known about their religion. It seems to have been a deification of the physical world, dominated by the recurrent idea of the struggle between good and evil. There are certain ideas in it which recall the beliefs of the ancient Orient; the world was created by a great god (Hurrab) whose son, the lord of night and day (Itzamna) taught the Mayas writing, law and the calendar,[1] and whose worship was associated with that of the sun-god. The rest of their countless deities—amongst whom the rain-god enjoyed especial favour—were the object of a worship with an extremely complicated ritual, made up of offerings and, in the last phase of the Maya civilization perhaps influenced by the Aztecs, of human sacrifice.

It is a curious thing that the Maya civilization does not seem to have reached the Antilles, which were inhabited by the Arawak and Carib peoples, both originally from the South American continent. Several centuries before the Spanish conquest the Arawaks had replaced a primitive fishing people who lived on the island of Cuba. They had created there a peaceful and completely agricultural civilization. The Caribs, on the contrary, had settled there during the 15th century AD.

Though settled in these islands, these people were in no way sea-going. They were allied to the peoples settled along the coasts of Colombia and Venezuela living in agricultural villages, but they erected stone buildings, made roads and bridges and reservoirs and built houses on terraces, which proves a high standard of civilization.

The Incas

In South America the whole Pacific coast was settled by agricultural peoples who were, generally speaking, at a similar stage of development to those on the coasts of Colombia and Venezuela. Well before the arrival of the Incas, various already civilized peoples came by sea on rafts and settled along the northern Peruvian coasts between Tumbez and Chimon

[1] There seem to have been certain ideas allied to the Osirian cult.

and built there a considerable metropolis. The zenith of their civilization, which was distinguished by the construction of cyclopean walls, seems to have been between the 4th and 7th century AD. Their settlement was destroyed by some sort of flood which made them look for a new site on higher ground. They went up to the high plateau, where they founded the city of Quito. Tradition has it that another group reached an island in the Ocean, whence they were later to return.

These tales are considered by certain authors as confirmation of the hypothesis that a country formerly existed between South America and Australia where a civilization may have developed of which Fiji and Easter Island are the only remaining survivals.[1]

This might explain the common origin that these authors assign to the Indians of South America and the Polynesians.

The Chimons seem to have conquered the northern coast of Peru up to the borders of the present republic of Ecuador.

Several states were organized in Peru and Ecuador. A people who arrived by sea may have disembarked at the spot which has since been known as Bahia de Canaks and reached the plateau and set up its capital at Quito. Little states of farmers, shepherds and fishermen were formed in the valley near modern Lima. Farther south, on the coast, Nazca was the powerful capital of the Chinchas and, from the 10th century, Teahuanaco, still farther south, built at an altitude of nearly thirteen thousand feet, was a particularly famous religious centre, surrounded by powerful ramparts enclosing temples, palaces and fortresses.

All these peoples had reached a high degree of civilization when the Incas first came on the scene. All of them were originally composed of patrilinear clans which, after their settlement on the land, had replaced the unity imposed by blood by that created by land ownership.

First settled in the valley of Cuzco, the Incas were made up of scattered tribes. The need for unity of command forced them to unite. After Manco Capac, who commanded a tribe, there was Sinchi Roca[2] who commanded a confederation. These chiefs were elected.

With Maita Capac, the Inca conquests extended rapidly. They reached Lake Titicaca. Capac Yupanqi seems to have been the first great technician of the conquest; he organized means of transport for his troops, built roads and pontoon bridges.

With Inca Roca a new branch of the dynasty, which had now become hereditary, took power. The king thenceforth assumed the title of Inca.

[1] L. Baudin, 'La vie journalière des Incas', Paris 1955, page 35.

[2] These were possibly legendary and symbolic persons.

The Inca dissociated the religious and political power; he built schools and organized public ceremonies of great magnificence.

But the Incas, by the very fact that they wished to extend their conquests over the neighbouring peoples, were surrounded by enemies. They passed through a period of crisis which lasted until Pachacontec ascended the throne at the beginning of the 15th century. In his reign the Inca Empire was consolidated and united; it became a homogeneous and intensely centralized bloc surrounded, along the frontiers, by military zones.

His son, Tupac Yupanqi, who was associated with him in his rule, during his voyages along the northern shores of Peru, decided to set out on a naval expedition to Polynesia. For this purpose he had a fleet of rafts built, which mustered at Tumbez, and assembled an army of about twenty thousand men under his command.[1]

The voyage lasted a year. On his return Tupac Yupanqi was given a triumphal welcome. The articles which he brought from Polynesia were placed in the fortress of Cuzco where, a little later, the Spanish conquerors could have seen them.

On his father's death, Tupac Yupanqi continued the pacification and organization of the empire which stretched over twenty-five thousand miles of coasts and high mountains from southern Colombia to Chile. His successor, Atahualpa, divided the empire, which he considered too big to be governed well as a single unit, between his two sons. One had his residence at Quito and the other at Cuzco. But it was not long before dissensions broke out between the two parts of the empire. They were to prove fatal for, by this time, the Spaniards had already landed in America.

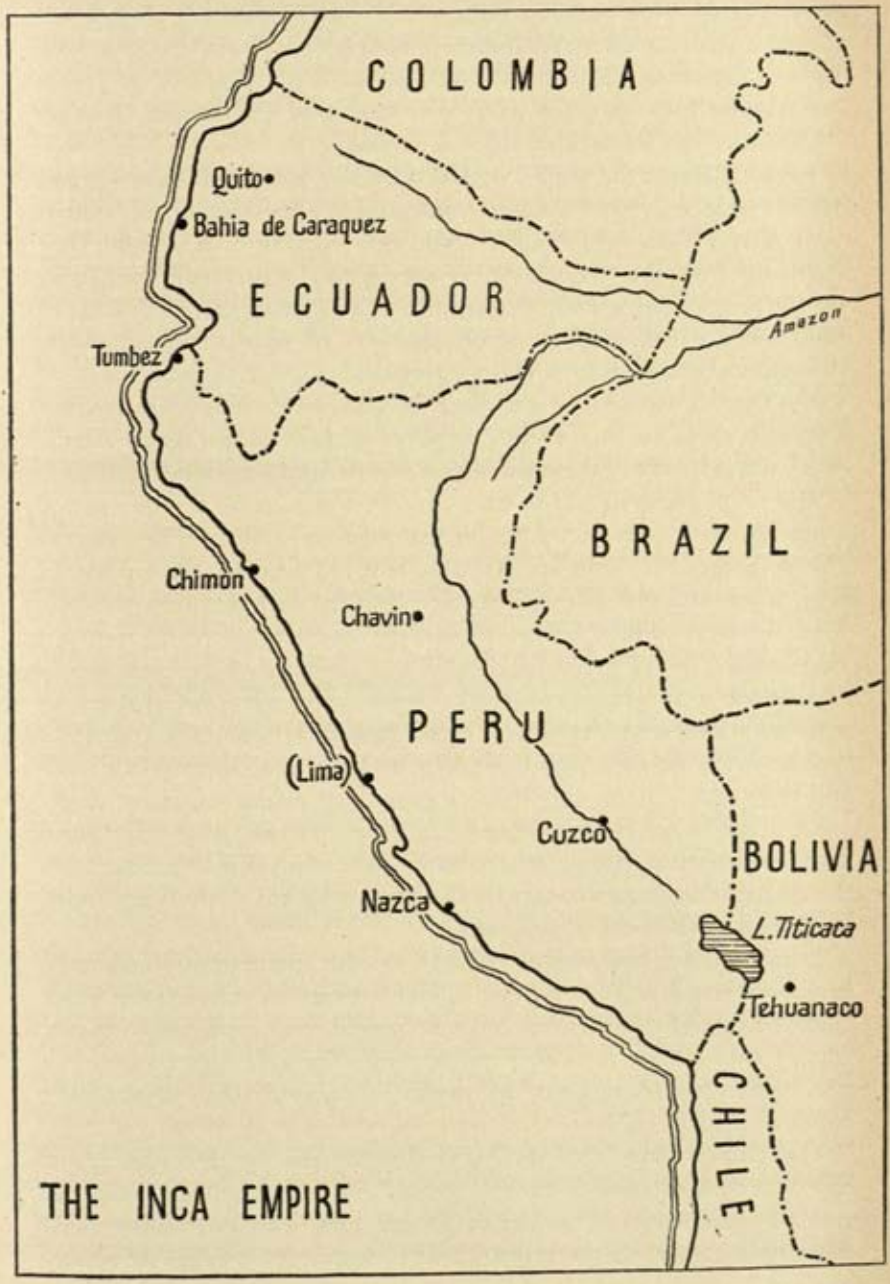
The unity of the empire was based upon the solar cult and on the unity of language which, after the conquests, had been imposed on all the conquered peoples. Those who resisted were deported to the most distant parts of the empire.

The Inca Empire had as its chief the Inca, the civil, military and religious leader. He was the incarnation of the sun on earth. As his power increased, so his religious character was accentuated. By the 15th century he was regarded as a god. To perpetuate the divine element which he incarnated, he married his sister.[2] He also had other wives, specially chosen from amongst the virgins consecrated to the sun, who were immured in convents. On his death, the Inca was mummified and his body kept in the temple of the sun.

[1] Baudin, op. cit. p. 20.

[2] This was an evolution of monarchist absolutism similar to that practised in Egypt.

Map No. 25


COLOMBIA
Quito
Bahia de Caraquez
ECUADOR
Amazon
Tumbez
BRAZIL
Chimon
Chavin
PERU
(Lima)
Cuzco
BOLIVIA
Nazca
L. Titicaca
Tehuanaco
CHILE
THE INCA EMPIRE

The empire was divided into four provinces, linked to the capital by roads passing over pontoon bridges and cord suspension bridges and provided with wayside inns. Transport was on mens' backs (the Americans had not discovered the wheel). The administration organized an express relay service between them. These provinces were governed by relatives of the Inca, who formed his Supreme Council.

For local affairs, the people were divided into patrilinear classes, whose leaders were judges and military commanders. The officials and officers were recruited among the nobles, who enjoyed various privileges. They could have several wives, whereas monogamy was strictly obligatory for the people. The nobles, furthermore, had at their service a number of more or less enfranchised slaves, prisoners of war and common-law delinquents, whose duty it was to protect them. All the land belonged to the state. It was divided into three categories. One was devoted to the solar cult, the second was at the disposal of the Inca and his family and the third, the property of the community, was divided amongst the farmers.

The people were subject to rules fixed by the state. Men were married at the age of twenty-four. After his marriage, every man, if he were not already assigned to some specific task, received a house and a parcel of land, whose size was increased according to the number of his children. These lands, since they formed part of the collective property, were not transferable.

All men were obliged to work. Those who were not assigned to agricultural work were appointed by the local authorities to be craftsmen, to take part in the construction of public buildings or to maintain the roads and the canals. Those who were employed on public works or undertakings and who did not possess lands to cultivate were maintained together with their families by the state. There was a similar arrangement for the men conscripted to serve in the army, which at all times amounted to about a tenth of the population.

In this society, both aristocratic and socialist, trade played little part. It was entrusted to state agents. Those commercial transactions which could be carried out between ordinary people were restricted to barter. Money was unknown, as also was writing. The state, however, kept a strict system of accountancy by means of knotted tallies of variously coloured cords.

The state also concerned itself with forming, among this subject mass deprived of all initiative, an élite created by the schools and recruited either from among the nobles or among men who had distinguished themselves in war, in the construction of suspension bridges or on any

other occasion. In order to encourage the members of this élite, an appeal was made to personal advancement which was strictly forbidden to the mass of the population. The Inca gave lands, llamas, cloth, weapons and precious objects to the most deserving amongst them and allowed them to bequeath these goods to their heirs. Over the masses, subject to a socialist régime, the nobility, drawn from the élite of the nation, formed a powerful and honoured class, which led gradually to the formation of a régime of private property. It was on this élite alone that the empire, as well as the civilization which it represented, was dependent.

The masses, however, were indoctrinated with an ideology, both religious and national, upon which the prestige of the empire was founded. On certain feast-days, the people were called together to hear official storytellers recount the mythological history of the empire, which had emerged from anarchy thanks to the Inca, the incarnate God, who had brought to it the benefits of civilization. Thus the civil and religious prerogatives of the Inca were blended. Any disobedience to his orders must be punished by the authorities as a crime and chastised by the gods as a sin.

Under such a system technique, especially that of building in stone, reached a high degree of development, but art remained poor.

The great interest in life was religion. A deification of the forces of nature, it counted an enormous number of gods. Amongst them, as in almost all the American civilizations, were discernible a hero-civilizer, at the same time creator-god, symbolized by the sun. This was Quetzalcoatl, 'the Mexican', which seems to prove that the Incas came from Mexico.

The Incas admitted to their pantheon as inferior gods those of the conquered peoples. Every class had its own guardian spirit. The first-fruits of the harvest were offered to them.

There are to be found in this religion, whose mythology was infinite, ideas which recall those of a mother-goddess who may have given birth to the human race, and others which make the sun-god a creator-god who fecundates the moon and also—like the Zeus of the Greeks—ordinary mortals. The opposition between good and evil, represented by divine beings, is another essential element. Certain myths, such as that of the Flood summoned by Chichchacum to destroy all men, that of the same god condemned—like Atlas—to bear the earth upon his shoulders, and that of the god Bochica who announces to men the resurrection of the body and teaches them how to spin and weave cotton, and certain religious ceremonies, like the processions through the fields at sowing and harvest

and the sacrifices to the gods which went, at the time of the enthronement of the Inca, as far as human sacrifice, and the burial of the dead with their familiar objects around them at the bottom of deep wells, all make one think of the oriental religions.

At the time of the Inca's burial, women and servants who were to accompany him in the after-life and children chosen from amongst the most beautiful were also sacrificed. Did the Incas believe in an after-life? It seems so, judging from what we know of the burial of an Inca. But we have no other facts at our disposal which would permit us to say so.

Generally speaking, the civilization of all the American peoples is distinguished by certain similarities It was an essentially continental civilization. The sea had no part in it. Even the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean, which were surrounded on all sides by civilized peoples, did not become inland seas, so that no close relationship was ever established between the various civilizations. The Maya civilization which was, it seems, the most cultivated of them all, and which flourished in Central America on the coasts of the Caribbean, never reached the islands of the Archipelago, where there was a far more rudimentary civilization.

None the less, we know from the Spaniards, who encountered them in the Pacific near Tumbez, that merchants, escaping from the control of the Inca state, navigated on rafts, transporting the goods in which they traded.

We know too that various tribes arrived in South America on rafts; and we have mentioned the great expedition of the Inca, Tupac Yupanqi, to Polynesia.

Despite all that, sea-borne trade had no part in the economic plan of the Inca state, which was essentially agricultural. It does not seem that a merchant middle class was ever formed within it, as had been the case among the Aztecs.

What is characteristic of all the civilizations of pre-Columbian America is that they were entirely the work of an élite and that the only framework into which they fitted was a religious framework.

That explains how the Spanish conquest, by destroying this élite and by preventing the celebration of the national religions, was able to overthrow so suddenly these civilizations which had never become part of the mass of the people.

CHAPTER XXV

AFRICA UP TO THE MIDDLE OF THE 15TH CENTURY

WHEREAS the Mediterranean countries of Africa, incorporated in the Roman Empire and conquered by Islam, had played a constant part in the history of the Near East and of Europe, the African continent remained almost unknown to Europeans up to the 15th century.

General Features

Before the glacial epoch, when the Sahara was covered with vegetation intersected by rivers and was inhabited by a comparatively numerous population, northern Africa was inhabited by Hamites of white race. The black races were being formed in central, eastern and southern Africa. The whites had caused Mediterranean influence to penetrate as far as Lake Chad and Guinea.

Africa is geographically divided into two clearly distinct zones of civilization. In the great equatorial forest the peoples, devoid of communication with the outside world, divided into chieftainships without organization and without history, had a purely local and backward civilization.

To the north and south, on the contrary, great states were formed, in the north by the white peoples and in the south by the black peoples.

Leadership of the Western Sahara

The oldest state in northern Africa, whose existence was revealed to us by the Arab historian, El Bekri, writing in the 11th century, was the Empire of Gana, whose white population, known by the name of Srakolle, was composed of Hamites crossed with Berbers. In the middle of the 10th century Kumbi, the capital of Gana, was an important market-place where caravans from the Berber coastal regions stopped, before going onward to the Niger and Senegal. Kumbi, built of stone, had a Moslem

quarter with a dozen mosques. In the royal quarter of the city the houses of the high officials were grouped around the palace. Every day the prince distributed two thousand meals to his subjects. He had at his command a powerful army of two hundred thousand warriors, of whom forty thousand were archers, by which he kept his subjects in control. Gana was a feudal state, divided into provinces, governments and tributary kingdoms stretching over the whole western Sahara (Sahel). In the north it bordered on the Berber countries of the Sahara, to the west it reached the Senegal river and on the south the Niger.

The prosperity of Gana was founded on its imports and exports upon which the king levied taxes. It had gold-bearing deposits in the southern provinces which gave the king of Kumbi a monopoly of the gold-trade, which was the reason for a large movement of caravans from the north.

At the end of the 11th century conflicts broke out between Gana and the Moslem peoples, which led to Abubekr-ben-Omar to undertake a Holy War against the Gana Empire. Kumbi was taken in 1076. Its king was forcibly converted to Islam and compelled to pay tribute, while the empire was subjected to Moslem occupation. This did not last long, but long enough to cause the Gana Empire to disintegrate and its former vassal principalities to recover their independence.

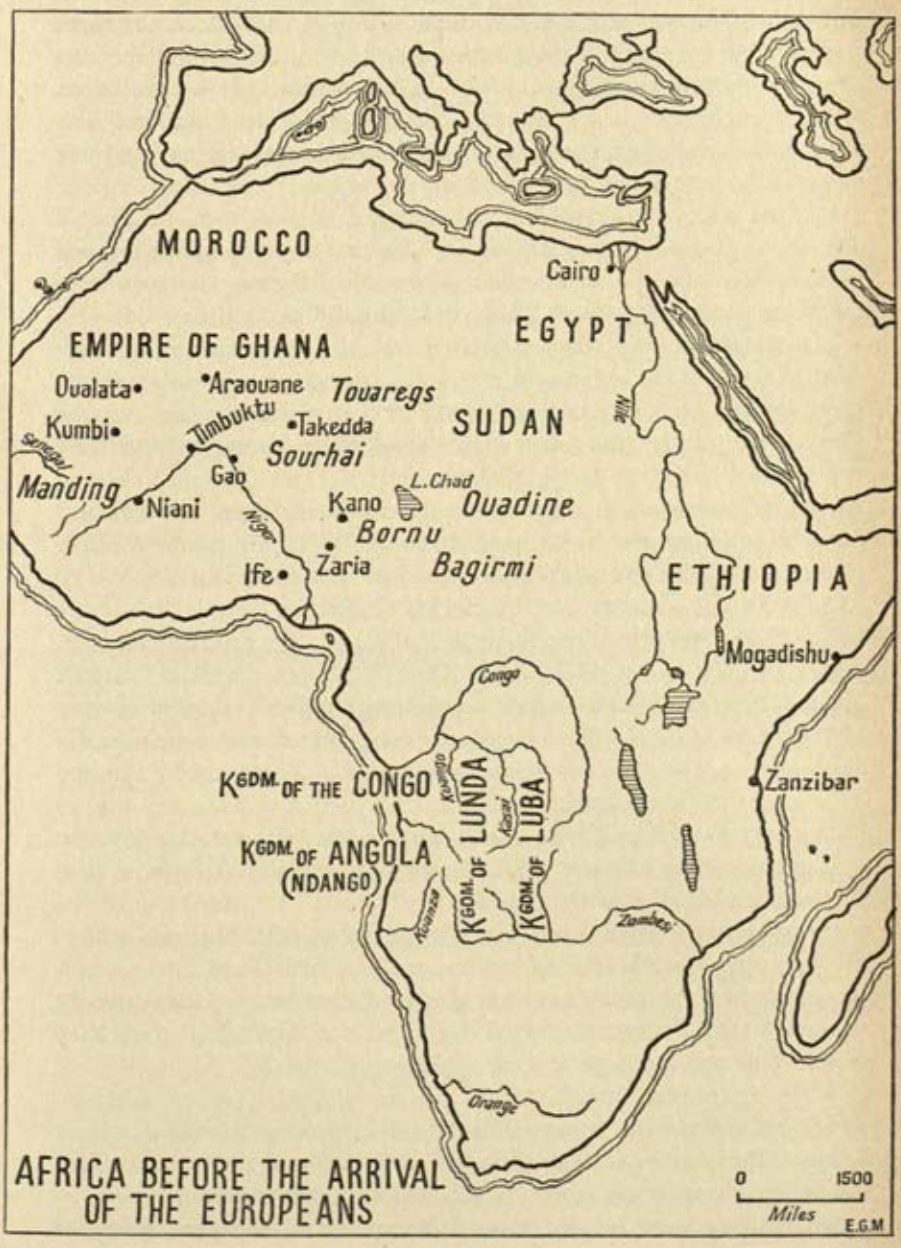
At this time an important state was being formed in the Sudan around Gao (on the bend of the Niger) where the Surhai, who had been converted to Islam in the 11th century, gave a great economic importance to the western Sudan. Gao, where a Moslem quarter was created, became a market frequented by merchants who came with their caravans from the Sahara and the Maghreb. It was to know several centuries of prosperity.

Amongst the principalities which had formed part of the Empire of Gana and which had recovered their independence at the end of the 11th century that of Sosso—situated to the south of Kumbi—was one of the most powerful. It restored the empire by imposing its suzerainty on the neighbouring principalities. But this political construction, a mere feudal framework superimposed on the country, lasted only a short while. In 1295 the empire, engaged in a struggle with the Sudanese states, broke up and, after a merciless war, the Sudan asserted its leadership over the Sahel (western Sahara).

Sudanese Hegemony

The prince of Niani (on the Niger), who had been converted to Islam about 1050, conquered the Sahel, including the gold-bearing provinces, and united them in a vast empire—the Empire of Manding. Like the

Map No. 26


MOROCCO
Cairo
EGYPT
EMPIRE OF GHANA
Oualata
Araouane
Touaregs
Kumbi
Timbuktu
Takedda
SUDAN
Sourhai
Gao
Senegal
Manding
Niani
Niger
L. Chad
Kano
Ouadine
Bornu
Ife
Zaria
Bagirmi
ETHIOPIA
Mogadishu
Congo
Kwango
Kasai
KGDM. OF THE CONGO
KGDM. OF LUNDA
KGDM. OF LUBA
KGDM. OF ANGOLA (NDANGO)
Zanzibar
Kasanje
Zambezi
Orange
AFRICA BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF THE EUROPEANS
0 1500
Miles
E.G.M

earlier empires, it was feudal. It reached its greatest expansion in the 14th century. At this time Manding kept up regular contacts with Morocco and Egypt. The prince summoned Arabs, *literati* and merchants, to Niani and for half a century there was peace and order throughout the vast empire of which Timbuktu (on the Niger), Walata and Arawan in the former Empire of Gana were the main trade centres. Manding also came into contact with Europe and John II of Portugal sent envoys there in 1484. But by then its decline had already begun.

Like all feudal empires Manding collapsed from within, because of dissensions in the reigning family. The dynastic discords which resulted made it impossible for the empire to defend itself against the invasion of the Touregs who came from the north. Manding fell to pieces.

The Surhai Empire, which had been created around Gao in the 10th century and which ever since had maintained a great economic importance, profited by the dissolution of Manding to extend widely over the western Sahara. Ali the Great (1493–1529) took Timbuktu and tried to free himself from the growing modern influence throughout all northern Africa. He massacred the Moslem *literati* whom the kings of Niani had called to Manding. But he had nothing to put in the place of the Moslem civilization and his dynasty was overthrown by Mohammed Touré who set up a Moslem dynasty over the Surhai Empire.

The Surhai Empire thenceforth seemed like a purely Moslem state. Surrounded by *literati*, Mohammed Touré set up monarchical rule and divided his empire into three districts, themselves sub-divided into cantons and villages. The system of vassal states was systematically organized, each vassal receiving the investiture of his power by handing over some symbolic object.

The king himself had great estates which were cultivated by slaves or serfs placed under overseers. Great seigniorial and slave-cultivated properties extended all over the empire.

Its expansion westward brought it into conflict with Morocco which, in 1591, put an end to the Surhai Empire. The Moroccans, armed with arquebuses, imposed their rule over all the western Sahara (Sahel) and the western Sudan. In 1591 they extended it as far as Timbuktu which they seized. This was the limit of their expansion southward.

While Islam was spreading over all the western parts of northern Africa, from the 14th century onward the central Sudan had also been deeply influenced by it. This, it is true, only affected the princes, all of whom were converted, while the population remained pagan.

Small states were formed around Kano, Zaria—the principality of

Laoussa—and along the shores of Lake Chad, Burnu. It was Burnu which took the lead in the central Sudan because of the role played by Lake Chad in the caravan economy since it was the end of the route from the great market of Timbuktu through the Takedda copper-mining region. Other states occupied the Waddai, which Islam had penetrated from the 11th century; farther east, Darfur and Kordofan remained pagan up to the 15th century; Islam was finally to impose its influence on them in the 16th century.

South-east of Lake Chad the Bagirmi built up a state out of a number of chieftainships, which was converted to Islam in the 16th century and was to become a small military state.

In the states of the western and central Sudan the white peoples of Libyo-Berber stock became more and more mixed with the black race and extended eastward. In the 15th century they reached the middle Senegal and settled there. Their migration continued in the form of infiltration of bands of herdsmen with their flocks. Thus they reached, peaceably, French Guinea and, in the 16th century, the Cameroons.

In the 10th century, with the Peul and Berber peoples from the north, Islam also began to appear on the Senegal. The Berbers, who had made their appearance in the 9th and 10th centuries on the Senegal, the Niger and at Lake Chad, slowly drove the negroes back. The result was a mixture of the black and white races, which is shown in the African languages where Carthaginian words introduced by the Berbers are to be found. In the Sudan the vocabulary shows that almost all words relating to crafts, save those connected with agriculture, are foreign importations. Weaving, spinning, dyeing with indigo, basket-making, casting by the *cire perdue* process (practised in Benin), the manufacture of beads and coloured glass, were brought by the Berbers or the Moslem Peuls. All in all, the civilization of Islam was, up to the arrival of the Europeans, the only one to influence Africa.

The first state-forms to be organized on the Senegal, when the country was made tributary to Manding, were chieftainships (*chefferies*) over a few villages on the Atlantic coast. On the Gold Coast these chieftainships, by forming confederations, were like organized kingdoms and devoted their efforts to making pillaging expeditions into Manding.

It is interesting that the estuary of the Niger developed a kind of civilization which gave birth to cities. The phenomenon was similar to those which we have already noted, in the dawn of history, on the estuaries of the Nile, of the Tigris and Euphrates and of the Indus. The activity which had necessarily been created along the great Niger river, near

which or along which had been formed several centres of trade, Gao, Timbuktu, Niani, an activity which perhaps extended along the coast, led to the appearance, due to trade contact among the peoples, of a more developed civilization. Thus there was founded in the 13th century, in the midst of a fairly dense population, the state of Ifi which claimed Arab origin, and later Benin where, in the 14th century, a local art developed which produced bronze figures cast by the *cire perdue* process, which reached its height in the 15th century when it was discovered by the Portuguese (1472) who recorded its remarkable character. This original and refined art is unique among the peoples of black Africa. It is characteristic that it appeared on the estuary of the Niger, which undoubtedly played a civilizing role in north-west Africa. Throughout all the western Sahara and in the Sudanese states the prosperity and consequently the leadership which they held in turn was founded on the trade of the markets situated along the caravan routes. It was essentially a barter trade, in which iron and copper ore and sometimes certain shells were used when needed as means of payment.

The main basis of this trade was the gold for which the capitals of Kumbi (Gana), Niani (Manding) and Gao (Surhai) were the principal markets, where Egypt and the Berber lands obtained their supplies. Copper was also the object of a trans-Sahara traffic throughout the Middle Ages. In the 14th century Takedda, centre of the copper-mining region, was the greatest city of the Tuareg lands. Every year a caravan of twelve thousand camels went there from Cairo. To a lesser extent cola nuts, salt, ivory, ostrich feathers and ebony were exported.[1]

This trade owed its vitality to the contacts established between the western Sahara and the Sudan and the Moslem states of the Mediterranean coast, above all Egypt.

The First Great Civilization of Black Africa and Its Downfall

To balance this civilization, greatly influenced by Islam, formed in northern Africa among populations which were either white or strongly crossed with white, another civilization south of the great equatorial forest, much less known to us, seems to have arisen from the contact of the black peoples of the Zambesi with Islam by way of the sea.

In the 7th century Arab traders, attracted by the gold-mines, came to settle there.

Ruins of stone buildings have been found at the mouth of the Zambesi,

[1] Many of these products are the same as those that the Egyptians in the times of the Ancient Empire imported from the land of Punt (Somalia).

amongst which are those of the elliptical temple of Zimbabwe, constructed with an already perfected technique from well-cut mortarless stone, with walls twelve to fifteen feet thick and thirty feet high. At first it was thought that these might be the ruins of Phoenician settlements. But apart from the fact that the naval history of the Phoenician cities makes such a hypothesis hard to accept, the discovery in these ruins of a black and yellow pottery similar to the containers still made by the Zambesi negroes seems to establish that these were buildings put up by the black peoples. Near these ruins crucibles and furnaces for smelting copper and gold have been found, with a few pieces of gold jewellery, spindles and fragments of Chinese porcelain and Persian glass.

These buildings seem to have been constructed between the 9th and 13th century on the site of the gold-mines.

Other ruins of similar type have recently been discovered in Angola, notably tombs, walls of dimensions recalling those of buildings found in Rhodesia, and stone towers.

It thus appears that an important civilization was developed, through the contact of the local peoples with the Arabs, a civilization whose origin must be sought in the exploitation of the gold-mines and in the sea-borne trade to which they gave rise. The sea put the blacks of the Zambesi region into touch with the Arabs, who perhaps taught them how to work gold and copper. But it does not seem that the Zambesi civilization was a mere Arab importation. Indeed it is rather astonishing that Islam does not seem to have influenced the religious ideas of the population. The great elliptical temple of which traces remain proves that they had kept their own religion.

Thanks to the Arabs, they had contact with the outside world, with the Islamic world, with China and with Persia. A stone architecture resulted which recalls, in technique, the first architectural works of the Achaeans.

The construction of great stone monuments, the smelting of metals, traffic with distant lands proved by the discovery of Chinese and Persian objects, are enough to show that a real civilization existed on the Zambesi between the 9th and the 13th century, born of the sea and kept alive by sea-borne and river trade. It was, at a more developed stage, a social phenomenon analogous to that which we have already noted on the estuary of the Niger.

The Zambesi peoples, awakened to civilization by the sea, quite naturally made their way up the great river, which brought them to Angola. They brought their civilization with them, for Angola, like Rhodesia, had stone buildings.

Angola and the nearby region of the Congo, when the Portuguese discovered them in the 15th century, were a great deal more civilized than the other black regions of central Africa.

Feudal kingdoms existed both north and south of the Congo estuary; to the north, Loango and the tributary states of Kakongo and Ngoy which, in the 15th century, were somewhat amorphous aggregates of chieftainships on the eve of dismemberment. The state of the Congo stretched from the river Congo in the north to the river Kuango in the east and the river Kuanza in the south, both of which assured contact with the Zambesi. It seems that this state was created in the 13th century as a chieftainship which served as a nucleus for the kingdom, whose principal vassal states of Sonyo and Bamba were situated on the coast between the Congo estuary and the Kuanza. Farther east, the great chieftainships of Pemba, Sundi, Pangu and Mbata were also its vassals. Furthermore Mani Congo (the king of the Congo) claimed suzerainty over the Bateke people. The centre of the kingdom at Mbali—the word means 'court'—became the royal residence as well as an administrative and military centre. It was a huge village which the Portuguese, when they penetrated there in 1491, made the town of San Salvador.

Finally, north-east of the Congo there were the kingdoms of Ndango, whose sovereign had the title of Ngola which caused the Portuguese to call his kingdom Angola, of Lunda and of Luba. The kingdom of Ndango was an enemy of the Congo kingdom. Lunda and Luba were powerful chieftainships, whose chiefs belonged to a family which seems to have founded a series of chieftainships stretching from the Zambesi to the Congo.

It may well be that all these states made up of chieftainships in the region of the Congo estuary were, about the 13th century, all under the suzerainty of the king who reigned over the remarkably civilized state situated on the bend of the Zambesi. This was in any case the tradition which the companions of Vasco da Gama heard when they made landfall at the Congo estuary (1498). They speak of a vast empire, whose chief, the Monomatapa, reigned from the Zambesi to the Cape of Good Hope and whose suzerainty extended over all the chieftainships of the Congo estuary.

It also seems that between the Zambesi region and Angola, and also towards the region of the great lakes, there were contacts which suggest a form of civilization superior to that previously known by the peoples of these areas. In the equatorial forest, especially in the neighbourhood of the volcano Ruwenzori, the banana is one of the main food sources of

the population; but the banana is not African and seems to have been introduced from India several centuries earlier. On the other hand, there are still cleared areas in the tropical forest zone which, it seems, were formerly cultivated by nomad or semi-nomad tribes and have once more been invaded by the forest.

All these factors taken together seem to establish that black Africa possessed, between the 9th and 13th century, zones of civilization along the great river estuaries, amongst which that on the Zambesi was by far the most civilized. The people of this region expanded along the Zambesi and into the Great Rift, where the large lakes are situated, and introduced the cultivation of the banana and techniques which made possible the clearing of the great tropical forest. If tradition is to be believed, chieftainships were formed in these zones of expansion which probably remained under the suzerainty of the kings of the Zambesi region.

If one thinks of the civilization formed on the estuary of the Niger in the 13th century at the same time as the petty kingdoms appeared on the Congo estuary, then it seems possible that there was some contact by sea between Angola and the Niger, which was a factor of civilization common to both these regions.

However that may be, it seems that throughout black Africa civilization first appeared on the river estuaries under the influence of the contacts made there with more advanced peoples.

How did this civilization come to an end? We do not know. Doubtless the cause was the downfall of the kingdom of the Zambesi. Was this due to a migration of peoples or to conflict with the Arabs? We have no idea. We are compelled to admit that the art of stone architecture was lost, both in the Zambesi region and in Angola, and that the conquests made by agriculture in the equatorial forest were also lost. Of that century of civilization all that remains is the banana.

Save for the kingdom of the Congo which was still existent when the Portuguese were to discover it in the 16th century, it seems that all that remained in central and southern Africa were chieftainships, some of which along the rivers—the Congo, Niger and Kuanza—still kept the form of feudal states and others, isolated in the equatorial forest, were forced to live in complete isolation with no contacts except those they still maintained with a few neighbouring regions and whose civilization was of a particularly archaic form.

The chieftainship was only an extended family relationship, a sort of patrilinear line of descent, to which outsiders were associated or reduced to slavery. It possessed a territory which was a communal property; it

was under the leadership of a patriarch, sometimes both a religious leader and a magician. In certain cases the chieftainship, by extending its rule, developed along seigniorial lines. The chief became a seigneur and the permanent military leader, and levied a tithe on agricultural produce. Conflicts broke out among the militarily organized chieftainships. The most powerful imposed its rule on the others and thus formed a kingdom in which the chief became hereditary. Vassal chiefs were entrusted with the task of defending the river fords, to assure the kingdom control of certain regions. The king recompensed himself by holding large land-tenures. In short, what took place in Africa was similar to what had taken place in Egypt in the proto-historic period when the *nomes* were formed. In the more prosperous regions a feudal régime emerged from this first organization of the chieftainships. The vassal, after receiving public investiture of his power, was granted a tenure. Certain officials were also, it seems, remunerated by grants of land.

The royalty thus fortuitously created was of a religious type. The chief or the king was the intermediary between his people and the forces of nature. That was why—as was probably also the case in ancient proto-history—the king, in certain regions, notably in Nigeria, was put to death after reigning seven years, in order to ensure that the group always had a young leader in full possession of his powers. His heart, his loins and his brain were ritually eaten by his successor, who thus assumed the cosmic power that he incarnated, and the rest of his body was mummified. In general, the king's successor was chosen from his own family in the paternal line or was his own son (as in Manding); but there were cases where the succession was made in the maternal line, nephew succeeding uncle (especially in Gana).

In these chieftainships which became kingdoms the queen-mother and the first wife usually played an important role, held appanages of their own and had a 'household', whose members were chosen, as for the king's 'household', from amongst the sons of the great feudatories and dignitaries.

But such institutions, in so advanced a stage of development, only existed to the north of the great equatorial forest or in the little states set up on the river estuaries.

In the great forest the chieftainships remained isolated; their life was based on the balance, which they did their best to maintain, between man and the powers of nature which they venerated as the source of all good.

BOOK VI

The Formation of Western Civilization and the Universal Expansion of the Sea-Going Peoples

CHAPTER XXVI

THE RENAISSANCE

I. INDIVIDUAL EMANCIPATION

THE essential characteristic of the civilization of Western Europe in the 15th century is that it marks the triumph of the individualist conception, on the economic as well as on the social and intellectual plane.

After the downfall of the Roman Empire individualism was in full decline as a result of the state socialism and the controlled economy practised since Diocletian. The occupation of the western provinces of the empire by the barbarians had hastened this movement, which grouped the peasants, reduced to the status of *coloni*, around the great landowners who had become seigneurs. Individual liberty had thus almost completely disappeared in the countryside. In the cities it had been more or less saved by the influence of trade. But the ruin of the cities, after the expansion of Islam, had finally eliminated it.

Ever since the 7th century society had been broken into social groups outside which the individual could no longer find security, the family group, the seigniorial group, the feudal group. In the feudal-seigniorial system, which attained its classic form in the West from the 9th to the middle of the 11th century, life was no longer possible except within the framework of the group and the class system. The social conception had almost entirely replaced the individualist conception. Economic stagnation had led to intellectual decline. Lack of trade exchanges led to lack of intellectual exchanges. The stifling of the individual necessarily created the asphyxia of civilization, since thought does not belong to social groups but to individuals. Art and thought disappeared at the same time as international trade.

The one thing still to exist, luckily, was religion, and, with it, the morality which became the refuge of the individualist idea. For without individual responsibility there is no conscience and without conscience there is no Christian morality. The individualist reaction of Christ himself against the dominance of social materialism had been so deeply impressed

on spiritual life that it saved Christian society from the danger of seeing human personality become submerged in the group and thus revert to the primitive state known to the Germanic tribes.

This was a phenomenon exactly analogous to what had happened in Egypt after the downfall of the Ancient Empire and the New Empire. Then (in the XXVth century and again in the XIth century BC), and later after the dissolution of the remnants of the Roman Empire (in the 7th century AD), it was the morality founded on the idea of the responsibility of man before God—which the Egyptians had known as well as the Christians—and consequently on individual conscience, which saved the conception of the human personality envisaged as the essential basis of all spiritual values.

The seigniorial régime, by stifling all economic activity and all culture, left only one way open for action and for thought—religion. That was why, every time it was imposed on civilized peoples, it led to a current of religious fervour. But that religious fervour, which is the search for God, can take, in those religions which have a moral base, only an individualist form. It had been so in Egypt after the seigniorial feudalism which had succeeded the Ancient Empire (XXth century BC). It was so also in the West in the 11th century AD, whence religious feeling began to extend the conception of the equality of all men before God to that of the equality of all men among themselves.

The movement of individualism, begun on the spiritual plane, led to the Cluny reform and the first spiritual renaissance which, following a continuous evolution was first evident in an artistic renaissance, since art always precedes thought in the phases of intellectual emancipation.

When at the end of the 11th century the revival of shipping renewed trade, individuals, freed from the dominance of their group, devoted themselves to independent commercial activity. The urban middle classes, thus formed, were obliged, in order to win their economic independence, to claim their social independence. Thus individual freedom reappeared. The cities became centres of a revival of individualist civilization. Breaking the framework of the closed economy, they broke down the seigniorial system also. It was then that the family yielded before the individual. Under the seigniorial régime the family was an entity strictly subjected to the authority of the father; in the cities it began to break up. In the 13th century the father lost his right of chastisement, which seigniorial law continued to sanction, both among noble families and among the peasants, free or serf.

Economic and social emancipation, by eliminating the idea of class

dependency, left the way open to emancipation of the conscience, which had been the aim of the religious movement, and freedom of thought reappeared.

The movement of emancipation, passing from the cities to the countryside, led to the progressive liberation of the serfs; begun in the 13th century it spread more and more, and ended, in the 15th century, by making individual liberty the normal condition of the people in Italy, in the Netherlands, in England, in France and in Spain.

The destruction of the seigniorial system involved the ruin of the feudal régime, of which it had been both the cause and the reason for existence, and from the 13th century onward monarchy was established in the Western lands.

The urban régime, with its consequences of individual emancipation, made its way into Germany along the Baltic coasts and in the valleys of the Rhine and Danube. But in the Germanic Holy Empire the cities were not numerous enough and had only a local influence. The Rhine and the area of the Upper Danube took their part in the Western evolution. But in all central Germany the seigniorial régime stood firm and even became stronger, reducing more and more the peasants on the manorial estates to serfdom. In all Germany east of the Rhineland and north of the Danube there was no individual emancipation, except in the cities of Bohemia and the little towns of Saxony, born of mining activity.

Thus was defined the area of a western civilization built up on the emancipation of the individual and which corresponded to the expansion of urban economy. It covered all the west and south of Europe and found its way into the cities of the Hansa League. Bordered by the Rhine and the Danube as far as Ratisbon, it reached Bohemia and, though losing force, the towns of Saxony. All the rest of the continent of Europe was outside it.

Europe roughly reverted to the boundaries of the former Roman Empire, and was divided into two distinct zones of civilization; the West where individualism triumphed and central Europe where the individual only existed as part of a social group.

This civilization was represented in the West by individual liberty, by a flowering of art and thought, by mercantile activity and by the organization of monarchical states; in central Europe there was, on the contrary, serfdom, intellectual and artistic sterility, the seigniorial economy and feudalism.

The Renaissance was to affect only the West. In central Europe the seigniorial society was to remain for several centuries. Between these

two parts of Europe, there was to be henceforth only one bond, that of the Catholic church.

2. THE BEGINNINGS OF LARGE-SCALE CAPITALISM

The urban economy was organized on a system of privileges because the cities, peopled by traders and craftsmen, formed little islands of individualist law in the midst of the seigniorial régime. Within those islands a new society began to appear, that of the middle classes which, founded on liberty, gave itself a law that suited it and in which wealth supplemented the ancient criterion of birth. The merchants were organized in guilds, in order to assure the protection of their activities and the safety of their property. The craftsmen formed corporations in order to regulate competition amongst themselves, to assure the quality of their production and to establish a social balance between employer and employed. The former social subservience was replaced by a new unity which combined the interests of the urban group with individual liberty.

From the 12th century onward the development of the export industry in the great cities of Italy and Flanders led to the amassing of great fortunes in liquid capital; this was the origin of the capitalist class which was formed there in the 13th century and which, relying on its financial power, seized the city governments. The petty craftsmen who made cloth with the wool provided by the merchants became dependent on them and became a proletariat. Capitalism, from its first appearance, was accompanied by pauperism. To escape the exploitation of the capitalists, the workers formed unions and began a political struggle to improve their social conditions by seizing power.

In the countryside, where the population was progressively being emancipated from serfdom, technical improvements gave a vigorous impetus to agricultural production. During the centuries that preceded the revival of humanism and the development of capitalism the monastic orders had greatly increased the area of cultivable land. The windmill had been brought back by the crusaders, fundamental techniques had led to the appearance of the water-mill, the stirrup and harness, and the plough had been greatly improved. Cultivation was thus able to furnish the ever increasing population of the cities with the necessary means of subsistence. Agricultural economy was organized alongside urban economy during the social crises of the 14th century.

While these social crises were raging in Italy and Flanders, the accumulation of liquid fortunes had extended international trade more and more,

which necessitated ever greater monetary facilities. The need for credit made itself felt. Banks were founded in Italy, on Byzantine models, first at Siena and then at Florence, which put into circulation the capital amassed by the business men and by offering credits for trade became an essential factor of international commerce.

The Flemish cities, where the influence of Byzantine finance had not been felt, remained apart from the money trade. But since they could not do without either credit or exchange operations, Italian finance extended throughout the West and took control of business. The result was an economic crisis which, grafted on the social troubles and aggravated by the ravages caused in the mid-14th century by the Black Death—a consequence of the Hundred Years War—gravely compromised Flemish industry. To counter it the city governments intervened. They were controlled, according to the state of the social unrest, sometimes by the property-owning classes, sometimes by the workers' unions. The merchant middle class saw the solution of the crisis in a liberty which gave free vent to private initiative. The unions on the other hand, not taking into account the fact that its causes were international, wanted to solve it by imposing more and more rigid rules on city industries, which protected the workers but hampered international business. In order to escape them, the industrialists took their factories into the smaller towns or even into the countryside, thus creating unemployment problems in the great cities. With their very existence thus threatened, the cities claimed for themselves an industrial monopoly and privileges which created such serious hindrances to the development of big business that many wealthy middle class business men preferred to withdraw from business and put their fortunes into land and become *rentiers*.

In all the cities of the north which lived from export, in Flanders, in England and in the cities of southern Germany, to which thanks to the development of capitalism the mining industry had opened up vast possibilities, big business passed into the hands of new men who, born and enterprising adventurers, claimed full liberty of action. To escape the tutelage of the city regulations, they turned to the monarchy which, needing resources to carry out its policies, joined forces with them.

Enormous fortunes were made outside the ancient guild structure. The city economy gave pride of place to a wider economy which escaped the influence of the autonomous city governments and over which only the power of the monarchy had a certain control.

As in ancient times mining was the origin of the first great capitalist fortunes. In Austria the Fuggers, whom the international trade of Augs-

burg had first led to Venice where they learnt the conduct of big business, obtained rights of exploitation in the silver mines of the Tyrol, Bohemia and Hungary. Within a few years they had amassed, outside the control of any economic regulations, a fortune which was to give them great political power; at the beginning of the 16th century it amounted to a million ducats.[1]

The finances of the monarchical states which were being formed were also—as in the Rome of the *publicani*—the source of rapid and considerable fortunes. In France, Jacques Coeur, the great business tycoon, managed to obtain from Charles VII the right of minting the royal currency for a consortium that he had formed. In 1432 he carried out extremely profitable operations by exporting to the East the silver of the Bohemian mines, which he exchanged there for gold. Like the Fuggers he obtained a concession for the metal mines of the Crown in the Lyonnais and Beaujolais districts, where he brought in German miners. Appointed court treasurer, he lent the king large sums at from 12% to 50%. International commerce led him to create three hundred agencies from Famagusta to Bruges and England. He possessed seven deep-sea ships, speculated in the cornering of goods and aroused the protests of the 'honest merchants'. He had a palace at Bourges and houses at Paris, Tours and Montpellier. The king ennobled him. At the time of his downfall in 1451 he possessed twenty-two million gold francs.

In the Netherlands, Jean Laurin, whose palace at Malines was to be bought in 1507 for the governor, Margaret of Austria, was also a man who had risen from nothing. His son built in the *polders* the town of Philippeville in 1506. When he became court treasurer he had at his disposal an income of ten thousand *livres*, an enormous sum.

The cities were unable to compete with these new men, whose business activities, in the wake of the monarchies, were of immense scope. Their influence on the evolution of their times cannot be exaggerated. By granting the kings the credits they needed to carry out their policies, they allowed them to free themselves from the control of the Estates and to begin their advance towards absolutism, of which capitalism then appeared to be the primary condition. Representative institutions, in France and in Spain, were destroyed by the power of the gold which the capitalists put at the disposal of the kings. Large-scale capitalism laid the foundation of absolute monarchy.

By taking the role in international trade which the city middle class had played until the 15th century, the capitalists ruined the former wealth

[1] The ducat was worth ten gold francs.

of the communes and the merchant cities, which were now no longer capable of defending their autonomy against the monarchy whose development they had favoured. This was a phenomenon analogous to what happened in the Greek cities at the time of Alexander the Great. The municipal structure had become too narrow for the importance which the monarchies had given to business. Thus the economic structure completely altered. Industry left the cities to settle in the countryside, where the disappearance of the seigniorial régime allowed the recruitment of an abundant labour force. In Flanders, in Italy, in England, the cities, immured in their corporatism, could no longer compete with the rural industry which recruited in the countryside workers who were forced by their isolation to work for low wages. The great Flemish cloth industry fell into a decline which involved the ruin of the communes. The linen industry which then appeared in Flanders was exclusively rural; and even as urban industry had caused the rise of a free middle class, so rural industry completed the emancipation of the peasants. In 1415 Florence finally suppressed serfdom. A century later, some edicts of Charles V abolished what remained of serfdom in the Netherlands (1515), forbade the creation of fresh tithes and suppressed all the landlords' rights created during the past forty years (1520). These measures, which finally put an end to the seigniorial régime, were in fact intended to provide capitalist industry with a more and more abundant cheap-labour force outside the guild framework.

Commerce, as well as industry, tended to abandon the former markets which, all of them, Bruges as much as Venice, London as much as the Hansa cities, practised a protectionist economic policy. Trade could only be carried on there through the medium of the city burghers or the representatives of the Italian financial companies. This meant high expenses which the business men tried to avoid. In the 15th century the cosmopolitan community began to leave Bruges for Antwerp, a new city which had no privileges, practised a broad economic liberalism towards foreigners and which was under the protection of the duke of Brabant.

The Dutch merchant marine, a newcomer on the scene, was organized outside the monopolies to which the Hansa cities remained faithful. It attracted trade, thanks to the advantageous conditions which it offered, and competed successfully with the Hanseatic cities, now rapidly declining, for control of shipping in the Baltic. In France, Lyon, which broke with the traditional policy of corporatism and monopoly, became the greatest business centre of the kingdom and offered strong competition

as an international fair to Geneva, which had remained faithful to its mediaeval economic institutions.

The evolution which led the capitalist economy to free itself from city monopolies was greatly hastened by the great discoveries made by the Portuguese and Spaniards. But it is important to note that it was not the discovery of the new trade-routes which created the conditions for the development of capitalism. It was, on the contrary, the development of capitalism that impelled the West towards the discovery of the new trade-routes which, once opened, hastened and amplified the rhythm of capitalist economy to such an extent as to transform completely the balance of the world.

3. THE ORGANIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL LIFE

The development of capitalism, a consequence of large-scale international commerce, was quite naturally accompanied by a stabilization of marine law. The custom of Barcelona—the *Consulate of the Sea*—successively adopted by Italy, the United Provinces, the Hansa, France and England, had become in the 15th century the international code of sea-borne trade. Reprisals—that is to say the right of seizing the persons or goods of a state in compensation for the obligations of that state or certain of its subjects—which from the 14th century had become an attribute of sovereignty, were finally renounced by Venice in 1423; England had renounced this right as far as the Milanese were concerned in 1490 and a treaty finally put an end to the custom between England and France. Questions of marine law and international trade in general had led to constant conflicts of jurisdiction due to the different nationality of the litigants. According to the ancient Rhodian law it was agreed that ships enjoyed extra-territorial rights. As to the law that should be applied, Bartolo in the 14th century had established the 'theory of statutes', which has been preserved ever since, according to which the courts, even foreign courts, must refer to the national law of the parties to the dispute for all questions of personal responsibility. The foundations of an international private law were laid down.

Security is an indispensable condition of commerce. But in the 15th century blockade by sea had become a normal method of war. Enemy ships as well as neutral ships trying to force the blockade were subject to chase. This had led to more disputes. In order to put an end to them, Edward III had created in England a Court of Admiralty entrusted with legislating on the legality of prizes. The Netherlands under Maximilian

did the same in 1487. Little by little the laws of blockade and the status of neutral nations became established. In the Middle Ages the provisioning of belligerents was an important source of profit. The maritime cities of Italy had made considerable profits during the crusades by providing the Moslems with food, arms and other necessities of war, despite the threats of the Pope and the Councils. During the Hundred Years War the Pope had obtained agreement that neutrals must abstain from supplying belligerents, and Venice had forbidden its shipowners to lease ships to France or England. In compensation, the goods of neutrals were to be respected.

But commerce, even when assured of a certain security, came up against the monopoly that the maritime nations claimed to exercise over navigation. From the very earliest times Venice had reserved the Adriatic from Ravenna northwards for her shipping, Genoa the Ligurian Sea and Pisa the Tyrrhenian. The growing strength of the monarchies continually increased the pretensions of their kings to the sovereignty of the seas. In the 13th century Bracton claimed for the king of England jurisdiction over the seas which surrounded his kingdom. After the great voyages of discovery Portugal and Spain claimed the exclusive use of the oceans; and de Castro, while contesting the Genoese and Venetian claims to their local sovereignty of the seas, claimed it in the name of the king of Spain.

Thus the tendency to commercial expansion found itself blocked by the constant development of the monarchies. Bilateral treaties were signed to avoid it. The Netherlands were the most ardent supporters of liberty of the seas. In 1496 their sovereign, Philip the Fair, concluded with the king of England, Henry VII, a treaty—the *grand entrecourse*—which abolished reprisals between the two countries, accorded fishing rights to the English and Flemish sailors and proclaimed the policy of the open door, which allowed English merchants to live in Flanders and Flemish merchants to live in England, and established freedom of trade in precious metals.

One of the essential conditions of trade is the stability and free exchange of currencies. The people of Ghent had been the first—in the times of van Artevelde—to propose to the king of England the establishment of a monetary union between France, Flanders, Brabant and England. In 1469 Charles the Bold invited the king of England, Edward IV, to a monetary conference which took place at Bruges; the powerful 'Duke of the West', in order to improve trade between the Netherlands and England, proposed a stabilization of exchange and a standardization of weights and

measures between the two countries. England, however, did not accept. In 1523 Charles V, at the time when the king of England, Henry VIII, was devaluing his currency,[1] convoked a new Anglo-Belgian monetary conference at Calais to fix the relation between the two currencies. These constant attempts made in Belgium to favour the economic liberalism which was then triumphing at Antwerp were accompanied by the most liberal legal theories on freedom of navigation. In 1516 while Spain—over which Charles V, who was also sovereign of the Netherlands, ruled—was supporting the thesis of the strictest monopoly of the seas, Nicholas Everardi, President of the Great Council of Malines, the Supreme Court of the Netherlands, pronounced a judgment proclaiming complete freedom of navigation on all seas and all rivers.

Capitalism, by developing international credit, created legal disputes between states. In 1546 France and England, to end them, had recourse to arbitration by commissioners appointed by the two countries. Public law and international private law were thus being established, bit by bit.

The international treaties which were their expression assumed a more and more legal character. In 1360, to guarantee the terms of the Treaty of Bretigny, the king of France, John the Good, gave the king of England eighty hostages, forty nobles and forty burghers. In 1420 the Treaty of Troyes was drawn up by the lawyers and theologians, sworn in the presence of the Papal delegates, and its terms communicated to all the states of Christendom. In 1435 the Peace of Arras, concluded between the king of France, Charles VII, and the duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, seemed like an international congress. The two powers came to an agreement in the presence of the ambassadors of all the European states, calling on them to witness their undertakings. An international concert of powers was formed which chose from amongst them 'Conservers of the Peace' entrusted with watching over the execution of the treaty. In 1493, at the Treaty of Senlis, the principal cities of France were called upon to act as conservers of the peace signed by the king. In 1505 Louis XII and Ferdinand of Aragon entrusted the king of England with a similar task.

The authority of the Holy See, whose temporal supremacy had been rejected by the monarchies, was maintained as the supreme guarantee of law. After the treaty concluded by them in 1514 France, Spain and England submitted it to the Pope and asked him to excommunicate the sovereign who should violate it.

[1] He was the only English sovereign to do so.

Relations between states remained, however, sporadic. But in the 15th century Venice—which had had permanent ambassadors at Rome and at Constantinople from the 13th century—established permanent envoys to the court of Philip the Good at Brussels, because of the economic importance of the Netherlands, and then in France (1479), in England (1497) and, at the beginning of the 16th century, in all the states of Europe. The more important posts, at Vienna, Paris, Madrid and Rome, were confided to ambassadors, while resident envoys were sent to the other courts. After the taking of Constantinople by the Turks diplomatic relations with Venice had been broken off; they were restored in 1479. In 1513 the Holy See installed a 'nuncio' accredited to the court of Vienna.

A little later Charles V, Francis I and Henry VIII, in imitation of Venice, sent permanent ambassadors to each other's courts chosen not from the great nobles but mainly from lawyers and theologians. Councils for foreign affairs then appeared in all governments. International life entered the era of diplomacy.

Diplomatic representatives enjoyed reciprocal immunity; only Turkey, where the Sultan considered that by sending ambassadors to him the Christian sovereigns were rendering him homage, was not represented at the European courts.

The importance of the reports sent by the Venetian ambassadors to the Most Serene Republic for the political history of Europe is well known. It is piquant to recall their impressions on the envoys of different nations; the Germans, they said, were noted for their arrogance, the Italians were perfidious and dangerous, the Burgundians (that is to say the representatives of the states of Burgundy[1]) very intelligent, the French straightforward, the English tenacious and prudent.

International law, as soon as it actually came into being, became a science. Contrasting theories began to appear. The Belgian lawyers, with Wielant[2] and van Clichthove, and the Dutch, with van Gorcum, refused in general to consider war as legal, even against heretics, and denied the victor the right to seize the property of the vanquished. The French, with Alberic Gentil, the English with Sutcliffe, the Spaniards with Suarez, accepted war as legal, but tried to mitigate it. In the course of the Hundred Years War, it often happened that there was a mass massacre of prisoners. The putting to death or enslavement of prisoners of war was henceforth

[1] Charles V sent mainly Belgians as ambassadors.

[2] Wielant in his work *Practijke Criminele* made a real compendium of the international law of his time.

considered to be contrary to law, if they were Christians. The right to booty continued to exist but was subject to limitations; ransoms from captives were fixed at a half of the annual income of the prisoner.

Thus, after giving themselves a national structure, the states undertook to organize international life by subjecting their relations to certain rules designed to ensure respect for individual rights beyond their respective frontiers and to create, above particular sovereignties, a unity of all Christian peoples.[1]

In reality, however, international life only affected the Western peoples. The vast feudal states of central Europe did not take part in it. The emperor, it is true, held a particularly eminent place in Christendom. But this was only a memory. The feudal states of the Holy Empire played no role in the diplomatic life of the times. The ambassadors accredited to the emperor did not reside at Ratisbon, where the diet met, but at Vienna, where the duke of Austria, titular holder of the imperial crown, had fixed his capital.

The evolution of international law, as that of national public law, was conditioned by the social structure of the peoples. The development of the law of nations went hand in hand with that of private international law, whose only reason for existence was the protection, outside national frontiers, of individual rights. For that reason it was the relations between autonomous cities which had led to its birth in the 13th century.

In the 15th century the mediaeval structure of the Western countries had ended by falling to pieces. The closed economy of the seigniorial system had been destroyed by trade and the social organization, which grouped the serfs under the rule of their seigneur, had been replaced by parishes of free peasants; the urban economy had given way before capitalism which had freed international commerce from the corporative framework; the law of the family had been modified. The individualist principle had triumphed in both social and economic life, as also in the political organization of the state, and even in the family.

Individual emancipation, the expansion of capitalism, monarchic centralization and international organization thus appeared as parallel aspects of a common evolution which affected Western society under the influence of international trade. It was accompanied by a magnificent intellectual upsurge which history always has considered as the renaissance of civilization.

[1] This unity was not extended to non-Christian peoples. Baldo, in the 14th century, divided the peoples into Allied—the Roman Catholics—Foreign—the Greeks, Tatars and Jews—and Enemy—the Turks and Saracens.

4. THE RENAISSANCE AND HUMANISM

The Evolution of Individualism from the 11th to the 15th Century

In the cities revived or created by trade at the end of the 11th century the middle class at once adapted itself to the individualist formula; and as the feudal-seigniorial institutions knew nothing of individualism, it had to look to the institutions existent in Byzantium, that is to say to Roman law, to find a basis for its reorganization.

A school of Roman law was created at Bologna and a school was organized at Parma. The revival of individualism led the West quite naturally to the study of classical times; it was the beginning of the Renaissance.

From Italy Roman law reached Languedoc in central France, then Flanders and all the West, and finally triumphed in England.

The cities, by putting an end to the closed economy, destroyed the seigniorial régime and consequently feudalism, to the advantage of monarchy. They relied on the king or on the great vassals who carried out a monarchical policy. With the *legum professores*, the legal counsellors by whom the king and the great feudal lords were surrounded, Roman law began to reassert itself in public law. By the end of the 13th century it had become, throughout the West, the law of the princes. At Milan the *Libri Feudorum*, edited by the consuls of the city, superimposed on feudal law the principles of Roman law, which led to monarchy. In France the 'customs' were edited to serve as manuals for the judges and clerks; and with Philippe de Beaumanoir, who reintroduced the science of law, the principles of Roman jurisprudence rejected the 'social' conceptions of the seigniorial-feudal régime. Individualism again took its place in private law. At the same time the Rhodian commercial law, edited in the IIIrd century BC, which had been maintained at Byzantium and been adopted by the Venetians, penetrated to the cities of southern France, whence it reached Bruges and the Hansa League.

The renaissance of ancient law was affirmed in all fields and, with it, that of individualism. It coincided with the wonderful upsurge of the Gothic style, with the revival of thought and literature, of which the University of Paris became the international centre in the 12th century. The study of medicine reappeared at Montpellier under Arab influence. In England, the ancient abbey schools at Oxford and Cambridge became universities. In Spain, the great Moorish university at Toledo became Christian and the first Catholic school in the peninsula was opened at Coimbra. The Italian cities of Siena and Perugia also opened universities.

Through the teaching of the Arabs and the Jews the Western peoples again found the classical thinking which they had lost.

Aristotelianism, which in Greece had inaugurated an era of monarchy and of science, was taught at the University of Paris, gave the Church its Thomist scholasticism and, with Roger Bacon in England, inaugurated the experimental method.

In the 14th century individual emancipation triumphed throughout the West, though not without terrible social, political and religious crises. In the cities the proletariat stormed the citadels of power; in the countryside serfdom disappeared and *jacqueries* broke out. The *cortes* in Spain, the Parliament in England, the States in France and the Netherlands, took their share of power, and feudalism collapsed before monarchy triumphant which rejected the temporal guardianship of the Holy See, itself in conflict with the Councils.

Western influence penetrated into central Europe, brought there by the monarchies. The Luxembourgs founded a university at Prague, the Piasts at Cracow, the Angevins at Pecs in Hungary, the Hapsburgs at Vienna, the Palatine princes at Heidelberg. Culture spread irresistibly. In the 15th century universities sprang up everywhere; in Italy, in France, in England, in Spain, there was practically no large city which did not have its university. The University of Louvain was founded in the Netherlands under the dukes of Burgundy; universities were founded at the free city of Basle, at Leipzig and at Wittenberg in Saxony, at Munich in Bavaria, at Tubingen in Württemberg, at Rostock for the Hansa towns and as far as Scandinavia, at Copenhagen in Denmark and at Uppsala in Sweden. Universities appeared wherever society was becoming emancipated through the action of the cities, the kings or the Church. But there was not one in central Germany. The feudal-seigniorial chaos which existed there remained impenetrable to the great movement of individual independence which pervaded all western Europe.

Although in the 13th century the University of Paris had become the centre of international revival, the universities of the 15th century did not play a similar role. Strictly subjected to the Church, they were all docile instruments of Aristotelian scholasticism which, after the fruitful period of the 13th century, was dissipated in vain and sterile dialectic. They served a style of thinking which had survived, not the thinking that was to come. They trained clerks, but did not seek to open new horizons to knowledge. They had a similar character to the guilds in economic life. Thought was moulded in the scholasticism of the universities even as the industry of the cities was moulded in the guild system; one and the other

claimed supremacy just at the moment when they had become obstacles to the formation of the new society which was coming into being.

The Renaissance of Ancient Thought in Italy

It was outside the universities that the classical renaissance, after its triumph in the field of law, spread to literature and art. Petrarch devoted an epic, *Africa*, to the Punic war, which earned him a triumph at the Capitol (1341) in the manner of ancient times. In the *Decameron*, Boccaccio introduced Italian prose. He encouraged the reading of classical Latin literature and reintroduced the study of Greek into Italy. Brunelleschi built at Florence the first buildings which restored to honour the Roman column, the semi-circular arch and the cupola. Donatello broke away from mediaeval sculpture and took Roman busts as models. Individualism restored the vogue for portraiture.

The return to antiquity was shown from the first half of the 15th century in Italy in art and literature, where it heralded the end of mediaeval mysticism. The importance of this movement did not go unnoticed; in 1443 Cardinal Nicholas da Cusa welcomed it as a sign of a real revolution.

It began when the renaissance of antiquity was extended from art to philosophy. In 1440 the Greek Pletho founded at Florence, then under the rule of Lorenzo the Magnificent, the Academy, where Platonic idealism was revived as a means of restoring spiritual life to Christianity which had become imprisoned in formalism and material preoccupations. A little later, the fall of Byzantium caused an influx of Greek savants into Italy. Florence took the place of Constantinople as the centre of Hellenism. But whereas at Constantinople Greek thought, stifled by the decadence of the city and subjected to religious fanaticism, could no longer be revived, at Florence, then in the full tide of her economic and artistic development, it was to know an extraordinary renaissance. The Greek Cardinal Bessarion collected there six hundred Greek manuscripts. The works of classical authors were sought everywhere. Marsilio Ficino founded Greek philology. Pico de la Mirandola introduced the study of Hebrew.

A better knowledge of the ancient languages coincided with a scientific method which aimed at free research. Laurentius Valla did not hesitate to break with the physics of Aristotle and with Thomism. What the academies, then flourishing in Italy, wanted was disinterested knowledge freed from the tutelage of any form of dogma.

The scientific viewpoint triumphed everywhere. The Roman court abandoned mediaeval Latin and restored classical Latin to honour.

Guicciardini, in imitation of ancient times, revived history by turning to a study of the past. And Macchiavelli, in *The Prince*, created the science of politics and claimed to isolate the idea of the state from the rules of morality.

The greatest of all the spirits of the time was Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), an encyclopaedist who recalled the great Alexandrian thinkers; an engineer concerned with the problems of aviation and submarine navigation, an agronomist experienced in the science of irrigation, an anatomist who, a century before Harvey, was acquainted with the circulation of the blood, an astronomer who forecast the theory of universal gravity,[1] an apostle of experimental science. By returning to the enthusiasm that the ancients professed for the beauty of the human body, so despised by the primitives, he was also the great rejuvenator of art.

In Italy the end of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th marked both the zenith of art and the emancipation of thought. While Bramante was drawing up his first plans for the basilica of St Peter at Rome, while Michelangelo was painting the Sistine Chapel and giving St Peter's the largest cupola since Santa Sophia at Constantinople, and Raphael, after the countless painters of the *quattrocento*, had attained a perfection which was to herald academism, Pomponazzi, the founder of the rationalist school of Padua, in his *Treatise on the Immortality of the Soul*, rejected belief in the after-life and revived, in *De Fato*, the ancient conceptions of Stoic morality.

The contact that the West had lost in the 7th century with the civilization of classical times had been restored. Alexandrian science revealed horizons which mankind had already known but of which it had lost even the memory. So great a revelation was bound to lead to great crises. The crises of the 14th century had only just put an end to the feudal-seigniorial and mystical world of the Middle Ages when those of the 16th century which were to create modern civilization began.

The 'Humanist' Renaissance in the Netherlands and England

The Netherlands, at the other end of the trade-route linking Venice and Bruges, were, with Italy, the greatest economic centre of Europe. That was why they were an intellectual and artistic centre whose splendour was not less, at the time of the Renaissance, than that of Italy.

The dukes of Burgundy, like the Medici at Florence and the Popes at Rome, revived the traditions of Maecenas. The library collected by Philip the Good at Brussels was one of the finest of the times.

[1] Leonardo da Vinci published none of his scientific works.

However there was a great difference between the Italian Renaissance and the humanism of the Netherlands.

At a greater distance than Italy from the relics of ancient times, the Netherlands, equally developed in social and political individualism, did not break with the Christian past in order to study the ancient philosophers. The tried to attain their intellectual emancipation by developing their traditions, adopting the methods of scientific criticism to the study of the Bible and ended, by comparing ancient ideas with those of their own times, by proposing a great religious and social reform within the framework of Christianity.

As in Italy, the renaissance was first heralded by the arts. Jan van Eyck (died 1441) invented oil painting and inaugurated the wonderful Flemish school of de la Pasture and Memling, contemporary with Angelico, Masaccio, Benozzo Gozzoli, Botticelli and Ghirlandaio. Josquin des Prés (died 1521) and Clement Jeannequin (died 1560) created in Flanders a school of musicians, fifty years before Palestrina made music a major art in Italy.

History, with Chastellain and Commynges, who preceded Guicciardini and Macchiavelli by half a century, was already almost a science of politics.

The revival of thought was contemporaneous with the art of printing. Laurent Coster at Harlem invented wooden types. Gutenberg at Strasbourg, by casting them in lead (1440), was to make possible a rapid and immense diffusion of printed books. From 1470 the University of Paris had its own press. Venice made printing a prosperous industry. By 1500 there were printing presses everywhere.

Their diffusion went hand in hand with that of paper. Imported from China and Central Asia by the Arabs, paper had made its way to Italy and Marseilles by the 10th century. In the 14th century paper-making was widespread in France. Printing and cheap paper were the most important technical inventions to accompany the intellectual renaissance and make its rapid conquests possible.

Erasmus

While classical philosophy was being revived in Italy, Erasmus, born in Rotterdam in 1467 (died 1536), soon became the most influential thinker of his times. After studying at Paris and Bologna, he lectured at Oxford and at Basle. His cosmopolitan thinking had an influence, at the beginning of the 16th century, equal to that of Voltaire in the 18th century. His correspondence, which circulated everywhere, dealt with all the problems of his times. An erudite man, he published the *Geography* of

Ptolemy and edited the Greek text of the Gospels; a philosopher, he did not concern himself with metaphysics, but dealt with moral problems and tried to exert a direct influence on his contemporaries. A satirist of his times, preaching tolerance and freedom of thought and a purer Christianity, his *Praise of Folly* (1508), written in Latin, was translated into all languages and, despite its violent attacks on scholastic theology, had an immense success even as far as the court of Rome.

Erasmus was both a philosopher and a Christian. His *Adages* aimed at reconciling classical philosophy with Christianity. The *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* (Manual of the Christian Soldier) preaches a theology based exclusively on the Gospels, and in it Erasmus is a follower of the mediaeval mystics.

In England, Oxford was the great centre of the Renaissance. Grocyn and Linacre introduced Hellenism there; their pupil, Colet, Dean of St Paul's, revived there, after his visit to Florence, the study of platonism. But the influence that Savonarola had had on him made him an ardent supporter of an internal reform of the Church. He became the centre of the school of 'Oxford reformers', whose two principal representatives were Latimer and Sir Thomas More.

During his visit to England Erasmus had become a close friend of Thomas More who, continuing the English tradition, was also a champion of freedom of thought. His *Utopia* (1516), which is allied to the great democratic movements of the 14th century by the communism of goods that it preaches, had an influence in no way less than the *Contrat Social* of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

It was at Louvain that humanism was introduced for the first time into the curriculum. Jerome Busleyden in 1517 founded there, on the lines laid down by Erasmus, the College of the Three Languages, which owed its name to the critical study of Latin, Greek and Hebrew. It served as a model to Francis I when with William Bude he founded at Paris the Collège de France (1530) and to Cardinal Wolsey when he founded Cardinal College (the present-day Christ Church) at Oxford.

Within a few years Erasmian humanism had conquered all western Europe. The Pope, the king of England, Henry VIII, and the king of France, Francis I, made themselves its protectors. And when a conflict broke out at Cologne between the disciple of Erasmus, Reuchlin, and the Dominicans about the sacred books of the Jews, the elector of Saxony, the duke of Bavaria and the marquis of Baden intervened in favour of Reuchlin and the Pope imposed silence on the contestants.

The Renaissance in Germany and Spain

The Renaissance was universal throughout the West. In Germany, the cities of the Rhine and Danube regions produced the humanists Reuchlin and Melancthon and the painters Dürer and Holbein. But the Renaissance did not penetrate into the seigniorial countries of Germany and central Europe.

In Spain, where thinking, after assimilating the Arab and Jewish tradition, reacted in a Catholic and racial sense, the Renaissance developed within a strictly religious framework. Luis Vives, who had been a professor at Louvain, was a great moralist who put his views into practice by creating, in the Netherlands, the first organization of charitable works.

Gomez Pereira announced the 'I think therefore I am' of Descartes by writing: *Nosco me aliquid noscere et quidquid noscit, est: ergo sum*, and Francisco de Vittoria inaugurated political science at the same time as Macchiavelli. But by contrast to the Italian writer, who placed reasons of state above moral rules, he claimed to subordinate public law to Christian morality. With real courage he expounds in his *De Indis* that the law of conquest has limitations and that colonization involves obligations; and in *De jure belli* he defends the conception, borrowed from scholasticism, of the just war, lays down the rules of war and the foundation of the law of nations, of which Francis Suarez, in the *Tractatus de legibus ac Deo legislatore*, was the real founder. The work of Hugo Grotius in the 17th century merely continued the work of these Spaniards.

The Renaissance in France

The Renaissance penetrated France later than Italy or the Netherlands. What gave it its originality was that it developed under their double influence. In painting the Flemish influence was at first preponderant. Clouet, the greatest French painter of the time, came from Brussels. But Francis I, by setting up a centre for Italian painters at Fontainbleau under the leadership of Primaticcio, and by calling to his court Leonardo da Vinci, who ended his life there, assured the triumph of Italian influence (1540).

France was diverted from the Gothic—the French art *par excellence*—to classical art by a series of stages represented by the Palais de Justice at Rouen (1499) and the Château de Blois (1503), and finally the Château d'Anet by Philibert de l'Orme and the renaissance façade of the Louvre by Pierre Lescot. A similar gradation is to be seen in sculpture, from Michel Colombe through Germain Pilon to Jean Goujon. Italy, on the other hand, made a sudden leap from the Gothic to the Chapel of the

Pazzi by Brunelleschi (died 1444) to the Vatican and the cupola of St Peter's, for which Bramante made the first design, at a time when the construction of the Gothic town-hall of Brussels was just being completed.

In England, as in France, art developed in the national tradition; the Palace of St James was built in 1532 in the Tudor style, directly derived from the Gothic, which was to remain so deeply rooted in Great Britain.

A similar transition is to be seen in French literature and thought. Villon (died about 1489) was still a mediaeval poet, whereas Guillaume Fichet was already writing a *Rhetoric* completely inspired by classical antiquity. In the next century the poets Marot, du Bellay and finally Ronsard were all men of the Renaissance, all influenced, albeit a little pedantically, by the learned erudition of the *Treasury of the Greek Language* by Henri Estienne.

The greatest French savants of the 16th century were lawyers. Guillaume Bude, the hellenist Provost of the Merchants of Paris, who became secretary to Francis I, was, with Charles Dumoulin, under whose influence the customary law of Paris was to become the first French legal code, the founder of legal science. Jean Bodin, inspired by the Italian Alciato, the creator of the history of law, introduced the study of comparative institutions.

The mid-16th century saw the full flowering of the French language; it then took its final form in the *langue d'oil*, which Francis I made the official language of the whole kingdom. It immediately attained a richness which recalls the great literary periods of all time. The French literature of the 16th century is the beginning of modern literature. It was dominated by three names: Rabelais, Montaigne, Calvin.

Rabelais (died 1553) in his immortal *Gargantua*—which concealed the image of Francis I—made himself the champion of the ideas of Erasmus, but at the same time he was deeply influenced by the rationalism of Pomponazzi. All the political, social, moral and religious problems of his time are treated with a tolerance, a freedom, a spirit of charity and a humanity the more remarkable in that France was at that time a prey to the most atrocious of civil wars provoked by religious passion.

With Montaigne (died 1592) the Middle Ages, still so present in the works of Rabelais, have entirely disappeared. He was a classicist, nourished by the ancient writers, sceptical and tolerant. Disgusted by the excesses of the religious wars, he found neither in Catholicism nor in Protestantism that 'humanity' which was his main principle in life. In his *Essays*, which are a sort of daily examination of his conscience, he appears as the first of

the freethinkers, a forerunner of Voltaire; it was within himself that he sought the meaning of life and the rules of a morality which, combining Christian morality with Stoicism and Epicureanism, led to those qualities which were to become dominant in the spirit of France: measure and taste.

Calvin (1509–1564), one of the founders of classic French prose, was quite different. His pitiless severity, supported by an ardent faith and a dynamic conviction, checked the onset of humanism then about to force an internal reform upon the Church. But he too conceived the Renaissance within the framework of Christianity. He wished—as Plato had done—to reconcile faith and rationalism, but by subjecting rationalism to the postulates of faith, preserving it from the scepticism of Montaigne. By guiding it towards a religious enthusiasm which recalled that of the great mystical movements of the Middle Ages, he differed from Erasmus and put an end to the ideal of tolerance and indulgent humanity towards which the intellectual élite was tending.

The Beginnings of Rationalism

Thus the Renaissance created two widely differing currents of thought. One was rationalist, which rejected the whole Christian tradition, represented in Italy by Pomponazzi; the other was liberal, but remained within the framework of Christianity, represented by Erasmus and Thomas More. Their freedom of thought did not go so far as to free themselves from Christian dogma. What they wanted was an intellectual liberalism, which would allow them to give Christianity a less rigid dogma, purer and freed from the narrow formalism which had been imposed on it in the 13th century. It was Christianity itself that they called on to counter by its individualism the social hierarchy of the Middle Ages.

That was why the crisis of thought was much more clear-cut in Italy and therefore the crisis of morality was particularly felt there. The moral anarchy of the Papal court under Alexander VI Borgia was never reached in the Atlantic lands, despite the greater freedom evident in everyday life. Charles VII parading his mistress Agnes Sorel was no more debauched than Edward I of England who appointed a special official to look after the six royal courtesans; but it was more anarchic, more divorced from the rules which for centuries men had wished to appear to respect.

But though the break with the past and with tradition was more clear-cut in Italy, this does not mean that thinking there was basically different. The Renaissance was a single movement; it was the culmination of the evolution which from the 11th century had led the Western peoples,

stage by stage, towards freedom of thought and towards an individualist conception of conscience and of law. In Italy, in the Netherlands, in England, in France, in Spain and in the Rhineland and Danubian cities freedom of thought had resulted in a great intellectual movement which took the form most suited to its surroundings. The essential of the Renaissance was not the return to ancient models, but the return to freedom of thought which brought human personality to the fore. That was why, in all the countries where it was active, that is to say only in the Western countries, to the exclusion of central Europe, it turned towards reason and therefore towards knowledge. Whether it was with Leonardo da Vinci who, without publishing anything, foresaw the principle of gravity, with the Pole Copernicus, who studied at the University of Padua and returned to the ideas of Eratosthenes about the spherical nature of the earth and its rotation round the sun, with Mercator of Antwerp ,who laid the foundations of modern mathematical geography, with André Vésale of Brussels who founded the science of anatomy, with the French surgeon Ambroise Paré or the German mineralogist Agricola, the knowledge of the Renaissance is 'one', based on the principle of free research, on the value of reason, on experience. It rejected the scholastic method which, regarding revelation as the origin of knowledge, proceeded by deductive methods, in order to return to the experimental method which seeks on the contrary to establish general ideas by observation of particular facts, that is to say by induction. It replaced mysticism by rationalism.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE MARITIME EXPANSION OF THE WESTERN PEOPLES

I. THE DISCOVERY OF THE OCEANS AND THE NEW WORLD

Europe Re-discovers Asia

FROM the 12th century the trade of Europe with Asia had been monopolized by Venice and Genoa. They used two routes. The continental route, the 'Silk Road', followed by the caravans, linked China, through Central Asia, with the Black Sea and Syria. Genoa had for long cornered all this traffic. The sea route, the 'Pepper Road', started from the Chinese ports and reached Alexandria by way of Ceylon and the Red Sea. Venice had kept this traffic in her hands.

After 1381 the Venetians, having destroyed the Genoese fleet and seized its trading-posts, alone controlled the highly profitable trade with the East. And when after the taking of Constantinople the Ottoman Empire spread over all the eastern Mediterranean, Venice assured herself by treaty a monopoly of all traffic with the Syrian ports where the produce of India and China arrived.

In the 13th century the kings of Aragon had tried, by occupying Acre on the Syrian coast, to seize for themselves a share of the Levant trade. But they had not been able to keep Acre; and despite their seizure of Sicily they had been unable to break the Venetian monopoly.

Despite the considerable trade between Venice and China through the intermediary of the Syrian ports, Europe had lost all knowledge of Asia. In the 13th century the embassies sent by Pope Innocent IV (1246) and Louis IX (1253) to Karakorum and then the voyages of Marco Polo in China (1271–1291), whose *Book of Marvels* revealed to Europe its wealth, had revived interest in those distant lands which were known under the generic name of 'India'.

About the same time Arabic science restored to Europe a knowledge

of the classical geographers and especially Eratosthenes, who admitted the spherical shape of the earth. But such was mediaeval ignorance that when Marco Polo described China, which he called Cathay, no one realized that it was the same country that Ptolemy had spoken of under the name of Serica. It was thought to be still farther eastward, and geographers thus gave to Asia an enormous extent which brought it considerably nearer to Europe.

At the end of the 14th century the Catalans who, driven out of Syria, were trying to find fresh outlets in Africa, and the Portuguese under the stimulus of Prince Henry the Navigator were to make great advances in geography for all the Mediterranean and North African lands.

—And Discovers Africa

The Genoese followed them and soon outstripped them in Africa. At the end of the 14th century they aroused a great interest in distant voyages by their accounts of their voyages of exploration on the Ivory and Gold Coasts. In 1402 a Norman, Jean de Bethancourt, set up a kingdom in the Canary islands. The Hundred Years War, by curtailing French navigation, turned Portuguese and Castilian shipping definitely to the high seas; the Portuguese Prince Henry the Navigator, son of King John I, resolved to make his ships undertake the circumnavigation of Africa.[1]

Scientific progress made expeditions by sea easier to undertake. The advance made in the art of navigation by the Portuguese, who improved the compass which had been imported from China and the astrolabe inherited from the Arabs, the construction of more powerful galleys, achieved by Venice during the Hundred Years War in order to reach Bruges directly by sea, and above all gunpowder, permitted long voyages to be undertaken and men to adventure into unknown lands.

The taking of Ceuta by the Portuguese in 1415 assured safety of navigation along the African coasts and from then on Prince Henry scientifically organized exploration, which he entrusted to a council of specialists, the Guinea House, which centralized all Portuguese trade with Africa. He collected a geographical library of books and charts. From 1419 an expedition was sent out every year. On the first of these Madeira was occupied; the vine was at once acclimatized there and in 1444 a privileged company—the first of its kind—was formed and granted the monopoly of exploration in the island, on the condition that it remitted to the king a fifth of its profits. In 1434 Cape Bojador was rounded and in 1445 Cape Verde was reached.

[1] As the Egyptian king Necho had succeeded in doing in the VIth century BC.

The Azores, entrusted to the Order of Christ with the consent of Pope Eugenius IV, were exploited by the Portuguese colonists and Flemish concessionaires, whence the name of the Flemish Islands which they retained until the 17th century.

In 1445 a trading-post was founded in Senegambia where the Portuguese made contact with the caravans which linked the coastal regions with the great African commercial centre of Timbuktu. The black world, which Islam had already penetrated but of which Europeans knew nothing, was now revealed to them. They were to set out at once to conquer it. Henry the Navigator sent Diego Gomez to explore the Gambia (1446–1460).

Up till then exploration, wisely directed by Henry the Navigator, had associated scientific interest with material profit. Contact with the negroes, delivered over without defence to the Europeans with their firearms, was to lead rapidly to unbridled lust for gain. From the 10th century the slave trade had ceased in the West, though the trade had none the less been carried out on up to the 14th century by the Genoese in the Black Sea and the Maghreb and by the Venetians and Castilians in the Canary Islands. It had, however, remained a source of great profit to the Moslem world. Africa gave the Portuguese the opportunity of taking it up again, and they did not resist the temptation. In 1452 a Bull, signed by Pope Nicholas V and confirmed in 1456 by the Spanish Pope Calixtus III, authorized Henry the Navigator to reduce to slavery the natives of the newly discovered countries. This date is the darkest in the history of colonization.

Soon after the death of the 'great prince of the sea' in 1460 the rape of Africa was in full swing; it immediately degenerated into a trade in human flesh. In 1469 Fernao Gomez obtained from King Alfonso V, with the approval of the *cortes*, a monopoly of the trade in negroes on the Guinea coast, on the condition that he extend his discoveries by one hundred leagues every year. Allied to the slave trade, colonial expansion extended rapidly. Benin and Gaboon were explored. In 1480 the Portuguese settled in the lower Congo. They were favourably received by the peoples there, who were rapidly converted to Christianity. Mines were exploited and a trade in ivory and gum was begun with the local peoples. A centre of Portuguese civilization was created which extended over the Congo basin and into Angola. Negroes were ordained as priests and there were mixed marriages between Portuguese and Congolese.

A great effort was made to penetrate more deeply into Africa. In the north, where they were already installed at Ceuta, the Portuguese kings

extended their conquests and seized Anfa (Casablanca) in 1468 and Tangier in 1471; thenceforward they assumed the title of *rei de Portugal e dos Algarvos daquém e dalém mar em Africa*. In the east of the continent a mission was sent to Ethiopia to establish relations with the states of Prester John (1487). In the west expeditions were organized to reach Timbuktu and to explore the valley of the Congo, while the islands of Sâo Tomé and Principe became important staging points for oceanic navigation. A black state was formed in central Africa which adopted Christianity and the Portuguese language. In 1518 the son of the negro king, Dom Eurico, came to Rome to be ordained bishop by the Pope.

The Great Voyages of Discovery

The southward thrust of the Portuguese navigators was made possible by the use of the astrolabe, known since the 13th century, which made deep-sea navigation easier by making possible the measurement of the Pole Star above the horizon. But the Pole Star is no longer visible in the southern hemisphere. The Portuguese technique,[1] carefully kept secret, evolved a method of navigating south of the equator by setting the position of the sun.

A little later, in 1487, Barthelemy Diaz rounded the Cape of Good Hope. The way to India was now open. John II immediately prepared to conquer it. Peter de Covilham was sent to Cairo to reach India by way of the Red Sea and to survey its coasts, formerly so well known to the Roman sailors. He embarked on an Arab ship and arrived at Calicut, the great Indian spice market, whence he reached the east coast of Africa where the Arabs had had for several centuries an important port at Zanzibar; he descended as far as the Zambesi. The account which he sent to the king made it possible for Vasco da Gama to undertake the great expedition which was to reopen the Indian Ocean to European shipping, whence it had been absent for a thousand years. Doubling Africa, he reached Calicut and Goa on the Malabar coast in 1498. When he returned to Lisbon in 1499 the king appointed him Admiral of the Indian Sea. The expedition had cost two hundred thousand ducats, but the sale of the spices brought in a million. Under the stimulus of huge profits, the voyages of discovery were henceforth to be pursued with untiring energy.

Meanwhile Christopher Columbus, a former Genoese weaver of Jewish origin, who had become a sailor (born 1451) formed a plan, after studying the ancient geographers—which Cardinal d'Ailly[2] had collected in his

[1] This discovery has been incorrectly attributed to the Nuremberg geographer Martin Behaim who was an expert in Portuguese methods and went to Portugal to study them in 1484.

[2] Chancellor of the University of Paris under Charles VI.

Tableau du Monde—and the astronomical tables of the Spanish Jew Abraham Zacuto, of reaching China from the west. Rejected by the king of Portugal, he was granted audience by Isabella of Castile and, in 1492, was able with her aid to form a limited company for the discovery of a new sea-route to China. Its aim was to establish direct communication by sea with the countries producing gold and silk. Ferdinand and Isabella subscribed three hundred and fifty thousand *livres*, the shipowner Pinzon and Columbus himself seven hundred thousand *livres*. Columbus was promised the hereditary title of High Admiral, the Vice-Royalty of the countries he might discover and a monopoly of trade with them.

He set out with letters of accreditation for the emperors of China and Japan but made his landfall on the islands of Cuba and San Domingo. America was discovered. In later voyages he reached the mouth of the Orinoco and Central America, still convinced that he had reached China. But he did not find the gold and spices which had been expected. The privileges granted to Columbus would have made him and his heirs real sovereigns; but Ferdinand took advantage of this failure to withdraw them.

In 1492 Portugal, now master of the African route, prepared to reach India by the Cape. The king of Castile who, as he thought, was about to settle on the Chinese coast and who was uneasy about the progress of Portuguese navigation, wanted to reserve for himself the sea silk-road which he thought he had discovered. He therefore asked for the mediation of the Pope; and in 1494 the Treaty of Tordesillas divided the extra-European world along a line passing three hundred and seventy leagues west of the Cape Verde islands; all land east of this line was reserved to Portugal, the west was the portion of Spain. Thus, even before it had been discovered, the Portuguese and Spaniards, with an astonishing assurance, shared out the empire of the new world. In 1500 Cabral searching for a route to India, took possession of Brazil according to the terms of the Treaty of Tordesillas in the name of the king of Portugal.

The fabulous profits made by the direct contacts established with India and China did not, however, deter other nations in their turn from making deep-sea voyages. In 1497 the Genoese Cabot, at the head of an English expedition, reached Labrador, still thinking himself to be in China.

It was only in 1507 that the Florentine Amerigo Vespucci, after several journeys to Brazil for the king of Portugal, realized that the new continent, henceforth to be called America, was a new world. In 1513 the Spaniard Balboa, from the mountain tops of Central America, saw the Pacific for the first time. The world suddenly appeared in all its vast extent, of

which men had never dreamed. Supported by the young Charles V who had just ascended the Spanish throne, the Portuguese Magellan formed the bold plan of wresting its last secrets by making a journey around the world (1519–1522). He died on the way, murdered by the natives of the Philippines, but one of the five caravelles of his fleet managed to get back to Seville. The Europeans, from then on, were to devote themselves to the conquest of the seas.

2. PORTUGUESE THALASSOCRACY[1]

The maritime expansion of the little kingdom of Portugal was as important in the history of the modern world as the Phoenician expansion was in the history of ancient times. From the close of the 11th century the sea had been for Europe a trade-route of the greatest importance; it had been a source of wealth because of the trade by sea between the various peoples of the continent and it had been the means of contact between Europe and the Near East. But Europe could not communicate with Persia, India and China except through Syria or Alexandria.

Now unexpectedly the oceans, which had opened direct access to Asia and Africa for the Portuguese, had become the source of fabulous wealth. But this was reserved for the little kingdom of Portugal alone. It held uncontested mastery over more than twelve thousand miles of coast. It was to take every means to ensure this monopoly. During the early years of the 16th century the Spanish colonial empire played only a very limited role. Its only productive centre was the island of Hispaniola; the colonization of Cuba and Jamaica only began about 1510. The trading-posts of the Portuguese Empire, on the other hand, produced an immediate yield.

Vasco da Gama, who had obtained from the sultan of Calicut a treaty which opened the whole country to Portuguese trade, again took the road to India in 1502 with a small squadron of twenty ships.

At the beginning of the 16th century navigation in the Indian Ocean was entirely in the hands of the Arabs. Two ports controlled it; Muscat, the 'gate of China', on the Gulf of Oman, and Zanzibar on the east coast of Africa. The possession of Ormuzd on the Persian Gulf also gave them access to Persia, while Aden reserved for them the Red Sea. The sea-borne trade of India and Persia with China and Africa was therefore entirely dominated by the Arabs.

The Portuguese did not hesitate to become the Arabs' most implacable

[1] See map, page 387.

rivals despite the thousands of miles which separated them from their bases. The persecution of the Moslems which was then taking place in the kingdoms of Spain and Portugal had created a fanatical hatred between Christians and Moslems which the Portuguese brought with them into the heart of Asia. Vasco da Gama, cruising in the Gulf of Oman, captured all the ships he met, set fire to them and tortured and massacred their crews and the pilgrims whom they were taking to Mecca.

The superiority of the powerful Portuguese galleys, armed with cannon, rapidly enabled them to conquer by terror the mastery of the seas.

The destruction of Arab shipping had immediate and disastrous consequences for European trade. By closing the Red Sea to the Indian trade, it threatened to ruin Alexandria and consequently Venice which obtained spices there. It was a vital question for Egypt, as well as for the Most Serene Republic; they at once formed a coalition, which was joined by the Turkish sultans of Bidjapur and Gujerat in western India.

Venice financed the expedition; but the Arab fleet sent against the Portuguese was destroyed at Diu in 1509.

The Venetians then formed the great plan of opening a canal across the isthmus of Suez, in order to send their galleys to dislodge the Portuguese from India. But the war which broke out at that time in Italy between France and Aragon prevented them. Portugal therefore remained master of all the Indian Ocean. Albuquerque, sent as governor of the Portuguese settlements in India, set up his capital in the important town of Goa (1510) on the Malabar coast, where he seized all the main ports, and quartered a garrison at Malacca (1511), a coastal city of more than a hundred thousand inhabitants, whence he dominated the route from India to China. He founded trading-posts in Java and in the Moluccas, the great producers of spice.

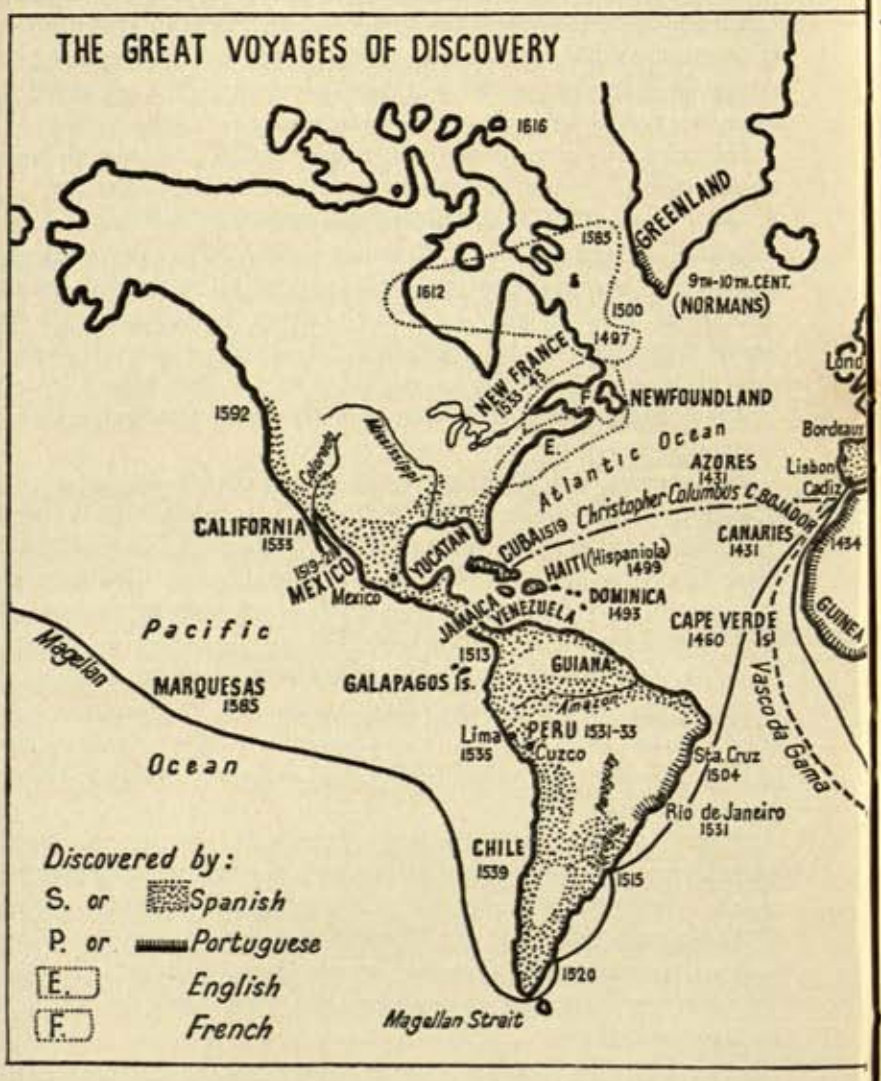
In 1515, in alliance with the shah of Persia, the Portuguese drove the Arabs from Ormuzd and thus gained control of all the sea-borne trade of Iran. They also seized the port of Muscat, which controlled the trade of Arabia with India, and the island of Socotra at the entrance to the Red Sea, thus cutting off all contact between Egypt and the Indian Ocean.

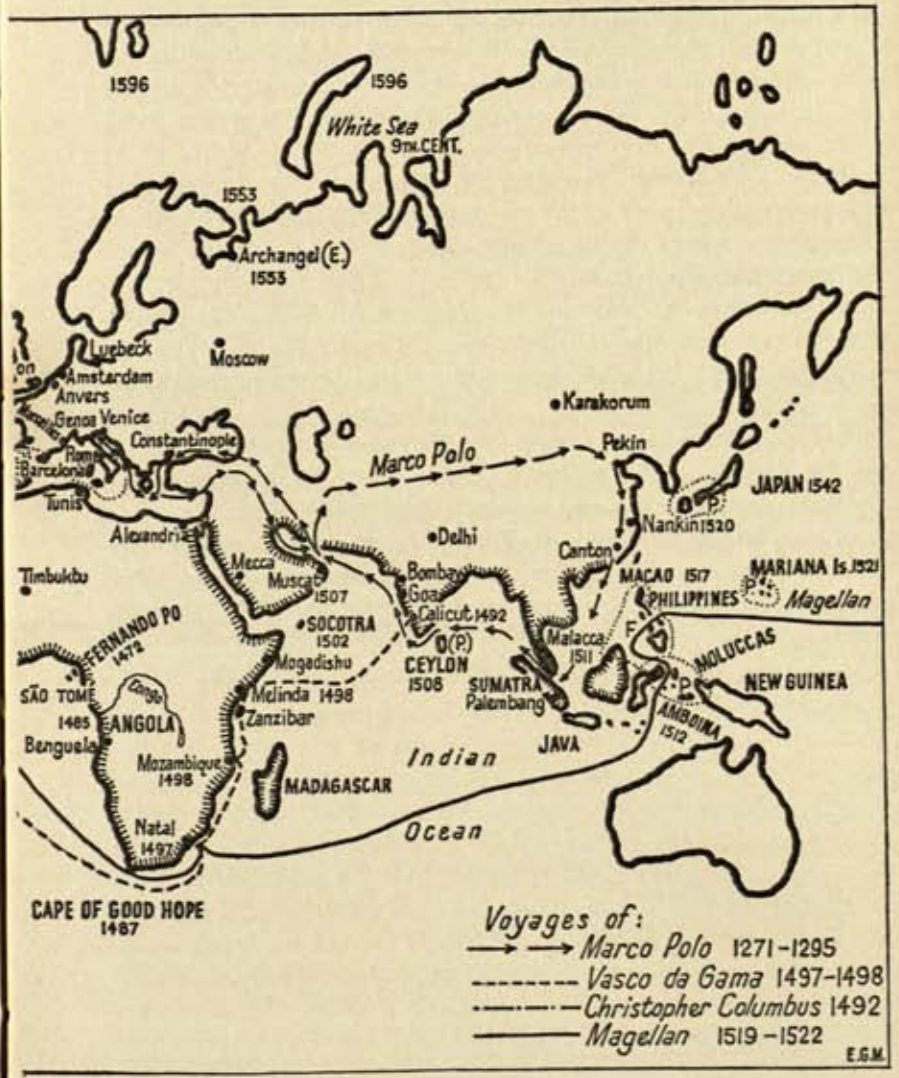
Ceylon, the great staging-post between China and the West, was occupied in 1518.

By 1517 they had reached Canton and in 1520 the emperor of China received their ambassadors. But their piracies made the Chinese, who had at first received them well, treat them as enemies.

Throughout Asia the Portuguese became the successors to the former Dravidian and Javanese thalassocracies. Holding all the traffic of the

Map No. 27


THE GREAT VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY
1616
1585
1612
1500
1497
GREENLAND
9TH-10TH. CENT.
(NORMANS)
NEW FRANCE
1535-41
NEWFOUNDLAND
1592
Atlantic Ocean
AZORES
1431
Bordeaux
Lisbon
Cadiz
Christopher Columbus C. BAIADOR
1434
CANARIES
1431
CALIFORNIA
1535
1519-21
MEXICO
Mexico
YUCATAN
CUBA 1519
HAITI (Hispaniola)
1499
DOMINICA
1493
JAMAICA
VENEZUELA
CAPE VERDE
1460
Isl.
GUINEA
Vasco da Gama
Pacific
Magellan
1513
GUIANA
MARQUESAS
1595
GALAPAGOS Is.
Amazon
Lima
1535
PERU 1531-33
Cuzco
Sta. Cruz
1504
Ocean
Rio de Janeiro
1531
CHILE
1539
1515
1520
Magellan Strait
Discovered by:
S. or Spanish
P. or Portuguese
E. English
F. French


1596
1596
White Sea
9TH. CENT.
1553
Archangel (E.)
1553
Lubeck
Amsterdam
Anvers
Genoa
Venice
Moscow
Karakorum
Constantinople
Pekin
Marco Polo
JAPAN 1542
Tunis
Nankin 1520
Alexandria
Delhi
Canton
Timbuktu
Mecca
Muscat
1507
Bombay
Goa
Calicut 1492
MACAO 1517
MARIANA Is. 1521
PHILIPPINES
Magellan
SOCOTRA
1502
Malacca
1511
MOLUCCAS
FERNANDO PO
1472
Mogadishu
CEYLON
1508
SUMATRA
Palembang
NEW GUINEA
SÃO TOMÉ
1485
ANGOLA
Melinda 1498
Zanzibar
AMBOINA
1512
Benguela
Mozambique
1498
JAVA
Indian
MADAGASCAR
Natal
1497
Ocean
CAPE OF GOOD HOPE
1487
Voyages of:
Marco Polo 1271-1295
Vasco da Gama 1497-1498
Christopher Columbus 1492
Magellan 1519-1522
E.G.M.

Indian Ocean in their hands, they were an essential factor in the economic life of India and China.

But while the Portuguese colonies were being founded along the Malabar coast, the Turkish sultans of Delhi were trying to extend their rule southwards. Quite naturally, the Hindu princes sought the alliance of the Portuguese, seeking to find in them—and in their artillery—a support against the sultans of Delhi. To obtain this, the Mahratta princes ceded them Bombay with a vast hinterland (1534).

So also in China, where the great profits made by the Canton merchants from spice imports led to the cession of the island of Macao to the Portuguese, where the merchants came to barter silk for spices, cotton-goods and later opium.

Thirty years and a few thousand Portuguese had been enough to make Portugal master of the trade of all the seas of Asia and Africa. A chain of trading-posts, all directly dependent on the capital, stretched from Cape Bojador to the Moluccas.

At the time when France and Spain were disputing in Italy the leadership of the Mediterranean and involving Europe in a general conflagration, Portugal, by seizing the mastery of the seas, profoundly altered the whole economy of Asia and Europe by shifting the economic centre of the world to the European Atlantic coasts and, thanks to about three hundred ships of war, finally seized their economic primacy from the Mediterranean peoples.

CHAPTER XXVIII

ASIA AND THE MARITIME EXPANSION OF EUROPE

I. THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE CUTS OFF EUROPE FROM ASIA

The Conquests

WHILE the Portuguese, launching out on the conquest of the oceans, made themselves masters of the sea-borne trade of Asia, the Ottomans, installed in Constantinople, aimed at restoring the Roman Empire to their own advantage, by taking possession of all the territories formerly ruled by Byzantium, both in Europe and Asia. Already Mohammed II (1451–1481) styled himself *Asiae et Graeciae imperator.*

In less than a century the whole of Nearer Asia fell under the rule of the sultan. Genoa and Venice, who continued to fight one another in the presence of their common enemy, lost their positions, Genoa in the Black Sea and the Aegean, Venice in Euboea, in the Archipelago and Albania, despite the assistance given her by the ships of the Pope, of Aragon and of Rhodes (1463). In compensation, she took possession of Cyprus (1473) from the Christian Lusignan dynasty and instead of contesting the mastery of the seas with the sultan concluded an alliance with him which more or less assured her trade in the Levant.

Under Selim I (1512–1520) the Ottoman conquests extended to Moslem states. Egypt, under the Mamelukes, had become a great naval power which included all Syria. A single campaign was enough for Selim to conquer it. The taking of Cairo in 1517 put an end to Egyptian independence. Mecca too soon paid homage to him and all Arabia, without a shot being fired, became part of the empire. Selim took the title of Caliph and became religious head of all Islam.

Soliman the Magnificent (1520–1566) completed his conquests by taking Baghdad and Mesopotamia (1534). But he could not overcome the resistance of Persia which barred the route to India and Central Asia,

thus preventing Turkey from achieving the unity of the Moslem world.

At the same time as he was extending his empire in Asia, Soliman resumed the struggle against the Christians. The seizure of Rhodes (1522) completed the ruin of Christian shipping in the eastern Mediterranean. In 1521 he took Belgrade and in 1526 Buda. In 1529, after the first siege of Vienna, Emperor Ferdinand I acknowledged himself Soliman's vassal for that part of Hungary which he still held.

But the Porte was not a naval power. To impose his rule in the Mediterranean, Soliman took the terrible Barbary pirates of North Africa into his service and conferred the title of High Admiral on the famous corsair Khaireddin Barbarossa. Thanks to his aid, Ottoman sovereignty, after violent fighting for Tunis, was to extend as far as Gibraltar.

Institutions of the Empire

Nothing could be less like the Roman Empire, or even the Arab Empire, than the new empire founded in less than a century by the Turks.

In the 7th century Islam had brought a revival of ancient civilization. The Ottoman Turks, remaining very close to their origins, had no civilization. They were an army on the march which, to justify its conquests, regarded itself as the sword of Sunnite orthodoxy. That was the reason for its immense success. It was also the reason for the irremediable decadence that followed its conquests. They marked the end of Moslem civilization.

The Turkish Empire, as formerly the Mongol Empire, was entirely dependent on the rule of the sultan. And as no law of succession regulated the handing on of the sovereign power, every ascent to the throne involved the putting to death of the brothers of the sultan in order to avoid dynastic quarrels. For the same reason the sultan could only marry slaves.

The power of the sultan was based on two factors; religion and the army. As religious leader he represented orthodoxy. The janissaries, who were the crack troops, were, by origin, a monastic militia.

The clergy, presided over by the Grand Mufti, all of whose members were appointed by the sultan, had a right to a large part of the conquests; a third of the conquered lands was handed over to them in mortmain. It was a noble caste, exempted from taxation, but which, like the Christian clergy, was recruited from all classes. The state entrusted it with education, public assistance, public works and both criminal and civil justice. It was the guardian of the immutable law. The absolute power of the sultan was limited only by the sacred authority of the Koran; any trans-

gression of this justified insurrection. This sacred, and consequently rigid, nature of the law was one of the reasons for the incapacity of the Ottoman Empire to adapt itself to the economic, social and political needs of the countries which it occupied.

Whereas the clergy were holders of all social authority, the army held the political power. Military command was confounded with government. The first minister was at the same time commander-in-chief. Provincial governors were commanders of the local troops. All the state resources were primarily intended for the support of the army. The administration was organized on the principle of military discipline; in two centuries fifteen out of the sixty-six viziers were executed.

Throughout the empire no authority existed save that of the state. An empire based on military state control appeared for the first time in Europe. Neither birth nor property were sources of power, which was exclusively conferred by the sultan—with the exception of members of the clergy—on state servants associated with the army. Except in the vassal states the wars had in any case destroyed the former landed aristocracy, and the seigniorial estates had been confiscated. The only fiefs that remained were appanages granted to senior officials for life. Wealth was the reward of public service; there were no hereditary offices or great landlords.

The government was superimposed on its subjects who owed it a blind obedience. The state assured security; its justice did not attempt to ensure equity but order by submission to the sultan. Its means of doing so were terror, espionage and denunciation, sanctioned by ferocious penalties and horrible tortures, which, however, did not exclude a patriarchal benevolence towards the poor and humble. The state wanted to be obeyed; in all other matters it demanded nothing from the people and paid no heed to it, leaving to the clergy—in the Greek lands the Orthodox clergy—and the trade-guilds the task of watching over its social and economic interests.

The small number of officials and their extreme venality corrected what might have been too arbitrary and inexorable an authority and assured the people a certain amount of individual liberty.

The principle of Turkish government was very similar to that of Mongol government. Born, like it, of foreign conquest and nomad origin, it was imposed on the conquered peoples with the firm intent of not mixing with them. The empire was so varied a conglomeration that the only hope it had of enduring was to remain alien to the civilization and the religious and national sentiment of the subject peoples.

Its unity, therefore, was not based on the nation—for that did not exist—but on the sultan, on his military force and on the religious idea that he represented. To prevent the weakening of his power, the sultan excluded the Moslems from the government. In principle, all officials were foreign to the people over whom they ruled. They were exclusively the sultan's men, adventurers, Christian renegades from the countries of Europe, whom the sultan had captured as prisoners of war or whom he had bought on the slave-markets of the Crimea or the Caucasus. Throughout the Christian districts of the empire, the sultan requisitioned young boys. In the Caucasus, the people reared children for sale. Educated in the Moslem faith, these young Christians formed the crack corps of the janissaries, soldier-monks who had to remain celibate, or entered the sultan's service. They formed a sort of servile nobility, which had its own law; it was the foundation of the empire. In a similar way young girls, Christians for the most part, Greeks, Russians or Poles, bought for the harem, were prepared by careful instruction to become the slave-wives of the sultan; one of them would give the empire its future omnipotent ruler.

Besides the janissaries, whose number increased from one thousand in the 15th century to twenty-four thousand in the 16th, the army was made up of mounted men, the spahis. The Spahis of the Porte, who were the emperor's bodyguard—there were ten thousand of them under Soliman—were highly paid; those in the provinces were granted a small fief in land, insufficient to allow them to become a seigniorial nobility. They were mainly Europeans. The last of the Paleologi was general-in-chief of the spahis of Asia. In the 16th century the European provinces provided fifty thousand spahis to the Ottoman army, the Asiatic provinces between ten and thirty thousand only. Provided with an excellent artillery, organized by Germans, the Ottoman army, always mobilized, was the most powerful military force in the world.

The empire never had racial or national conflicts with the conquered peoples because it never had a racial or national policy, nor did it meet with any religious resistance from the Christians, who were left free to practise their religion. The only opposition which it encountered was from the Moslem heretics, irreconcilably hostile to the Sunnite orthodoxy of the sultan, even as the Orthodox Greeks had always been hostile to the Catholicism of Rome.

The Ottoman Empire Puts an End to the Influence of the East on the West

Even as there was no Turkish nation, so there was no civilization

native to the Turkish people. Armies have often destroyed culture; they have never created it. The Ottoman Empire's only reason for existence was its army. Doubtless it did nothing to suppress the civilization of the peoples whom it conquered; but it brought nothing of its own. Its architects had been Persians, Syrians and Greeks; its technical efficiency, which was applied only to the conduct of war, came to it from the West. Its fleet, which it used as an instrument of conquest or piracy, was given it by the African Moors. It had no art or literature of its own and the very nature of the government stifled thought.

In the Middle Ages the influence of the East on western Europe had continually increased from the 11th century onward. The influence of the Syrian style was one of the essential sources of Romanesque architecture. Classical thought returned to the West, thanks to the Arabs. The pointed arch was derived by the architects of the Gothic style from Persian art. After the first crusade the knights brought back from Armenia the use of armorial bearings. The steeple head-dresses worn so elegantly by the great ladies of the 15th century had been imported from Syria, even as their turbans, a little later, came to them from Persia, Constantinople and the Syrian cities had been, for eight centuries, intermediaries between East and West, while in Spain a composite civilization had been created of mingled Hellenistic, Persian and Western elements.

The taking of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 and of Granada by the Spaniards in 1492—the year of the discovery of America—led to an almost total rupture of Mediterranean relations with the Eastern world. At the end of the 15th century the current which for almost four hundred years had flowed from East to West stopped. Between the West and Asia there was now to rise, like an insurmountable barrier, the brutal and uncultured primitivism of the Ottoman Empire, which could give nothing to Europe since it had destroyed, without even being aware of it, all that had made the wealth and refinement of the various civilizations of the Near East. All that was refined and sumptuous and unworldly in the oriental tradition, the gift of meditation, tolerance and ease of life, that casualness that modified a too rationalist viewpoint; all this, as the Turks had lost it, was also lost to the West which, at the time when it was conquering all the oceans of the world, abandoned all real contact with Asia. It no longer understood and no longer tried to understand. Its technical and scientific superiority was henceforth to be expressed with such authority that it had no more to ask from Asia. The tide had turned. For dozens of centuries the West had taken its ideas from the East; the East, decadent and somnolent, with no more to give the

West, was in the future to ask it for its gifts of technical superiority.

Without realizing it, the West suffered greatly from its rupture with the millenarian civilization of the East. By losing its fantasy and its humanity, the West began to move towards that iron materialism which, more and more concentrated on a direct and tangible utility, was to win within a few centuries the incontestable mastery of the world, but at the price of a 'realism' which was one day to deliver it to the most frightful of all the crises that mankind has ever known and during which it was to plunge into an orgy of self-destruction due to its loss of a sense of real values.

2. THE PORTUGUESE EXPANSION DRIVES ASIAN TRADE TO THE CONTINENT

The Portuguese Ruin the Sea-borne Trade of Asia

The formation of the Ottoman Empire between Europe and Asia led to a profound change in the structure of international trade. The wealth of Constantinople had come from its sea-borne trade. For the Ottoman Empire the sea was only a pretext for piracy. The reason for the existence of the Ottoman fleets was not to protect the international seaways as it had been for the Byzantine fleets but only to aid the Ottoman conquests. There was an essential difference between the Ottoman economy and the earlier Byzantine and Arab economies; instead of relying on the sea, it turned its back on it.

At the time when the Turkish Empire was being formed, the sea communications of the Asian peoples among themselves and with Africa were in the hands of the Javanese between China and India and of the Arabs in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Oman. The Arabs operated from Muscat on the Persian Gulf, Aden on the Red Sea, Zanzibar on the east coast of Africa—which they had been the first to explore—and Egypt. Their great European base was Alexandria which for eighteen centuries had been the end of the Indian route to the Mediterranean. There the Arabs had come into contact with Europe through the Venetian galleys. Alexandria, as in the times of the Roman Empire, was the great spice market, the centre where the traders of Europe and Asia met.

Asian trade in the Mediterranean was entirely in the hands of European sailors. Up to the 11th century the sea-borne trade of the Black Sea, of the Syrian ports and of Alexandria had been concentrated on Constantinople. But from the 12th century, Venice and Genoa had gradually come to the fore. At the time of the Turkish conquests Genoa dominated the

Black Sea and the Aegean, and Venice, despite the competition of Cyprus, dominated the Syrian ports and Alexandria. But by the end of the 15th century Genoa had lost her trading-posts in the Black Sea, and Venice, which had taken possession of Cyprus, and Alexandria remained the great staging-posts between Europe and Asia.

While the Ottoman Empire was completing the conquest of Nearer Asia, the Balkans and Egypt and seizing Constantinople, the Black Sea, the Syrian ports and the great mart of Alexandria, the Portuguese were destroying Arab shipping in the Gulf of Oman, closing the Red Sea and settling in Malacca, thus imposing their control over all the traffic from China to Insulindia, India and Persia and shifting the Indian route from Alexandria to Lisbon.

It was the greatest revolution that had ever taken place in world trade. Western Europe seized the mastery of the seas. But at the same time it cut off Asia from the sea. Henceforth trade between China, Insulindia, the countries of the Bay of Bengal, India and Persia, was exclusively in the hands of the Portuguese and was carried on solely because of the profits they could extract from it. The consequence was that trade between the various parts of Asia became almost non-existent. Doubtless it was still enough to keep a few Hindu ports going and to make considerable profits for the Cantonese business men, but it played only a secondary role in Asian economy.

Iran, by barring the way of the sultan's armies to Central Asia and therefore also to India, prevented them coming into contact with the Portuguese and driving them into the sea. The whole sea-borne trade of Asia was henceforth to pass to the Portuguese without the land-empire of the Ottomans, despite its military power, being able to stop them; but none the less, without any effort on its part, the Ottoman Empire was to have an enormous increase in prosperity because of the renewal of activity that the closing of the sea-routes to China and India was to give to the caravan routes of Nearer Asia.

The direct result of the conquest of the Indian Ocean by the Portuguese was to divert Asia trade to the continental routes, forcing the Hindu and Persian ports to cede the greater part of their operations to the caravan cities of the interior. Persia, which had only been a secondary stage on the international sea-route, was henceforth to dominate the great transit routes between the Ottoman Empire, India and China and to have, because of this, a great revival. In India the business centres were to move from south to north. The Hindu influence which had been predominant in Indo-China by way of the sea now disappeared before Chinese influence

which made itself felt by land, while the ancient maritime empires born of contact with the sea, Java and what remained of the Khmer Empire, already in decline because of the ruin of Dravidian shipping, were finally to collapse.

All this meant a total remoulding of Asian economy, now directed almost exclusively towards the continental routes. The results were disastrous for the ancient maritime countries, that is to say for India and all the countries of the Bay of Bengal, but they were most favourable for the continental powers, Persia and the Ottoman Empire.

The Renewal of Continental Trade Revives Constantinople

The international trade of Asia, diverted from the sea to the continental trade-routes, restored Mesopotamia, as in the most distant times of oriental antiquity, to its place as the essential route for trade between the Indian Ocean and Nearer Asia. Baghdad, as formerly Babylon, recovered an immense prosperity, and the great continental markets of earlier times, Aleppo and Damascus, also revived. The cities of Syria and Asia Minor, shut off from the sea, lost their role of international bazaars, which they had played for so many centuries, to the caravan cities; but their industry, favoured by the continental trade, experienced a fresh revival.

The decline of Mediterranean shipping, by causing the decline of the Syrian and Black Sea ports, naturally revived the land-routes which reached Constantinople from the Persian Gulf and the Caspian. By losing the mastery of the seas, Constantinople in the 12th century had ceded her primacy to Venice and as the caravan routes to Asia and to Russia had been cut off by the Turks she entered a period of decadence. In the 16th century the shifting of the trade-routes to the continent and the unity of the Ottoman Empire which assured their safety restored to Constantinople her place as the great international market between Asia and Europe. She became so prosperous that in less than a century her population increased to a million inhabitants, as in the brightest days of her splendour.

Ottoman policy had no share in this economic revival of Constantinople. It was the result of the great international trade currents. Its artisans were Persian, Armenian, Jewish and Greek merchants, many of whom were Christians, to whom the sultan's government left complete freedom in matters of business. The destruction of the great seigniorial estates, which had been dismembered to settle officials on them, gave a growing importance to the urban classes. Merchants, bankers, farmers of the taxes and customs, acquired by reason of their wealth enormous

influence,[1] which replaced that which the landed aristocracy had exercised on the Byzantine court and government in the 13th century.

Thus, by a combination of circumstances with which it had absolutely nothing to do, the formation of the Ottoman state on an exclusively landowning and military basis, with no interest whatever in economic matters, led to the destruction of the landed aristocracy in the former Greek and Moslem provinces and revived the life of the great merchant cities, amongst which Constantinople was again to take the leading place, relying this time not on the sea but on the land.

The Ruin of Alexandria

The prosperity of Constantinople caused by the diversion of the Red Sea route to Mesopotamia involved the ruin of Alexandria, a city created by the sea-borne trade with India. The ruin of Arab shipping, which had diverted the spice trade to Lisbon, was the death-blow to Alexandria. In the middle of the 15th century it was still the greatest port of the Mediterranean. A century later, reduced to eight thousand inhabitants, it could scarcely be said to exist. Egypt, no longer on the great international trade-routes, was to lose not only its sea-borne trade but its last vestiges of greatness. It was to slumber—till the day when de Lesseps reopened the Suez canal—in a lethargy which made it a purely landowning country, divided amongst wealthy Turkish landowners enriched by the labour of wretched *fellahs*.

The Revival of Persia

The naval conquests of the Portuguese, by destroying the Arab thallassocracy and diverting the India trade to the caravan routes of Persia, restored to the Persian cities their former wealth. Their influence at once made itself felt throughout the country.

At this time Persia was still a prey to the civil war which, since the death of Tamerlane, had been going on between the Turcoman factions of the 'Black Sheep' and the 'White Sheep' which had set up a sort of military feudalism. But the Persian national traditions, which went back to the times of the Achaemenid Empire, had been kept up among the middle classes in the cities. Their revival spread throughout the whole country where, in any case, they had left deep traces.

Before its conversion to Islam, the unity of Persia had been centred

[1] This wealth could not, however, be compared with that of the high officials. The Grand Vizier of Soliman the Magnificent left a fortune of twenty-six million gold francs in cash and fifteen millions in property.

around the Mazdaean religion, which had been revived in the VIIth century BC by Zoroaster and at the beginning of the Christian era by the Mithraic mysteries. Islam had never been entirely successful in destroying Mazdaean and Mithraic ideas, which directly associated the royal power of the Achaemenids with the gods. The national revival gave fresh life to these ancient religious ideas and, even as in the early days of Christianity earlier beliefs had led to heresies, so Zoroastrian and Mithraic ideas became incorporated in the Shiite heresy to which the Persians had remained faithful since the schism which had taken place in the earlier days of Islam between the descendants of the prophet. The Persians had rallied around Ismail, a scion of a dervish family which claimed descent from Ali, the grandson of Mohammed, in opposition to the orthodox Turks who accepted the religious authority of the Ottoman sultan. Certainly, the descendants of Ali had ceased to occupy the throne, but a legend directly revived from Mithraic ideas held that Ali had withdrawn into a cavern whence he would one day emerge like the sun at morning and the wheat in spring.[1]

The national revival thus assumed a religious character. The Shiite heresy triumphed, though not without bloodthirsty persecutions, and Ismail was brought to the throne and founded the Safevid dynasty, which was to reign over Persia for two centuries (1502–1722).

Freed from the Turkish feudal yoke and given fresh life by the wealth of the cities, Persia was to experience a magnificent renascence directly inspired by its ancient traditions.

Having at his disposal the resources of the city taxes and the customs, and supported by national Persian sentiment, Ismail founded a national dynasty in contrast to the sultan of Constantinople who ruled despotically over conquered lands.

The Turkish feudal clans, reduced to impotence, had no other alternative than to enter the service of the shah as mercenaries. Granted small fiefs of land, they became the army upon which the revival of Persian greatness was to be built.

Ismail was himself, certainly, a foreigner in the eyes of the Persians. But this was of little importance since he held his authority from God. His power was as great as that of the Achaemenids; everything was subordinate to him, the state as well as the persons and properties of his subjects. No council shared in his omnipotence. But it was not an arbitrary

[1] Mithra, Saviour of the World, was born in a cavern. The sun rising in the morning symbolized the resurrection of the creator-god, even as the germination of the wheat in spring symbolized that of the saviour-god. The king was thus assimilated to Mithra, to the solar god and the nature-god.

omnipotence imposed by force of arms; it was based on the consent of the nation which he represented. Furthermore it was subordinated to divine authority as interpreted by the doctors of the faith, the religious expression of Persian nationalism. These doctors, many of whom lived in Mesopotamia, outside the kingdom and independent of the throne, were the highest dignitaries of the Persian religion; they were the all-powerful arbiters between the sovereign and his people.

Ismail, supported by this national religious sentiment, restored to Persia the ancient frontiers it had had during the Sassanid Empire, and united under his rule all the territories from Baghdad to Kandahar and from the Indian Ocean to the Caucasus, where he made an alliance with the princes of Moscow against the khans of the Volga.

The Ottoman Empire, the instrument of Turkish imperialism and the representative of Sunnite orthodoxy, found itself faced by an implacable enemy, the Iranian Empire founded on the Persian national ideal and the Shiite heresy. The two empires threw themselves at one another's throats. The sultan succeeded in taking Baghdad and Mesopotamia (1555), but when he tried to advance into the districts with a Persian population he met with a resistance which he was unable to overcome. A fresh balance was thus set up in Nearer Asia, shared between two Moslem empires of diametrically opposed viewpoints; the Turkish Empire which had been formed on the barbarian steppes of northern Asia and was based on principles, modelled on the Mongols, of military state control and arbitrary absolutism—but absolutely sterile from the artistic and intellectual standpoint—and the Iranian Empire, which restored the ancient and wonderful Persian civilization, based on a national community incarnate in a monarchy by divine right which was to revive in its capital, Ispahan, the ancient glory of Persepolis and was to create a magnificent renascence of Persian art and civilization.

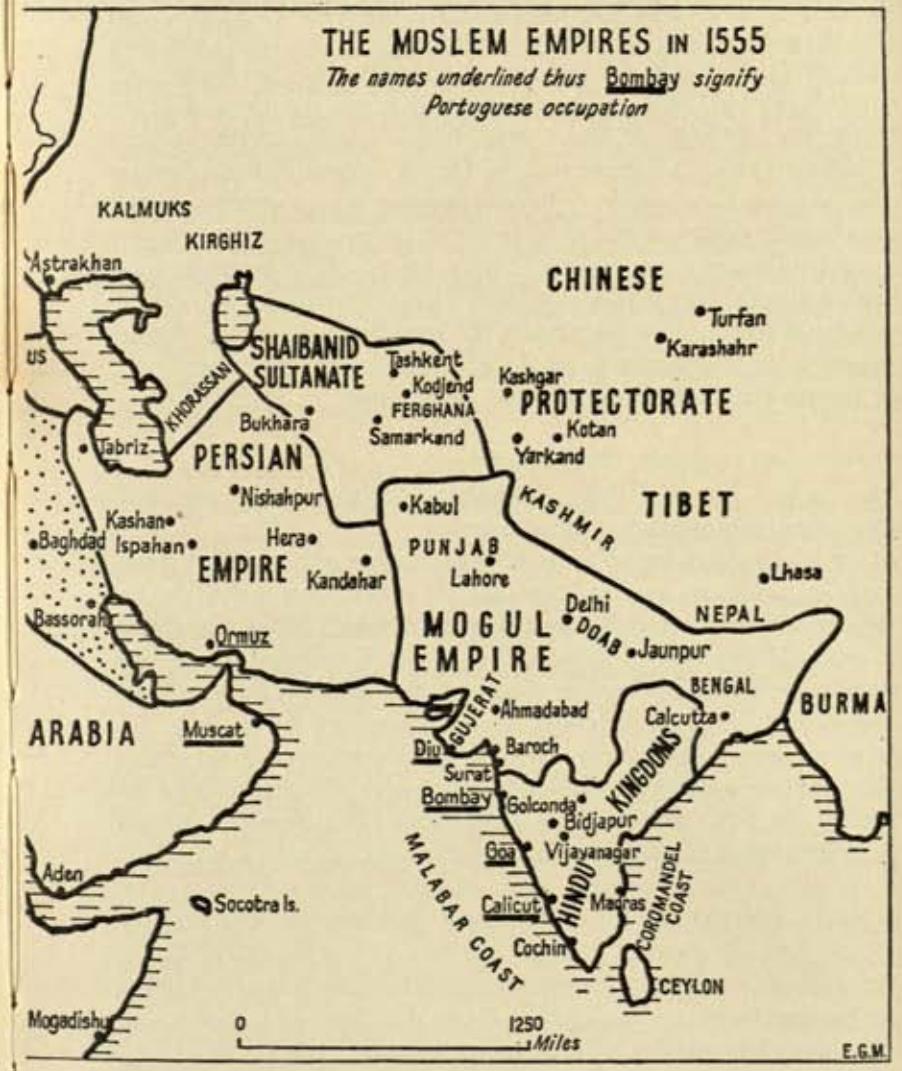
Thus, just at the time when western Europe was returning, in the great upsurge of the Renaissance, to Greco-Roman antiquity, whose maritime, cosmopolitan and individualist civilization it restored, Persia was reverting to the ancient traditions of the Achaemenids and the Sassanids, based on a continental, nationalist and absolutist conception.

Intellectual Revival at Herat

The renewal of trade along the caravan routes of Central Asia, especially on those linking northern India to Ispahan, meant not only an exchange of goods but an exchange of ideas. The result was to kindle a brilliant fire of civilization all along these routes, centred on the city of Herat,

Map No. 28

SCOTLAND
Edinburgh
IRELAND
ENGLAND
London
UTD. PROVS.
Amsterdam
Luebeck
HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE
BOHEMIA
PRUSSIA
POLAND
Cracow
Kiev
Dnieper
RUSSIAN EMPIRE
Moscow
KHANATE OF CRIMEA
Azov
Volga
Paris
FRANCE
Bordeaux
Lyon
SWITZ.
HUNGARY
TRANSYLV.
MOLDAVIA
WALLACHIA
BULGARIA
OTTOMAN
BOSNIA
ALB.
Venice
Genoa
Marseilles
Barcelona
Rome
Naples
Salonica
RUMELIA
Constantinople
CAUCAS
PORTUGAL
SPAIN
Lisbon
Cadiz
Oran
Algiers
Bône
Tunis
MOREA
Brusa
EMPIRE
Smyrna
Konya
Aleppo
Mosul
Tangier
Ceuta
Melilla
Tlemcen
Fez
MOROCCO
ALGERIA
TUNISIA
BARBARIAN STATES
CRETE
RHODES
CYPRUS
Tripoli
Damascus
Cairo
EGYPT
Mecca
Timbuktu
GUINEA
São Tomé Is.


THE MOSLEM EMPIRES IN 1555
The names underlined thus Bombay signify Portuguese occupation
KALMUKS
KIRGHIZ
Astrakhan
CHINESE
Turfan
Karashahr
US
SHAIBANID SULTANATE
Tashkent
Kodjend
FERGHANA
Kashgar
PROTECTORATE
KHORASSAN
Bukhara
Samarkand
Kotan
Yarkand
Tabriz
PERSIAN
EMPIRE
Nishahpur
Kabul
KASHMIR
TIBET
Kashan
Baghdad
Ispahan
Hera
Kandahar
PUNJAB
Lahore
Lhasa
Delhi
DOAB
Jaunpur
NEPAL
Bassorah
Ormuz
MOGUL EMPIRE
BENGAL
BURMA
GUJERAT
Ahmadabad
Calcutta
ARABIA
Muscat
Diu
Baroch
Surat
Bombay
Golconda
Bidjapur
KINGDOMS
HINDU
Goa
Vijayanagar
MALABAR COAST
Aden
Socotra Is.
Calicut
Madras
COROMANDEL COAST
Cochin
CEYLON
Mogadishu
0
1250
Miles
E.G.M.

founded eighteen centuries before by Alexander when he had glimpsed the wealth of the Indus and Ganges valleys. It was a great international market-place between India and Iran and became also a centre of civilization. Under Hossein-i-Baiqera (1469–1506), a descendant of Tamerlane, its court shone with an intellectual lustre as lively as that of his contemporary Lorenzo the Magnificent at Florence. But at Florence, a cosmopolitan centre open to the entire world, it was the dawn of a new era that was breaking. At Herat, as in Persia, intellectual life, crushed between the Ottoman Empire and the Mogul Empire of India, had no further horizons than its own. Persian civilization was to develop around it an influence which was to shed its brilliance on India and even to throw a few rays of light on the Turkish Empire, but unable to revive itself by contact with the outer world, as Asia had formerly done by way of the sea, it could do no more than repeat the same formulas which, despite the marvels of decorative art and the exquisite poetry that it produced, soon became fixed within narrow and sterile limits.

The Mogul Empire of India Turns from the Sea

After he had destroyed Delhi, Tamerlane left there a lieutenant who did not wait long to become independent.

At the beginning of the 16th century Baber, a descendant of Tamerlane and of Genghis Khan, had inherited the state of Ferghana on the Jaxartes. Driven back by the wave of Mongol invasion which broke out at that time over all Central Asia, he seized Kabul (1504), occupied Lahore and conquered Delhi. On his death in 1530 he had carved out for himself an extensive empire which stretched all over northern India. It was a military structure on the Turkish model, which concentrated the landed wealth of the country in the hands of a few feudal lords and reduced the people to the direst poverty. The conquering sultan regarded himself as proprietor of all the land, upon which he levied, as rent, a tax which absorbed almost the entire yield of the peasants' labours. There was no limit to his arbitrary power which aimed primarily at extracting the maximum possible wealth from the people. This pitiless exploitation discouraged all initiative; the oppressed farmers and artisans only worked under the threat of the whip. Outside the small minority of landowners, the whole rural population fell into the most squalid misery.

While Baber was founding his immense empire, the Portuguese installed themselves on the Malabar coast. The Hindu cities and princes sought their aid against Baber. The Mahrattas ceded them Bombay, and the support given them by the powerful prince of Vijayanagar allowed them to

organize their overseas empire around Goa. In 1534 a bishop was enthroned at Goa, Christian schools were opened and printing introduced. The Portuguese, by marrying rich Hindu women, were gradually accepted by the people of the cities, to whom they were, in any case, indispensable. In the ports the rich burghers who controlled the spice trade had amassed considerable fortunes. They were organized in corporations which had retained, from ancient times, the advanced practices of credit, bills of exchange, insurance and trusts which had formerly been part of Hellenistic law. But all their trade was dependent on the Portuguese ships, which were, however, welcomed since they had displaced the Moslem Arabs.

Baber's empire, like almost all the big states founded by military conquerors, collapsed on his death, leaving the Turkish feudatories face to face with the Hindu population which made common cause with the Portuguese. Turkish India, hostile to the Portuguese, turned away from the sea; the trade of its cities flowed northward towards the Persian caravan routes.

In Central Asia the Caravan Cities Recover their Importance

Quite naturally the shifting of Chinese and Indian trade to the continent was to restore to the caravan cities of Central Asia their former importance as staging-posts. The result was a social phenomenon exactly analogous to what had happened in India. Asia, from Syria to the Chinese frontiers, was entirely dominated in the 15th and 16th centuries by a double trend, firstly of Turkish expansion and secondly of the caravan trade.

After the raids and massacres of Tamerlane, Central Asia, devitalized and in ruins, had fallen prey to an invasion of Kirghiz tribes of Mongol race from the neighbourhood of the Urals. About 1430 they occupied the whole country between the Urals and Lake Balkash. Twenty years later the Kalmucks, a branch of the eastern Mongols, who roamed as nomads to the south-west of Lake Baikal, driven by the movement of the peoples caused in northern Asia by the Kirghiz emigration, in their turn began to expand. They tried to invade China and appeared before the walls of Pekin; then, driven westward, they settled in western Turkestan and established their rule in Transoxiana where, from 1500 to 1599, their capital was Samarkand. The great central plain was overrun and was again divided into feudal fiefs.

By this time the consequences of the Portuguese conquests began to make themselves felt; the caravans reappeared in ever greater numbers on the ancient trade-routes, which had been almost abandoned after the terrible massacres of Tamerlane. Bukhara, Tashkent, Samarkand, revived

by transit trade, once again took their traditional role of staging centres and soon exercised a decisive influence in the countries of Turkestan, becoming centres of petty states ruled by Mongol feudatories. The Sheibanid dynasty which reigned at Samarkand was replaced in 1599 as suzerains of the princes of Transoxiana by the Astrakhanid dynasty, whose centre was Bukhara. It was to maintain its rule in western Turkestan until 1785.

In eastern Turkestan the cities of Kutcha, Kashgar, Turfan, Yarkand and Khotan, involved in the Chinese trade which was then returning to the continental routes, also had a revival of commercial prosperity. Under their influence the Mongol invaders either settled or returned to the northern steppes. To ensure the safety of the silk merchants, China extended its rule over the country. Central Asia, the crossroads of trade, recovered the cosmopolitan character it had known during its earlier periods of prosperity; a half-Chinese, half-Turco-Persian civilization developed there, dominated by the Iranian renascence with Islam as a sustaining influence.

3. CHINA BREAKS ITS CONTACTS WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD

The Break-Up of Asia

For the first time in its long history the Mongols had united Asia in a single empire stretching from the China Sea to the Mediterranean. In its time both Islam and Christianity had penetrated China while Buddhism advanced, in the footsteps of the conquering race, up to the western limits of Asia and as far as the shores of the Mediterranean. It seemed that a new era in the history of Asia was at hand. But from the beginning of the 14th century the Mongol unity was broken and in all Nearer and Central Asia the little Mongol minorities had been forced to renounce Buddhism for Islam, to which the conquered peoples had remained faithful.

Thus the deep fissure which had separated the Far East and Islamized Asia before the conquests of Genghis Khan and his successors was re-established. The national revolt of China, by overthrowing the Mongol dynasty of the Yuan and replacing it by the Ming dynasty (1369), had confirmed the break. China was plunged into a great nationalist and xenophobic movement.

Thenceforward the unity of Asia, outlined by the Mongol khans, was lost forever. Asia was divided, more than ever before, into civilizations

which were to remain mutually impenetrable, each with a different religion. Nearer and Central Asia finally became a part of Islam. Islam too had a foothold in India with the Turkish conquerors but without managing to breach the idealistic Brahmanism of the Hindus. Arab shipping, replacing the Dravidian, had brought the Moslem religion to the Malay islands where it little by little succeeded in replacing Hinduism and Buddhism.

In northern Asia the nomads remained pagan.

In China, in Indo-China and Japan, Buddhism, superimposed on the Taoism and Shinto to which the Chinese and Japanese peoples remained faithful, formed the basis of a common civilization derived, like Brahmanism, from the ideas of an ancient pantheism. Thus, the civilized world was divided into three cultural blocs—Christianity, Islam and Buddhism.

The world of Islam, astride Asia, Europe and Africa and subject to the spiritual authority of the Ottoman emperor, heir of the caliph, was linked through the Turkish Empire to the Mediterranean civilization and kept in constant touch with Europe. By the 16th century the Ottoman Empire was a European power. From 1536 it was in alliance with France against the Hapsburgs who sought an alliance with Persia as a counterpoise. Moscow also, whose policy looked southward, sought the friendship of Ispahan against the Porte. The Ottoman Empire and the Iranian Empire took their places in European politics. Certainly the two great Moslem states, which disposed of resources far greater than those of the Western monarchies, treated them with a certain disdain and regarded themselves as greatly superior. But they were already learning from the West, borrowing technical skills and giving their armies an artillery which was to be found as far as India. Furthermore there were many points of contact between Moslems and Christians; their religions, both derived from Jewish monotheism, were akin, and their art and also their thinking had the same origins, derived, as much in the East as in the West, from Hellenistic civilization.

Once across the Chinese frontier, it was quite another world, which had no other ties with Nearer Asia and Europe than those connected with its silk exports. Cut off from western Asia by the Tibetan plateau, the Pamirs and the Central Asian deserts, China, separated from it by religion and culture—far superior to that of Islam—and by the wise institutions of a centralized empire, turned away from the West, which it had known in Mongol times, and extended its influence with irresistible force over Indo-China and Japan.

National Revival in China

While China, having cast off the Mongol yoke, was passing through a period of national reaction (1369), Tamerlane was founding in Central Asia, amid massacre and ruin, a feudal empire (1370) which cut off all land communications between the Far East and Nearer Asia. All Chinese trade was, therefore, forced to turn seaward. The Chinese coasts, raided by Japanese pirates, were put in a state of defence. A navy was built. For the first time in her history, China made a great naval effort. At the end of the 14th century her ships reached Ceylon, Hindustan, the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, and across the Indian Ocean as far as Mogadiscio in Africa. But it was an expansion without morrow. The death of Tamerlane and the collapse of his empire revived Arab shipping and the caravan trade and, as formerly, the Chinese ports and the markets of the Hoang-Ho relied on foreign sailors and foreign caravans for their international connections.

Having rejected all that was not Chinese, the China of the Ming in a great surge of national feeling reverted to its origins, a half-century before the Renaissance recalled western Europe to classical antiquity. It returned to the usages of the Tang dynasty (7th–10th century) and sought its artistic and literary inspiration in the distant ages of the Han (1st to 2nd century), in whose times China had been so closely linked to the Roman Empire by the international trade which had been the foundation of their greatness.

Return to State Socialism

The revival of law and of the ideas of ancient times helped China to slide into the state socialism which was the normal consequence of the evolution begun by the Yuan. The institutions of the Han, absolutist and egalitarian, reappeared. The centralization of the Mongol state, under the personal authority of the emperor, was accentuated. The conception which attributed to the state the ownership of the soil was again incorporated in the laws; every landowner was regarded as a tenant and the land-tax considered a form of rent. The state socialist conception, thus introduced the idea of property, was extended to trade by a return to the policy of controlled economy which, without renouncing private initiative, subjected it to stricter and stricter control. To encourage business, the tax on liquid fortunes was suppressed and replaced by a sales tax of 5%. The state thus linked its prosperity to that of private commerce. But at the same time it extended its control over the organization of sales by returning to the system of fiscal monopolies, as at the time of the Han.

Salt became a state monopoly. The sale of metals was reserved to the emperor, the classic procedure in all periods of great centralization in China; exploitation of the mines was left to private enterprise, but all the metals extracted had to be handed over to the state at fixed prices.

The crisis of fiduciary inflation, which had led to the revolt against the Yuan, faced the Ming dynasty with a serious monetary problem. It solved it by controlling the use of paper money. All payments were made by the state in notes at a fixed exchange rate, but valid for two years only, after which they had to be exchanged for new banknotes at a discount of 2%. This measure, which amounted to a tax of 1% per annum on capital in circulation, remained in force up till the 15th century without causing any fresh inflation crisis, the obligatory exchange of banknotes incidentally preventing the amassing of great fortunes.

Having established his power on a foundation which was both national and absolute, the Emperor Trae-Tsu undertook a war of extermination against the Mongols (1372) in order to save China from the danger of fresh invasions. The Mongol Empire which still existed around Karakorum was destroyed and the scattered tribes forced to pay tribute to China.

But absolutism, evolving constantly towards a more and more rigid form, transformed the central power into an autocracy and the high dignitaries of the army and the administration into an oligarchy whose power grew dangerously after the victories over the Mongols. The crisis of authority—the normal consequence of absolutism—was imminent. To avoid it, the emperor, profiting by the prestige of his victories, had all his principal assistants arrested and put to death: tradition has it that fifteen thousand persons were executed. But the crisis which he had hoped to escape by organizing these massacres broke out at once. Faced with such merciless power a violent opposition sprang up. Trae-Tsu was overthrown and the usurper Tchreng-Tsu (1399) introduced extensive reforms.

The Religious Reform

Ming absolutism was not restricted to the political field; it also tried, by making Buddhism a state religion, to make use of religion as an instrument of government. Religion, dominated by the temporal power, became imbued with a formalism which deprived it of its moral and spiritual values.

Reaction appeared in the distant regions of Tibet, where a sect was formed, the 'Yellow Robes', which preached a type of Buddhist humanism. It preceded by a century the Reformation in Europe. Under

its influence, there was a return to the study of the original texts of the Mahayana; a reform of ritual was undertaken, in which 'a man from the west with a hooked nose' took a prominent part; the Buddhist rites became markedly similar to the Catholic, and some twenty years before the *Imitation of Christ* (1430) introduced it into Europe, the Chinese and Tibetan reformers developed a mystical ideal in tune with the times. In order to shield it from the power of the emperor, the Tibetan Buddhist Church was placed under the control of two lamas, who were regarded as gods incarnate; one, the Dalai Lama, was the chief of the cult, the other the authority on doctrine. On their death, their successors were chosen from among new-born children according to certain signs which revealed the divine will.

This religious and intellectual reform, which was to restore its independence to the Church, was introduced into China by Tchreng-Tsu about 1420.

To mark the era that it inaugurated, the capital of the empire was moved to Pekin (1421), where the Mongol emperors had formerly resided.

The Crisis of State Socialism

State socialism, however, followed the evolution that was inevitably to involve it in a twofold crisis, oligarchic and fiscal. More and more, the oligarchy, which the Emperor Trae-Tsu had hoped to drown in blood, usurped the administration, leaving to the candidates recruited by examination only a seventh part of the posts, the others becoming hereditary or venal, while the treasury, because of the constant increase in the expenses of the court and the administration, and by the livings which the high dignitaries kept for themselves, found itself more and more unable to face up to its responsibilities. The state let itself be diverted slowly to a policy of inflation in which, once started, it would go only from worse to worse for, despite the law which imposed a fixed exchange rate, the constant increase in the issue of paper money progressively reduced its value.

While this twofold crisis was going on, the nomads on the northern frontiers again became menacing. At the beginning of the 15th century a dynasty descended from Genghis Khan had been restored in Mongolia and had refused to pay tribute to China (1403). Chinese diplomacy, however, succeeded in arousing against it the still more primitive tribes of the Kalmucks who, in 1434, took possession of Karakorum and formed a vast empire stretching from Lake Balkash to Lake Baikal and as far as

the Great Wall. Drawn by the wealth of China, it had attempted an invasion but had been thrown back westward (1449) and had retreated into Central Asia. Their defeat had allowed the Mongol tribes to unite once more; they had reconquered Karakorum (1470) and once again placed a descendant of Genghis Khan on the throne and recommenced their raids on China.

Thus northern Asia continued to be subject to the strange fluctuations of those nebulous political formations, vast incoherent empires which, succeeding one another, were a constant danger to all the peoples of Asia and Europe.

The Mongol raids on China, which took place at the time when the oligarchic and fiscal crisis was at its height, transformed it into a political crisis. The palace eunuchs,[1] who held the reins of government, seized power; the governments of provinces were sold to the highest bidder, the administration quickly fell to pieces and the finances were plunged into utter disorder. Twenty years later the state was bankrupt. In 1490 the paper money had lost 99% of its value and the state itself only redeemed its banknotes at 10% of their nominal value. The state socialist system once again ended in disaster.

The Emperor Siao-Tsong (1488–1505)—as formerly Trae-Tsu—tried to recover his power by condemning the principal eunuchs to death. In order to give the country a stable currency he had copper coins minted and in order to deal with the most urgent of his problems, the extreme poverty of the people, he organized granaries and ordered free distributions of foodstuffs.

But on his death the government fell once more into the hands of the courtiers.

Buddhist Evangelization Ends the Nomadism of the Mongols

In the midst of the anarchy which spread throughout the empire, Lamaist Buddhism was the only great moral force. It was this force that defended the empire against the constant menace of Mongol invasion. The lamas undertook the evangelization of the Mongols. Within a century they were all converted to Buddhism which weaned them from their warlike ardour and introduced them to a less brutal life, dominated by religious and moral ideas. They settled, spreading over the whole country, and began to frequent the northern Chinese markets. The empire

[1] As formerly at Byzantium, and then in the Ottoman Empire, the emperor surrounded himself with eunuchs, since they were unable to form a hereditary oligarchy. These eunuchs, who held the highest positions at court, often belonged to great families which castrated their young sons at an early age in order to prepare them for a career at court.

of Karakorum split up into a number of petty states. The Mongol danger was finally ended.

But a fresh danger arose. In 1516 the first Europeans appeared on the Chinese coasts.

4. FEUDALISM IN JAPAN

Feudal Evolution

In the 14th century the evolution of Japan was very similar to that of the Germanic Holy Empire in the 13th century.

The political dissolution of the country was complete. Every trace of the central power had disappeared. The imperial rule had become a mere fiction. The *shogun* himself had lost all real authority. The country was parcelled out among vassals who had become petty sovereigns; and while the feudal dismemberment increased, trade adapted itself to the new conditions. Trade with China became of real importance in the seaports which developed on the island of Kiushiu. Sakai, the ancient centre of salt production, became the greatest port of Japan. Copper, sulphur, fans, lacquer and weapons were exported to China in exchange for money, iron, cloth, books, pictures and medicaments.[1] A burgher class, enriched by trade, came into being; industry became organized and supplied the feudal princes with arms. The temples, which were great landowners, had considerable reserves of precious metals; by the middle of the 14th century—like the Templars and the Teutonic Order had done in Europe fifty years earlier—they began to exploit them by investing their funds in commercial operations and sea ventures. Banking made its appearance. From the temples it passed to the merchant middle class, especially in the ports, who amassed large fortunes. The feudal lords borrowed money from the merchants. The port of Sakai became the financial centre of Japan.[2]

Their wealth enabled the coastal cities to wrest from the princes upon whom they were dependent recognition of privileges which gave them political and judicial autonomy in return for certain economic advantages. Thus the coastal city of Hyogo ceded to the monastery on which it was dependent the monopoly of its customs dues (1470).

Far from hampering trade the feudal wars favoured it by providing outlets for industry. Insecurity forced the merchants to travel in caravans,

[1] After the destruction of the Mongol fleets in 1280 and the decadence of China under the last Mongol emperors (1300–1369) communication between Japan and China was revived in the form of piracy.

[2] As in Europe the great ports became, at the end of the 15th century, the leading financial centres: Antwerp, then Amsterdam and London.

which led to the formation of guilds. In the cities the artisans, the manufacturers of cotton, paper and goldleaf, were grouped into corporations on the basis of earlier existent trade organizations.

The coastal and merchant cities, in order to ensure the defence of their interests, formed leagues reminiscent of the leagues of the Rhine and Hansa cities.

The feudal lords, for their part, found their advantage in the development of the middle class through the tolls which they levied on the merchants who, living on the fringe of feudal society—essentially military and landowning—were treated with the deepest disdain.

These cities, in which sea-borne trade led to the appearance of new social classes based on commerce and personal freedom, formed, in the midst of feudal Japan, islands of individualist law, whose principles were diametrically opposed to those existent in the countryside. Everywhere outside their walls the nobles completed the enslavement of the peasant population within the framework of a seigniorial régime.

But urban economy was to have in Japan consequences identical to those it had had in Europe. Trade, by breaking down the closed manorial economy, led to the disintegration of the seigniorial régime. The freedom which existed in the cities led to social insurrections among the serfs on the feudal estates. In all parts, and despite the bloody repressions, peasant revolts broke out against the nobles and against the monasteries which were great seignorial landowners, as well as against the cities which tried to subjugate the districts immediately around them.

Everywhere—as in Europe—social claims took the form of religious movements. The equality of men before the gods once again appeared as the lever for ideas of emancipation and liberty.

Religious Reforms

From the 12th to the 13th century Zen Buddhism spread widely throughout Japan.[1] It opposed the temporal power of the Church and wished to return to the original simplicity of Buddha. Born in the monasteries and based on the people's faith, it won over the court and the nobility and became the state religion. But it had lost its mystical character. It tried to assert its primacy over the other Buddhist sects whose monasteries had up till then had a predominant influence at Kyoto. The result was a religious war in the 13th century. The clergy had fallen into disrepute and a fresh outburst of religious fervour broke out against the temporal power and the wealth of the monks. The people adhered

[1] It was a movement similar to the Cluny reform in Europe.

to it with enthusiasm. The 'Pure Earth' sect was contemporaneous with the 'Yellow Robes' in Tibet and China and was perhaps influenced by it. But even as in Europe Erasmian humanism was transformed in the feudal districts of Germany into the religious crisis of Luther and the social revolt of the peasants, so the 'Yellow Robe' movement, which assumed a humanist form in the individualist society of China, released in feudal Japan a revolutionary and religious fury which recalls the Peasants' War in Germany.

As in Europe, these religious and social peasant revolts were finally crushed in the 16th century.[1]

These movements of popular religious fervour, directed against the Buddhist monasteries, were linked, in the minds of the people, with the cult of the sun-goddess, the centre of the ancient national religion, Shinto, which had never entirely disappeared from amongst them.

Thus while in China the Lamaist reform was trying to free religion from the temporal authorities and preserve its universal character, in Japan—whose social evolution had only just begun—the mystical 'Pure Earth' movement led to the revival of the national religion of Shinto, in opposition to Buddhism which, imported from China, had become the religion of the ruling classes.[2] The court, decadent and dispossessed of all authority by the feudal nobility, also turned to Shintoism; the *literati* who, as in Europe, were favourable to social emancipation, also adhered to it. The people and the educated classes rallied to Shintoism and supported the emperor against the nobles. Shintoism which had absorbed certain elements of Buddhist morality, became a national Church,[3] within which popular piety was displayed in the form of great pilgrimages.

Political Organization of the Feudal Principalities

While this great religious movement which aimed at social emancipation was developing, a deep political evolution was driving the feudal principalities towards a revival of the central power and of security. The princes tried to ban private wars by taking the most merciless measures. Law was organized. Codified customs replaced the ancient imperial law which had fallen into disuse. Criminal law was standardized, though

[1] Almost at the same time as the revolt of the German peasants was crushed by the nobles supported by Luther

[2] It was a strange parallel with humanism, universal in its aspirations, and Lutheran nationalism, which reacted against the Catholic Church imported from the West, which had given Germany her political and religious structure.

[3] It was a similar phenomenon to the wave of mysticism which, in Europe, alienated the people from Rome and rallied them around its kings, thus leading to the appearance of national churches.

still, it is true, sanctioning the class-system; for a similar act a peasant was put to death after torture, a noble beheaded and a priest banished. But all this legislative work was strictly limited to the principality. Every feudal state was a unit under the rule of its prince who held in his hands both public and private justice. He was the apex of the social pyramid which kept society divided into hereditary classes; all feudal duties involved a bond of personal allegiance between prince and office-holder. This was the first step towards centralization of power, which always accompanies individual emancipation. The feudal world was organized in the midst of continual wars between princes, in the course of which the weakest were gradually eliminated. Thus the formation of more powerful states, by the union of principalities, foreshadowed a new political order which was to become evident in the 16th century.

In western Europe the sovereign power was restored during the Middle Ages by reliance on the cities and the economic trends they represented. In the Germanic Holy Empire, on the contrary, where land was the dominant factor, the evolution of the feudal principalities took place exclusively within a landowning framework. The cities remained on the fringe; they retained their own institutions without projecting them beyond their walls. It was the same in Japan. The feudal world and the world of the cities remained closed to one another, developing side by side, and each representing a quite different social type, the one seigniorial and landowning which enslaved the people under the rule of the privileged classes, and the other urban, influenced by trade and by the sea and dominated by the middle class which had won its freedom and lived under its own law strongly tinged with individualism.

5. THE DECLINE OF ASIA AND THE ADVANCE OF EUROPE

From the end of the 15th century Asia, under the twofold influence of the expansion of Turkish feudalism and of the maritime conquests of the Portuguese, entered a new phase of its history. Its civilization became exclusively continental.

Thrown back from the Mediterranean coasts by the formation of the Ottoman Empire, which was solely interested in territorial conquest, and cut off from the Indian Ocean by the destruction of the Arab and Javanese shipping, Asia now possessed only the continental routes as outlets for its trade. The result was a great change in its economic structure. Sea-borne trade by the direct contacts which it established between countries favoured contacts with their civilizations and thereby created a

sort of cosmopolitan culture open to the outside world; that was why the sea, when it served as the framework for an economic unity, encouraged the growth of a similar type of civilization along its coasts. In the IIIrd and IInd centuries BC the eastern Mediterranean had produced Hellenistic civilization, and the Roman Empire was only the political expression of the economic and spiritual unity which already existed in the Mediterranean lands. About the same period the Sea of Oman had established a close interpenetration between Egypt and the Greek world on the one side and India on the other, which spread the scientific achievements of Hellenism to the Hindu world and, through it, to China. During the first four centuries of our era the Gulf of Bengal had become the centre for the expansion of Hinduism; and the sea too had spread Chinese civilization over all the eastern coastlands of Asia, from Annam as far as Korea, and was the cause of its penetration into Japan. Finally, Arab traders had extended Moslem influence in the Indian Ocean as far as Insulindia and even into eastern Africa.

Between these great centres of civilization thus formed in Asia, constant contact had been increasingly maintained by the sea. The Chinese ports were in close touch with those of India and Persia and, even as formerly the Roman merchants regularly visited the Hindu ports of Malabar, the Arab and Persian merchants formed influential colonies in the Chinese ports. The result was a continual renewal of exchanges, not only material but intellectual, which stimulated all facets of life in the maritime countries. Wherever the influence of the cities was paramount, trade encouraged private property and individual liberty. Through the ports of China, India, Persia, Syria and the Black Sea, on which the caravan routes and the rivers converged, the influences of the outside world penetrated deeply into the continent. Thus the universalism created by the sea corresponded to an individualism created by trade.

The destruction of the sea-borne trade of Asia resulted in breaking it up into areas mutually almost impenetrable. The Straits of Malacca, in the hands of the Portuguese, placed an impassable barrier between the Far East and the countries of the Indian Ocean. Even in the Pacific Ocean communications by sea almost ceased to exist, which led to an almost complete separation between China and Japan. For China the sea continued to play the part of a great river which connected her coastal ports, but it no longer, as in former times, opened the way to more distant lands. India withdrew within itself; and Islam, broken into fragments, ended by losing the universal civilization of which it had been the outstanding example.

Certainly the continental trade-routes took the place of the sea-routes. The caravan cities on the tracks of Central Asia again flourished. Persia, towards which the routes converged, experienced a remarkable national renascence, and Constantinople, now become the capital of the Ottoman Empire and the meeting place for the continents of Europe and Asia, gained new life. But the land-routes were far from being as dynamic an element in international relations as the sea-routes had been. The silk and spice merchants used them; but instead of the great current which formerly joined the various parts of Asia, and Asia itself to Europe, there were now only paths flanked by cities more and more isolated in the midst of the vast domains, whose influence was continually increasing. The land-routes, by their very nature, merely linked neighbouring states, and Turkish rule, after the dismemberment of the Mongol Empire, had established a closed manorial régime in Central Asia. There was constant insecurity. The ruin of sea-borne trade, by restricting commercial activity to a few caravan cities, led inevitably to the decline of urban individualist civilization, born of the sea, to the advantage of the essentially seigniorial society which the Turks fostered throughout Central Asia.

Asia was thus broken into two separate worlds, the Far East which looked exclusively towards China, and the Moslem world, itself divided into three continental empires; the Ottoman Empire, military and conquering, which was built on the ruins of Moslem civilization bringing with it nothing which could take the place of the greatness it had destroyed; the Persian Empire, fanatically hostile to the Ottomans and drawing strength, by a return to its origins, for a revival of its feudal national organization; and the feudal empire of India, ruled over by a Persian-influenced Turkish military aristocracy imposed upon the subject Hindu peoples.

As for Egypt, which had for so many centuries been one of the centres whence civilization had spread throughout the world, the breakdown of its sea communications, both in the Mediterranean and in the Gulf of Oman, had completely extinguished it. The ruin of Alexandria, reduced to no more than a petty township, marked the end of its brilliant city civilization. Henceforward it was only to be a huge agricultural domain.

None the less the wealth accumulated in Asia was not lost. But since it was not exploited and was concentrated—throughout the Moslem world—in the hands of petty princely oligarchies, it created, because of the splendour of their luxurious courts, the illusion of immense prosperity. In reality, since it was not being used, it became sterile. The people, tied to the soil, with no horizon other than the limits of a seigniorial domain,

became enslaved, even as the peasants of the western provinces of the Roman Empire had become enslaved after the barbarian invasions and the Moslem conquests had cut them off from the sea.

From the 14th to the 16th century Asia passed through an evolution similar to that which Europe had had from the 5th to the 7th century. The Turkish invasions barbarized the peoples just as the Germanic invasions had done in the Roman Empire. The Portuguese, by controlling the Indian Ocean, isolated the countries of central and western Asia, even as the Arabs, by making themselves masters of the Mediterranean, had cut off western Europe from the rest of the world.

After the Arab conquests the Byzantine Empire, which alone remained open to the sea, had preserved its ancient civilization. But for it the sea did not extend beyond the Near Eastern coasts and the Black Sea. It had therefore turned to the continent and its influence had penetrated deeply into Russia, which it had converted to Christianity. Isolated between Islam and Catholic Christendom, with which it had broken all contacts, the Byzantine Empire managed to preserve its wealth and its culture, but by losing its universalism it became immured in a rigid national orthodoxy. Its civilization could feed only on itself and thenceforward became rigid and consequently sterile.

China was in a similar position after the maritime conquests of the Portuguese. In Asia, China alone kept her outlets to the sea, but on a smaller sea. On the continent the influence of Chinese culture spread widely and penetrated deeply into Mongolia, winning it for Buddhism. It preserved its wealth and its ancient traditions. But, cut off from the rest of the world, it was enclosed in its nationalism and ceased to refresh itself by contacts with the outer world, thus losing its creative force. For centuries it was to do no more than survive.

Formerly, the conquest of the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Gulf of Oman had given Islam the great traditions of the ancient civilizations. In a similar way the mastery of the seas by the Western peoples, just at the time when they were renewing their contacts with Hellenistic thought, opened boundless horizons to them.

For the first time in the history of the world, naval supremacy passed to the Atlantic peoples. It was to make them the founders of a new universalism and heralded the greatness of the West.

PART TWO

THE SEA AGAINST THE CONTINENTS

BOOK VII

The Attempt of Charles V to Create a Universal Empire. The Formation of the Great Monarchies and the Expansion of Capitalism

CHAPTER XXIX

THE CONFLICT OF IMPERIALISMS. THE ITALIAN WARS

Economic Imperialism and Continental Imperialism

At the end of the 15th century a new balance had been established in Europe as a result both of internal forces and external circumstances. Several areas were formed, clearly differentiated by their economic organization, their social structure and their political institutions. In the West, powerful monarchies, mainly in the maritime countries, had finally eliminated the feudal-seigniorial régime and, influenced by capitalism, set out on the road to economic imperialism.

In central Europe, on the other hand, the Middle Ages continued. The Germanic Holy Empire remained in feudal-seigniorial chaos. But a coherent state was formed around the House of Hapsburg by the union of the duchies of Austria, Styria and Carinthia. It was surrounded by vast seigniorial states without unity and without cohesion under elective monarchies: Poland, Bohemia, Hungary.

The Hapsburgs, hereditary holders of the imperial crown since Frederic III, undertook, under the influence of the West, a monarchical policy which, adapted to the purely territorial system of central Europe, was to result in a dynastic and territorial imperialism. Hapsburg policy was exclusively aimed at gaining these elective crowns for the dynasty and afterwards making them hereditary in the Hapsburg family.

Thus the territorial imperialism of the Hapsburgs, which aimed at uniting the whole continent under their rule, countered the economic imperialism of the Western monarchies which was based on the sea.

But though the states of the Holy Empire, split up into a multitude of feudal principalities, were incapable of opposing Hapsburg power, two new powers appeared in eastern Europe, both of them continental. to dispute its hegemony.

One was the Ottoman Empire. This was not a state, but an army; but it was the most powerful army in the world. Serving a religious idea, it

aimed at the conquest of all Christian Europe and tried to revive, to its own advantage, the ancient Roman Empire in a continental, military and Moslem form.

Finally, in the immense Russian steppes, Moscow, claiming to be the heir of Byzantium, also undertook a policy of Christian and universal imperialism. It began its Holy War of Russian Orthodoxy against the Moslem khans of southern Russia, even as the Turks waged the Holy War of the Ottomans against the Catholic Church.

European politics were to be dominated by these imperialisms. The struggle for the mastery of the seas began between the western states, while the three empires of eastern Europe—the Hapsburg Empire, the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire—were to fight one another for the mastery of the continent.

At the end of the 15th century all these imperialisms were in full expansion. Spain and Portugal, whose naval supremacy was indisputable, launched out on the conquest of the oceans. France adventured in the Italian wars to assure herself Mediterranean leadership, the Hapsburgs, by the marriage of Maximilian with Mary of Burgundy, gained a foothold in the Netherlands, Moscow under Ivan III began a vigorous offensive against the Mongol khans which brought it to the Volga, while the sultan of Constantinople, at the height of his power, undertook the conquest of Hungary. Only the English monarchy, forced to share its power with parliament, carried on a strictly national policy free of any idea of hegemony.

The Imperialism of Charles VIII Aims at Mediterranean Leadership

When Charles VIII ascended the throne of France (1483–1498) he possessed the most united, the strongest and by far the most populous kingdom of Europe. In the reign of Louis XI the crisis caused by the Hundred Years War had been overcome and the country, under the pressure of new-born capitalism, enjoyed a brisk economic revival.

The installation of the House of Hapsburg in the Netherlands was a serious check for the French monarchy. Since the 13th century the monarchy had aimed at attaching Flanders to the French crown. It slipped through its fingers at the very moment when the French victory over England and over the House of Burgundy seemed to make its possession certain.

The traditional alliance of the Netherlands with England, which Maximilian had at once renewed, put an end to the hostilities with Louis XI. Rather than embark on a new war, Louis wisely sought a com-

promise and achieved it by the promise of a marriage between Margaret of Austria, daughter of Maximilian, and the future Charles VIII, to whom she was to bring as dowry the rich industrial province of Artois and Franche-Comté. It was a triumph for French diplomacy.

But while Maximilian was taking possession of the Netherlands, Count René of Provence, king of Sicily, died (1480), bequeathing his kingdom to Louis XI, as well as the rights which he held from the Angevins on Naples, Cyprus and the kingdom of Jerusalem. Louis XI annexed Provence to France, but took care not to let himself be tempted by dreams of distant enterprises in the Mediterranean. Charles VIII, on the contrary, as soon as he reached his majority, was attracted by them. The possession of Provence and the port of Marseilles gave France the standing of a Mediterranean power. In 1492—the year when Christopher Colombus landed in Santo Domingo—the Mediterranean was the centre of all the trade with the East, and Italy was the essential staging-post. The wealth of the Italian cities, the greatest financial powers of the times, was even greater than that of Flanders. To conquer Naples and then set out on the conquest of the sea, Charles VIII did not hesitate to make the heaviest sacrifices to ensure the neutrality of neighbouring powers. He ceded Boulogne to England, renounced his marriage with Margaret of Austria—and his right to her dowry—and also ceded the Charolais to Maximilian, returned Roussillon and Cerdagne to Ferdinand of Aragon. Then, having amputated France on all her frontiers, he entered Italy (1494).

It was a complete reversal of the traditional policy of the French monarchy. Unlike Spain, which had been drawn seaward and had at once embarked on a policy of naval imperialism, based on the importance of the port of Barcelona, France from the 12th century had rallied around its kings. All the French wars, against England, against Flanders, against the Albigenses, against the Holy Empire and later once more against Aragon, and all the marriages of the kings of France concluded with the heiresses of the great fiefs of the crown had had only one aim perseveringly carried out—the territorial unity of the kingdom. That was why the monarchical policy, supported by the cities, had led to the birth of a national sentiment shown by a devoted loyalty to the king and had been supported by the States-General if one excepts the great moral crisis in which France had foundered after the Treaty of Troyes.

Since the 12th century the policy of the French kings had looked westward and northward. By deciding on the war in Italy, Charles VIII had begun an entirely new policy. Like the Hohenstaufen, the Angevins and the kings of Aragon, he yielded to the lure of the Mediterranean.

Such a policy would never have had the support of the States-General, always mindful of its cash. It would have been impossible to undertake it a century earlier. But it was supported by the capitalists who had forestalled the king in his policy of imperialism. If it were Charles VIII who claimed the crown of Cyprus, it was Jacques Coeur who had prepared the way under Charles VII by setting up a commercial agency at Famagusta. Marseilles opened to French large-scale capitalism the possibilities which had created the greatness of Genoa and Barcelona. Though it was useless for Charles VIII to try to obtain the support of the States-General, the credits granted him by the men of business were enough for him to recruit mercenary armies and obtain the alliance of the Swiss cantons, enough to allow the king to replace the national policy which the monarchy had hitherto pursued by a policy of dynastic imperialism.

So, although moved by diametrically opposed motives, monarchy and capitalism were to become closely allied. Lured by the imperial mirage, Charles VIII wanted to make himself master of Cyprus, Naples and Jerusalem and to reconquer Constantinople, since he remained haunted by the great mediaeval dream and hoped to re-establish the ancient grandeur of Rome. On the contrary, the capitalists who supported him were realists, modern business men, who wanted to make use of the military power of the monarchy to recover the markets of the Levant and seize from Venice her trade primacy.

The conquest of Naples was a military walkover. Savonarola, who then ruled the democratic and religious republic of Florence, came to terms with Charles VIII, the instrument of the most materialist capitalism, to prevent the return of the Medici. Impressed by his force, Milan and Rome let him pass, and the Angevin party of Naples rallied to his cause. Charles made a triumphal entry into Naples in 1495, in a chariot drawn by four white horses, crowned with the imperial crown and holding in his hands the sceptre and orb, to the acclamations of the people who welcomed him with the titles of Emperor of Constantinople and King of Jerusalem.

But when he thought that his dream had come true, Charles encountered the obstacle which had earlier broken the power of Frederic II, the traditional policy of the Holy See determined not to allow northern and southern Italy to be united under a single rule. The king of France installed at Naples and perhaps at Florence was a menace to all Italy. Naples was a Papal fief and Alexander VI refused Charles the investiture. It was the signal for a call to arms of all those who felt menaced by the presence of the French king in Italy.

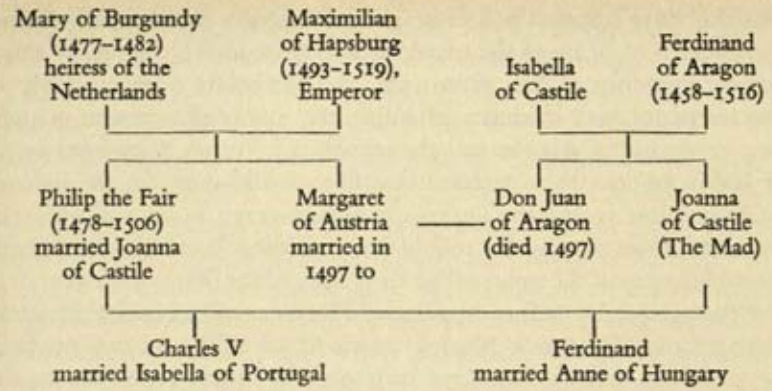
At the Pope's appeal a European confederation was formed against Charles VIII, made up of the emperor, who feared lest the king of France seize the kingdom of Italy from him, the powerful Ludovico il Moro, who feared for his rich duchy of Milan, and the Mediterranean powers, King Ferdinand of Aragon and the republic of Venice. Supported by all the Italian princes, they declared that they would unite for the defence of Christendom against the Turks—thus preventing Charles VIII, 'King of Jerusalem', from playing the role of leader of the Christians—and for the re-establishment of the rights of the Holy See and the 'King of the Romans' over their respective fiefs of Naples and Florence. In 1496 a Spanish army coming from Sicily took Naples, which Charles VIII, having no fleet, was unable to defend. The Pope conferred the crown of Naples on the Aragonese dynasty in the person of Frederic III. Charles died soon afterwards from an accident (1498). The imperial dream vanished.

Naval Imperialism of the House of Aragon United With the Continental Imperialism of the Hapsburgs

Despite the imperial dream of Charles VIII, the House of Aragon continued its imperialist policy which aimed at naval, that is to say commercial, hegemony. The alliance of Ferdinand of Aragon and the emperor against Charles VIII in Italy had united the two dynasties of Aragon and Hapsburg, which up till then had had no relations with one another, against the common enemy.

There were, however, close commercial ties between Castile and the Netherlands, where the House of Austria had just installed itself; and in the two wealthiest districts of Europe, in Italy and in Flanders, where Aragon and Castile had such great commercial interests, Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile had close links with the Hapsburgs. This resulted in a political rapprochement confirmed by a double marriage; in 1497 Don Juan, heir to the Spanish kingdoms, married Margaret of Austria—the fiancée repudiated by Charles VIII—and at the same time Philip the Fair, Maximilian's heir, married Joanna of Castile (see page 424).

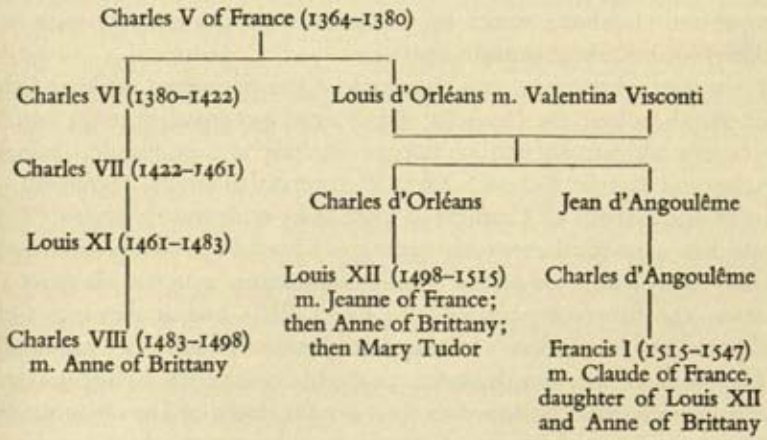
The union of the two dynasties, prepared by a policy of imperialism, was to have fateful consequences. In 1497 the death of Don Juan united in Philip the Fair and Joanna of Castile the inheritances of the Houses of Burgundy, Austria and Spain. The situation in Italy was, therefore, greatly changed. The House of Aragon possessed Sicily and the kingdom of Naples; the crown of the King of the Romans assured northern Italy for the Hapsburgs. Once these two inheritances were united, Venice and the Holy See were at the mercy of the Hapsburgs. The traditional policy



of the Pope and of Venice was to prevent Italian unity. Alexander VI and the Most Serene Republic changed sides and approached France.

The Policy of Hegemony of Louis XII in Italy Creates the First Great European Coalition Against Him

The death of Don Juan had scarcely changed the balance in Italy when that of Charles VIII caused the crown of France to pass to Louis XII



(1498–1515). To the rights of Charles VIII on Naples he added those he claimed from his grandmother, Valentina Visconti, on the duchy of Milan, held by Ludovico il Moro. Assured of the alliance of the Pope and Venice he once more began the war.

After the defeat of Charles the Bold, the Swiss had become a military

power. Louis XII obtained their alliance by offering them the Ticino, the Italian key to the Gothard. With their support he conquered Milan.

But the policy of Mediterranean leadership did not make Louis XII forget the policy of French unity; profiting by the alliance which bound him to the Pope, he obtained an annulment of his marriage with Jeanne of France, by whom he had had no children. This enabled him to marry Anne of Brittany, widow of Charles VIII. The last of the great fiefs was thus reunited to the crown. France, henceforth, held all the Atlantic coastline.

Ferdinand of Aragon was making ready for war. To avoid it, Louis XII in 1500 signed a secret treaty with him by which the two kings partitioned the kingdom of Naples to the detriment of Frederic III of Aragon, Ferdinand's cousin, to whom the Pope had granted the investiture. Louis XII occupied Naples and Ferdinand occupied Puglia and Calabria. But at Naples Louis found himself very far from his bases; Ferdinand, on the contrary, could rely on Sicily and his fleet ruled the sea. In 1504 he turned on Louis XII and defeated him at Gaeta; Naples, once more, was lost.

Once again it became evident that the Mediterranean could only be ruled from the sea.

But while these changes were taking place in Italy, a child was born at Ghent in 1500 to Philip the Fair and Joanna of Castile, the future Emperor Charles V. He was the richest heir of Europe.

Defeated at Naples Louis XII, who refused to renounce his imperialist aims in Italy, preferred, like Charles VIII, to sacrifice the unity of France. Since he could not hope to hold Naples against the Aragonese, he shared the leadership of the Mediterranean with them by arranging for the marriage of his daughter Claude with the young prince Charles (1504). The price exacted was a hard one. Louis XII—under the influence of the queen, Anne of Brittany, with whom he was much in love—accepted it. Claude would bring as her dowry Brittany, Burgundy and the county of Blois and the young couple would also receive the investiture of the duchy of Milan. France, thus dismembered, was handed over to the House of Hapsburg-Castile. Nothing explains better the strange mixture of ideas which monarchical policy still represented at the beginning of the 16th century. Freed from the control of the States-General, the king reverted to feudal ideas and lost contact with the nation. For the first time the monarchical policy sacrificed the country to the interests of the dynasty. But the times of feudalism were over; the French nation had become a reality. Its opposition forced Louis XII to disavow his engagements.

The Italian wars seemed to have reached their conclusion. Louis XII kept Milan and renounced the kingdom of Naples, which remained to Ferdinand of Aragon, whose fleet had defeated the military power of France and whose supremacy in the Mediterranean was made stronger still.

At this time Julius II della Rovere had just succeeded Alexander VI on the Papal throne (1503–1513). Carried away by the ideas of his time, the new Pope was to become a sovereign and to undertake, despite the kings of France and Spain, a monarchical policy in Italy, in order to rebuild, based on a great temporal power, the ancient supremacy of the Holy See in Europe. But in order to become 'lord and master of the world game' he had first to liberate Italy from foreign occupation. But the Pope had no armed forces. A clever and unscrupulous politician, Julius II succeeded wonderfully in getting the great European powers to fight for him. Venice was the most powerful Italian state able to oppose the Pope's monarchical policy. Julius II formed against it the League of Cambrai (1508), made up of all the powers which had pretensions in Italy—Louis XII, Maximilian of Austria and Ferdinand of Aragon. Then, after Venice had been beaten at Agnadello by the French, he made use of the alliance against France. The League of Cambrai was replaced by the Holy League (1511). Henry VIII of England, who had just ascended the throne and who was uneasy about the power of France, joined it. Inflamed by the spirit of mediaeval policy, he hoped to reconquer Guyenne.

Defeated at Novara by the Swiss, France lost Milan (1513). Henry VIII and Maximilian invaded from the north. Louis bought peace for cash. The policy of dynastic hegemony of France ended in a defeat which left her isolated against a coalition of all the European powers.

The First Anglo-French Entente

The death of Ferdinand of Aragon in 1516 led to the union in the hands of Charles V of the Netherlands, where he was already master, of the possessions of the Aragon-Castile dynasty in Spain and Italy and, a little later, of all the countries ruled by the Hapsburg dynasty in central Europe. The realist and imperialist dynastic policy of the kings of Spain had achieved its aims, the formation of a powerful empire of which Spain was the centre and which, beyond the central European territories which counted for very little, had at its disposal the Netherlands, Milan, Naples and Sicily. The advent of Charles V altered the whole international balance. It seemed that France, surrounded by hostile states including all the wealthiest parts of Europe, must succumb. In such conditions the

Holy League became a tool in the hands of the Pope. Henry VIII, in order to oppose the naval supremacy of Spain, broke away from it and, inaugurating the policy of the balance of power which thenceforward was always to be English policy, changed sides. To counter the empire of Charles V an understanding was reached between France and England which was confirmed, according to the dynastic policy of the times, by a marriage between Louis XII, then a widower after the death of Anne of Brittany, and Mary Tudor, sister of the English king, Henry VIII.

The reversal of the English alliance brought the war to an end. The Anglo-French entente, as soon as it was concluded, became a factor for peace.

Louis XII, however, died shortly afterwards (1515). Francis of Angoulême succeeded him as Francis I (1515–1547). A descendant of Valentina Visconti, like Louis XII, he at once prepared for war. The Anglo-French entente kept Charles V neutral; and the alliance of Venice which wanted revenge on the Pope prevented an Italian coalition being formed against Francis. After the conquest of the Ticino, the Swiss cantons had imposed a protectorate on Milan. In 1515 Francis I defeated their troops at Marignano, putting an end to their military power and their imperialist aims. The Pope, Leo X, hastened to make peace. Francis took advantage of this to obtain from the Holy See the Concordat of 1516 which granted to the king the nomination of bishops and abbots throughout the whole kingdom and placed the French clergy under direct royal authority. The Swiss concluded a perpetual peace at Fribourg, by which they engaged never to fight against France and allowed the French to recruit the mercenaries they needed in the cantons.

Charles V gave up the struggle. By the Treaty of Noyon he recognized the rights of Francis I to the duchy of Milan, who finally abandoned his claims on Naples. The war ended with the partition of Italy between the two great western powers, France and Spain.

The entente with England had changed the disaster, into which France had almost been dragged, into a victory.

English Balance of Power Policy

Alone of all the western monarchies England had ceased, after the Hundred Years War, to practise an imperialist policy. She had withdrawn into herself and devoted all her energies to her economic and naval development. During the Wars of the Roses the currency had depreciated and the monarchy devoted itself to restoring its stability. Under Henry VII (1485–1509) trade increased with Brittany, Castile, Portugal, Florence,

Flanders, the Hansa cities and the Baltic. Shipyards were founded. The king organized a fleet under the command of a High Admiral. Exports of wool, wheat, tin, honey and hides became important, against imports of wine from Portugal, the centre of the trade being in London, of timber from the northern countries, of spices, dried fruits and oriental goods. Bristol became the centre for the trade in Iceland cod. Societies of 'merchant-adventurers' founded a trading-post at Bergen. A commercial treaty with Flanders was signed. In order to help the country's trade, the government carried on a policy of friendship with the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal, which was confirmed by the marriage of Henry VIII to Catherine, daughter of Ferdinand of Aragon.

The court practised no dynastic policy. England remained on a war footing against France and supported the Emperor Maximilian against Louis XI, and then Charles VIII when the war broke out between them for the hand of Anne of Brittany which Maximilian wanted. But after the marriage of the king of France with Anne (1491), Henry VII gave up the struggle and, by the Treaty of Senlis (1493), which ceded him, in addition to Calais which he already held, the port of Boulogne, he renounced all other claims in France.

Henry VIII (1509–1547) countered the imperialist policies first of Louis XII, then of Francis I and finally of the Emperor Charles V by a balance of power policy. In 1515 for the first time he approached France to prevent Spanish supremacy and tried to save the peace by diplomacy. In 1518 his minister, Wolsey, held all the threads of international politics in his hands.

Certainly, Henry VIII too became infected in 1519 by this contagion and put forward his candidature for the empire in opposition to Francis I and Charles V. But this was only a brief impulse. From 1520 he tried to play the part of a mediator between the two royal rivals. His meetings with Francis at the Field of the Cloth of Gold and with Charles V at Gravelines (1520) did not, however, prevent them from going to war. It was impossible for England not to take part; faithful to her traditional alliance with Spain and the Netherlands, she took the side of the emperor. In 1525, after the disasters that France had passed through, Henry VIII was tempted to seize Normandy. But he finally renounced this policy and, preferring a stable balance between the European powers to a military success or even a complete conquest which would have weakened France, he allied himself with vanquished France against the powerful empire of Charles, who was his nephew and who was then at the height of his triumph.

The continental policy of England, thenceforth, was fixed. It was to be pacific, mediating, favourable to a balance which should prevent any power from having a hegemony on the continent or controlling the Channel coasts. The naval security of England and the balance of power in Europe were the two great political principles which appeared in the reign of Henry VIII and which, pursued unwaveringly, were to create the greatness of England.

CHAPTER XXX

COLONIAL POLICY AND THE EXPANSION OF CAPITALISM

I. FOUNDATION OF THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE COLONIAL EMPIRES

The Portuguese Policy of State Monopolies

AT the time when the great colonial expansion of Portugal and Spain was taking place, Europe was commercially dominated by capitalism and politically by absolutism. In Portugal, John II (1481–1495), after the great social crisis of 1439 which ranged the cities against the landed nobility, relied on the *cortes* to combat the privileges of the nobility and tried to govern as an absolute monarch, assisted by the men of law.

It was at this time that Portugal was establishing her rule in Guinea. The charter for the slave-trade granted by Alfonso V in 1469 had resulted in huge profits. John II refused to renew it and placed the trade under the control of the crown. Absolutism, translated to the colonies, took the form of a royal monopoly. Emanuel the Fortunate (1495–1521) was to make it the basic principle of his colonial policy. The spice trade brought in enormous sums.[1] The king took control of it, concentrating in his own hands all the profits of colonization even as, at the same time, he concentrated all the political power in the crown. In 1503 he created the *Casa da India* to centralize the spice imports. The king was now sole buyer. He resold through agents, reserving 50% to 60% of the profits for himself. In Brazil, where trade was not fully organized but developed as the colony was peopled and civilization advanced, the royal monopoly was not set up. All Portuguese were allowed to trade there subject to taxation which amounted to 10% on the sale of slaves and rose to 28% on goods imported and exported. In practice, however, trade was almost completely in the hands of the officials.

[1] The import of pepper into Lisbon reached 26,000 quintals.

The colonization of Brazil was not, however, greatly impeded by this. Its prosperity was based on the cultivation of tea, cocoa, dye-woods[1] and above all on sugar cane, which developed a considerable sugar industry. There was also a great development of stock-breeding and fishing. But this cultivation, stock-breeding and fishing was the work of the colonists who, unhampered by state intervention, exploited the country and brought Portuguese civilization with them. The Church came with the colonists and systematically organized the conversion of the natives, who had remained very primitive, some of them even cannibals. The Jesuits, who were the great colonizers of Brazil, settled them in villages, stabilized them, taught them farming, and it was their protection which saved them from the slavery which otherwise the colonists would have forced upon them. The task of conversion was accompanied by a magnificent cultural effort. In 1551 a bishopric was set up in the capital, Bahia, and in 1567 a Jesuit college was opened in the new town of Saint Sebastian. The Church brought to these completely savage regions the ancient culture which was based on Christianity.

From the beginning of the 16th century the kings of Portugal did their best to give their empire a political structure which assured them an all-powerful authority. The Portuguese Empire included various clearly defined areas; Brazil, a vast colonial territory, and the trading-posts of Africa and India which were, in fact, nothing else save the agencies of an enormous commercial enterprise of which the king of Portugal was the proprietor.

After the conquest, Brazil had been parcelled out by the king in concessions to noble captains, who were both landowners and governors and who were authorized to levy tithes. Emanuel replaced the tithe by a royal tax and appointed royal commissioners alongside the captains. In 1527 John III transformed the *capitaneries* into districts administered by men of law. Brazil became a province of Portugal. Like Brazil, Madeira, the Azores and Guinea were given royal officials as governors.

The trading-posts in India were united under the governorship of a viceroy resident at Goa, to whom the captains of the various ports were subordinated. Goa, a great Hindu city with only four hundred and fifty Portuguese residents, received its institutions from Lisbon. Monarchical absolutism aimed at governing the kingdom and its colonies on the same principles. But their isolation transformed the captains into petty potentates who at once resorted to extortion and the royal monopoly was faced

[1] The 'Brazil' tree gave its name to the country.

with the competition of the royal officials themselves, carried on for their personal profit.

The system of the royal monopoly, though rudimentary enough, concentrated in the king's hands or, illegally, in those of his representatives the greater part of the capital produced by the spice trade. This capital was not employed by the king for commercial purposes; it was absorbed by the growing luxury of the court, whose prestige helped to support the absolutist policy. Save for the agents at Lisbon, Lagos, Algarve and Oporto, who leased the sale of spices to foreign countries, the Portuguese people had no part in the profits of colonialism. The capital, blocked in the king's hands, remained unproductive, which explains why the colonial trade did not develop either industry or commerce within the country itself.[1] As, since the expulsion of the Jews, Portugal no longer had any international merchants the farming of the spice trade was almost exclusively usurped by foreigners. Exports to India consisted almost entirely of Flanders cloths and Italian weaves. These foreign imports, made either for re-exportation to India or to satisfy the luxury of the court, brought in large sums to the treasury in the form of customs dues. At Lisbon it was the Antwerp firms who cornered the market. Portugal lacked merchants to such an extent that John III had personally to ask the Portuguese Jews who had settled at Antwerp to become farmers of the royal monopoly. They imported from two to three hundred thousand ducats worth of spices to Antwerp annually, on which they made profits of from 100 to 200%. From 1528 Charles V, being short of means, confiscated the wealth of the Jewish merchants of Antwerp and their influence declined. The sale of spices was then entrusted by John III to the merchants of Nuremberg.

The monopoly did not apply solely to the sale of the commodities; their transport was also subject to royal control. The result was that the country's merchant shipping, paralysed by state competition, withered away. And as the state did not draw any immediate profit from its fleet, it was neglected. At the beginning of his reign (1521) John III possessed more than three hundred ships, amongst them the largest cargo vessels of the times, displacing three thousand four hundred tons. In 1578 Portugal was so short of ships that she was forced to lease colonial transport to an Augsburg firm.

In short, state capitalism in Portugal ended in complete failure. In good years the state monopoly brought in an average of four hundred

[1] In the middle of the 16th century Portugal exported only colonial or agricultural produce; but it imported large quantities of manufactured goods.

thousand ducats and the customs provided another two hundred and fifty thousand despite the disorder of the finances and the venality of the officials. But these sums were absorbed and surpassed by the expenses of the court and the pensions paid to the courtiers who swarmed about it in ever greater numbers. The luxury of the court greatly increased imports. Lisbon exported goods to the value of 1,300,000 ducats to Antwerp annually but imported 1,800,000 ducats worth. The trade deficit therefore was greater than the total revenues of the state spice monopoly. It became necessary to borrow. In 1534 the public debt rose to two million ducats, not counting four hundred and eighty thousand ducats owing to the Flemish merchants. By 1567 it was bankruptcy; the royal banknotes, even in Portugal itself, lost 45% of their value.

Another result of the monopolies system was the introduction of the sale of negro slaves by the state administration in the home country. Ten to twelve thousand slaves were brought into the country annually and bought by the great landowners who settled them on their estates where they replaced not only the Moors who had been expelled, but also the former Christian peasants who, reduced to beggary, swarmed in the cities.

As in Brazil, evangelization followed in the footsteps of the Portuguese conquerors in India. But whereas in Brazil the Church had to deal with uncivilized peoples, in India it clashed with an ancient civilization and a religious feeling which had been powerful enough to make an invincible resistance to Islam. In Portugal as in Spain absolutism was founded on Catholic unity. In the early 16th century Portugal had begun religious persecutions. John III brought the Inquisition to India together with the institutions of the Portuguese kingdom (1540). The conversion of the country was systematically undertaken. Bishoprics were created and priests and monks were soon twice as numerous as the other Portuguese. The native population resisted. To put pressure on them, those Hindus who refused to be converted were outlawed (1567). The persecution had similar results in India to those in Portugal; the Hindus left the Portuguese trading-posts *en masse*, leaving them without industries and without a labour force, and depriving them of almost all contact with the interior. This was the main cause of their decadence when faced with the competition of the Dutch, who began to work against the Portuguese monopoly, which was unable to defend itself because the state socialist system had not been able to maintain naval supremacy.

Less than a century after the foundation of its empire, Portugal was well on the way to inevitable decline. Its merchant fleet no longer existed. Its finances were in total disorder; all commercial life was stifled. The

people of the countryside were reduced to poverty; agriculture, so prosperous under the Moors, withered under the régime of slave labour, and the continued introduction of negro slaves into the country bastardized the people both physically and morally.

While Camoens was celebrating in his *Lusiads* (1572), the masterpiece of Portuguese literature, the colonial epic of his country, Portugal, the conqueror of the seas, dragged down by state socialism, was foundering in utter bankruptcy. The spice market had moved to Antwerp, Flemish and Italian industry reaped the greater part of the profits of the colonial trade and the Augsburg capitalists maintained communications between the mother-country and its colonies. In 1578 King Sebastian died in Morocco after a terrible military disaster. In 1580 Portugal and its empire passed under the sceptre of Philip II, king of Spain.

Spain Conquers Mexico and Peru from the Aztecs and the Incas

After the voyages of Christopher Columbus, Ferdinand of Aragon had a systematic exploration made of the Antilles and, in order to exploit them, created the *Casa de Contratación* (Chamber of Commerce) at Seville in 1503, entrusted with centralizing all colonial exports and imports, and the Council of the Indies, a government organ which advised the king.

From the time of their occupation the islands had been kept strictly closed to foreigners, and concessions had been granted to Spaniards under which the natives had been reduced to slavery and treated so harshly that they perished in great numbers. In 1492 the population of Santo Domingo seems to have numbered several hundreds of thousands; thirteen thousand remained in 1514. The Dominicans sent to convert the Indians had every reason to be indignant and to protest through Bishop Las Casas. But they were not heeded. And from 1501, to supplement the labour shortage, the import of black slaves into the Antilles began. Between 1509 and 1512 colonization was extended to Cuba and Jamaica.

It was only during the reign of Charles V that any attempt was made to conquer the American continent. From 1519 to 1522 Hernando Cortez, leaving Havana with eleven ships, seven hundred men and ten cannon, occupied Mexico. Between 1532 and 1535 two adventurers, Francisco Pizarro and Almagro—Pizarro was a former swineherd—made themselves masters of Peru. Venezuela (1520–1540), Yucatan (1527–1547), Colombia (1538), Chile (1540) and, in the second half of the 16th century, Argentina and Paraguay completed this immense colonial empire.

When Cortez arrived in Mexico, he was amazed to find the vast empire

that the Aztecs had built up over the past hundred and fifty years. The Spaniards were struck by the order of the Aztec cities, their gardens, their palaces, their stone houses and their temples perched upon pyramids. Mexico City was described by Cortez as being as imposing as Seville and Cordova, intersected by long straight streets where doctors, chemists, barbers and restaurants could be found.

In Peru, the empire of the Incas with its collectivist institutions and its great capital of Cuzco, whose population reached sixty thousand, seemed to the Spaniards a mine of immense wealth.

These great empires, which represented an ancient and brilliant civilization, were conquered by a few hundred men, thanks it is true—in the case of Mexico—to the support given the Spaniards by the peoples conquered by the Aztecs, who provided thousands of auxiliary troops.

The conquest of South America reflects no honour on the Europeans. It was carried out by terror, double-dealing and the most atrocious greed. Welcomed by the Inca emperor in friendliness and peace, Pizarro and Almagro, in order to seize his wealth, had him burnt at the stake after baptizing him. The peoples of whole cities were massacred or burned alive. The ruins of sixty cities of the Maya Empire which still exist in Yucatan are silent witnesses of the barbarity of the conquerors of the New World who in their destructive rage destroyed even the Maya manuscripts, evidence of the highest civilization attained by the American Indians.

Spanish Colonial Policy Tends Towards State Monopoly

Mexico and Peru, placed under the rule of viceroys, passed under the administration of the *Casa de Contratación* and the Council of the Indies. As in the Antilles concessions of *encomiendas* (agricultural domains)—on which the population was subject to forced labour and serfdom—were granted to colonists. Some of them, allotted to nobles, were as big as provinces.

The discovery of silver mines in Peru about 1530 immediately gave the colony an immense importance. Charles V, while reserving for himself the exclusive right of buying the silver produced by the mines, authorized their exploitation by individuals. But in the mines even more than on the agricultural domains the Spanish colonists reduced the people to slavery.

Charles V, however, deeply influenced by the liberalism of the Belgian provinces in which he had been brought up, made a sincere effort to prevent the natives from being reduced to slavery and to initiate them into Western civilization. He was supported by the Church. In 1520 he took

measures to achieve this and, since they remained a dead letter, he sent Mendoza to Mexico as governor in 1535 with orders to suppress slavery and defend the village commonlands, which he wished to see administered by the native chiefs, from the encroachments of the colonists. Schools were founded by the Jesuits for the sons of the chiefs who rapidly formed a civilized Indian élite.

At the University of Salamanca, de Vittoria taught, with the king's approval, that colonization could only be justified if its aim was to improve the lot of the natives. It was in this sense that his pupil Las Casas influenced the drafting of new laws for the Indies, published in 1542. They provided for the progressive suppression of the *encomiendas*, the abolition of slavery and the official use of the local languages. Their application led to a colonists' revolt. The viceroy of Peru was assassinated. It became necessary to temporize.

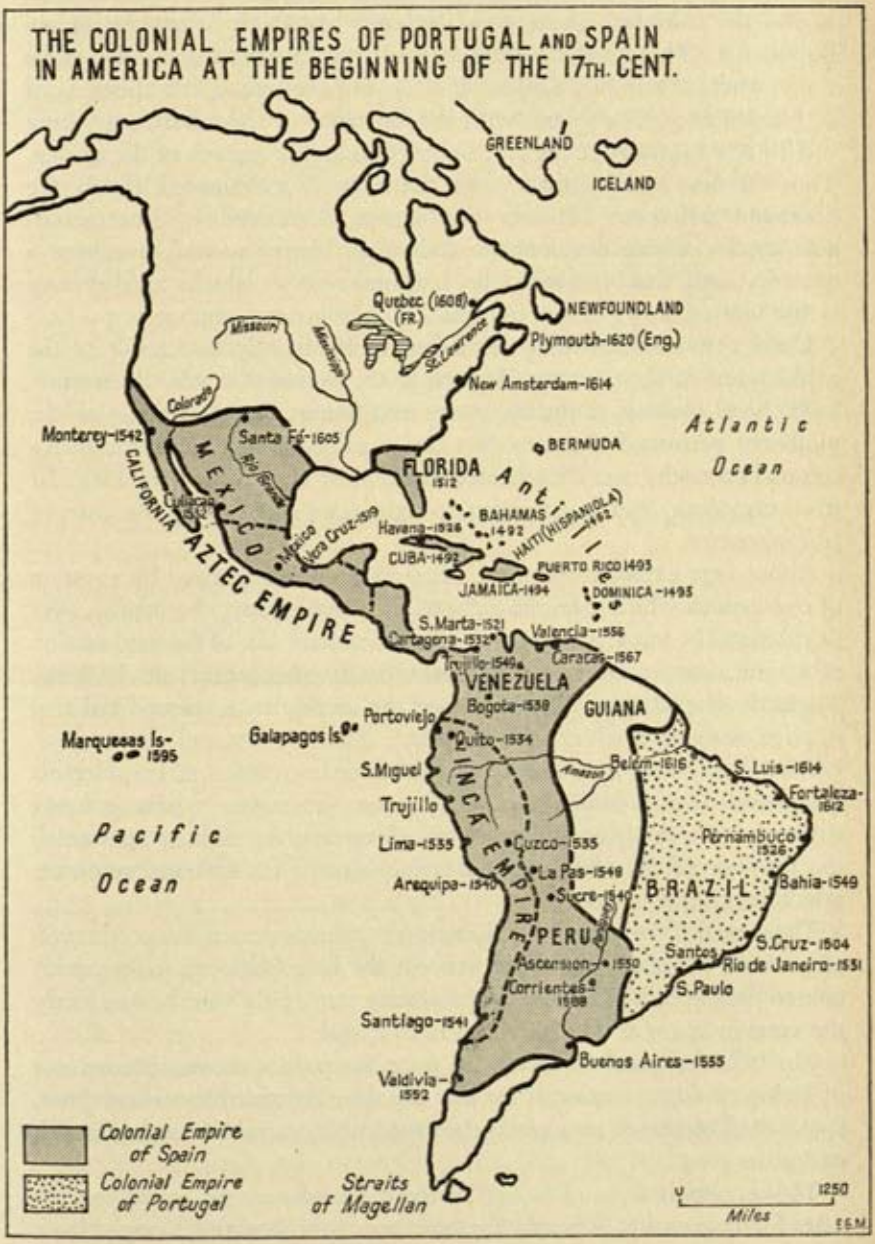
The Church was the king's main collaborator in the work of civilization. Without doubt evangelization only superficially converted the Indians to Christianity. Certainly, too, it served as a means of domination. But it was no less certain that it gave the native populations the active protection of the Dominicans and the Jesuits. The conversion of the Indians facilitated the fusion of the Indian and Spanish races favoured by the authorities. Archbishoprics and, in 1551, universities were founded at Lima and at Mexico.

To encourage immigration Charles V opened the colonies to all the the subjects of his empire. By the end of his reign more than a hundred thousand Spaniards had settled in America with no intention of returning. Spain brought Europe to the American shores of the Atlantic Ocean.

Like the kings of Portugal, Ferdinand of Aragon had organized colonial trade on the basis of a state monopoly. Charles V broadened the idea of a monopoly by granting it not only to the king but to all his subjects, authorizing them to trade with America upon payment of the moderate charges of 5% on exports and 2½% on imports. Transport, for reasons of safety, was carried out by a great annual convoy of about sixty ships which left Cadiz with an escort of ships of war.

Colonial trade, as practised by Charles V, was rather similar to the system the Portuguese kings had introduced into Brazil. The agricultural character of the colonies did not permit of a state socialism as rigid as that practised by the kings of Portugal in India. It was a compromise between the intervention of the state, which reserved for itself the right of granting mining and land concessions, and the private initiative of the colonists and adventurers, eager to make their fortunes. The state in Mexico and

Map No. 29


THE COLONIAL EMPIRES OF PORTUGAL AND SPAIN IN AMERICA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 17TH. CENT.
GREENLAND
ICELAND
Quebec (1608) (FR.)
NEWFOUNDLAND
Plymouth-1620 (Eng.)
Missouri
Mississippi
St. Lawrence
New Amsterdam-1614
Colorado
Monterey-1542
Santa Fé-1605
Rio Grande
MEXICO
CALIFORNIA
AZTEC EMPIRE
Mexico
Vera Cruz-1519
FLORIDA 1512
BERMUDA
Atlantic Ocean
BAHAMAS 1492
Havana-1526
CUBA-1492
HAITI (HISPANIOLA) 1492
PUERTO RICO 1493
JAMAICA-1494
DOMINICA-1495
S. Marta-1521
Cartagena-1532
Valencia-1556
Trujillo-1546
Caracas-1567
VENEZUELA
Bogota-1538
GUIANA
Portoviejo
Galapagos Is.
Marquesas Is-1595
Quito-1534
Belem-1616
S. Luis-1614
Fortaleza-1612
S. Miguel
Amazon
Trujillo
INCA EMPIRE
Pernambuco 1526
Pacific Ocean
Lima-1535
Cuzco-1535
La Paz-1548
Arequipa-1540
Sucre-1540
BRAZIL
Bahia-1549
PERU
Ascension-1550
Santos
S. Cruz-1604
Rio de Janeiro-1531
Corrientes 1588
S. Paulo
Santiago-1541
Buenos Aires-1555
Valdivia-1552
Colonial Empire of Spain
Colonial Empire of Portugal
Straits of Magellan
0 1250
Miles
E.G.M.

Peru, far from being an oppressor, was on the contrary, in the reign of Charles V—and still was in that of Philip II—the protector of the natives; it was the colonists whose greed did not hesitate to crush the Indian population. Though state intervention was destructive to the India trade, where it was only a question of buying and selling, it was beneficial in Mexico and Peru where, with the assistance of the Church, the king did his best to ensure respect for the persons and properties of the natives. Thus the first contacts made with the New World showed clearly the profound difference between the régime demanded by commercial activity, for whose development individual liberty would have been a necessity, and that demanded by land cultivation which, handed over to the sole authority of the colonists, at once became oppressive.

Until 1530 colonial trade developed spontaneously as a result of the exploitation of the country. As well as the *encomiendas*, on which vineyards were planted, industries came into being; the cultivation of the mulberry permitted the introduction of silk-weaving; an autonomous colonial economy was thus created in the new lands which the king, far from impeding, merely subjected to light taxes justified by the costs of administration.

About 1530 exploitation of the silver mines was organized by a system of concessions which required 20% of the production to be handed over to the state. It was not a question of state control but of the exploitation of a new country by private initiative under the control of the king. Trade developed rapidly; just before the mines were opened colonial imports amounted to 175,000 ducats.

After 1531 silver and gold began to flow into Spain in considerable quantities. The monopolistic policy won; the king, whose political enterprises required enormous resources, reserved the right to acquire all the produce of the mines, thus assuring himself the financial resources which he needed.

Thus, even if freedom of exploitation rapidly increased the production of precious metals, it could not prevent the king being the only person able to dispose of it. The results of this state monopoly were to be exactly the same in Spain as they had been in Portugal.

The influx of precious metals led to an immediate increase in the cost of living. Industry, stricken by the expulsion of the Moors and Jews, found itself unable to struggle against the importation of French, Flemish or Italian goods.

The monopolization of capital by the king, who used it to support his wars for hegemony, deprived the country of the benefits it might have

given industry. It is interesting to note that, though a great producer of gold and silver, Spain had no national banking system. It was the capitalists of Augsburg and Antwerp who controlled the Spanish silver market.

The precious metals, diverted from their commercial uses, were of no help in the development of the country; on the contrary, by increasing the luxury of the court, they drove the kingdom to a policy far too expensive for its resources, great as they were. By causing a rapid rise in the cost of living the gold and silver of Peru ruined Spain. Industry was unable to respond to the country's needs. The country was swamped by foreign imports and the trade balance showed a deficit. The increase in prices led to a social lack of balance. Spain which in the 15th century had had a mainly favourable trade balance began, at the end of the reign of Charles V, to suffocate under the gold and silver which came to her from America and from which she could not profit since the king, who reserved it for himself, deflected it from its economic role in order to devote it exclusively to political aims.

2. THE REPERCUSSIONS OF COLONIAL EXPANSION ON EUROPE

Shifting of the Main International Trade-routes

The creation of the Portuguese and Spanish colonial empires had very considerable consequences for world trade.

The first and most important of these was the shifting of the international trade-routes between Asia and Europe.

In the 11th century, at the time when the first Turkish invasions cut the route by the great Russian rivers, the Alexandria-Venice-Bruges route replaced that which until then had linked Byzantium by way of Kiev and the Baltic to England and Flanders. The consequences of this great turning-point in the economic history of Europe were incalculable. Byzantium, then at the height of its prosperity, began inevitably to decline. The great city civilization which had been developing in Russia was stricken to death. The West, which had been vegetating in isolation, was recalled to life.

Henceforward international trade was organized around two essential arteries, one continental—the silk route—which ran from the valley of the Hoang-Ho in China, by way of the cities of the Tarim basin to Persia, ended at the Syrian and Black Sea ports, the other maritime—the spice route—linked the Hindu ports, by the Red Sea, to Alexandria. From the Black Sea, Syria and Alexandria eastern trade reached Genoa and Venice.

From Genoa a trade-route was established to Provence, the Rhône and Languedoc where it touched the Garonne and, by way of Bordeaux, reached England.

From Venice, the trade-route went northward towards the Champagne Fairs and thence to Bruges and London.

At the same time, the Baltic ports, Germanized and cut off from Byzantium, looked westward and, centred on Luebeck, replaced Scandinavian shipping in the northern seas.

In the 13th century the devastation of Languedoc after the crusade against the Albigenses shifted the economic centre of the western Mediterranean to Barcelona. A new route was opened from the East to Spain, while the *reconquista* enabled Castile, by the occupation of the Biscayan ports and Cadiz, to reach the Atlantic. The attraction of the trade centres which were developing in Italy, in the Netherlands and in the Baltic, meant great prosperity for the mines of central Europe. The trade in metals, together with the spice trade centred at Venice and the cloth exported by Bruges to the Hansa ports, led to the opening of a new route, from Venice, by way of Augsburg and Nuremberg, to Luebeck, which still held all that remained of the Novgorod fur trade. The Danube thus became an important centre of activity with direct connections to Novgorod, Luebeck, Venice and Strasbourg.

In the 14th century the struggle for leadership which plunged France and England into a century of wars led to the Champagne route being abandoned for the Rhine and made the Venetian merchants who went to Bruges and London take to the sea-routes. The Atlantic Ocean reawakened Castile, the heir of Moorish industry, which became a great naval power, and Portugal too turned seaward. Influenced by the traffic on the seaways, Zeeland and England developed their merchant marine and won mastery of the northern seas from the Teutonic Hansa. But while in the north the Hansa was declining to the advantage of the Atlantic ports, Genoa was driven out of the Black Sea by the Ottoman conquests and Venice, which became the great Mediterranean power, was able, by monopolizing the access to the Syrian ports and Alexandria, to corner the silk and spice trades.

Technical progress made long voyages possible. The Genoese sought new outlets on the Atlantic coasts of Africa. The Portuguese sailors were close on their heels and in the closing years of the 15th century made themselves masters of the Indian Ocean, isolated the Red Sea and diverted the spice-route to Lisbon.

It was as great a revolution in world trade as that which took place at

the end of the 11th century after the abandonment of the Russian river-route. Venice, it is true, managed to retain her access to the continental silk-route, but she lost all contact with India by sea. Spices, henceforward, were sold five times more cheaply at Lisbon than at Venice, where they could only come by the more difficult and hazardous caravan routes.

The Castilians, setting out to search for a direct sea-route to China in order to seize the silk trade as the Portuguese had seized the spice trade, discovered America and conquered Mexico and Peru. In 1531 the first ships laden with silver reached Cadiz.

The Atlantic finally dethroned the Mediterranean, at the very time when the most powerful of the European dynasties, relying on the growth of capitalism, were warring amongst themselves for the possession of Italy and consequently leadership in the Mediterranean.

The opening of the Atlantic Ocean to European trade was to spread a network of sea-routes over the whole world. The spice-route, held by the Portuguese, began at Canton, passed through the Straits of Malacca, touched at the Indian ports, rounded Africa and, touching at Guinea, the Canary Islands and Madeira, reached Lisbon. The metal-route, over which the Spanish galleons sailed, left Peru, followed the Pacific coasts of South America, passed through the Straits of Magellan and ended at Cadiz. Finally another sea-route, whose importance increased continually, linked the Antilles and the Mexican coasts with Spain. The two ports on which the commerce of the oceans centred were Lisbon and Cadiz. Both were in close touch with Antwerp which, taking the place of Bruges, was to become the meeting-place of all the international trade-routes, whether by sea or land.

The Mediterranean still, however, remained important because the silk-route passed through it. This route, which began in China, passed through Central Asia, Persia and Nearer Asia, to centre on Constantinople, now the capital of the Ottoman Empire, where the Venetian galleys alone assured, at the beginning of the 16th century, its links with western Europe. But the growing power of France was already menacing Venice with the formidable competition of Marseilles which, aided by the alliance concluded between Francis I and the Porte (1536), was to take in Egypt and throughout the Levant the place of Venice, which had been dragged by the Holy Empire into the war against the Turks. Thus, alongside the ancient route which linked Venice and the Levant, whence it went onward to Bruges and London, a new route was opened, dominated by Marseilles.

In the north, England and Zeeland, favoured by their position on the

Atlantic, finally took the place of the Hansa. London became an important crossroads of sea-routes linking it to Antwerp, Rouen, Bordeaux and Venice. Bristol became the market for the Iceland fishers; Amsterdam held an important place in Baltic trade.

Searching for a north-east passage to China, the English 'merchant-adventurers' who were already established at Bergen in Norway founded a trading-post at Archangel (1553) which put London into direct contact with Moscow.

The Great Discoveries Lead to the Decline of Moslem Sea and Land Trade in Northern Africa

On the other hand the great discoveries, by establishing a sea-route directly linking Europe with the Atlantic coast of the Sahara and as far as the Sudan led to the decline of the great caravan routes of central Africa which had been established in the 4th century and which the Moslems had greatly developed in the 8th century. The date oases, which had been created in the desert and which had served as halts for the caravan traffic in gold and slaves, were to a large extent abandoned. The nomads who had lived from this trade flowed back into the Maghreb, destroying the budding agricultural and urban civilization there. The development of Christian shipping, which at once began to privateer against the Moslems, led to the ruin of the sea-borne trade of the Maghreb, whose main resource, henceforward, was to be piracy.

Thus the prosperity brought to the West by the great discoveries corresponded to a profound decline of the Moslem states of North Africa and of the continental trade activity of the Sahara regions. This set-back to Moslem trade in northern Africa is a historical fact of some importance. Naval supremacy henceforth belonged to the West.

The Sea-routes Dominate Trade

Faced with competition from the sea-routes, the continental trade-routes, including those of the Rhine and the Danube, diminished in importance. The Rhineland cities remained immobilized in their city trade, which was to keep them isolated from the great international commercial currents. The Danube held out longer. The mines of Bohemia and Styria were, in fact, in full exploitation during the 16th century. Capitalism, which took over their exploitation at the end of the 15th century, gave them an international role of premier importance. To compete with Spain, which had the silver of Peru at its disposal, France continued to increase her imports of silver from Styria. But already

Augsburg and Nuremberg, which competed with Genoa as centres of large-scale capitalism, had begun to be abandoned by international traffic. Their fate was linked with Venice. Augsburg which, through Venice, held the spice market for central Europe lost it to Antwerp. And already the capitalists of the Danube cities had begun emigrating to Antwerp and Portugal.

European trade was being increasingly carried by the sea-ways. All the most active nations of the continent looked to the sea, not only Spain and Portugal but also France, England and the Netherlands. In France the ports played, in the 16th century, a dominant role in the country's trade. Marseilles was the centre of the traffic with the Levant and Morocco, Bordeaux sent Guyenne wheat to England, and Rouen, with its port at Le Havre (completed in 1547), became the main export centre to England. The export trade also gave fresh life to Honfleur, Dieppe, Saint-Malo, Nantes and La Rochelle. Expeditions set out from the French and English ports to discover distant riches and reached Brazil, Florida and western Africa. Jacques Cartier, searching for a north-west passage for a new route to the spices of India and the silks of China, discovered Canada, and a little later Cavelier de la Salle founded the first French trading-posts on the Mississippi (1535–1541). In all the western ports, shipowners, profiting by the wars which involved all the European countries, undertook profitable privateering operations against the Spanish colonies.

It was above all in England that these 'ventures' took the form of great business enterprises. In 1564 John Hawkins, breaking the Portuguese and Spanish monopoly of ocean voyages, embarked a cargo of slaves in Guinea and took it to Mexico. The slave-trade, thenceforward, was to become a source of huge profits for the English. Queen Elizabeth herself did not disdain to invest in it and to place her ship, the *Jesus*, at the disposal of the traffickers in human flesh.

The scale of the slave-trade put an end to the work of civilization which the Portuguese had undertaken in the Congo. Hunted down by the slave-traders, the negroes kept away from the Europeans and Christianity. The Portuguese had to retreat to the coast and for three centuries the interior of central Africa was only to know Europe by its slave dealers.

Spain jealously kept to herself all access to the Pacific Ocean. Drake forced his way in, by making a voyage around the world between 1577 and 1580, not without plundering on his way the storehouses of precious metals in the Peruvian ports. Drawn by the lust for gain, the Dutch, then in revolt against Spain, in their turn undertook a corsair war against the Spanish coastal garrisons which, when they were able to catch them,

handed the Dutch sailors over as heretics to the bonfires of the Inquisition.

International Trade

The development of navigation and the inflow of precious metals which continually increased, whether by the regular routes or not, developed international exchanges to an enormous degree.

It is very difficult to understand what the movement of imports and exports meant in the 16th century. At the time of the great discoveries, Venice was the centre for Asian exports to Europe; they amounted to the enormous sum of ten million ducats.[1] Flanders and the mines of central Europe ranked, after Italy, as the main exporting regions.

The diversion of international traffic in the 16th century rapidly changed the economic balance of Europe. A French document, drawn up between 1550 and 1556 by an 'inspector of ports and roads', throws an interesting light on this period of transition.[2] It estimates the total of French imports at 36 million *livres tournois*.[3] Italy heads the list of countries exporting to France with silks and carpets worth twelve and a half million *livres*, colonial produce worth 400,000 *livres* and manufactured goods worth 700,000 *livres*. Germany was next with six million *livres* worth of metals, and furs—bought in Russia—to the value of a million *livres*; but manufactured goods only amounted to 200,000 *livres*. The Netherlands, whose economic role under the influence of Antwerp had become preponderant in Europe, sold to France goods valued at about three and a half millions, a figure roughly corresponding to half their total exports, which amounted to eight million *livres*. Spain sold silk to France valued at two million *livres*, colonial goods worth 500,000 and manufactured goods for 250,000 *livres*; but the Spanish trade balance was heavily in the red since, in order to balance her imports and exports, she was obliged to transfer three million *livres* to France in cash. As for Portugal, she sent colonial and agricultural products to France to a value of one million three hundred thousand *livres*.

England was dependent for her imports on France and Italy; to compensate for the deficit of her trade balance with these countries she carried on a profitable traffic in the northern seas, earned great profits on freights and on the produce of her lead and tin mines, whose exploitation had been

[1] In the 16th century a Venetian ducat weighed about 4 grammes of gold, that is to say 16 gold francs.

[2] Chamberland: '*Le commerce d'importation en France au milieu du 16e siècle*' in the '*Revue de Geographie*' 1892–1893.

[3] The *livre tournois* was worth about 1·75 silver grammes. For the sake of comparison it should be noted that in 1543 the property tax, the principal land tax of the kingdom, brought in 4·3 million *livres*.

actively pursued, but above all from the enormous profits which she gained from the slave-trade and from her privateering expeditions against the Spanish colonies.

According to these facts, it seems that the great exporting countries, in the middle of the 16th century, were Italy, Flanders, Danubian Germany, Spain and France. But whereas France and Flanders were to keep, and even improve, their positions by the end of the century, Germany, Italy and Spain were to see theirs decline. The mines of central Europe were soon unable to compete with the American mines and by the end of the 16th century they were to cease production almost entirely, involving in their ruin the great capitalists of Augsburg and Nuremberg. Spain was to give a mortal blow to her silk exports by burdening them, for fiscal reasons, with a 15% tax which in a few years led to their extinction. The French mercantilist policy, by encouraging silk-weaving within the country, greatly reduced French imports from Italy.

In the new economy of Europe Spain drew her wealth from her colonies, France from her industry, the Netherlands became the great centre of international trade and England built her prosperity on her fleet.

Capitalism and Economic Liberalism

Nowhere was there place for the mediaeval communes, whose activity was based on monopoly and a rigid corporative control. It was the new cities which attracted the great capitalist traffic, and among them Antwerp held pride of place. Unlike Bruges, Venice and London, Antwerp was a free port and business was carried on unhampered by the intermediary of the city brokers. Foreigners were as free to trade there as the citizens of Antwerp themselves. Thus business there rapidly became cosmopolitan: Englishmen, Germans, Spaniards, Portuguese, Italians and French met there. In 1531 the van der Beurs[1] family founded the first Bourse, a kind of permanent fair 'open to the merchants of all nations' as the inscription over the façade declared

Trade in Antwerp became both cosmopolitan and capitalist. The centre of finance moved there from Italy. The great capitalists of Augsburg, the Fuggers, who so largely influenced the policy of Charles V, came to live there. Ambrose Hochstetter tried to found there an international mercury trust (1528) which was, however, a sensational failure. In 1532 the king of Portugal, John III, entrusted the farming of the spice trade to the Nuremberg bankers who had set up business there. International prices were fixed at Antwerp. Great speculations were devised there. The free

[1] This Flemish name means 'of the Bourse' (of the purse).

exchange gave opportunity for arbitration operations which brought in profits of up to 20% in three weeks. Marine insurance which had reappeared in Italy in the 15th century and then in Portugal set up its headquarters in Antwerp in the 16th century. A trade in currencies appeared there, which involved speculative operations like the great Antwerp lottery (1565–1567) and betting shops. Inventors and business men made their appointments at Antwerp.

A similar economic liberalism created the prosperity of Holland and Zeeland whose shipping, by cornering the Baltic wheat trade, made Amsterdam, from the middle of the 16th century, the great international market for cereals from the north, even as Middelburg became the market for French wines.

In England, as at Antwerp, it was private capitalism which broke down the structure of mediaeval economy. Up to the 15th century commerce had been in the hands of foreigners, Italians, Flemings and Hanseatics. But shipbuilding, the rise of industry, mining and privateering led to the formation of an English capitalist class which soon was powerful enough to advance monies to the crown and upon whose initiative an Exchange, modelled on the Antwerp Bourse, was opened in London in 1571.

The inflow of precious metals, by increasing the circulation of money, automatically—save in Spain and Portugal where the system of state monopolies was in force—developed banking and finance. From 1540 Peru annually exported 300,000 kilograms of silver and quantities of gold whose value, between 1540 and 1594, increased from 400,000 to 670,000 ducats. Between 1520 and 1620 silver production increased fivefold; and capitalism which in the second half of the 15th century had been limited to a few great speculators, penetrated the whole of society. Banking, which had previously been carried on only by the Italians, became centred in Antwerp, penetrated into France and England, not only because of the greater and greater immigration of German capital into Antwerp and Italian capital into France, but also on the initiative of the nationals themselves. Goldsmiths, merchants, finance officials, all formed financial syndicates. In France they acquired such power that at the beginning of the 16th century they had a predominant influence on politics. The mayor of Tours, Semblançay, through his loans to the treasury, was made superintendent of finances. The ascendancy of this financial oligarchy became so great that Francis I began an open struggle against it, supported by the Commission of the Tour Carrée, created in 1527 to investigate frauds against the treasury. The same year Semblançay, unjustly however, was accused and hanged, and his goods confiscated by the state.

In the 16th century finance took control of business, even as the aristocracy of money, which it caused to appear, imposed its will on municipal authorities and the administration. Great fortunes were no longer made by merchants but by international financiers. The new industries created in the countryside, the textile industry of Flanders and the wool industry around Liège and in Yorkshire, were in the hands of capitalists. Printing and silk-weaving which appeared at Lyon, Nîmes, Montpellier and Paris were organized on a capitalist basis, like the metal mines in Bohemia, Styria and France.

The development of financial operations made an organization of credit necessary. In 1532 the University of Paris still condemned interest on loans. But the Church permitted it in the form of share partnerships. It was the kings who gave it legal recognition, Charles V by declaring interest on loans legitimate provided it was not more than 12% and Henry VIII by fixing the maximum rate at 10% (1545).

Credit became an essential not only for commerce but for politics.

From the 15th century public credit had been organized by the great Flemish cities—Bruges, Ghent—in the form of mortgage bonds. Francis I, in order to escape the demands of the tax-farming societies and the Lyon bankers, who lent to the state at 16%, introduced it into France in 1522, by issuing a loan for 250,000 *livres* at 10% guaranteed by the bonds of the Paris municipality and secured by the salt-tax and the excise. Henry II tried to centralize state credit operations by creating a Royal Bank, first at Lyon (1544), the great capitalist centre of France, and then at Paris (1548 and 1566). He failed. Loans had, however, become an essential factor in the financial organization of the kingdom. In 1555 Henry II issued a great loan, the *Grand Parti*, at Lyon to unify and regularize the public debt by an annual amortization of two million *livres*. Its success with the public was enormous; speculation in state bonds was so great that it ended in disaster. In 1585 the royal paper had lost a half of its value.[1]

Like the kings of France, Charles V and Philip II extensively practised the policy of loans from bankers, especially those of Augsburg and Genoa. But the resounding bankruptcies of the states, in France under Henry II (1559), in Spain under Philip II (1556, 1575 and 1596), made the capitalists wary about public credit. The bankruptcy of Spain led to a crisis so severe that it finally destroyed the prosperity of the Spanish fairs in which the Genoese bankers and the Fuggers had played a leading role.

Capitalism did not intervene only in industry and public finances; it even changed the régime of landed property. Mortgages appeared as a

[1] It was a phenomenon similar to Law's attempted 'system' in 1716.

means of utilizing the soil.[1] The constant increase in land values—it doubled in France between 1547 and 1554—caused speculation in land, which gave a considerable stimulus to agriculture. In Flanders the fallow lands were replaced by pasturages. In France the cultivation of silk-worms was introduced. In England, on the contrary, the usurpation of land by the capitalists involved in the wool trade had very serious effects on the social structure of the kingdom. In order to extend sheep-farming, they turned the pastures into grass-land and obtained from Parliament—where they were predominant—the right of buying and enclosing the commons; they thus deprived a large number of peasants of their means of existence and an agricultural proletariat was quickly created. The workless moved into the cities where the shipowners found amongst them crews for the fleets which they were building.

So great and so important a change in social conditions necessarily involved important social consequences. In England small-holding began to diminish. In France, on the other hand, it profited from the increased land-values, since the seigniorial ground-rents were based on a perpetual tenancy and did not increase at the same time as the yield.

The most direct cause of the social changes was the considerable increase in living costs which took place in the 16th century. Between 1462 and 1602 the purchasing power of money in France was reduced to a fifth of its value. The public authorities tried to stabilize prices by promulgating maximum price indices (in 1544, 1567 and 1577). They remained a dead letter because the causes were beyond anything which might be corrected by royal edict. In 1577 there was an attempt to peg money values. The abundance of silver had caused the relation of gold to silver to fall, between 1530 and 1594, from a ratio of 1:10·75 to 1:13·90. This naturally led to monetary fluctuations which reacted on prices. There was, therefore, a return to monometallism based on gold. But this was only a palliative. The real reason for the debasement of the money was the constant increase of minting.

The rise in prices combined with the fixed nature of the seigniorial ground-rents ruined the nobility. On the other hand, by making it impossible for urban industry, organized in the ancient guild structure, to compete with the rural industries which recruited cheap labour in the countryside, it led the rich burghers to retire from business; they put their wealth into land and formed a class of *rentiers* which soon intermingled with the petty nobility.

In the guilds, now restricted to the home markets of the cities, the

[1] As at Athens in the Vth century BC.

masters tried to maintain their position by limiting their numbers and closing the right of entry to the workers. Thus a merchant oligarchy was created on the one hand and a workers' proletariat on the other, whose conditions of life rapidly worsened. In 75 years the cost of living increased fourfold, while wages only rose from 30% to 50%; in practice that meant a two-thirds reduction. Hoping to stem the rise in prices the government intervened to impose maximum wage rates which none the less kept them at famine level. Strikes and riots resulted, some of them very serious such as those which broke out at Lyon in 1539 and in 1571.

In the rural industries economic freedom had similar results to the corporatism of the urban industries, though for quite different reasons. The workers, defenceless against the manufacturers, had to submit to the severest conditions. Their fate became, generally speaking, more and more miserable. Both in the cities and in the countryside they tried to defend themselves by forming workers' unions, but in all countries their members were immediately hunted down by the public authorities. In France the edict of Villers-Cotteret (1539) forbade workers' unions, at the same time trying—in vain—to oppose the monopoly set up by the masters.

As in ancient times, capitalism by concentrating wealth in a few hands destroyed the social balance and led to the formation of a poverty-stricken proletariat. The running sore of pauperism once again was the companion of capitalism.

This proletarization of the people was contemporary with an increase in the birth-rate, which made recruitment of labour easier and forced its price down. By 1550 France was the most populous country of Europe, having eighteen million inhabitants. Paris, the capital, had three hundred thousand souls, exceeding the 190,000 inhabitants of Venice. Antwerp had a hundred thousand inhabitants. The population of England increased to 4,200,000. Only Spain decreased, after the proscription of the Moors and Jews; at the end of the 16th century its population had fallen from eight to seven millions.

Population posed problems which it was impossible to overlook. Vagabondage and begging became public dangers. Plans for social reform appeared. The *Utopia* of Sir Thomas More recalled the *Republic* of Zeno, published in the IIIrd century BC in similar circumstances in Greece. It dreamt of a state where labour would be organized by legislation of communist type.

The result was the first state intervention. The 16th century, however, was not to know any real social legislation. The laws aimed only at

repressing as crimes, by corporal punishment or forced labour in a sort of labour-camp, the begging and vagabondage of the unemployed.

At the beginning of the 16th century, however, the Spaniard Vives, who was a professor at the University of Louvain, tried at Ypres in the Netherlands the first legislation for charitable works, by grouping all the charitable institutions into a single administration, creating 'visitors of the poor' and organizing help for children who were without resources.[1]

In England, from 1551 onward, laws were passed to make the poor work; a new ruling on apprenticeship was imposed by the state, which fixed its duration at seven years (1563); in imitation of what had been done in Belgium, controllers of the poor were appointed and a tax established to provide funds for the first social works, which included the institution of poor-houses for old and infirm persons, in preparation for the 'Act for the Relief of the Poor', which was to be passed in 1601.

Economic Intervention

The importance of foreign trade to the monarchical states led necessarily to their intervention in business. The circulation of money which it brought to the country, the customs dues, the formation of great capitalist fortunes and of banks which made it possible for the state to issue loans, made foreign trade an essential element of political centralization. Portugal and Spain had not hesitated to impose a monopoly of colonial trade. England and France, which had no colonies, sought to increase their exports by commercial treaties. At the end of the 15th century England signed trade agreements with Brittany, Castile, Portugal, Florence, Flanders and the Hanseatic League.

France continued to look towards the Mediterranean—her armies were fighting to conquer Italy—and did her utmost to seize the Levant trade from Venice for the benefit of Marseilles. In 1528 she signed a treaty with the Porte which opened to her Egypt and the Near East and which the capitulations of 1536, by establishing a formal alliance with the Ottoman Empire, transformed into a virtual monopoly, made more effective by the right of protection of the Catholics in the sultan's lands granted to the king of France. Having triumphed over the trade supremacy of Venice in the south, she turned northward to compete there with the Dutch and English, signing commercial treaties with Denmark (1541) and Sweden (1542), purchasers of wine and salt.

The policy of all the western states in the 16th century, therefore, was

[1] The 'visitors of the poor' still exist in Belgium.

to try to increase their trade outlets and to acquire, by trade and industry, the maximum of wealth. To attain this they took divergent paths. Spain and Portugal, who wanted to keep the profits of their colonies to themselves, adopted a policy of monopoly, that is to say economic state socialism. The Netherlands and England, which above all wanted to break into foreign markets with their trade and shipping, appealed to individual enterprise and economic liberalism. France competed with Italy through her new-formed industries and, in order to protect them, introduced a policy of controlled economy.

French Mercantilist Policy

Louis XI had already undertaken a policy of economic expansion by doing his best to create new industries in France and to favour exports. In the reign of Francis I mediaeval empiricism was replaced by a systematic policy. Law was inspired by rationalist principles, absolutism was based on a theory of power and economics became a science. This led to the mercantilist theory which aimed at enriching the kingdom by creating the greatest possible excess of exports over imports. It was therefore necessary to increase production for export and to reduce purchases from abroad. This theory was at the root of the treaties with the Levant (1536) and led to the construction of the port of Le Havre (1537) to increase trade with England; finally, in internal affairs, it led to the policy of controlled economy.

From the time of Charles VIII the state had tried to increase the value of the luxury industries. It was in fact the importation of silk, cloth and dress-materials which had drained the gold from the kingdom. It will be recalled that France spent twelve and a half million *livres* on silks and carpets from Italy, one and a half million *livres* for Flemish cloth, two million *livres* for silk weaves from Spain and two and a half million for colonial products on which Italian and Flemish middlemen made large commissions. Francis I did his best to reduce these imports, which represented more than a half of the purchases which France made abroad, by creating or developing on her soil silk, cloth and textile industries and by trying as far as possible to buy spices from the producing countries and granting privileges to inventors who introduced new processes into France. It was the beginning of the patent system. This policy of creating industries within the country was accompanied by a protectionism which was supported by public opinion. In 1539 the import of Spanish and Flemish cloth was forbidden; in 1540 gold and silver cloths and silks were burdened with a 5% import duty. The same year the import of spices

was limited to the producing countries: Spain, Portugal, Italy and the East. The duel began between Antwerp and the port of Le Havre which Francis I wished to take its place. But a serious error committed by the fiscal authorities was to turn to the profit of Antwerp; silks and luxury cloths in transit through France were burdened with a 2% duty. Antwerp opposed a policy of free trade to the protectionism of France. Transit trade avoided France and went to Antwerp.

Protectionism was increased during the second half of the 16th century. It took a new form by trying to reserve national produce for industry at the lowest prices. While the import of cloths, textiles and tapestries was subject to an import licence, the export of raw materials intended for their manufacture was, in principle, forbidden (1572). In order to prevent a rise in wages, the export of wheat, wine, wool and textiles was burdened with high duties (1577); and in 1581 an extensive reform of the customs subjected all manufactured articles to import duties. The States-General (1576, 1588), the Assemblies of Notables (1596) and the Paris merchants (1598) continued to demand protective tariffs and import restrictions. Only the city of Lyon which, like Antwerp, owed the prosperity of its fairs to liberalism, did its best, though in vain, to maintain the policy of the open door.

Concentration of Capital

Through all the divergencies of economic policy in the 16th century, state socialism in Spain, liberalism in the Netherlands and England, controlled economy in France, there can still be discerned an irresistible current which forced all the maritime countries to a concentration of capitalist forces. Very clear in Spain, where the state aimed at uniting all of them in its hands, perceptible also in France where the government, without wanting to take possession of the country's wealth, tried to increase it, it took place spontaneously at Antwerp, where capital flowed in from all the countries of the world and where the Bourse concentrated at a single point all the main speculators ready to extend their operations to all commercial, maritime and even public enterprises capable of making a profit. In England associations were formed[1] which, by bringing together isolated capital funds, made possible the first overseas enterprises which only the Spanish and Portuguese states had until then been able to undertake. In Italy, finance had become so important that Genoese bankers talked as equals with the kings of Spain. In France, financiers, officials,

[1] The first such associations aimed only at a specific enterprise. The Dutch were the first to form permanent companies.

goldsmiths and merchants formed financial associations which made a profession of lending large sums to the state. And above this social whirlpool, which everywhere tended to create fresh forces by the union of capital, a few great capitalists were the support of the most powerful monarchs; the policy of Charles V would have been impossible without the Fuggers, that of Francis I without the Medici or that of Elizabeth of England without the loans granted her by Sir Thomas Gresham.

While the sovereigns of Europe were building modern states by centralizing all power in their hands, large-scale capitalism was creating new forces. Absolutism and capitalism were to be the two poles around which were to be decided, in the 17th century, the destinies of the Western peoples.

CHAPTER XXXI

CONCENTRATION OF POWER

Enlightened Opinion Breaks With the Past

THE monarchic absolutism of the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th century in the western countries was a phenomenon parallel to the formation of capitalism. Like it, it represented the tendency towards concentration of forces at a moment when the whole world was opening to the expansion of the maritime peoples.

While the spread of capitalism gave rise to a rich burgher class, which took the form of an aristocracy of the purse, the diffusion of culture prepared by the humanism of the Renaissance created an aristocracy of the mind.

Both these classes broke with tradition by envisaging, with an astonishing freedom, the organization of the new world. Even as the capitalists, relying on the monarchies and giving them their support, built up a new economic system outside the existing structure, so too Macchiavelli, Erasmus, Thomas More, de Vittoria, Jean Bodin and, in his own way, Rabelais tried to rebuild society. They broke away from tradition and from the masses. In the 15th century a great parliamentary movement had grown up in all the western lands, but in the 16th century the intellectual élite, except for Jean Bodin, who conceived the monarchy in its parliamentary form, seemed to take no interest in it. They posed political questions in a philosophical form and in order to remake the world on new and liberal foundations they did not count on the States-General but on the monarchy.[1] They regarded kings as the instruments of a humane régime where class privileges would disappear and where tolerance would rule. Thomas More, in his *Utopia*, considered the absolute king as the elect of the people. The ideas of natural law, which had already emerged in the mystic aspirations of the Albigenses, the Lollards and the Hussites, found among the humanists a considered and conscious form. These ideas

[1] As Aristotle, at a similar period in the evolution of Greece, abandoned the idea of the city-state for that of the monarchy.

appeared not only with Erasmus and Thomas More in the social and moral field but also in law with Cujas, who created legal science, with Alciato, who inaugurated the history of law, and with Jean Bodin who found in law the source of a social philosophy by comparing the institutions of various peoples and various periods.

Absolutist Centralization Under Francis I and Henry II (1515–1559) Paves the Way to the Formation of Modern France

The French were incontestably the greatest jurists of the 16th century. The legal science of the theorists at once affected the practice of the government. The influence of the intellectuals on the policy of the monarchy is one of the most interesting characteristics of the 16th century.

Completely won over to the ideas of humanism, Francis I made his court a centre of civilization. He summoned Leonardo da Vinci and, after Leonardo's death, Primaticcio; he chose the son of a burgher, William Bude, who was both a Hellenist and the Provost of the Paris Merchants, to be his secretary. Bude, supported by Marguerite of Navarre—the king's sister—founded 'for men' the *Collège de France* where the freedom of thought and tolerance of Erasmus' humanism was taught in opposition to the scholastic instruction of the Sorbonne.

While making himself the champion of triumphant individualism, the king finally broke down the mediaeval barriers which had divided society into classes and the kingdom into principalities; he standardized law and centralized government institutions. Once again individualism was accompanied by an irresistible trend towards civic equality, of which the centralized monarchy was the instrument. It was shown especially in France by the emancipation of women who, under the influence of the mother of Francis I, Louise of Savoy, were presented at court and made their mark in letters with the charming poetess, Louise Labbé, wife of a Lyon burgher. Women began to exercise an influence on social and intellectual life which was to continue to grow.

The unification of the kingdom necessitated a re-casting of the customary laws. Their editing, which had been carried out under Charles VIII and Louis XII, had made them seem both archaic and heterogeneous. Systematic legislation and codification of law was therefore undertaken which culminated, in 1539, in the Great Ordinance of Villers-Cotteret, published by the chancellor, Poyet. It finally abolished ecclesiastical jurisdiction in civil affairs, instituted registers entrusted to parish priests, and reformed and standardized procedure for the whole kingdom, inspired by the wish to ensure not only security but equity. Individualism,

which had triumphed in the intellectual and economic fields, was affirmed as the essential principle of law.

At the same time the kingdom was given a uniform judicial organization. In the former jurisdictions, a lieutenant assisted by notables formed the court of first instance (1522); above them were the *presidials*, created in 1552, courts made up of a president and nine counsellors, entrusted with hearing appeals from cases submitted to the lieutenants and as a court of first instance in more important cases. Finally there were the *parlements*, whose number was increased to twelve, which became courts of appeal from the *presidials*. The Great Council, which crowned the edifice, acted as a supreme court, entrusted with assuring uniformity of jurisdiction and with the settlement of legal disputes.

It is true that extraordinary courts still existed, survivals of the various laws of the Middle Ages; the Board of Excise, the manor courts for water and forest rights and in 1584 the Admiral of France still held the rights of justice in marine affairs. But all these were directly dependent on the state. In the courts there were royal procurators, assisted by deputies, who defended the interests of the state and acted as public prosecutors. Thus, in the midst of the inextricable complications of mediaeval customary law, the rational decisions of the monarchy were developed. The judicial system established by Francis I and Henry II, only slightly reformed by Louis XIV, was to be adopted by Napoleon. Modern law had taken shape.

There had to be a national law to correspond to this standardized judicial procedure. In this field, because of her feudal origins, France was far less advanced than England, where the royal statutes had, since the 13th century, given the country a uniform legislation. The publication in 1580 of the revised Customs of Paris enabled France to recover the ground lost. It was the greatest work of codification undertaken in the West since the fall of the Roman Empire. The Customs of Paris, as a supplementary law, replaced Roman law. It was the first French legal code. Inspired by the labours of Charles Dumoulin (1539), whose work served as a basis for the *Traité des obligations*, which Pothier was to publish in the 18th century and which the editors of the Civil Code followed almost blindly, the Customs of Paris directly foreshadowed the Code of 1804.

As well as legal procedure, the government was reorganized. In 1545 the former principalities were entrusted to governors, shortly to be assisted by royal commissioners who, in the form of intendents, became the predecessors of the Prefects of the Republic.

The provincial Estates continued to meet, but they too lost their character as political bodies, since the provinces no longer possessed separate sovereignties, and were transformed into administrative councils.

In the provinces the former autonomy of the cities had begun to disappear in the 15th century, since liberty, now extended to the countryside, took from the city laws the exceptional character which they had possessed at the time of the seigniorial régime. The cities had kept their republican organization only in the less progressive countries, for example Germany, where they had continued to form little islands of liberty in the midst of an enslaved countryside. In France the judicial reforms by taking their local courts away from the cities had integrated them with the common law. Only the cities of the Midi which possessed, like the Netherlands cities, autonomous governments preserved—although losing their exceptional courts—their councils elected in two stages by universal suffrage and their Assemblies of Notables.

Finally the country districts, after the breakdown of the seigniorial régime, were organized in parishes; the modern communes were created.

Thenceforward the former feudal-seigniorial organization was totally abolished and replaced by a co-ordinated system headed by the monarchy. Built up progressively above the feudal institutions, the royal government had retained the former principalities in the form of provinces. The administration of the finances, totally reorganized in the 16th century, had become independent of them and had given the country an entirely new structure. In 1542 the kingdom was divided into sixteen financial circumscriptions, which number was later increased to thirty-five, the treasury 'generalities', which were to become the origin of the *départements*. The King in Council distributed the taxes among the 'generalities'; in each the finance office shared them out among the parishes according to the number of 'hearths', that is to say households. From 1523 the State Savings Bank under the Treasurer-General presided over the control of the finances and paid all the state expenses. The Court of the Louvre, created in 1522, was entrusted with auditing the accounts and the activities of the finance officers. It was the origin of the Audit Office.

Thus all the former functions, previously held by the nobles or by privileged groups, passed to the king who exercised them through officials. These agents had obviously to be paid. The social restraint which was thus eliminated was therefore replaced by financial obligation. That was why between 1517 and 1543 the taxes rose from 2·4 to 4·6 million

livres, and in 1588 reached a total of eighteen million *livres*[1] without being enough to satisfy the needs of the treasury.

If the monarchy was able to build up the framework upon which it was later to base its absolutist policy, it was thanks to capitalism which made it possible to borrow the resources which it did not want to have to beg from the States-General.

This authoritarian policy, which created modern France, was the work of the royal government solidly constructed in the reign of Francis I. But by concentrating all power in his hands, the king became separated from the nation and to sustain his power he surrounded himself with luxury and pomp. The court, which till then had been very modest, grew to an enormous size and absorbed a great part of the state revenues. The government was transformed into a vast organization presided over by ministers. It was presided over by the chancellor, assisted by 'secretaries of state' who, under Charles IX, were given control of the finances, the interior, war and foreign affairs (from 1570 to 1589). The Council of Ministers was created. It was henceforward to be composed entirely of new men, chosen from the burghers and the petty nobility. The ancient nobility of the sword was finally excluded from the control of affairs.

No power could hope to exist without a permanent military force to support it. Under Francis I the ancient feudal military service still existed. The king extended it from forty days to three months and introduced payment for the vassals who were called up. The military service—*d'ost*—due by the vassal to his suzerain was transformed into direct obligation to the king, which affected the petty nobility. The conception of 'military service' was created, which Louis XIV was to extend to the parishes, and the Revolution to all France.

Besides this little army raised for three months, the king recruited mercenaries and, in 1534, laid the foundation of a permanent national army made up of career soldiers by creating seven legions of infantry of six thousand men each; they were to become regiments under Henry II, divided into companies under the command of gentlemen-captains.

Thus armed, Francis I began a policy aimed at absolutism, and had his chancellor, Duprat, president of the Paris *parlement*, put forward the theory that all power belonged to the king.

[1] The reduction in the value of money must be taken into account. In 1346 the gold *écu*, which weighed about 4·25 grammes, was worth one *livre*; under Francis I the gold *écu* weighed not more than 3·5 grammes and was worth two *livres tournois*; in 1602, the date on which accounting in *écus* was abolished and replaced by the *livre*, the *écu* was worth three *livres* five sous; in 1630 the value of the *livre* was again reduced; four *livres* were needed for a gold *écu*, and in 1667 the *livre* was to be worth one gold franc (0·987 grammes).

The concordat concluded in 1516 with the Holy See was an application of this theory; it granted the king the right to appoint bishops and abbots throughout the kingdom.

The absolutist policy of the king encountered only one opposition, that of the Paris *parlement*. It had accepted the civil reforms but, staunchly loyal to the mediaeval tradition of the supremacy of the spiritual over the temporal power, it refused to register the concordat regarding it as contrary to the freedom of the Church. The king, over-riding its prerogatives, summoned the counsellors to his court and ordered them to ratify it or be thrown into prison. They gave way. In 1525 a fresh conflict arose; the chancellor Duprat had himself appointed archbishop of Sens and abbot of St Benoît-sur-Loire in order to lay his hands on the stipends of these livings; the *parlement* protested against these abuses, which were a consequence of the authoritarian policy. This time the king limited himself to having the acts of the *parlement* annulled by his Great Council. The opposition was broken.

Francis I did not summon the States-General again. He replaced it by an Assembly of Notables whom he chose personally. The national sovereignty which Philippe Pot had claimed for the States-General (1484) was purely and simply confiscated by the king.

Thus the independence of the Church and the *parlement* disappeared, together with the right of the States-General to exercise control. Absolute monarchy, sharing its power with no aristocracy and no oligarchy, was in the saddle.

Relieved of all responsibility, it took the line of least resistance. The expenses of the court, payable by the state, rose to one and a half million *écus*, a sum equivalent—in 1543—to the total tax yield of the entire kingdom! Lack of a States-General assured complete freedom for taxation; taxes were soon levied on all basic necessities; 5% on the sale of livestock, fish, cloth and wood and up to 25% on drinks. Furthermore, from 1560 onward, in order to meet the constant deficit caused by the religious wars, the king created, for sale, privileged functions paid for by special taxes; commercial agencies, banking rights and licensed salesmen, weighmen and inspectors. He created, in fact, a whole class of parasites who heavily burdened the economic life of the country but who helped the treasury, between 1560 and 1575, to amass twenty million *livres*.

Thus while the central authority was organizing the state, lack of control ruined its work by permitting it to become involved in ever-growing taxation and crushing the people with indirect taxes, pretexts

for countless abuses which brought corruption to the very steps of the throne.

Absolutism in England Under Henry VIII

The absolutist tendency already introduced into England by Henry VII, which had triumphed in France under Francis I, was confirmed by his son, Henry VIII (1509–1547). But it was opposed by a parliamentary régime already firmly established. The policy of Henry VII had created a strong current of opposition throughout the country. In order to calm public opinion, Henry VIII sacrificed his father's ministers, whose open corruption had aroused universal censure, to parliament. He allowed them to be sentenced and beheaded. But he resumed, with great resolution, his own authoritarian policy.

He did not, like the king of France, have to centralize the country's institutions, since they were already centralized. Throughout England the sheriffs ruled the counties in the king's name, and justice was in the hands of the Justices of the Peace.

But two great powers opposed him; parliament and the Church.

Like Francis I, Henry VIII entrusted the government of the country to the son of a burgher, Wolsey, a humanist and a clever lawyer and diplomat. He carried out an absolutist and democratic policy, making himself, according to the ideas of Sir Thomas More, a king's man and a friend of the people and the poor and an adherent of new ideas. Soon after Bude created the *Collège de France*, Wolsey founded Cardinal College at Oxford on the model of the College of the Three Languages at Louvain; he finally broke down the opposition of the higher nobility and relied upon parliament to impose his authority over the Church.

Though supported by parliament in his struggle against the nobility, which had alienated the middle classes by its excesses during the Wars of the Roses, he came into conflict with it because of the financial exigencies demanded by the luxury of the court. The largest sum which parliament had ever been asked to vote had been eight hundred thousand pounds sterling;[1] Henry VIII tried to obtain one million six hundred thousand pounds. Parliament refused and greatly reduced the amount. Wolsey, relying on the absolutist theory which allowed the king to dispose freely of the goods of his subjects, tried to claim this sum directly from all property-holders, in the form of a free gift of one sixth of their possessions. There was such resistance that the king was forced to give way. Unable

[1] From the reign of Edward I (1272) to that of Henry VII the pound sterling had remained constant at the weight of 2·5 grammes of silver.

to triumph over parliament, Henry VIII decided to try to make use of it. Ferdinand of Aragon had gained immense wealth for himself by persecuting the Moors and Jews and confiscating their goods. Henry VIII, prevented by parliamentary opposition from arbitrarily imposing his demands on the country, undertook, with the help of parliament, to lay hands on the wealth of the Church.

In England, as indeed everywhere else, the Church was in the throes of a serious internal crisis, due to the fact that the temporal authorities had taken possession of the highest church offices. The monasteries were only too often the scene of disorderly conduct. Henry VIII invoked the necessity of reforming church discipline to obtain from the Pope the suppression of the smaller monasteries. It was only a first step. In order to retain the support of public opinion for his policy, he applied their properties, which he confiscated, to the foundation of colleges (1524).

Unfortunately Wolsey, like the chancellor Duprat in France, himself gave an example of the most scandalous abuse by accumulating the income of three bishoprics. But this did not prevent the Pope from appointing him Papal Legate in England. The chancellor thus became the chief of the Church. The temporal power imposed its will on the spiritual power.

Thus, in England as in France and Spain, the absolutist policy was accompanied by an open thirst for enjoyment. Those in power accumulated wealth. In imitation of the king, who employed the resources of the state to support a luxurious court—which the 'parliamentary' kings had not done—his collaborators rifled the treasury. The king, who saw in that a sure guarantee of their devotion to his cause, let them do it.

Francis I had forced the Pope to accept the concordat of 1516. Henry VIII too aimed at subjecting the Church to his authority. The conflict between the Pope and the king broke out, not on the subject of his rights of administration of the goods of the clergy, but on the occasion of the divorce which Henry VIII wanted pronounced against his wife, Catherine of Aragon, who had not born him a son. The queen was the aunt of Charles V; the Pope refused. Wolsey, who had failed in his negotiations with the Holy See, was replaced as head of the government by Thomas Cromwell, a convinced adherent of royal absolutism and who was firmly resolved to make the Church a tool of monarchical policy. By a series of bills which he obtained from parliament, he subjected all ecclesiastical legislation to royal approval (1532) and suppressed appeals to the Pope against the decisions of the Archiepiscopal Court at Canterbury. In 1534 a law forbade the collection of Peter's pence in England and, breaking with the Pope, it conferred on the king the title of Supreme

Head of the Church in England. By taking the place of the Pope, the king reserved for himself the right of appeal against the decisions of the archbishop's court. Parliament, out of hostility to Papal authority to which it had been opposed since the pro-French policy of the Avignon Popes, handed the Church over to the monarchy. It was to make use of it to destroy the parliamentary régime.

The schism which tore the Church of England from Rome did not take place without resistance. Thomas More was beheaded for his opposition.

Henry VIII, now master of the Church, sold the properties of the monasteries for the benefit of the crown; he distributed a part of them to the nobility in an attempt to gain its support against any counter-action which the Roman Church might undertake.

In Spain monarchic absolutism had made use of the Church to confiscate the goods of the infidels. In England it relied on parliament to despoil the Church. In France, freed from the financial intervention of the States-General, it inaugurated a régime of fiscal abuses. Everywhere the trend was similar, to strengthen by every possible means the royal authority and to assure the king the resources necessary for his authoritarian policy.

The Policy of Centralization and the End of the 'Communes' in the Netherlands

The same policy of centralization was carried out in the Netherlands, where Charles V, continuing the works of the dukes of Burgundy, ended by giving the country the organs of a central government, represented by three councils, the Privy Council, the Council of Finances and the Council of State. Going further than Francis I—who was perhaps inspired by his reforms—he divided the country into four financial districts, dependent on the Audit Offices of Lille, Brussels, The Hague and Guelder (1531), thus destroying the former autonomy of the provinces. It was a remarkable thing, however, that he did not touch the privileges of the States-General, created in 1463, whose members, elected by the Estates of the different principalities, continued to vote the taxes. Like England, the Netherlands[1] adapted parliamentary liberties to the centralized institutions which had been formed spontaneously in the 14th century. Economic liberalism was accompanied by political liberty.

A great legislative effort was made, contemporary with what was being done in France, to codify customary law. Monarchical centralization introduced the era of 'written law'.

The new conception of the centralized state was quite naturally to arouse the opposition of the mediaeval tradition perpetuated in the

[1] It will be recalled that they united present-day Belgium and Holland.

independence of the great Flemish communes. They were two irreconcilable worlds. In contrast to Charles V, who represented political centralization, economic liberty, capitalism, the trend towards civic equality, the end of privileges and the emancipation of the countryside, the communes defended urban autonomy, the economic policy of monopolies, corporatism based on social intervention and communal privileges.

The prosperity of Antwerp, a new city founded on the principles of free trade and absolute business freedom, contrasted with the serious crisis in Bruges and Ghent, both faithful to the ideas of the past and hoping to recover their former leadership by restoring the economic and political institutions which, in the days of urban economy, had been the cause of their greatness.[1] The crisis ended with the revolt of Ghent (1539), his native city, against Charles V. The conflict was fierce. But the times when city militias had triumphed over Frederic II and Philip the Fair were over. The communes no longer had either financial resources or military forces comparable with those of the sovereigns. Ghent surrendered and, amid universal indifference, the mediaeval communes lost, together with their privileges, the dominant position which they claimed within the country. The sovereign henceforth appointed the ruling mayors, until then elected by the people. The régime of the communes came to an end. The political status of the entire country was standardized under the rule of the prince. The political struggle which ended in Flanders was not a struggle between the liberal peoples of the cities against the tyranny of the monarch; it was the final episode of the conflict between the urban economy and the international expansion of capitalism.

End of the Spanish 'Communes'

A precisely similar struggle broke out in Spain between the communes and the king. In Spain, as in Flanders, the cities had played a leading role in the economic and political development of the various kingdoms. At the time of the accession of Charles V the *cortes* included only the representatives of the cities, to the exclusion of the nobles and clergy. The clash was already imminent between the centralizing policy of Ferdinand of Aragon and the independence of the cities which, masters of the *cortes*, wished to continue to represent the legal authority in the kingdom and to form little states within the state. When Charles, still quite young, a foreigner and surrounded by Flemish counsellors, wanted to take possession

[1] It was a political reaction similar to that of Athens which, in the IVth century BC tried to find in a policy of nationalism the political greatness it had lost just because its exclusiveness no longer corresponded to international capitalist expansion.

of the Spanish kingdoms his first contact with the *cortes* was to demand from them the enormous sums necessary to carry out his imperialist policy. The two trends at once clashed, the one, cosmopolitan and capitalist, which the policy of maritime expansion and dynastic imperialism carried on by the kings of Aragon since the 13th century had continually strengthened, and of which Charles V, although a Fleming, was the culmination; and the other, born of mediaeval economy, which had caused the flourishing of rich, autonomous and free middle classes in the midst of the closed class-system of feudalism. No more in Spain than in Flanders could Charles V avoid the conflict with the communes, since neither he nor they was responsible for it. Both, without being aware of it, were the visible instruments of forces which were driving the world irresistibly onward. The revolt of the fifteen principal cities of Castile which, led by Toledo, formed the Holy Junta was liberal and nationalist in its aims. It declared its opposition to the holding of government appointments by foreigners, to the export of Spanish currency, to the reform of customary laws and privileges and to the levying of fresh taxes (1520). In actual fact what roused the communes against the king was the resistance which they, like Bruges and Ghent, thought they were able to make against the concentration of political forces and capitalist power which threatened their proud independence and the wealth which they had till then possessed; they failed because they were not big enough to halt an evolution that depended neither on them nor on the king but which, created by the stimulus of the very cities it was now to engulf, let loose a force which could no longer be restrained. Even as the liberalism of Antwerp triumphed in the Netherlands over the protectionism of Bruges, so in Spain the ancient ports of Catalonia, whose privileges had formerly been the basis of their prosperity, had to cede their primacy to Seville and Cadiz, the seats of the royal monopolies.

End of the 'Communes' in Italy

It was the same in the Italian possessions of Charles V. The Italian communes had begun to decline since the 15th century; one after the other they had passed into the rule of quasi-monarchical régimes. Only Florence had retained the semblance of an independent republic. Charles V, intervening as emperor, in 1530, restored the government to the Medici, the greatest bankers of the city, upon whom he conferred the title of Dukes of Florence.[1] The liberty of the Italian cities was over. Milan

[1] Even as the leading financiers replaced the dukes in the duchy of Athens at the end of the 14th century.

and Florence were to become the capitals of little monarchies whose princes, under the suzerainty of Spain, were to carry on absolutist policies, modelled on those of the great states.

Thus Italy was only to know the authoritarian aspect of monarchy without profiting by the advantages which the concentration of power had brought to the great Western states. The Italian states kept their particularism but, by stifling it under a barren authority, the little despots who were to govern them deprived them of that prodigious energy which they had known in the heyday of their republican autonomy.

Only the Most Serene Republic of Venice, which had already replaced its representative institutions by the government of an oligarchy of capitalists, maintained, at the dawn of the monarchical era, an independence basically founded on a mediaeval economy since, mistress of a maritime empire, she had been the first to achieve a concentration of capital which made her the equal of the most powerful monarchies.

The disappearance of the autonomy of the Italian, Flemish and Spanish cities is a historical event of major significance. They had dominated international trade up till the 15th century. Their fall marks the end of an epoch in European history. Politics and trade had become so widespread that they required a concentration of forces which far exceeded their resources. The era of great imperialist ambitions and vast colonial and financial enterprises was beginning.

CHAPTER XXXII

CHARLES V TRIES TO ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL EMPIRE

Economic and Territorial Imperialism Join Forces

WHILE the Western states were developing a concentration of political powers and capitalist forces which led them towards a maritime and economic expansion based on monarchic absolutism, the states of central Europe had been involved in a policy of territorial concentration. It had ended, by the close of the 15th century, by making the Hapsburgs the most powerful princes of the Holy Empire. Even as the kings of Portugal and Castile had set out for the conquest of the oceans, and as France and Aragon were engaged in a final duel for the mastery of the Mediterranean, the dukes of Austria, titular holders of the imperial crown, were asserting their will to rule the entire universe.

Thus two great imperialist currents developed in Europe, one economic and maritime, the other territorial. They were united by the concentration of the inheritances of Burgundy, Aragon-Castile and the Hapsburgs in a single man—Charles V.

The maritime imperialist policy of Aragon-Castile had succeeded in uniting in a single person the crowns of Spain, of Naples and of the Netherlands. The continental imperialist policy of the Hapsburgs tended to create a hereditary monarchy out of their Austrian duchies, Bohemia, Hungary and the whole Holy Empire.

The two policies were basically different. That of Aragon was dominated by economic preoccupations; that of the Hapsburgs aimed only at the acquisition of lands. The first relied upon the capitalist class, the second could not have been undertaken without the support of the large landowners who, in Bohemia and Hungary, disposed of the elective crowns.

Up to the reign of Charles V each of these imperialisms had been conditioned by the social structure and the financial resources of the Netherlands, Spain and Italy, urban and monarchic, or of central Europe,

landholding and seigniorial. The whole balance of Europe was dependent on the clear distinction of the spheres of interest of these imperialisms, limited to countries of similar economic and social structure.

Their union in the hands of Charles V put an end to this.

Since the tragic end of the Hohenstaufen, the Germanic Holy Empire had been no more than a feudal aggregate without political cohesion and without financial or even military power. In the hands of Charles V, who controlled the immense resources of the Netherlands, Spain and Italy, the empire could take life again and become a reality which, relying on the wealth of the maritime countries and the manpower of central Europe, was an invincible force.

International Capitalism and the Imperial Crown

At the end of the wars in Italy, in the same year as Charles V ascended the throne of Spain (1516), France was at the height of her power. Having achieved her unity by incorporating Brittany, France had seized Milan from the Holy Empire and thus prevented the creation of an Italian state on her eastern frontier. Furthermore, through his mother, Louise of Savoy, Francis had hopes of uniting the duchy with France.

To this great monarchy, in the full tide of economic prosperity, the best governed and most populous of the Western states, the emergence of an immense empire stretching from Hungary and the Baltic to the North Sea and as far as Spain, encircling France on all sides, both by sea and land, seemed a mortal danger. To prevent its taking shape Francis I reverted to the ambitions of Louis XII, and in order to prevent its seizure by the Hapsburgs put up his own candidate for the imperial crown in opposition to Charles V. Henry VIII of England at once put forward his own claim. The great Western monarchies all entered the lists in order to win, by an invigorated imperial dignity, the right to pose as the arbiter of Christendom. By comparison with these claims, the candidature of the Elector of Saxony, who represented the feudal tradition, passed unnoticed.

The electors did not hesitate to put the crown openly up for auction. After that, there were only two possible candidates, Charles and Francis. The fate of the empire was not, therefore, to be decided by force of arms. Banking replaced weapons. A financial struggle began. Francis I, financed by the Medici, poured out gold. Charles was supported by the unlimited credit of the Fuggers, the great Augsburg capitalists, whose immense fortune made in the Styrian mines dominated the Antwerp money market. The Fuggers issued to the electors bills of exchange payable after the

election. At the same time Charles concentrated an army of a quarter of a million men near Frankfurt, where the Electoral College was in session.

The Fuggers won. Charles was elected (1519). For the first time finance decided the fate of Europe.

Charles V Aims at Universal Empire

Frederic III and Maximilian of Hapsburg had formed the vast plan of imposing their rule over the world by grouping Europe around their Austrian duchies.

With Charles V the idea of the empire changed form. Its centre was no longer Austria; it moved seaward. It was at Antwerp, in Spain, in Italy and was to extend to America. Europe was no longer sufficient for the ambition of the young emperor. To the proud motto of Frederic III—*Austriae est imperare orbi universo*—he added his own—*plus oultre*. In 1519, the year when Charles became emperor, Cortez conquered Mexico. In twenty years the whole Pacific coast, Central America and North America were to be incorporated into the Spanish Empire.

While the New World was passing under his rule, the dynastic policy, shrewdly prepared for by Maximilian, was bearing fruit in central Europe. A few years after his success with the Spanish marriages, the Emperor Maximilian had negotiated for his grandchildren—the brother and the sisters of the future Charles V—a number of dynastic unions. Coveting Denmark, which controlled the Baltic straits, he gave, in 1514, his granddaughter Isabella of Burgundy to King Christian II, who was then allied with the Netherlands, while he negotiated with Vladislas, king of Hungary and Bohemia, the double marriage of Louis and Anne of Hungary with Marguerite and Ferdinand of Hapsburg.

On the death of Vladislas, Louis II succeeded him in the two kingdoms (1516). At the time when Charles was being invested with the imperial crown, the sultan, Soliman II, was preparing a new expedition against the Danubian lands. In 1521 he took Belgrade. Louis II entered the lists. He was killed at the battle of Mohács (1526), which delivered a large part of Hungary to the Ottomans. This terrible defeat of Christendom was, for the Hapsburgs, the keystone of their policy. By causing the death of Louis II, Soliman made certain that the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia went to Ferdinand of Austria.[1] Austria-Hungary was created in the form it was to retain until 1918.

Throughout the Catholic world, only France, England, Portugal, the Scandinavian countries and Poland were not subject to the authority of

[1] These crowns, which were still elective, became from then onward hereditary in fact.

the emperor. Charles, pursuing his family policy with inflexible determination, prepared for their incorporation into the empire by dynastic marriages. In 1525 he married his sister to King John of Portugal (1521–1557), whose sister Isabella he himself married. This double marriage was to bring Philip II in 1580 not only the Portuguese crown but also Brazil and the colonial empire of India.

Only the two monarchies of France and England were still able to hinder the great design of universal empire. Charles, unable to destroy them by force of arms, did not despair of gaining them by dynastic policy; in 1530, after the Peace of Cambrai (1529), he gave his sister Eleanor in marriage to Francis I, thus tying the bond which Philip II was to strengthen by marrying Elizabeth of France, and which was to serve as justification for the disastrous dynastic war against Henry IV. At the end of his reign, attempting to realize the great plan of uniting the Spanish and English sea-powers, he must have thought that he had triumphed when he succeeded in obtaining Mary Tudor as wife for his son Philip immediately after she had ascended the English throne (1553).[1]

Thus not a single country throughout the Catholic world escaped the network of dynastic unions upon which Charles V, continuing the policy of the Houses of Hapsburg and Aragon-Castile, tried to create the most extensive empire that had ever been known.

Lack of Unity in the Empire of Charles V

But the empire of Charles V was made up of two elements between which no possible union, either social or political, existed. The inheritances of Burgundy, of Aragon-Castile, the Netherlands, Spain and Italy included the wealthiest and most progressive states of the West; they were in the full tide of maritime and capitalist expansion. The patrimonial duchies of the Hapsburgs and Germany, however, had retained a landowning and seigniorial character which, in mid-16th century, preserved intact, in the centre of Europe, a political, economic and social organization in many ways less advanced than that of the West in the 12th century.

While the Western states had developed rapidly in the form of centralized monarchies, the kingdom of Germany, ever since the War of the Investitures had broken its episcopal structure, had fallen into a political decomposition which had been at its worst in mid-15th century. The Reichstag, which Otto I had organized as an assembly of imperial officials, had become, since the feudalization of the empire in the 12th century,

[1] He took up once more the dynastic policy which had begun with the marriage of Henry VIII with Catherine of Aragon.

a feudal diet whose sole effective role was to seek, though in vain, to have observed throughout the kingdom the Truce of God which Bishop Henry of Liège had proclaimed there in 1081. In the 13th century the cities had laid the foundations of a new force. They had freed themselves from the control of the feudal lords, had formed leagues which Frederic II had recognized legally in 1225 and their representatives had thenceforth been allowed to take their seats in the Reichstag assemblies. But the Reichstag had only a theoretical existence. At best it sometimes acted as a feudal court. From 1356 the prince-electors, officially recognized in the exercise of a power which they had arrogated to themselves, had taken from it the most important of its prerogatives, that of appointing the emperor. Thenceforth the kings of Germany were forced to ensure public security by concluding contracts with the local diets, where the princes of a particular region met at the royal summons. The Emperor Wenceslas of Luxembourg, at the time when his family was giving Bohemia a strong monarchical constitution, had invited princes and cities to conclude alliances to ensure the public peace (1376–1389). But his appeal could find no response in a Germany which was disintegrating more and more. The introduction of the feudal principle in the 12th century had split the former duchies even more, so that they were now reduced to a dust-cloud of tiny semi-sovereign states; there were now more than seven hundred of them in each of the duchies of Franconia and Swabia!

In the 14th century, however, there was a reaction against this feudal disintegration. In 1356 an Imperial Bull had proclaimed the indivisibility of the electorates and in the course of the 14th and 15th centuries the less important princes had almost all admitted the indivisibility of their territories.

The triumph of the Hapsburg dynasty marked a revival of imperial policy. Frederic III, who had wanted to enforce his paltry power over the whole world, had undertaken a monarchical policy in Germany. He had reorganized the Reichstag which, now divided into three Colleges, the electors, the princes and the cities, had been promoted to become the Supreme Court of the Empire (1489). At the same time he had attempted to re-group the countless German princes by uniting them in leagues. But since he had not sufficient force to assert his superiority, he had succeeded only in Swabia, where the House of Hapsburg held its patrimonial estates.

With Maximilian (1493–1519) the imperial policy took a new path. His marriage with Mary of Burgundy brought to the House of Hapsburg the considerable resources of the Netherlands. The emperor suddenly

ceased to be merely a feudal sovereign and became a powerful monarch able, thanks to the funds at his disposal, to levy troops and enforce his will.

Reliant on the West and influenced by it, Maximilian had at once embarked on a monarchical policy in Germany.

In 1495 he organized an annual assembly to maintain the peace in his German kingdom. By 1500 this had become the Imperial Commission of Nuremberg, made up of one representative of the emperor and twenty from the states. To assure its operation he divided the empire into six circumscriptions more or less coinciding with the ancient duchies: Franconia, Bavaria, Swabia, Saxony, the Rhine and Westphalia; in 1512 four new ones were added: Austria, Upper Saxony, the Electorate of the Rhine and Burgundy, that is to say the Netherlands, which had in fact been separated from the empire since the 13th century and which Maximilian wished to reintegrate, in order to make them the foundation of his power.

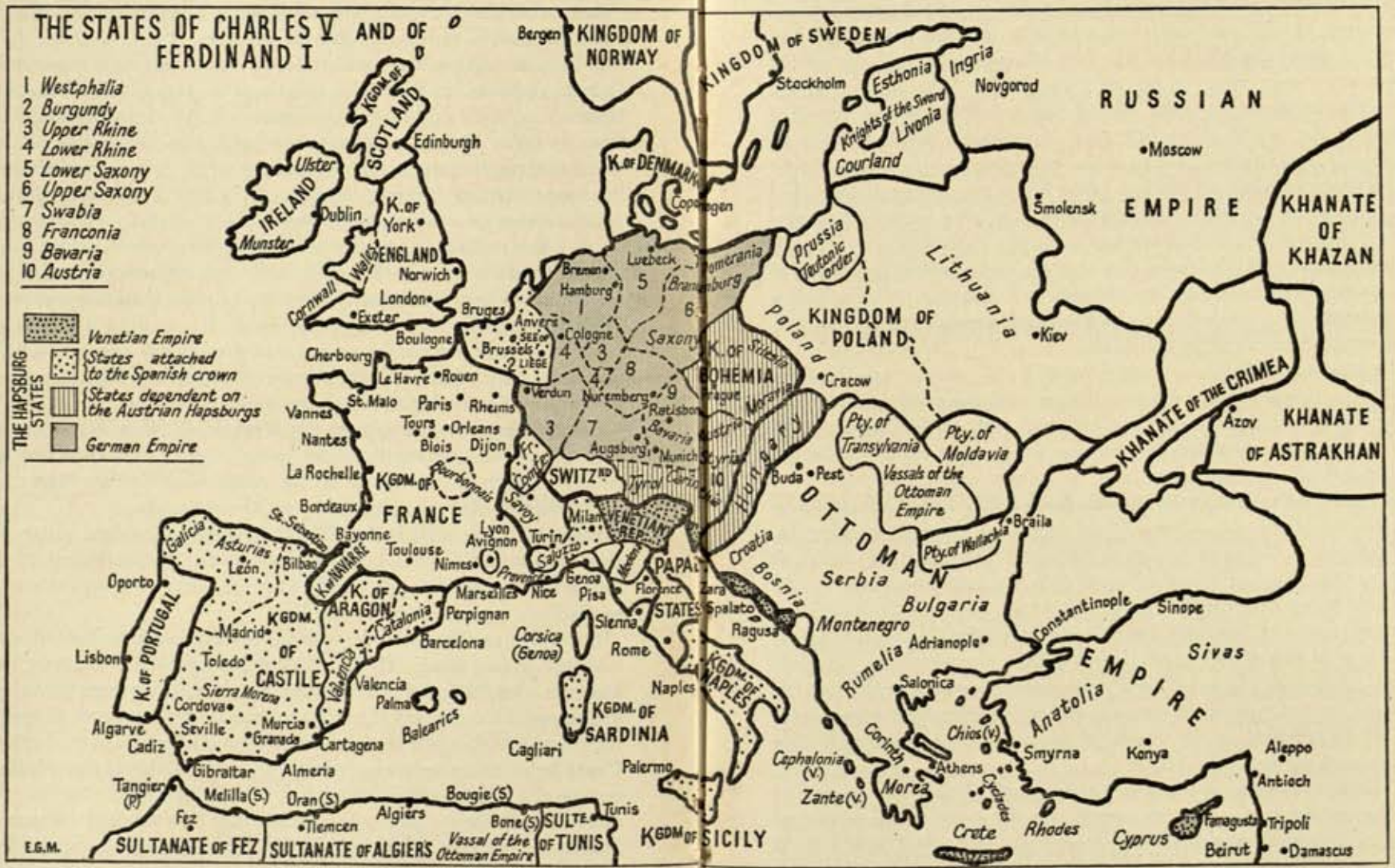
In each circumscription an assembly of princes was to meet to act as a court of justice and to fix the troop contingents and the taxes due to the emperor by the seigneurs and the cities.

Above these circumscriptions, the Electoral College was entrusted with the task of administering the empire during the absence of the emperor, under the viceroyalty of the count-palatine of the Rhine and of the Marshal of the Empire, then the duke of Saxony.

From his accession Charles V had wanted to introduce, above this rudimentary judicial and political framework, the authority of the monarchy, by legislating through edicts designed to give the empire standardized principles of criminal law.

But it did not take him long to find out that Maximilian's reforms had remained a dead letter. The circumscription assemblies had only been formed in Swabia and Franconia, and nowhere had it been possible to impose on the multitude of sovereign princes the obligation to furnish the emperor with regular supplies of troops or money. As to the Supreme Court, into which the Reichstag had been transformed in 1489, it had not become the instrument of a unified monarchical policy, which was indeed impossible to carry out, but a tool in the hands of the princes against the autonomy of the cities and the petty nobility. The first outlines of the centralization of power appeared not in the empire but in the feudal principalities which, in the semblance of petty monarchies, tended more and more to detach themselves from the emperor and to become so many sovereign states.

Map No. 30


THE STATES OF CHARLES V AND OF FERDINAND I
1 Westphalia
2 Burgundy
3 Upper Rhine
4 Lower Rhine
5 Lower Saxony
6 Upper Saxony
7 Swabia
8 Franconia
9 Bavaria
10 Austria
Venetian Empire
States attached to the Spanish crown
States dependent on the Austrian Hapsburgs
German Empire
THE HAPSBURG STATES
KINGDOM OF NORWAY
KINGDOM OF SWEDEN
RUSSIAN EMPIRE
KINGDOM OF POLAND
KHANATE OF KHAZAN
KHANATE OF THE CRIMEA
KHANATE OF ASTRAKHAN
OTTOMAN EMPIRE
KINGDOM OF SCOTLAND
IRELAND
ENGLAND
KINGDOM OF FRANCE
KINGDOM OF ARAGON
KINGDOM OF CASTILE
KINGDOM OF PORTUGAL
KINGDOM OF SARDINIA
KINGDOM OF NAPLES
KINGDOM OF SICILY
PAPAL STATES
VENETIAN REP.
SWITZERLAND
BOHEMIA
Hungary
Saxony
Lithuania
Prussia
Courland
Livonia
Esthonia
Ingria
Wallachia
Moldavia
Transylvania
Serbia
Bulgaria
Montenegro
Rumelia
Anatolia
Sivas
Crete
Rhodes
Cyprus
SULTANATE OF FEZ
SULTANATE OF ALGIERS
SULTE. OF TUNIS
Vassal of the Ottoman Empire
E.G.M.

By comparison with the Western monarchies, central Europe remained a feudal chaos.

In such conditions there could be no question of Charles V adopting a similar policy for all his states. He was forced to adapt himself to local conditions. He did not even try to achieve an imperial unity which had shown itself impossible. That was why his internal policy was far less constructive than those of Francis I and Henry VIII. Though in the Netherlands, where he really seemed like a national prince, he could continue the work of centralization commenced by the dukes of Burgundy, in Spain the country remained throughout his reign a mosaic of autonomous states, Castile and Leon, Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia and Majorca, which kept their own institutions, their own finances, their own economies and their own governments. Under the clumsy scaffolding of economic state socialism imposed on it by Hapsburg policy, Spain retained its mediaeval structure, like an archaism incompatible with the policy of universal trade and leadership which its sovereigns were carrying out.

A similar fractioning existed in Italy.

The empire of Charles V was not, therefore, an immense state. It united under a common dynasty a group of kingdoms, principalities, cities and *seigneuries* at various stages of development, with varied languages and customs and, consequently, institutions so diverse that any cohesion amongst them was impossible.

Isolated above all his states, Charles V was not to become absorbed by the interests of any one of them. Both by birth and upbringing a Fleming, brought up in Belgium, he was, as much in Spain and Italy as in his Austrian duchies, a foreigner. Circumstances forced upon him a rigid dynastic policy which made him a type of monarch completely different from Francis I or Henry VIII. United with their peoples by long tradition, the kings of France and England only existed in connection with their states. Charles, on the other hand, who owed his power only to matrimonial alliances, was not the head of a state but of a family. For that reason his power appeared, in the middle of the 16th century, as a monstrous excrescence of the feudal system.

Transported to the Western monarchies and adapted to monarchical absolutism, the feudal principle, which was the origin of the empire of Charles V, was to give birth to a conception of dynastic power based upon a family, independent of peoples and above them.

The Focal Point of the Empire Shifts Seawards

With the advent of Charles V, who united in his person the wealthiest

countries of the West with the backward regions of central Europe, it was not the Hapsburgs of Austria, it was not even the emperor, who extended their power over Spain and the Netherlands, it was Spain and the Netherlands who extended their rule over the empire. It was not the continent which was united around central Europe; it was the sea which exercised its irresistible attraction as far as the confines of the Ottoman Empire and the kingdom of Poland.

In the new political complex which was being formed, it was the Netherlands, then the focal point of international capitalist economy, which acted as a hinge between the maritime states of Charles and his continental possessions. This role was the more natural in that Charles, educated in Belgium, knew neither Spanish nor German; he spoke French and knew Flemish, his counsellors were Flemings and Walloons, his favourite residence was Brussels and the centre of his financial power was Antwerp.

There could be no question of restoring the Germanic Holy Empire. Mediaeval times, born of the continental isolation of Europe, were over. It was the call of the sea that began modern times. It was on the sea that Charles was to found the greatness of his empire which extended far beyond Europe over America and the oceans. It was a state no longer European but universal upon which 'the sun never set'.

In this modern state the feudal lands of central Europe played only a secondary role. Its real power rested on the wealth of Spain, Italy and the Netherlands. But this wealth came from the sea, from the colonies, from international trade; it was not so much dynastic union as the sea which was to be the cement of unity and the foundation of imperial power. The union of these countries favoured their economic prosperity, made Antwerp the greatest port of the world and centralized capital there. It was the power of the capitalists that had gained the imperial crown for Charles. The empire was to cast in its lot with the capitalists. But even as he had no political principles, the emperor also had no economic policy. Liberal at Antwerp, he was to practise the most rigid monopolism when it was a question of laying hands on the precious metals of Peru. He aimed to support his plans of universal hegemony by centralizing in his own hands, by whatever means, the maximum of resources. Charles did not hesitate to introduce into Antwerp, then the most liberal city in the world, the racist ideas of Spain and to confiscate the considerable reserves of capital held there by the Portuguese Jews in order to fill his treasury drained by the wars. For Charles V, more than for any other sovereign, the reality of power was linked to capitalism which alone enabled him to

concentrate his immense resources at any given moment at any point of his immense empire.

But capitalism depends on trade. The policy of political hegemony could only be achieved by economic hegemony, which in turn depended on the control of the seas. The empire to be universal must therefore be, as formerly the Roman Empire had been, a maritime empire.

That was why, as soon as he had been proclaimed emperor, Charles claimed the return to the empire of all the Lotharingian lands which had formerly been a part of it and which were vital arteries of European trade; the kingdom of Arles, that is to say the Rhône valley, the Dauphiné, Provence with Marseilles, the gateway of France to the Mediterranean, and northern Italy.

Firmly installed on the Atlantic, where he held the main ports, Antwerp and Cadiz, he wanted to assure universal hegemony by adding the mastery of the Mediterranean to that of the oceans. But two new powers also laid claim to it; in the West, France, which had been battling in Italy for thirty years, and in the East the Ottoman Empire which made the Mediterranean an instrument for territorial conquest.

This was the outline of the great dream which was to dominate the life of the emperor; to drive France out of Provence and Italy and to destroy the naval power of Turkey.

But France, encircled by the states of the emperor, could not, without committing suicide, lose her access to the sea. Her reply could only be war. As for the Ottoman Empire, it countered Charles V's plans for a maritime empire with its own vast ambitions for a continental empire. The fight between them, between the sea and the land, was to be implacable.

Quite naturally the two enemies of Charles V, whose interests did not clash, since French interests were on the sea and those of the Porte were on the continent, were to form a close alliance, at first economic (1528) and then political (1536). The alliance of the Catholic king of France and the Moslem sultan was to do away with the last vestige of the European unity which the Middle Ages had based upon the oecumenical character of Christianity. Undermined from within, it was torn to pieces, at the same time and for the same underlying causes, in the great drama of the Reformation.

The Imperialism of Charles V Looses a European Conflagration

At first the imperialism of Charles V seemed merely to be a renewal of the conflict between France and Spain for Mediterranean leadership,

which had been going on, on French initiative, since the reign of Charles VIII.

In 1520 France was the most powerful of the European monarchies. Her population was as large as those of Spain, the Netherlands and England together. Charles, before engaging in a war which he must have considered would be decisive, tried to revive the traditional friendship which united England, Spain and the Netherlands.

But England, thinking only of her maritime expansion, feared to see established in the Mediterranean a supremacy which would have given, either to France or to Spain, a position which would inevitably have been harmful to her. Henry VIII, therefore, desired peace. He did all that he could to mediate. In 1520 he visited Francis I, who received him with extraordinary sumptuousness at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and met Charles V at Gravelines who, on the contrary, received him with the greatest simplicity. Francis had calculated badly. His luxury aroused fears of his power; and the war became inevitable. Henry VIII, in order to safeguard the maritime interests of England, was forced to join one side or the other. He reverted to tradition and concluded an alliance with Charles, to whom he was in any case more closely related.

Of the two imperialist powers, it was France which seemed to him the more to be feared. As often happens in politics, Henry VIII judged the new situation by out-of-date criteria.

But while Charles V, relying on the alliance of Henry VIII, was rallying all the maritime powers in a coalition against France, Soliman II was preparing a great military expedition against the continental countries of central Europe. The two wars broke out simultaneously.

France was forced to be on the defensive on all fronts, by land and sea, on the frontier of the Netherlands, in Provence, in Navarre, in Italy. Faced with this supreme danger, the last of the great French vassals, the Constable of Bourbon, commander-in-chief of the French armies, saw the last chance to destroy the monarchical policy which would inevitably submerge his fief. He betrayed his king—and with him France, whose fate was in the balance—went over to the enemy's side and led the imperial armies to the assault on Marseilles.

Francis, save for his own resources, had only one ally, his Swiss mercenaries. Their rout at Pavia in 1525, when Francis himself fell into the hands of his adversary, put an end to the war. To ransom his freedom, he was obliged to sign the Treaty of Madrid (1526), by which he renounced the duchy of Milan and all suzerainty over Flanders and Artois and ceded Tournai and Burgundy.

But if Charles V represented dynastic interests, France was a nation. She did not accept her partition. The States of Burgundy, declaring proudly that they alone could dispose of their own destinies, refused to recognize the cession of their country, and the Paris *parlement*, invoking the 'fundamental law of the kingdom', confirmed their decision.

The same year as Francis signed the Treaty of Madrid, Soliman II destroyed at Mohács the army of Louis II of Hungary, who perished on the battlefield (1526). The anarchic rule which the seigniorial régime imposed upon Hungary plunged the country into civil war. The nobility was divided between the party which defended the principle of an elective monarchy and the party which supported the 'family pact' of the Hapsburgs. Ferdinand, the brother of Charles V, invoking the rights he held by his marriage to Anne of Hungary, invaded the country and having been recognized as the successor of Louis II obtained the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia.

Both wars ended in the triumph of the Hapsburgs; but if, in the West, this triumph was accompanied by the defeat of France, in the East it was merely a consequence of the Ottoman victory.

The disaster at Pavia delivered Europe into the hands of Charles V. Henry VIII was for a moment tempted to profit by it and seize Normandy. But wiser councils prevailed over this momentary advantage. A weakened France, even for an England enriched by her spoils, meant that the prosperity of England would be handed over to the tutelage of Charles V. Henry VIII, rather than take a share of the plunder, made a decision which doubtless involved grave risks but which alone could have assured the full independence of England; he offered the vanquished Francis I the alliance which he had refused the magnificent monarch of the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

Pope Clement VII, for his part, renewing the gesture of Innocent III against Frederic II and of Leo X against Ferdinand of Aragon, also sided with Francis I to prevent Charles V from achieving Italian unity under his rule, the only remaining exceptions to which were the States of the Church and the Republic of Venice.

The war was to show Europe that imperialism had changed sides. Even as Europe had rallied against Louis XII and against Francis I to halt their policies of hegemony, so now it turned against Charles V to prevent him achieving the universal sovereignty at which he aimed.

Charles V, however, had no intention of losing the advantages of his triumph. His armies took the field again; in 1527 his bands, levied in Germany, plundered Rome and in 1529 he forced upon the Pope the

Treaty of Barcelona which placed all Italy under his protectorate.

Charles should now have been able to turn all his forces against France, weakly supported by England which lacked large land forces.

The Turkish offensive which in 1529 approached Vienna stopped him.

To fight on two fronts seemed to him impossible. Faced with the menace of the Turks he wanted to restore peace in Europe and to unite it in a Holy War against the Moslem invasion. He therefore signed the Peace of Cambrai (1529) with Francis I, by which he restored Burgundy. It was not possible for a divided Europe to defend itself against the Turks, and Charles V, like a great statesman, understood that no final peace was possible without the adhesion of France.

Split in the Empire

It is possible that the emperor, instead of signing the Peace of Cambrai, might have triumphed over his enemies had his empire not been continually split on its internal front. In the Western countries his monarchical policy roused the cities against him, which rose, like the ghosts of the past, to defend their outmoded economic and political systems; but he had on his side the capitalists, who favoured imperialism since it opened immense possibilities to them, and the intellectual élite, hostile to privileges. In the empire, on the other hand, where no new force had appeared to oppose those of the past, his centralizing tendencies encountered universal opposition, not only from the feudatories, opposed in principle to the monarchical policy, but even from the learned men of humanistic culture; for Wain, Chelius and many lesser men, far from turning like their masters Erasmus and Thomas More towards the new perspectives, placed themselves at the service of the feudal ideal. Charles V had the great political sense to realize that the weakness of his empire lay in the fact that it was composed of two completely dissimilar parts; one—Spain, Italy, the Netherlands—maritime, urban, socially advanced and dominated by economic interests, the other—the empire—continental, feudal and dominated by the interests of the great landlords. The colonial development of Spain, due to the conquests of Hernando Cortez in Mexico (1519–1527) made this duality still more evident.

In the political field the duality was even more marked. In his patrimonial states of Austria, the traditional policy of his family aimed entirely at the conquest of the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary, to unite them in one huge land state. No link existed between this policy and the policy of his western possessions, looking towards the sea and economic expansion.

It soon appeared that it was impossible to carry out two such contradictory policies. From 1522, acknowledging the inescapable duality which divided his empire into two groups of states without common ties, he ceded his patrimonial duchies in central Europe to his brother Ferdinand, keeping for himself, together with the imperial title, the maritime countries and the colonies.

The empire, thenceforward, was divided. In central Europe Ferdinand, without heeding the wars which his brother was waging in the West, followed the dynastic policy which in 1526 had brought him the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary; while Charles V, continuing the maritime tradition of Aragon, made himself master of northern Italy, tried—in vain—to drive France back from the Mediterranean, conquered Mexico and undertook the conquest of Peru.

The colonial expansion of Spain far from drawing the countries of central Europe, where the Danubian cities had none the less acquired very great wealth, into the Western economic sphere kept them apart from it. The diversion of the spice market from Venice to Lisbon had dealt a serious blow to Augsburg, which was aggravated by the discovery of the Peruvian silver mines. In face of this competition, the mines of Saxony and Bohemia gradually lost their importance. The capital funds of Augsburg and Nuremberg moved to Antwerp; and the Turks, cutting off all contacts with the East by way of the Danube, helped to isolate southern Germany.

So while the West, turning away from its continual contacts, moved more and more seaward, the continent became more and more cut off within its landowning organization.

The Peace of Cambrai (1529), by finally confirming the partition of the Hapsburg empire, was a decisive date in the history of Europe. It changed its traditional structure, to re-form it into two distinct worlds, the one turned to the sea, the other exclusively continental. The Netherlands and Milan, for centuries linked with the Holy Empire, were torn from it and attached to Spain, whose policy aimed at maritime hegemony. The Holy Empire thus lost, even theoretically, its universal character and was restricted to the continent; while the Western monarchies, breaking the bonds hitherto imposed on them by the sea, expanded outside the limits of the continent and set out on the conquest of the world.

The tradition that Germany was the political centre of Europe which had existed for centuries was broken.

Certainly Charles V asserted more than ever the universal character of the empire, but he detached it from the continent to base it on the ocean, as formerly Frederic II had dreamed of restoring it around the

Mediterranean. He realized the dream which had haunted for three centuries the Hohenstaufen, the Angevins, the House of Aragon and finally Charles VIII.

Even though it was regarded as universal, the Holy Empire—as formerly the Roman Empire—was divided into two monarchies, the one maritime, the other continental. Under the twofold attraction of the sea and the land it split apart, following the boundary, traced out by differing economic and social development, which already marked the separation between the countries emancipated by the Renaissance and those to whom it had remained alien.

In the West the empire was to become involved in great wars for naval supremacy, in which capitalist forces were to play a decisive role; in central Europe it was to arouse the reaction of feudalism against absolutism, of mediaeval religious fervour against rationalism, of manorial economy against capitalism.

At the time when Francis I and Charles V were signing the Treaty of Cambrai to bring peace to Europe, it was already irremediably involved in the greatest crisis it had ever known since the fall of the Roman Empire which, by tearing Christendom into hostile creeds, was to make it lose the last element of unity which it still possessed—religious unity.

BOOK VIII

Europe Split Between the Call of the Sea and the Continent

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE REFORMATION

I. THE CHURCH CRISIS

THE great crises of the 14th century, the formation of the Western monarchies, the emancipation of thought and the economic transformation of the world by capitalism at the end of the 15th century all had great repercussions on the Church. The universal power of the Pope and the unity of Christendom, as the Middle Ages had known them, were dead by the beginning of the 16th century. After the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, Pius II had called in vain on the Christian world for a crusade. His voice was lost in the universal indifference.

The Pope himself had, moreover, abandoned his claims to supremacy over the temporal power and had become an Italian prince. Adrian VI of Utrecht (1521–1523), elected Pope through the influence of Charles V who would have liked to see the universal power of the Pope restored as a parallel to the universal power of the emperor, was the last 'European' Pope. From the end of the 15th century the Pope was more and more dominated by Italian politics. His role as sovereign of the States of the Church overshadowed his role as leader of Christendom. Alexander VI Borgia (1492–1503), Julius II della Rovere (1503–1513) and Leo X Medici (1513–1521) were, above all, Roman princes. During their pontificates Renaissance Rome became the centre of marvellous art, but licence was open and widespread. Rome was gorged with the wealth which Christendom poured into its coffers. The Popes played the role of Maecenas amid stupendous luxury. Nepotism and unrest flourished. The Holy See became the fief of the great Italian families; under Julius II at the Lateran Council of 1512 almost all the prelates were Italian.The greater number of these princes of the Church displayed an unheard-of luxury, thanks to which Rome owes the magnificent palaces built there in the 16th century.[1]

[1] In 1555, during the wars of religion, Blaise de Montluc tried to make his fortune by kidnapping a young Roman lord and demanding as ransom a sum equivalent to his annual income, that is to say eight thousand *écus*.

Popes and cardinals openly flaunted their mistresses in Rome, where the number of courtesans rose to six thousand eight hundred.

The slackness of morals and the decay of discipline which was most strikingly displayed at Rome existed, however, throughout Christendom. Since the kings and princes had freed themselves from Roman control, they flaunted almost freely the dignities and emoluments of the Church. In Germany, where the Church had owned one third of the lands, the bishoprics and monasteries were exploited by the princely families. 'Great and small,' wrote the duke of Saxony, 'all of us strive to obtain the episcopal dignities for our children, our brothers and our friends.' It was the same in France and in England where the prelates and even parish priests frequently did not reside in their dioceses or parishes but were represented there by clerks of lower orders. The archbishops, bishops and abbots, who often received holy orders only at the time of their appointment, were courtiers or military men. During the Italian wars, the general staff of Louis XII included three cardinals, two archbishops and five bishops.

In such conditions, the religious orders lost almost all their influence. Only the Dominicans, who had been entrusted with the conduct of the Inquisition, remained active. But the Inquisition, since the repression of the heresies of the Albigenses, the Lollards and the Hussites, was somnolent. Lacking heresies, the inquisitors had taken to investigating demonology. In 1487 two Dominicans published at Strasbourg the *Malleus maleficorum*, a treatise on the misdeeds of sorcerers. Magic thus found its way even into the Church, as astrology and the occult returned to favour even with kings. Encouraged by the repression, the contagious folly of the belief in sorcerers was to become a social scourge. The 17th century especially was struck by it. Up to the French Revolution the fires were constantly lighted to burn poor old women who were accused of dealings with the devil.

Faith, none the less, remained as alive as ever, especially among the people, where great moral reserves still existed. But the people no longer had faith in the clergy. Ever since the time of St Thomas, the Church, in order to defend itself against the heresies born of mystical piety, had done its best to interpose its mediation between God and man. But the decadence of the clergy alienated the most pious among the faithful. The democratic crisis of the 14th and 15th centuries had displayed, in England with Wycliffe and the Lollards, in Bohemia with Jan Huss and in Florence under Savonarola, not only a deeply mystical character but also a revolutionary fervour which wanted, in religious worship as well

as in social life, to return to the simplicity and purity of the gospels and to establish direct contact between God and men, all of whom were equal before Him.

In the second half of the 15th century printing made possible a wide diffusion of the Bible and the gospels which the great mass of the people did not know. Between 1457 and 1517 more than four hundred editions of the Bible were published. Printing spread the education which had been encouraged by paper-making. The whole world began to read and write. The nobility, which since the time of Charlemagne had remained almost entirely illiterate, the middle classes and even the mass of the people acquired a taste for culture. In 1500 a book-fair was held at Frankfurt.

Furthermore this popular religious fervour found support for its religious and social aspirations among the intellectuals. Erasmus, Reuchlin, Thomas More and Lefèvre d'Etaples were all supporters of a purified Christianity, simplified in dogma and in liturgy.

These tendencies, fed by the growing influence of Erasmus, penetrated to all classes. Tolerance, intellectual liberalism and reform became the fashion, even in the Roman court itself.

2. THE RELIGIOUS AND MEDIAEVAL REACTION OF LUTHER

Luther

Just at this time an Augustine monk, Luther, born in 1483, the son of a miner from Eisleben, was teaching at the University of Wittenberg, recently founded by the Elector of Saxony (1502). Unlike Reuchlin who, in 1510, had aroused the opposition of the Dominicans by demanding the right of interpreting the Scriptures and studying the Hebrew text of the Bible—it will be recalled that Pope Julius II had decided the controversy in his favour—Luther was filled with the mystical fervour which was then vigorous among the people. While still a child, he had shared the hopes of the miners who were caught up in the widespread social agitation prevalent in all the more progressive parts of Germany, on the Rhine, in the Upper Danube region, in Bohemia and in the mining districts of Saxony, and which was quite foreign to humanist ideas and deeply influenced by mediaeval religious beliefs.

A deeply religious man, Luther had been effected only by the religious and evangelical aspects of the movement and not at all by its human and social aspects, of which he was suspicious. The reason preached by the humanists seemed to him 'the Devil's bride'. Haunted by the terror of divine justice and of the devil, so much feared at that time by the Dom-

inicans, whom he felt prowling about him, he adhered passionately to the words of St Paul's Epistle to the Romans which says that the just man is saved by faith. He felt that the degeneration of human nature was inevitable and that faith alone ensures salvation; man must therefore abandon himself to God without seeking to penetrate the mystery of His will. To the intellectual liberalism of the humanists Luther contrasted the utter negation of free will, even as to the economic liberalism of capitalism he intransigently contrasted the Thomis theory of fair price and the prohibition of interest-bearing loans.

Religious fervour was for him associated with the structure of feudal society, which had been so deeply influenced by it. However, the return to the spirit of the gospels which he demanded was at first to gain him the sympathy of the humanists.

Sent to Rome in 1511, Luther may well have returned disturbed by the luxury and disorder of the Holy See. Pope Julius II had just decided to build the Basilica of St Peter. To obtain the necessary funds, Leo X in 1515 announced special indulgences and the Dominicans were entrusted with their distribution, while the Fuggers, the great Augsburg bankers, obtained the rights of collection in Germany against a fair commission. The distribution of the indulgences thus became a commercial operation. Certificates were sold at the tellers' windows in the banks. In 1517 Luther made a public protest against their sale and opposed the whole principle of indulgences. The Pope summoned him to Rome; but the Emperor Maximilian, who claimed sovereignty over the Church in Germany, arranged that he should be interrogated at the Diet of the Empire. He appeared at Augsburg in 1518, but refused to retract, and the Diet, carried away by his oratory, protested against the exactions of the Papal treasury.

The quarrel rapidly became envenomed. In 1519 Luther declared that he was in essential agreement with Jan Huss, to whom the Czech people had remained faithful and whose influence and social aspirations had remained strong among the miners of Saxony. He thus declared himself to be not the disciple of the Erasmian humanists but the successor of the Hussites; like them, he rose against the universal power of the Pope and mingled his faith with nationalist ideas.

In 1520 he rejected the infallibility of the Councils. Pope Leo X replied by condemning his theses. The conflict had begun.

The Manifesto to the Nobles and the Nobles' War

While this was going on, Germany was being threatened by two social crises. The serfs were involved in a great liberation movement.

In 1490 peasant revolts broke out in Alsace and in Württemberg; the *Bundschuh* (1493–1512)—the League of the Shoe—united them in continual hostility to their seigneurs. It was a German replica—a century later—of the insurrections of Wat Tyler in England and the French *jacquerie*, and was directly linked with the Hussite insurrections in Bohemia. Meanwhile, corresponding to the social ferment of the people against the seigneurs, there was a crisis among the petty nobility, threatened by the aspirations of the serfs and the monarchical policy of the princes and supported by the clergy, whose highest dignitaries were recruited from the great feudal families.

The crisis in Germany was the culmination of an evolution which had lasted for several centuries. To understand it fully one must go back to the very origins of German civilization. When Charlemagne incorporated the German tribes into the Frankish Empire, he had superimposed upon them a twofold structure, religious and political, modelled on Gallic practice. Otto I, by entrusting temporal government to the bishops, had to some extent integrated the Holy Empire with the Church, which brought with it its conceptions of universalism and of individualist morality. But behind this façade the German people had gone on evolving according to its own traditions, that is to say within the narrow limits of rigidly circumscribed tribes which entirely subordinated the individual to the group which was regarded as a social, political and religious unit.

Whereas in the West political institutions and social structure developed side by side on a common basis and had emerged spontaneously, in Germany the evolution of the ruling classes, recruited to a large extent from the former Roman provinces, took place on a plane entirely separate from that of the masses. Up to the 12th century they had lived under Gallo-Roman institutions, that is to say Roman law[1] and Canon law. It was precisely that which had given European civilization a universal aspect during the Middle Ages.

Although the German élite acquired Western culture, the people having no contact with it remained attached to the unity of the restricted group.

The fractioning of the imperial structure after the War of Investitures broke the cohesion of the Western institutions. The empire soon became no more than an aggregate of autonomous principalities, that is to say of separate states; and the Church alone remained to represent Western civilization. Within the principalities the villages evolved towards the seigniorial organization, giving rise to a landowning and military nobility,

[1] The Roman law had been bastardized, but had retained its essential principles.

derived from the former German tribal organization, which formed the real autochthonous aristocracy of Germany. Under its rule, the people were enslaved; the assemblies of free men were replaced by the little feudal courts; in each principality the *junkers* (barons), following the tribal tradition, met in the *landtag* with the prelates and abbots and, from the 13th century onward, the representatives of the cities.

Thus two tendencies met face to face. The feudal prince and the clergy represented Western law; the cities, closely involved in international trade, adopted, of necessity, an individualist law which separated them from the primitive units; the nobles, on the contrary, remained the real national element, a direct issue of the Germanic tribal system. As to the mass of the people, living on the lands of the Church or the local seigneurs, they were enslaved to such an extent that the customary laws of the *Sachsenspiegel* and the *Schwabenspiegel*, drawn up in the 13th century, allowed the seigneurs to exchange their serfs at their pleasure.

In the 14th century the great European crisis had serious repercussions in Germany. The decline of the universal power of the Holy See subjected the Church to feudal influence. The dismembered empire was only a fiction. The great families seized the bishoprics and abbeys; princely authority, reinforced and concentrated, became national. Lacking a great monarchical movement, Germany became a mass of petty national cells, within which the Church no longer held any universal authority. On the ruins of the universalist idea, formerly introduced by the empire and by the Church, the 'nationalism' of tribal law reappeared.

But in these petty states, where civil and religious power passed more and more into the hands of the princes, the people, influenced by the great current of religious fervour which was coursing through Europe, tried to shake off the rule of the nobility; the influence of the cities tended to break down the seigniorial economy and, from the times of Frederic III, the emperor did all in his power to restore a central authority in the empire which, quite naturally, strengthened the unity of the Church, which had been split up by feudalism.

Thus, in the Germany of the early 16th century, the forces of the future, which tended to make the country emerge from its isolation, were the emperor, the Church, the cities involved in international trade, and the people. The nobility, landowning, military and predatory, represented the past, that is to say the seigniorial régime, closed economy and serfdom. It was hostile to everything that threatened its existence, to the emperor, to trade, to the cities and also to the Church, whose property it coveted. Opposed to every outside influence, it became the centre of a vaguely

nationalist movement, which arose through its hostility to everything that was foreign to itself.

The split between Luther and Rome naturally brought Luther closer to this movement which was both particularist and hostile to the Church. After his condemnation by the Pope, he wrote the *Manifesto to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* (1520), in which he demanded a Council to restore Rome to evangelical simplicity and to re-establish the national churches—which had never existed—in their rights. The thesis of the universalism of the Church was rejected in the name of the rights of the German nation.

Leo X replied by the Bull *Exsurge domine*, which recalled Luther to obedience. He burnt it publicly on the square of Wittenberg on Christmas Day 1520. The Pope excommunicated him.

Disseminated by printing, Luther's appeal had an immense response. Outside Germany the humanists and the popular religious fervour favoured, since he wanted to restore to the Church the simplicity of the gospels, that part of his thesis which was universal; in Germany it aroused the enthusiasm of the petty nobility because it proposed, in order to reform the Church, to secularize it and strip it of its properties. The crusade against Rome would therefore become, like the crusade waged earlier by the Teutonic Knights against the Slavs, a means of acquiring huge estates. Once again the German nobility was to wage war in the name of religion in order to take possession of the lands which it coveted.

None the less there was resistance. On the death of Maximilian in 1519 his grandson Charles V succeeded to the empire. In 1520, under the influence of Spanish monarchical policy, he introduced the Inquisition into the Netherlands to call a halt to the Lutheran ideas which had spread there. However, since he was himself converted to humanist ideas, he would have liked to avoid a breach and to effect a reform of the Church by a Council which would not be under the control of the Pope. The Pope, Adrian VI of Utrecht, who had been his tutor, was, like him, a humanist. But the Lutherans wanted a national German Council. Charles was conciliatory and gave way; he got the Pope to agree that Luther should be heard at the Diet of the Empire. He summoned it at Worms in 1521. But Luther refused to retract. Placed under the ban of the empire, he became a national hero.

While the Elector of Saxony was hiding Luther in his castle at Wartburg, where he made his translation of the Bible into High German, von Hutten urged Franz von Sickingen, who had proved an ardent supporter of Luther at the Diet, to make himself the Jan Ziska of the German revolt against

Rome. In August 1522 von Sickingen, at the head of a band of knights, seized the lands of the archbishop of Trier. Other nobles plundered the cities of Swabia. But the prince of Hesse and the elector-palatine, with the militia of the Swabian cities, crushed the knights and razed their castles to the ground. When the revolt of the nobles had been crushed, it seemed that the heresy too had been tamed and, to put an end to it once and for all, the Diet of Nuremberg was asked to take measures against the Lutherans. It refused to do so before a national German Council had met. The schism was imminent. Adrian VI, in order to conciliate the German nobles, handed over to them a fifth of the revenues of the Church.

The Peasant Revolt

The defeat of the landowning nobility was the signal for a peasant rising. From 1490 onward there had been constant unrest among the serfs on the seigniorial estates of Thuringia and Swabia. In 1520 Thomas Muenzer preached at Zwickau a mystical creed without clergy, and exhorted the peasants to massacre the evildoers. Quite naturally this popular religious ferment, impregnated with communist ideas, was to clash with the preaching of Luther. The weakening of the nobles gave free rein to the unrest. A revolt broke out in 1524 in the district of Schaffhausen, close to the Swiss cantons, where at this time Zwingli was demanding a rigorous democratic reform of the Church. The serfs refused to carry out their forced labour dues and rose in revolt. The movement spread with astonishing rapidity through all southern and western Germany where a terrible *jacquerie* took place. Both social and religious, it took its programme from the Bible. It was Germany's turn to pass through the evolution which had taken place in the 13th century in France with the Albigensian revolt, in the 14th century in England with the Lollards, and in the 15th century in Bohemia with the Hussite wars.

The peasant revolts immediately reconciled the forces that they threatened and the princes made common cause with the nobles. At their request Luther pronounced an anathema against 'these mad dogs' and preached a pitiless war against them: 'Strike with the sword, kill, strangle as many as you can. If you leave your skin there, so much the better for you, for you will die faithful to the word of God and in the service of your neighbour.' It was a declaration of enormous force since it reverted to the ideas of the Inquisition and the Holy War but contained a new factor which made ideological war an expression of neighbourly love. He thus adapted the words of Christ, who had taught men to love one another, to the collective mentality directly derived from the tribal

system of the primitive Germans, for whom morality, love and religion could not be conceived outside the tribal unit which was hostile to all that opposed it. But this unity was expressed, in the 15th century, by seigniorial rule; Luther therefore denied to subjects the right of insurrection 'even when their lords were evil and unjust'. The rules of Christian morality were placed at the service of the temporal authority.

The revolt was drowned in blood (1525). In Swabia ten thousand peasants were massacred, in Alsace eighteen thousand. In Hesse, Baden and Austria the serfs obtained some lightening of their burdens. Everywhere else they were reduced to a condition worse than before. Social revolution was never again to raise its head in Germany.

Anabaptism and the Revolt of the Urban Proletariat

Crushed in the countryside, the religious and social revolution was taken up by the urban proletariat; it spread in the Rhône valley and the Netherlands, whence it reached the Baltic cities, Kiel and Luebeck, and spread as far as Stockholm and Riga. This was the anabaptist movement, so called because of the second and adult baptism which its adherents received.

In 1528 several cities of Westphalia, Lower Saxony and the Baltic coast were in the hands of the heretic popular party. In the Hansa cities, where the competition of Dutch liberal economy had caused a serious crisis, the popular party wanted to revive their former prosperity by closing the Sound to the capitalist Dutch ships. The democratic party gave the Hansa, under the leadership of the insurgents who governed Luebeck, a revival of energy. To recover mastery of the Baltic, it tried to force its protectorate on Denmark by demanding that the election of the Danish king be subject to its approval. But Christian II triumphed over Luebeck (1533). The defeated popular party collapsed, involving in its ruin the former greatness of the Hansa which it had dreamed of restoring by a return to the outmoded privileges of the past.[1]

From then on, hunted down by the political and protestant princes, the popular party, which had mingled social aspirations with its creed and which the war had caused to practise the worst aberrations, was annihilated with the most terrible carnage. The most dramatic incident was the foundation of the 'kingdom of God' in 1534 in the episcopal city of Munster. Munster, become the New Jerusalem, was organized by John of Leyden as a theocratic and communist state which went so far as a com-

[1] It was the same story as that of the Athenian League in the IVth century BC, and of the revolt of the Flemish and Spanish cities against Charles V.

munism of women. In 1535 the bishop re-entered the city after a general massacre of the heretics. Anabaptism was rooted out.

The German cities never recovered from the demagogic crises into which the decline of urban economy had plunged them. The Hansa disappeared from the international trade scene at the same time as the great Flemish, Spanish and Italian cities lost their economic supremacy. But in the West the monarchical and capitalist economy had led to the rise of new and wealthy centres which replaced the expiring mediaeval cities. In northern Germany, where feudalism and the seigniorial régime were the only political and social forces, the decline of urban economy was not followed by any revival. The monarchical prosperity which was beginning in the West was to be balanced, in central Europe, by economic decadence embalmed in seigniorial feudalism.

The social insurrections which accompanied the Lutheran movement, which was however hostile to them, had two results, according to the countries in which they took place; on the one hand they let loose a terrible and pitiless repression, not only religious but civil, against the Reformation which was regarded as a frightful social danger; and on the other they sealed the alliance of Luther with the German princes.

Charles V, engaged in his wars against Francis I, was unable to take action in Germany. He restricted himself to organizing the repression of heresy in the Netherlands. In 1524 'apostolic institutors', dependent on Rome but appointed by the government, began their work. Public edicts were promulgated ordering the lay courts to punish by death anyone not a theologian who discussed matters of faith. The first martyrs of the Reformation were two Augustine friars of Antwerp who were burnt at Brussels. Erasmus said that their death converted many to Lutheranism.

Alliance of Luther and the Princes

The Reformation, which had found many adherents in the Netherlands among the people, the clergy and the humanists for evangelical reasons, triumphed in Germany by the adhesion of the princes. Save for the Hapsburgs and the dukes of Bavaria who were ardent Catholics, all the German princes were willing to compromise between their faith and their interests and to accept the reform of the Church which allowed them to seize its properties. 'If one wants to reduce the causes of the progress of the reform to simple principles,' wrote Frederic II, king of Prussia, 'it will be seen that in Germany it was due to interest.'

In 1525 the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Albert of Brandenburg,

joined the Lutherans and, secularizing the lands which he held as a fief of Rome, created the duchy of Prussia. The princes of Anhalt, Lüneburg, Frisia, Brandenburg and Bayreuth, following his example, secularized the Church and confiscated its immense properties. Thus the Church, till then Catholic, that is to say universal and subject to Papal authority alone, became divided into local churches directly dependent on the secular authorities. Luther acknowledged the absolute sovereignty of the princes, both in the temporal organization of worship and in doctrinal matters. The authority of the prince, extended to the spiritual field, replaced that of the Pope and was thus invested with a divine character; it was therefore enforced even over the consciences of his subjects, without this negation of spiritual freedom, which was to become a heavy burden on the whole history of the German and consequently of the European peoples, provoking even the slightest resistance.

In the absence of the emperor, kept busy by his wars, the Diet, meeting at Speyer in 1526, could only recognize the liberty of the princes to adhere to the Reformation or not as they willed, pending the return of Charles V.

The victory of Pavia and the conclusion of the Peace of Cambrai finally gave the emperor a chance to summon a Diet—also at Speyer—in 1529, where it was decided that Lutheranism would be tolerated wherever it had taken root but would not be permitted elsewhere. This was a restriction on the freedom proclaimed in 1526. Five princes and fourteen cities protested; from then on the reformers assumed the name of 'Protestants'.

Luther Lays the Foundation of State Socialist Nationalism

With the return of peace, Charles V set himself to restore the religious unity of the empire by conciliatory measures. In 1530 he summoned the Diet of Augsburg to try and find methods of agreement. Melancthon, an Erasmian humanist, was charged by Luther to expound his doctrine. But the 'Confession of Augsburg' which he read there—a profession of faith which laid the foundations of the Lutheran church—led to a final split between the Catholic and Protestant princes. At the same time, moreover, humanism broke with Lutheranism. The favourable reception given by Erasmus to Luther's theses had become greatly modified since 1524 by the complete negation of free will preached by the reformer. To the fundamental problem of the knowledge of God, which scholasticism envisaged under the aspect of both Platonist idealism and Aristotelian rationalism, Luther contrasted the problem of salvation obtained not by works but by faith, which did not imply the knowledge of God

but blind obedience to His will as expressed in the Scriptures. All the thinking of the ancient world, upon which Catholic dogma had been built, was thus denied.

It has been said that 'the Reformation burst into the Platonist and Aristotelian theology of the Middle Ages even as the German barbarians burst into the Greco-Roman civilization'.[1] But this break with the classical origins of civilization took place exactly at the time when the Western peoples were returning to them as a source of law, art and scientific and philosophical thinking. The renascence of classical antiquity in the West coincided with the rebirth of German antiquity in Germany. That was why Lutheranism rejected the universalism and individualism of the humanists and adopted the nationalism and authoritarianism of the primitive tribes; and from this absolute antinomy of the two civilizations, face to face with one another, was born the xenophobia which German nationalism was to preserve.

It would therefore be false to believe, as has so often been said, that by freeing himself from the authority of Rome Luther created freedom of conscience. He only changed the authority; from the Pope he transferred it to the Bible which, assuming thenceforward an intangible authority which it had not had in the Church, culminated in an orthodoxy a great deal more rigid than Catholicism; and as the guardians of that orthodoxy were the princes, the temporal authority assumed with Luther a divine character which was one day to become the basis of the state socialist ideology of Germany. In Lutheran Germany the temporal authority took pride of place over the spiritual. The princes, invested with their authority by God, were responsible only to Him. Their policy was above the criticism of their subjects; it had its own morality, of which the princes were the sole judges. They were the sword in the hand of God. The Lutherans therefore owed absolute obedience to the state, as to God himself.

This blind submission to the state, allied to his religious fervour, led Luther to reject the use of 'that prostitute' reason. Whatever he may do man can never achieve liberation. He can be only 'the slave of sin and the bondman of God'. All that he can hope for is to be able to live in an impassioned slavery. Only faith can liberate man. It must liberate him from everything, including himself, liberate him from the pride of knowledge, but also from the weakness of loving which binds him to the slaveries of this world. 'I never cease to repeat,' said Luther, 'that it is

[1] J. Schmidhauser: *Der Kampf um das geistige Reich*, Hamburg, 1933.

faith which makes us masters (*Herren*) while love makes us slaves. I will go so far as to say that by faith we become Gods.' On the temporal plane this faith links man to the state, as on the religious plane it links him with God. Luther thus came to formulate, for the first time, the thesis of German nationalism which was to make the empire, until then superimposed on Germany, a German conception; above the princes, invested by God, there is the German Empire.

'Let them take everything from us, body and goods, honour, wife and children. Much good may it do them. None will gain anything thereby. We shall still have the Empire.'[1]

The whole evolution of German civilization, derived from its ancient Germanic origins, was thus foreshadowed. In the passionate tones of Luther can be heard confusedly the voices of Fichte, Hegel, Wagner and Nietzsche. Lutheranism denied all the ideas upon which Christianity had been founded: love, individual conscience, universalism.

Nothing was farther from humanism than the ideology of Luther. In order to defend freedom of conscience against it Erasmus wrote his *De libero arbitrio*, to which Luther replied with his famous *De servo arbitrio* (1525). It was the final break. Compared with the intellectual liberalism of the humanists, Luther declared himself to be a man of the past. Humanism demanded a reform of the Church in a spiritual, universal and liberal sense; Luther carried it out by abolishing free will, by introducing the most rigorous authoritarianism and by splitting Christianity into national churches. The divorce which was so clearly shown between the West and Germany in the economic, social and political fields was thus completed in the religious field. The Christian community was finally split and thus the last factor of unity in Europe disappeared.

3. THE REFORMATION AS AN INSTRUMENT OF MONARCHICAL POLICY IN SCANDINAVIA AND IN ENGLAND

The Reformation in Scandinavia

It is impossible to separate the history of the Reformation from economic and political history. In Germany it was adapted to the feudalism of the princes. In Scandinavia it was to become a tool of the monarchy.

Ever since the Hansa cities had seized from the Scandinavians the mastery of the Baltic in the 12th century, Scandinavia had developed a strictly landowning and seigniorial civilization. In Denmark the nobles

[1] Spenlée: La pensée allemande, Paris 1939.

and the clergy, who possessed enormous estates, were represented in a diet which elected the king, and the elective character of the crown enhanced the leading position of the privileged classes. But at the beginning of the 16th century the decline of the Hansa allowed King Christian II to lay hands once more on the Straits and, thanks to the tolls which he levied there, to give the crown a considerable increase of power. Reverting to a maritime policy, Christian II approached the Netherlands by marrying in 1514 Isabella of Burgundy, sister of Charles V, and undertook a policy of overseas expansion. In 1518 he conquered Sweden, enforcing his rule there by terror (1520). Meanwhile he began a struggle against the Danish nobles and did his best to improve the condition of the serfs and to favour the emergence of a middle class which could expand the economic role of Copenhagen. But the nobles were powerful; they revolted and forced the king to flee to the Netherlands. A national resistance at once broke out in Sweden. Gustavus Vasa led a revolt of the peasants, who had remained free, and the miners of Dalecarlia where, under the influence of Dutch trade, the exploitation of the iron mines had begun. In 1521 he took Stockholm and in 1525 the Swedish Diet, made up of representatives of the nobles and clergy, recognized him as king of Sweden. After the Danish conquest, the upper ranks of the clergy had taken the side of King Christian II. That was enough for the nobles to favour Lutheranism which allowed the secularization of church property. After the war Gustavus Vasa found himself in grave financial difficulties. Luebeck, which had supported his revolt, demanded repayment of its advances. The clergy, asked to provide them, refused. The king joined the reformed church. In 1527 he obtained the approval of the diet to secularize church property, and it recognized him as head of the Church. But, contrary to what had taken place in Germany, the archbishop of Uppsala and the bishops remained; the temporal power, though breaking with Rome, did not claim to replace the spiritual power.

Revolts broke out in the countryside. They were bloodily suppressed. The Reformation, opposed in Germany to the monarchical policy of the emperor, in Sweden made the king an almost absolute monarch. The power which possession of the goods of the clergy gave him made it impossible for the nobles to withstand him. In 1544 the diet was compelled to approve a hereditary monarchy.

In the meantime the Danish nobles, after the exile of Christian II, had brought Frederic of Holstein to the throne (1523). Christian, who had taken refuge in the Netherlands, obtained the support of the Dutch fleet which saw a means of gaining control of the Straits. Frederic I, to counter

this, won the support of the nobles and the cities by proposing a partition of the properties of the clergy. In 1527 the Diet of Odensee adhered to the Reform. Civil war followed and the Norwegian peasants rose in revolt. Christian II profited by this to land in Norway.

But by 1533, the year when Frederic I died, the anabaptists, masters of Luebeck, had revived the energy of the Hansa cities. To assure control of the Straits, the Luebeck tribune, Wullenwever, offered the crown to Christopher of Oldenburg on condition that he closed the Sound to the Dutch. But the social nature of the struggle ranged the nobles against Luebeck and rather than accept a Protestant king supported by the popular party the diet gave the crown to Christian III of Schleswig. With Dutch support he destroyed the Luebeck fleet in 1535, put an end to the democratic government of the anabaptists, imposed his rule on Denmark and made peace with Sweden by recognizing its independence. But having become sole master of the Sound, he in turn adhered to the Reform which, by delivering the church properties into his hands, was to permit him to carry on a monarchical policy. The people of Norway and Iceland, led by their bishops, offered a fanatical resistance to the secularization of the Church. It needed a full-scale campaign to reduce them to obedience and to enforce the Reformation in their lands (1537).

Thus the Reformation, in Germany the tool of feudalism, began the era of monarchy in the Scandinavian countries. In Germany by conferring the control of worship, and even of dogma, on the princes it began the political evolution which was to lead to the sacrosanct state; in the Scandinavian countries, where the higher clergy continued to exist, the confusion between the temporal and the spiritual authority was avoided and there was no state socialist evolution.

The English Schism

Since the Avignon Popes had taken the side of the French king against England during the Hundred Years War, the English parliament had been hostile to the temporal power of the Holy See. Wycliffe had been the first to demand that the Church be placed under the authority of the king. But since the end of the 15th century a double tendency had become evident in English policy. In internal affairs the Tudors had tried to enforce an absolutist conception of the royal power; in external affairs England had given up her former territorial claims on the continent.

It was the time when the mediaeval conception of the Holy Empire was finally giving place in western Europe to the national monarchies and in central Europe to the sovereignty of the feudal princes. The Church

remained the last universal force capable of asserting itself over the various political systems. It was impossible for it not to become involved in the great crisis of belief which was then evident throughout Europe. Charles V, who was pursuing the ideal of universal empire, tried to find in Catholic universalism an ideological support for his dynastic power. On the other hand, Catholic unity was to be opposed by all the forces—whether they represented the past as in Germany or the future as in France and England—which refused to accept imperial suzerainty.

Francis I and Henry VIII both tried to halt the rise to power of Charles V by putting forward their own candidatures for the empire; and Henry VIII tried to obtain the Papal tiara for his chancellor, Wolsey.

But Charles was elected emperor (1519) and his former tutor, Adrian VI, became Pope (1521).

Henry VIII, finding himself unable to check the rising power of Charles V, tried to draw closer to him and, like him, dreamed of achieving monarchic absolutism by associating it with the authority of the Church. He therefore concluded an alliance with Charles against Francis I and in the struggle which took place between the Holy See and Luther he took the side of the Pope by writing (1521) his *Treatise on the Seven Sacraments* against the Lutheran thesis.

But the battle of Pavia (1525) and the crushing defeat of France made Charles the master of Europe and led to a profound reappraisal of Henry's policy. Charles V was becoming too powerful for it to be possible for Henry to escape by seeking an alliance with him; there was no alternative but to destroy the very notion of universal power, represented in the political field by the emperor and in the religious field by the Pope. Henry VIII therefore approached Francis I and began a policy of independence from the Holy See.

The two aspects of the problem, political and religious, coincided in 1527. Henry VIII had married Catherine of Aragon, the aunt of Charles V. He had no male heir by her. No woman had yet reigned in England. It was feared that the accession of the crown princess, Mary Tudor, would cause a dynastic crisis. The idea of divorce was mooted. The dynastic union with the House of Aragon was in any case now valueless since Henry's reversal of alliances. Wolsey thought that, once the divorce had been obtained from the Pope, the Houses of England and France might be brought together by a marriage between Henry VIII and Princess Renée, daughter of Louis XII. But Clement VII, when asked, refused, despite Henry's policy of intimidation, to agree to the divorce; he was, moreover, in the hands of Charles V whom he could not humiliate by

taking the crown of England from his aunt (1529). A crisis was imminent.

At first, it seems, the king had thought no farther than to obtain control of the clergy, as Francis I had managed to do by the concordat of 1516. Turning to the English clergy—as Philip the Fair had relied on the French clergy in his conflict with Boniface VIII—Henry demanded that they should recognize him as supreme head of the Church, without however denying, any more than Francis I had done, the authority of the Pope. Clement VII opposed him. Henry replied by having the 'submission of the clergy' voted by the Convocation of Canterbury, which subordinated ecclesiastical legislation to the king; parliament, for its part, intervened to reduce the prerogatives of canon jurisdiction (1532). As the Pope continued to resist, Henry VIII submitted the dispute to the principal universities of the continent, whose recommendations were, however, divided. It was then, in order to force the Pope's hand, that he suppressed the Papal first-fruits.

The crisis was then bound to take a tragic turn. Disregarding the Papal decision, the king married Anne Boleyn. To prevent the Holy See from annulling the marriage, he got from parliament a Bill forbidding appeals to Rome from the decisions of the Archiepiscopal Court of Canterbury. It was the final break. In 1534 parliament, by the Act of Supremacy, invested the king with supreme power over the English church.

England, on the eve of the war she was about to wage against the empire, assured both her political and religious independence by isolating herself under the supreme sovereignty of the king.

It was schism; it was still not heresy. But, making use of the power which his new spiritual authority gave him, Henry VIII was not to hesitate to make it an instrument of government. The duel between Charles V and France and England began in 1536. The same year, in order to strengthen his position, Francis I concluded a close political alliance with the sultan, and Henry VIII had the 'Articles of Religion' voted by parliament, which confirmed the final break with Rome,[1] and confiscated the monastery properties which the king shared with the nobles in order to enlist their support.

By limiting the sources of dogma to the Bible and the first three Oecumenical Councils and by reducing the number of the sacraments to three, those of baptism, penance and communion, as Luther had done, Henry VIII passed openly to the reformed church. The return of the Anglican church to Roman obedience became impossible. Henry VIII

[1] Henry VIII did not go so far as heresy; after him, Edward VI and Elizabeth did so by giving the English church its own dogmas.

could accept the struggle against Charles V without fearing lest Charles should make use of religious unity, of which he declared himself the champion, for the triumph of his cause.

Henry VIII, however, did not renounce Catholic ceremonial. The schism doubled his political independence with a religious independence; the splendour of worship served his absolutist aims by increasing the prestige of the crown, upon which the Church in England now depended.

Thus, as in Germany and the Scandinavian countries, the Reformation in England was adapted to the temporal institutions and the political aims of the country.

The nobles of the northern counties, profoundly Catholic, resisted. The repression which was at once organized crushed the opposition with torture. Everywhere the Reformation allowed princes and kings to invoke spiritual interests to support their political interests and to impose, by a repression analogous to that of the Inquisition, the absolutism of the temporal power.

4. IN SWITZERLAND THE REFORMATION IS ADAPTED TO CANTONAL AUTONOMY

Political Decline of Switzerland

After its victories over Charles the Bold Switzerland had become a great military power. Louis XII, by buying its alliance with a promise to cede the Ticino district, had involved it in the Italian wars, where it had won some striking successes. The Ticino was annexed and placed under the rule of bailiffs nominated by each of the cantons in turn. The Confederation had then practised an imperialist policy which coveted both Burgundy and Milan. But it failed before Dijon in 1513 and suffered a serious defeat at Marignano (1515) which forced it to recognize a sort of French suzerainty by allowing the king of France to levy mercenary troops on its soil. Switzerland ceased to be a power and slid into a crisis of internal demoralization.

The Zwingli Reform

It was at this time that Zwingli came on the scene. He was an army chaplain and as such had experience of the terrible moral consequences of military service. His preaching was antimilitarist, anticlerical and democratic, inspired by ideas very similar to those expounded by Thomas More in his *Utopia*. But the agitator, whose activities helped the rise of the communist anabaptist movement, soon became a reformer. Zwingli

was not, like Luther, a mystic; he was a humanist of the school of Erasmus who, in trying to find an explanation of the problem of evil, arrived at a sort of pantheist manichaeanism which integrated evil and sin with the creation. He preached that good could only be attained through grace, reserved by God to those predestined to salvation and which permitted the men touched by grace to practise the divine law.[1] Luther refused to admit Zwingli's ideas, which were impregnated with classical philosophy, and broke with him.

Zwingli's preaching enflamed the popular party of Zurich, which brought him to power there (1529), as the Florentine democrats, thirty years earlier, had delivered the republic to the dictatorship of Savonarola.

Zwingli, rejecting Papal authority, the cult of images and the worship of the saints, founded a state church at Zurich, based on a return to an evangelical religion and with a morality of charity, in whose name he condemned military service abroad, which had reached vast proportions in Switzerland.[2] But the poverty-stricken people of the countryside found a livelihood in military service and the aristocracy made huge profits out of it. They reacted violently against Zwingli who, however, was supported by the people of the cities. The communist crisis which broke out in Zurich in 1525—and which Zwingli fought against—made the Reformation seem a serious social threat. The Swiss cantons became involved in civil war; Zwingli was killed in the victory of the Catholic cantons (1531).

Peace did not bring union. The Catholic cantons, fearing domination by Berne, Basle and Zurich which supported the Reformation, formed a separate union under the presidency of Lucerne; the unity of the Confederation was broken. During the 16th century the Catholic cantons sought alliance with Austria, Spain and Savoy, while Berne approached Geneva against the duke of Savoy. Faced with this internal split, the Federal Diet observed a strict neutrality, leaving the cantons masters of both their religious attitude and their foreign policy (1545).

If Switzerland was able to pass through so long a crisis without perishing, it was because France had a major interest in respecting the independence of a country which assured the safety of her frontiers by holding the Alpine passes. The liberal policy of France in religious matters allowed the alliance concluded by Francis I with the Confederation in

[1] In many ways Zwingli was reminiscent of the Albigenses.

[2] There were at that time about twenty thousand Swiss mercenaries in the service of the king of France and about sixty thousand in the pay of other sovereigns. Switzerland obtained a large income from this foreign service. Service in France alone brought in an average of four million *livres* annually, a sum equivalent to the exports of the Netherlands to France over the same period.

1516 to be maintained without compromising the religious freedom of either the reformed or the Catholic cantons. The French alliance, common to all the cantons, was the essential element which maintained the unity and independence of Switzerland.

5. THE RATIONALIST AND 'MODERN' REFORM OF CALVIN

Calvin

In France the Reformation began to spread among the people of the cities about 1520. In 1521, in order to halt its expansion, a royal censorship was imposed on all printing presses. In 1525, during the captivity of Francis I, the *parlement* and the Sorbonne created a sort of inquisition court but, on his return, the king, favourable to humanism, had it suppressed.

However, Francis I could not afford to get embroiled with the Pope. The concordat, signed with Leo X in 1516, which had granted him the right of appointing bishops and abbots, was too advantageous for him to risk a conflict with the Holy See. So he left it to his chancellor, Duprat, to publish a rigid definition of orthodoxy which was far from supporting humanist ideas.

On the other hand it had seemed prudent for him to conciliate the reformers as long as the war with the emperor was going on. But the peace signed at Cambrai in 1529 allowed him to envisage the religious question from its internal political aspects alone. The excesses of the anabaptist beliefs, whose contagion was spreading rapidly and for which the Reformation was held responsible, seemed a grave social danger. Francis I therefore gave a free hand to the lay and religious authorities which, as soon as peace had been signed, began to hunt down the heretics.

The principal representative of the reformed ideas in France was Calvin. Born at Noyon in 1509 of a rich bourgeois family, Calvin was not, like Luther, a monk inspired by mediaeval religious fervour, but a lawyer versed in the study of ancient languages, brought up with humanist ideas and who had grown up amongst the business middle classes.

He was a representative of modern tendencies. In 1533 persecution forced him to leave France; at Fribourg he met Erasmus—who had emigrated because of the religious persecutions by the Catholics at Louvain and the reformers at Basle—and settled in Basle where in 1536, the year of Erasmus' death, he began the work which was to culminate, twenty years later, in his *Christian Institutions*. In this he founded his creed on the Scriptures, wished no intermediary between God and the faithful, no clergy, no saints; he proscribed images, reduced the sacraments

to baptism and communion and rejected the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. His creed was based on faith, drawn from the literal interpretation of the Scriptures. In principle this interpretation depended, for every believer, on his conscience. Calvin therefore made individual conscience the foundation of faith, in opposition to Luther who subjected it to the decision of the prince. Like Zwingli, Calvin found the justification of the Christian in the idea of divine grace and, like him, pushing it to its ultimate conclusions, admitted predestination. It was therefore no longer works which assured salvation but faith, in which the Christian found the proof that he is predestined to eternal life. Total devotion to faith thus becomes the aim not only of the religious life but of all the activities of life. Religion invades and pervades existence which, dominated by the mystery of predestination, was to take, under Calvin, an austere and even ascetic form.

The Reformation at Geneva

With Calvin Protestantism entered a new phase far more dangerous to the Church than any it had hitherto known. Calvin adapted mediaeval religious fervour to rationalism; the Reformation, thenceforward, assumed a deeply religious, universal and doctrinal character from which it was to derive an extraordinary energy. With Luther the Reformation had been dominated by social and political considerations. Calvin, on the contrary, wanted to impose on society a religious conception adapted to the new conditions of life created by the renascence of thought and by capitalism.

The centre of Calvinism was to be the little city of Geneva.

An episcopal city under the suzerainty of the duke of Savoy, Geneva had been given—under the authority of the bishop—an autonomous government made up of a Great Council, a General Assembly of the burghers and various restricted Councils, of the Twenty, the Sixty and the Two Hundred. In 1530 it had been approached by the Swiss cantons. The party of the *eygenots* (from *eidgenossen*, confederates) had been formed there which had renounced the suzerainty of the duke of Savoy. The bishop had been forced to leave the city (1533) and a few years later (1539) the Great Council had adhered to the reformed church as organized by Farel. Calvin, in 1536, had been kept at Geneva by Farel but had soon been sent into exile because of his excessive rigour. In 1540, however, he was recalled and in that same year he made the Councils accept his ecclesiastical ordinances. The Calvinist church was founded (1541).

Calvin conceived it as a Church national in organization—adapted to

Genevan autonomy—but universal in spirit. United with the state it was not, however, subject to it like the Lutheran church but, reverting to the Catholic standpoint, it aimed at controlling the state to the extent of making the government a narrow theocracy. It was obligatory for all citizens, to whom freedom of worship was refused. Its control was in the hands of four ecclesiastical bodies; a college of five pastors, who were co-opted with the approval of the Great Council, which was the guardian of doctrine and administered the sacraments; the doctors, elected with the assent of the Councils, were entrusted with teaching the gospel 'so that its purity should not be corrupted either from ignorance or evil opinions'; the consistory, made up of members belonging to the restricted councils, elected by the Council of Two Hundred with the approval of the pastors, had as its mission 'to watch over the lives of all' and to report to the pastors before they proceeded to 'paternal correction'. If necessary the consistory excommunicated the delinquent and handed him over to the magistrate who was entrusted with taking any legal action against him which might be necessary.

Calvin thus made Geneva a Christian community. As in the primitive Church, the ministers of religion were elected by the people. The public and private life of every citizen was subject to them. Every infraction of the rules, no matter how petty—for example singing a profane song—was punished by religious or secular penalties. All in all, the consistory played in the Calvinist church a role identical, but far stricter, to that of the Holy Office in the Catholic church. It acted as an Inquisitorial court. Never, save perhaps among the Albigenses, had religion been imposed to such an extent on all the actions of everyday life, whence it was its intention to remove everything which could detract from thoughts of God. Calvin had based his faith on freedom of conscience of the faithful by appealing to reason 'as illuminated by the Holy Spirit'. But his personal ascendancy gave to his interpretation of the Scriptures a value which became superior to all others and which, transformed into a virtual orthodoxy, ended by limiting the freedom of individual interpretation.

The Church instructed the faithful by preaching and education. Faith must be founded on knowledge. In that, Calvin differed fundamentally from Luther. In 1559 the Academy of Geneva was founded under the direction of Theodore of Beza to prepare pastors and preachers. For the first time in Europe compulsory education was introduced.

By contrast with the mystical faith of Luther, open to the miraculous, the faith of Calvin was rationalist. He rejected miracle as much as possible and wished to explain faith by reason, but within the framework of the

Scriptures in which the divine thought is revealed. Rationalist in method, it remained founded upon revelation, of which the Bible was the witness. The rationalism of Calvin was therefore very different from the rationalism of the humanists. Humanism accepted, within the framework of Christianity, a liberalism to which Calvin set limits but to which a number of his disciples returned. Humanism was tolerant and hostile to religious persecution. Calvin—in opposition to the French reformer Sebastian Casteillon, who rejected all religious intolerance and whose humanism was the ancestor of liberal Protestantism—admitted, like the Catholic inquisitors, that it was the duty of the magistrates to condemn heretics to death. When the Spaniard Michael Servetus, fleeing from the Catholic Inquisition which was hunting him for giving a pantheist explanation of the dogma of the Trinity, sought refuge at Geneva Calvin had him arrested and burnt at the stake (1553).

Taken all in all, Calvinism appears as the opposite of Lutheranism. By proclaiming the sovereignty of God, the Calvinist churches asserted their complete independence of the civil authorities, and jealously preserved the universal character of Christianity, which Luther had renounced in order to break the Oecumenical Church into national churches entirely subject to the all-powerful will of the prince.

Calvinism therefore preserved the two essential principles of Christianity, on which it had been built from its origins, universalism and individualism, both of them repudiated by Luther. It therefore appears far closer to Catholicism than to Lutheranism.

Expansion of Calvinism

Calvinism did not spread in the feudal lands. On the other hand, it penetrated into the cities whose populations were socially and intellectually emancipated. The opposition between the two creeds was marked in Europe by the line of demarcation which separated the peoples who had remained at the stage of seigniorial-feudal development from those affected by the intellectual and economic renaissance.

In Germany, Calvinism conquered only the urbanized areas. On the Rhine the elector-palatine imposed it on his subjects and Heidelberg became an important propaganda centre for the reformed religion (1540). In the Netherlands Lutheranism was entirely driven out by Calvinism which found its way into the business circles of Antwerp. In Bohemia the Moravian Brethren, who were at first adherents of Lutheranism, were in touch with Calvin from 1538 onward. In England, on the death of Henry VIII (1547), Calvinism made the Reformation move from the

political to the religious plane. A huge proselytizing movement was organized, centred around the teaching of the refugee Calvinists, Vermigli at Oxford and Bucer at Cambridge. Calvinism reached Scotland with John Knox, called to teach at St Andrew's University (1547), where it gave birth to the Presbyterian church. In France the revival of the war against Charles V (1536) had put an end to the persecutions. But as soon as peace was restored, the *parlements*, faced with the Calvinist contagion, demanded that the persecutions be resumed and, in 1545, Francis I was forced to agree to the massacre of the heretics of the Vaudois sect, which was decided upon by the *parlement* of Aix-en-Provence; twenty villages with eight hundred inhabitants were wiped out.

Lutheranism had been the cause of peasant revolts, but its expansion had created religious troubles only in the Scandinavian countries. Save in the Netherlands there were no Lutheran martyrs. This was because, in Germany, the form taken by Lutheranism was far more political than religious. The expansion of Calvinism, on the contrary, was based on the faith of the believers and not on the interests of the princes. That was why the Calvinist martyrs were soon to become countless; the blood of the martyrs, as in the first days of the Church, maintained the enthusiasm of the spreaders of the gospel.

Europe, plunged into a serious crisis by the split in Christian unity, was to tear itself to pieces in a series of wars and internal struggles. In Germany, under the influence of Lutheranism, these were to be political wars; in France and in the Netherlands, where Calvinism had spread, they were to be religious wars.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE FAILURE OF THE UNIVERSAL EMPIRE OF CHARLES V CONFIRMS THE POLITICAL DIVISION OF EUROPE

Charles V Tries to Base His Imperial Policy on Christian Unity

CHARLES V, by signing the Treaty of Cambrai (1529), had hoped to establish lasting peace in Europe in order to mobilize all his forces against the Turkish threat which Sultan Soliman was preparing in central Europe and which, in the Mediterranean, was becoming more and more serious because of the raids of the Barbary pirates. Constantinople and Algiers became great markets for Christian slaves, and navigation in the Straits of Messina had become almost impossible.

To restore the security of Christendom and to gain mastery in the Mediterranean, Charles V reverted to the traditional policy of the Holy See and envisaged the unity of all Europe in a great crusade. For that he needed not only political but religious peace, which had been compromised by the preaching of Luther, the effect of which, disastrous for Christian and consequently for imperial unity, was already making itself felt in the Scandinavian countries and in England. To check it, Charles summoned an Imperial Diet at Augsburg, which condemned Luther (1530) and requested the Pope to convoke a Oecumenical Council, from which he expected an internal reform of the Church and the reconciliation of all Christians by reciprocal concessions.

But the condemnation of Augsburg, instead of inducing the Protestant princes to recant, rallied them in resistance; to defend themselves they formed the Schmalkaldic League and appealed for the aid of Francis I, who had just undertaken the persecution of heretics in his own country. Charles, who wanted to avoid a rupture at all costs, compromised; he signed the Peace of Nuremberg (1532) by which Catholics and Protestants mutually suspended any religious conflict until the expected meeting of the Oecumenical Council.

In the meantime Charles was able to devote himself to his plans for a Holy War, which he counted upon to restore Christian unity and to assure the naval supremacy which was to become the essential foundation of the empire. It began in 1535 with a great expedition against Tunis. It was a signal success and led to the liberation of twenty thousand Christian slaves.

The consequences were far from being what he had expected. Francis I did not see in it a victory for Christianity but a threat to himself, for by gaining control of the Mediterranean Charles V completed the encirclement of France.

Alliance of France With the Ottoman Empire Marks the End of the Unity of the Christian Peoples

Soliman II, who feared lest all Europe unite against him, tried to strengthen his alliance with France and to restore his alliance with the republic of Genoa. In 1520 Genoa, which was trying to increase its influence in the Mediterranean, withdrew from this alliance. Francis I, however, hastened to accept Soliman's support and in 1536 a Franco-Turkish fleet went into action against the emperor. It was the final blow to the policy of Christian unity on which Charles wished to found his universal rule. A new era opened in the history of Europe. France brought Turkey into the counsel of the European powers and concluded with her an alliance closer than any she had ever concluded with any Christian state. The religious factor was finally sacrificed to the political factor. The idea of the empire waned before the idea of the national state.

By uniting the French and Ottoman fleets against Spain, the Turkish alliance upset the balance of forces in the Mediterranean. Supplemented by the capitulations, which assured France trading rights throughout the Ottoman Empire and granted her, in the Levant, a protectorate over the Catholics, subject henceforward to the jurisdiction of the royal consuls, it made France the first of the Mediterranean powers and Marseilles the gateway of Europe to the East. The prestige of France in the Levant, which was to increase constantly up to the 19th century, dates from 1536.

Assured at sea by the Turkish alliance, France concluded on the continent an alliance with the Schmalkaldic League. She also retained the Swiss alliance which made it possible for her to recruit excellent mercenary armies. The understanding between Francis I and Henry VIII after the defeat at Pavia was made closer by the consummation of the Anglican schism which finally separated England from Rome and isolated her in a national and monarchical religion.

Francis I, ally of the Turks, of the Protestant German princes and schismatic England against the representative of imperial and Catholic unity, had no longer any interest in hunting down the reformers. He pronounced a general amnesty in their favour and reverted to the policy of religious tolerance which allowed the Reformation to make its way into intellectual circles; the universities of Caen, Orleans, Bourges, Montpellier and Toulouse became its principal centres.

The coalition formed by France against Charles V obviously meant war in the Mediterranean. Venice, turned out of the Levant by France, approached Charles V. Two camps were now formed. Charles had to try at any price to prevent the joining up of the French and Turkish land-forces. The aims of his policy remained what they had been during the war ended by the Peace of Cambrai; to drive France back from the Provençal coasts and to destroy Turkey. But a sudden campaign against Marseilles ended in disaster (1538), and the powerful offensive both by land and sea carried on by the Porte ended in the double defeat of the army of Ferdinand I before Buda and the fleet of Charles V before Algiers (1541). Taking advantage of the imperial defeats Francis I invaded Milan. The empire shook to its foundations. Leadership changed sides.

The moment seemed ripe to destroy the power of Charles V and, with it, that of Catholicism. Thomas Cromwell would have preferred England to profit by it to make a close alliance with the German Protestants. But Henry VIII would not let himself be diverted from the interests of England, which were not on the continent but on the sea. The alliance which he had concluded against Charles V had not been for any religious reason but to prevent him becoming an irresistible naval power. But the alliance of France with Turkey and the reverses of the Spanish fleets had removed this danger. Once again, therefore, Henry VIII reversed his alliances and gave the vanquished Charles V the support he had withdrawn from him in the hour of his triumph.

It was now the turn of France to fight on two fronts; in the Mediterranean and on her northern frontiers. To combat England, she reverted to her traditional alliance with Scotland. A new general war broke out.

Feeling secure from England, Charles V invaded France from the Netherlands. But Francis I was not to be diverted from the sea. Marseilles remained the vital stake in the war because the Turkish alliance depended on it. A Barbary fleet, commanded by the famous Algerian pirate Barbarossa, a vassal of the Porte, joined the French fleet. Toulon was given to the Turkish fleet as a base. The naval war, thenceforth, was won for

France. But while Charles V was fighting against Francis I on the frontiers of the Netherlands, all the princes of northern Germany embraced Protestantism (1542). Charles V gave up the struggle. The Peace of Crespy (1544) confirmed the *status quo*. France, thanks to the strong naval position she had acquired by the Turkish alliance, emerged from the struggle mistress of the Mediterranean.

Internal Split in Germany

It had proved impossible to impose universal rule over Europe by force of arms. After the great wars he had waged, Charles found himself faced with a situation worsened abroad by the supremacy which France had won in the Mediterranean and compromised at home by the religious split in Germany, which cancelled the meagre results attained by the monarchic policy of the Hapsburgs since Frederic III.

Before claiming to rule the world it was urgent to restore peace to the empire. There was only one way of doing that—to find a solution to the religious conflict. Pope Paul III, like Charles V, remained a supporter of conciliation. He took advantage of the Peace of Crespy to summon, at long last, at Trento in 1545 the Oecumenical Council whose convocation the emperor had demanded for so many years. At the same time, to assure the success of the Council, the emperor began hostilities against the Schmalkaldic League. For the first time in centuries the emperor had at his disposal an effective military force, which he obtained from Spain. The Protestant princes were defeated at Muhlberg by the Spanish army (1547).

The victory of Charles V was, however, to end in disaster. Rather than accept the monarchical policy of the emperor, the Catholic princes and cities in league with the Protestants rose against him. The conflict which rent Germany appeared in its true colours; it was not a war of Catholics against Protestants, but a war of feudal lords against the emperor, a struggle between two incompatible conceptions, that of the Middle Ages represented by feudal Germany against that of modern times, of which the emperor, as king of Spain and the Netherlands, was the champion.

But the Middle Ages, which still survived in German feudalism, no longer had any of those great universal visions which had dominated them in the 13th century. It was an anarchic Middle Age which, having lost the Western tradition, had reverted to German particularism. The Holy Empire, in the 11th century, had been regarded as the temporal expression of the majestic unity of Christendom. The Germany of the

16th century conceived society, in the manner of the primitive tribes, as an aggregate of cells each possessing its own religion, its own prince and its own nationality. Feudal interests were definitely more important than religious interests. The Middle Ages were ending in Germany as in the West. But while in the West a re-grouping of economic, spiritual and political forces was taking place, which was to open the era of European supremacy throughout the world, Germany was foundering in political chaos, with enslavement of its peoples and the disappearance of the ancient oecumenical idea of Christianity. To replace it, there was only the new idea of the divine right of the local princes.

Absolutism in the West concentrated the forces of the states to increase their powers of expansion; in Germany, by adapting itself to the feudal régime, it stifled the country to the advantage of princes who represented nothing more than family interests.

The last attempt at conciliation by Charles V (1548), who suspended hostilities and summoned to Augsburg theologians entrusted with working out a compromise acceptable to all, could therefore not succeed. They agreed on one point only—intolerance. The split was now a reality.

The Abdication of Charles V Puts an End to the Attempt at Universal Empire

The 'Augsburg Interim' took place shortly after the death of Luther (1546) and of the two kings, Francis I and Henry VIII (1547). The removal of these strong personalities from the scene had immediate repercussions on European politics.

Both in England and France absolutism had given a leading role to the court. The factions formed there at once tried to enforce their views.

In England, where the minority of Edward VI (1547–1553) necessitated a regency, the parties were in open rivalry; the Anglican party supported the programme of monarchic absolutism, the Calvinists represented the humanist and tolerant tendency, and the Catholics, grouped around Mary Tudor, heiress to the throne, dreamed of a reconciliation with Rome, while the nobles formed a party whose only policy was to defend their class interests.

In France the court was split between the party of peace and religious tolerance, favourable to the entente with England and the Protestant princes, and the Catholic party, which clamoured for war against England both for dynastic and religious reasons. The Guises, leaders of the Catholic party, were the uncles of the queen of Scotland, Mary Stuart.

Henry II chose peace and alliance with the German Protestant princes, but at the same time, as a concession to the Catholic party of the Guises,

he consented to the marriage of the Dauphin, Francis II, with Mary Stuart.

It was to range France both against England and against the empire.

Henry II had the wisdom to avoid a rupture with either. The financial resources at the disposal of France became an essential tool of his policy. He stopped the hostilities which England was about to undertake by a payment of four hundred thousand *écus*; and he transformed his alliance with the Protestant princes into a simple matter of financial support for which he obtained, by the Treaty of Chambord (1552), not only the title of 'protector of German liberty' but the three bishoprics of Metz, Toul and Verdun, since, as his German allies declared, 'it was just that the king of France should take possession of these cities which had at all times belonged to the empire since the German language was not in use in them'. The Protestant princes thus countered the theory of the universal empire upheld by Charles V with that of a German community founded on language. It was the first time in the history of Europe that national feeling was to be based on the idea of linguistic unity.

Charles V at once laid siege to Metz. He failed and, resigning himself, signed a peace. After this fresh check, he renounced his impossible dream. He abdicated (1556).

His abdication was an important date in European history. It meant the disavowal of the policy of universal empire which he had pursued throughout his reign.

He had already partitioned his states by the Peace of Cambrai, keeping the maritime countries for himself and handing over his continental possessions to his brother, Ferdinand. But he had kept the imperial title, thus affirming his desire to exercise universal suzerainty.

By abdicating, and by the division which he made of his possessions, he wanted to show that this policy was at an end. He gave Spain, the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, the duchy of Milan, the Netherlands and Franche-Comté as well as the vast Spanish colonial empire to Philip II. But to Ferdinand I, together with the possessions of the House of Hapsburg, he gave the imperial crown. The empire, which in the reign of Charles V had shifted its axis to the sea, once more returned to Germany, to be nothing more than a simple feudal monarchy. The real power was grouped in a vast maritime empire centred on Spain.

It was the end of the universal empire. It had not been broken by the blows of France but by the existence, stronger than all policies, of its economic and social duality. The attempt to unite Europe in a political entity had failed because it was neither a spiritual nor a social entity. If

Charles V deserves to be judged by history as a great statesman, it is because he understood this and sacrificed the chimaeric dream of empire to the reality of a balance based on the division of Europe into two zones, one made up of the maritime and monarchic countries, socially and intellectually emancipated and interested in mercantile development, drawn by world trade and by the cosmopolitan civilization born of international exchanges; the other made up of the continental countries, where feudalism, class hierarchy, the seigniorial régime, manorial economy and serfdom flourished, which broke with the universality of Romano-Christian civilization revived by classical antiquity and replaced it by a sentiment of religious and linguistic nationalism derived from the remote Germanic past.

Failure of Monarchical Policy in Germany

Having tried in vain to obtain a conciliatory formula from the Council of Trent, Charles V, before abdicating, wanted to assure peace in Germany by bringing the religious war to an end. He could only do it by confirming the triumph of the feudal principle. The diet, meeting at Augsburg in 1555, recognized the right of *jus reformandi* to the princes, that is to say the right of deciding if their states were to remain Catholic or adhere to Lutheranism. The principle *cujus regio ejus religio*[1] was finally accepted. This meant the failure of the monarchical policy. Henceforward every feudal prince was to become, in his own states, both king and Pope. By inheriting the rights formerly held by the Church, he not only laid hands on the ecclesiastical properties but also on education which took in Lutheran Germany the form of state education and was to prepare for the ideology shown in the 17th century by a rigid dynastic nationalism. The identification of the state with its religion paved the way for the identification of discipline and morality. At the time when, in the West, the Renaissance was emancipating the individual conscience and thus preparing the triumph of the idea of a humanist civilization, the German people became part of a state system which made it a religious duty to accept the omnipotence of the prince in any field in which it might be displayed.

Thus a deep moral antinomy was added to the political, economic, social and religious division of Europe.

[1] The principle by which the prince gave his own religion to his state

CHAPTER XXXV

THE END OF CHRISTIAN UNITY

I. ATTEMPTS AT RECONCILIATION

FOR a long time Rome had watched the progress of the Reformation without making any attempt to defend itself.

The wars which had gone on constantly since 1519 had made impossible the convocation of an Oecumenical Council which might have been able to restore Christian unity by an internal reform of the Church and its dogmas. The Holy See itself had become involved in the whirlpool of politics. Alexander VI Borgia (1492–1503) and Julius II (1503–1513) had been far more like Italian sovereigns than Popes. The Lateran Council, summoned in 1512, attended by a hundred or so prelates almost all of them Italian, had shown no desire to modify the internal condition of the Church so favourable to the great Italian families who had turned the Holy See with all its immense resources into their fief. It had limited itself to suppressing a few of the scandalous pluralities. The sickness from which the Church was suffering came from above. The Pope himself allowed his functions to be usurped by the temporal authorities. In Spain the Inquisition had been organized under Ferdinand and Isabella not by the Church but by the sovereigns. In 1516 Leo X, by signing the concordat with Francis I, ceded him the right to appoint bishops and abbots. In 1518 he ceded, in fact, the control of the English church to Henry VIII by making Henry's minister, Wolsey, elevated to the College of Cardinals in 1514, his nuncio in England. In 1520 it was Charles V, and not the Church, who had taken the initiative for the repression of heresy in the Netherlands.

In order to tear the Holy See away from its Italian policies, Charles V had succeeded, in 1521, in getting Pope Adrian VI of Utrecht elected (1521–1523). He made a gesture of defence against Lutheranism by abandoning to the German princes, on the demand of the duke of Bavaria, one-fifth of the revenues of the Church. But his short pontificate did not permit him to convoke the Council demanded by Charles V.

The Italian reaction, caused by the imperial tendency of his policy, restored the tiara to Italian cardinals who, however, remained supporters of a compromise and in whose pontificates the ideas of Erasmus remained in favour at Rome. Paul III (1534–1545) appointed as cardinals cultivated and tolerant men won over to humanism. He even offered a cardinal's hat to Erasmus (1535), who refused it. None the less, the Reformation spread. The Diet of Speyer (1529) led to a split between the Catholic and Protestant princes. In Switzerland the Reformation triumphed, after the temporary reverses in the year of Zwingli's death (1531). Henry VIII broke with Rome. The Scandinavian sovereigns were converted to Lutheranism.

Paul III, supported by Charles V, did not, however, despair of restoring unity. At the Diet of Ratisbon (1541), which the emperor attended in person, the Pope sent tolerant legates, who were ready to make concessions. But the doctrinal influence of Calvin, far more dangerous to the Church than the fervour of Luther, had already made itself deeply felt. The conciliation of the Roman legates, Morone and Contarini, was met by the Protestant delegates, Melancthon and Bucer, with utter intransigence on the question of Papal authority, the sacraments and transubstantiation. To secure unity it was no longer enough to ratify the secularization of the Church properties, which the emperor offered to do; with Calvinism, Protestantism had left the political plane to become involved in religious feeling. Two faiths now clashed, between which compromise was no longer possible.

Paul III then decided to enter the struggle.

2. THE COUNTER-REFORMATION

The Society of Jesus

Throughout all the great crises which the Church had known, it had reacted from within, and that reaction had taken the concrete form of the creation of monastic orders which had taken over control. Under Gregory VII in the 11th century the monks of Cluny had undertaken a reform of the Church, then threatened by excesses similar to those which again faced it; in the 13th century, to combat the heresies of the peoples of the cities, Innocent III had been aided by the Franciscans who had known how to rally the city proletariat around their voluntary poverty, and by the Dominicans who had expounded the theory of Papal authority, who had had the legality of the death penalty against heretics admitted and who had organized the inquisitorial courts.

In the crisis of decomposition which the Church passed through in the 16th century new orders once more appeared. The Franciscans, to revive their religious influence, refurbished their rule of absolute poverty (1529); the Theatines were founded in Italy to give the clergy an example of disciplined piety and culture (1524); but above all it was the Society of Jesus, founded in 1534 by a Spanish soldier, Ignatius Loyola, which was to mark the counter-reformation with its imprint. Organized on military lines, under a military hierarchy and discipline, the Society of Jesus made it its task to restore the faith under the absolute authority of the Pope, both political and religious. It demanded absolute obedience of its members, the total abdication of their own will and a long training which was to give them not only great culture but an unmistakable stamp. The Jesuits aimed not only at repelling the forces of the Reformation but at repressing the independent spirit of humanism; not only heresy but intellectual liberalism. Their goal was complete submission to the Roman church. They decided to fight reason with its own arms. They opposed their own education to the education of the Calvinists. The curriculum of their colleges was wide open to the new culture, but censured it. They took from humanism its manners but not its spirit. Their Roman college became a seed-bed for the higher ranks of the clergy. In order to adapt their pupils to different countries they founded at Rome a German college, and a seminary for the English and also for the Greeks and the Maronites. By 1580 the General of the Society commanded five thousand zealots, grouped in twenty-one provinces with a hundred and forty-four colleges.

The activities of the Jesuits aimed first of all, and with great success, at making their influence felt among the ruling classes, whose trust they tried to gain by taking pains never to work contrary to their interests. They found their way into several universities. Without making any concession to the new spirit, they everywhere restored scholastic philosophy.

In 1542 they sent missions to the Portuguese colonies and soon penetrated to India and Japan where their activities met with a check in 1580 due to their intolerance.

It was a Jesuit, Father Canisius, who checked the advance of the Reformation in Germany and in Switzerland. It was by his work that the Society of Jesus controlled the University of Ingolstadt (1556) and of Dillingen (1563); he founded great colleges at Fribourg, Vienna, Prague and Munich and extended his activities to Poland, Livonia and Transylvania.

Despite the University of Louvain, the Society of Jesus established itself in the Netherlands in 1556 and created an Anglo-Irish seminary at Douai to carry on the struggle in the British Isles. In Portugal it became all-powerful under John III; in Spain it built its principal college, like a citadel of orthodoxy, next to the University of Salamanca.

Above all in Italy its influence was widespread. Its authoritarian rationalism, the influence which it gained through the frequent use of confession and the casuistry it derived from it stifled all freedom of thought with formalism. A similar phenomenon took place in art. In the Church of Jesus at Rome the ancient style, overlaid with ornament and gilding, became mere decoration; it foreshadowed the Baroque style which was henceforth to conceal the emptiness of a civilization which had become extinguished because it had lost the sense of the individual. In France the Society of Jesus clashed with Gallicanism and with the *parlement*. It founded no less than fourteen colleges in the kingdom, where it was favoured by Henry IV as an instrument of absolutism.

The Society of Jesus revived a strict discipline within the Church and restored its purity. Above all it laboured to restore its universalism. Nowhere did it act as an instrument of national government; on the other hand it did all that it could to subject the state to the influence of Rome. Disseminating a rich, but strictly controlled, culture it took pains to prevent any attempt at individual emancipation. By the most rigid intolerance, imposed with a minimum of external restraints, it prepared the triumph of a more and more total, though less and less visible, authoritarianism. Beneath the close-woven, strong, learned, pure network of the Society of Jesus the spirit of humanism was eradicated wherever it had taken root.

The Inquisition

While the Society of Jesus was carrying out its campaign against intellectual liberalism, Paul III revived the Inquisition (1542). He entrusted its direction to the Holy Office made up of six cardinals under the Grand Inquisitor, Cardinal Caraffa, formerly nuncio in Spain, who conceived it along the lines of the Inquisition introduced under Ferdinand and Isabella. Inquisitors-general with powers which went as far as the right to inflict the death penalty were sent into various countries. The courts of the Holy Office were entrusted to the Dominicans. While the Jesuits undertook to save the faith by imposing upon the élite a pleasant, dogmatic and rigid culture, the Dominicans undertook to defend the inviolability

of dogma by terror. In Italy, Venice alone—whose wealth was derived from her cosmopolitan character—refused to admit the Inquisition. Everywhere else it triumphed. Caraffa, obsessed by the phantom of heresy, when he became Pope under the name of Paul IV (1555–1559) exhorted the inquisitors to suppress even the semblance of heresy, not to spare even the most highly placed and never to have resource to mildness. Not content with destroying the reformers by fire, he wanted to stifle scientific freedom and philosophy. In 1563 the Congregation of the Index was founded and there was a mass burning of books. The counter-reformation became the counter-renaissance. The Inquisition was freely welcomed because it seemed to the property-owning classes, at a time when Europe had just known the follies of communist anabaptism, a supreme means of keeping order not only against heresy but perhaps even more against all subversive social theories. The success of the Jesuits among the upper classes of society was due, in great part, to the same cause; the fear of communism which for ten years (1525–1535) had involved the city masses in the worst excesses.

As well as the Congregations of the Inquisition and the Index, Paul III (1534–1549), in order to defend the faith, sent Apostolic Prefects and Vicars into various countries and, combining diplomatic representation with the struggle against Protestantism, appointed nuncios all along the religious frontier, at Lucerne, Cologne (1580), Warsaw and Brussels (1606). In 1622 the *Congregation of the Propaganda Fide* was founded to co-ordinate this policy.

The Council of Trent

As soon as the Treaty of Crespy (1544) had restored peace to Europe, Paul III at last convoked the long awaited Oecumenical Council at Trent. Charles V wanted its first task to be a radical reform of the Church which would make possible the removal of abuses, and then to envisage means to win back the Protestants by compromises on dogma.

But the Italian and Spanish cardinals, who were in the majority, first of all raised the question of dogma. The Council at once took up a stand of absolute intransigence and claimed for the clergy, whose hierarchical discipline it strengthened, the exclusive right of interpreting dogma and the Holy Scriptures. Conciliation was out of the question. Like the Society of Jesus and the Holy Office, the Council declared in favour of authoritarianism and against intellectual liberalism. Adjourned in 1549 for political reasons, it met again in 1551 but without result. It was not until the Peace

of Cateau-Cambrésis (1559) that the Council could undertake its task of an internal reform of the Church (1562–1563). Despite the split between Protestants and Catholics which had grown deeper since the preaching of the Calvinists, Catherine de Medici—who was acting as regent after the death of her son, Francis II—and the Emperor Ferdinand I still supported a compromise. Philip II, brought up in Spain, was fiercely intransigent. But the Council tore itself free from the influence of the temporal princes to obey only the will of the Pope, then represented by the sickly fanaticism of Paul IV.

The Church recovered its univeral character. At the Councils of Constance and Basle the cardinals, voting by nations, had represented national tendencies. At Trent they voted individually. Italian and Roman influence was paramount. The Pope, rejecting the tutelage of the princes, asserted himself sole master of the Church, as in the most glorious days of the Holy See.

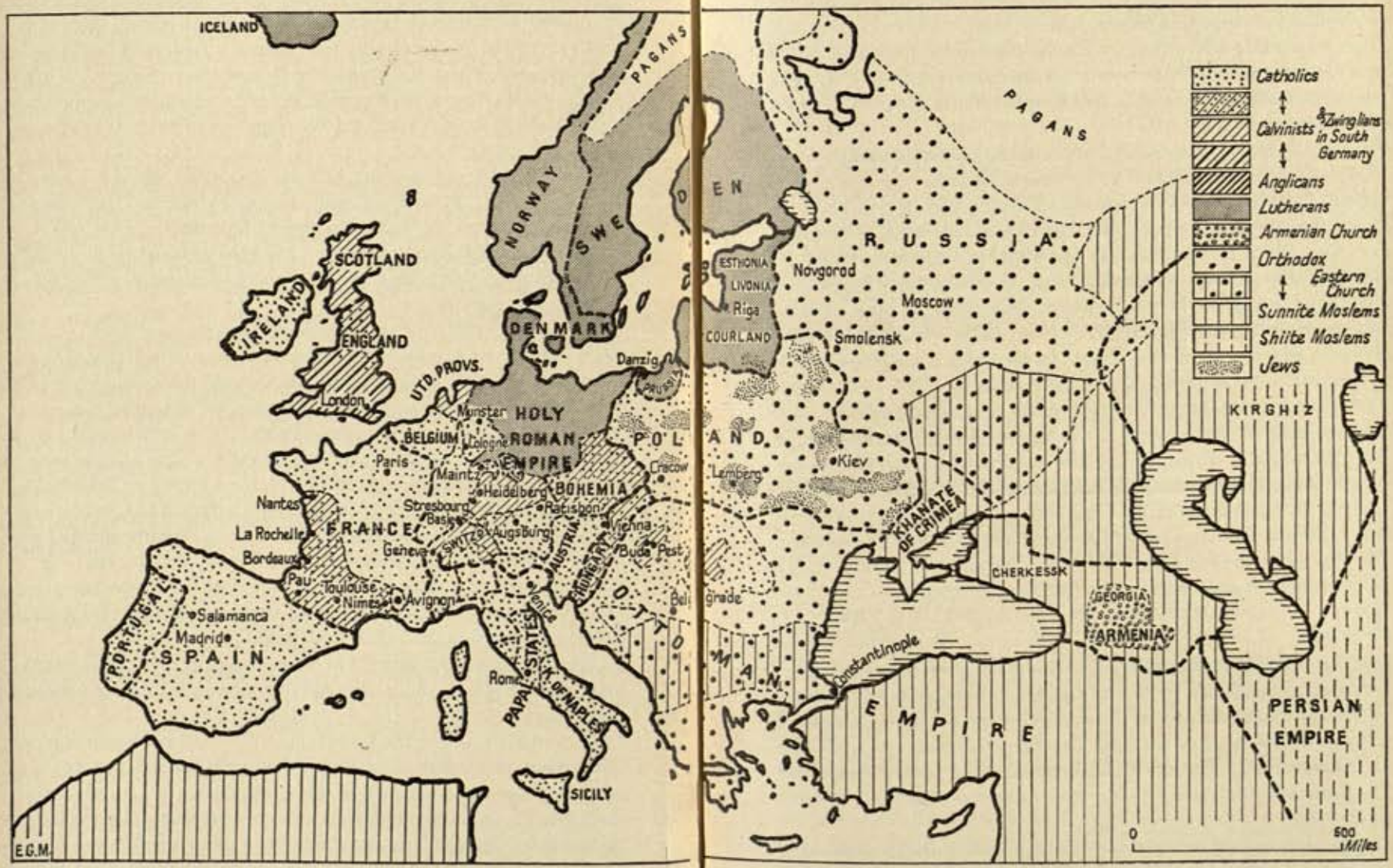
The Council of Trent, rejecting all compromise with heresy, saved the unity of the Church and rigidly defined its dogmas. The Roman catechism, drawn up in 1566 by Carlo Borromeo, made them comprehensible to the people; a breviary and a missal established the strict uniformity of rites for all Catholic worship. In 1582 the *Corpus juris canonici* was published, which gave its present form to canon law, and in 1592 an edition of the Bible—the Vulgate—which became the authorized Catholic version.

The authority of the Pope, denied by the Protestants, was asserted as more sovereign, more monarchic than ever. As for the internal reform of the Church, this was not carried out by the Council but left to the Holy See which was to undertake a profound revival. For more than a century Rome, fully absorbed by its spiritual mission, was to found seminaries, reform monasteries and create new orders.

The Council of Trent marks an incontestable Catholic renascence based on Papal authority, the inviolability of dogma and strict ecclesiastical discipline.

It completely halted the evolution, which had been shown in all the monarchies, towards the formation of national churches. But the decisions of the Council of Trent met, in the monarchies, with a lively resistance. In France the Gallicans objected to their enforcement within the kingdom. In Spain they were only accepted with the express stipulation that nothing should be changed in the existing system; so also in Venice. Only Portugal, Austria and Poland accepted them entirely. But the universalism of the Church was now so well restored that it could enforce itself on the states despite their opposition.

Map No. 31



The Religious Division of Europe at the end of the 16th Century

3. THE RELIGIOUS DIVISION OF EUROPE

The Roman Limes *Cuts Lutheranism Off From Calvinism and Catholicism*

If one looks at a map of the religious division of Europe and superimposes on it a map of the Roman Empire the striking fact emerges that in the West the ancient Roman *limes* marks almost exactly the dividing line between Lutheranism on the one side and Catholicism and Calvinism on the other.[1]

The Romanized populations, imbued with the classical tradition, either remained Catholic or adhered to Calvinism, because the whole contribution of the ancient civilization which they inherited was based on the two essential ideas of individual conscience and belief in universal values, ideas which Lutheranism had renounced and had replaced by the authority of the ruler and the national character of religion. The line thus traced across Europe is heavy with significance. It not only divided Europeans according to their religion but also and above all according to their social and moral ideas, which determined their religious values. There were two civilizations, two different worlds.[2]

It is very surprising to note that in Germany the Lutheran districts were exclusively those which had preserved, in the 16th century, the seigniorial-feudal régime and in which serfdom was rigidly enforced. On the other hand, Catholicism held out in the districts with an urban civilization, the valleys of the Rhine and the Danube; and it was in those Catholic regions—Austria, Bavaria, Hesse, Baden and the Rhineland—that serfdom began to weaken about the middle of the 15th century, whereas in the Lutheran regions it assumed a harsher and harsher form.

Lutheranism

Broadly speaking, Lutheranism, which was no more than a return to primitive religious ideas, took root in the least civilized parts of Germany. It was the reaction of the ancient German mentality, nationalist and tribal, which had been kept alive amongst the seigniorial nobles in opposition to the universalist civilization of Romano-Christian origin represented by the Church. By returning to the idea of national churches, known to

[1] The Catholic enclave of Westphalia excepted.

[2] Certainly, it must be remembered that in the Palatinate, Württemberg and certain parts of Bavaria the will of the prince rather than popular feeling was the decisive factor. But in these countries the intellectuals, for the most part coming from amongst the clergy, had retained the Roman tradition, supported by the individualist law which had been created in the cities. Catholicism was not, as in France, the southern Netherlands, Spain and Italy, defended by the mass of the people, any more than Calvinism was diffused by faith. They were imposed by the prince, supported by the upper classes.

all primitive peoples, it was a great religious step backward. Religion, in all the Lutheran countries, was merged with the national unit to which it was subordinated. It became lay, a means of assuring the cohesion of the political unit. It restricted the religious, and therefore the moral, framework to the national entity, led to the disappearance of equality among men professed by the Catholics and the Calvinists, and became part of the primitive solidarity of the less developed Germanic peoples.

Luther had only renounced the principle of Roman authority to place it in the hands of the rulers, who thus became absolute masters of the conscience of their subjects. Far from suppressing religious authoritarianism, he tore it to pieces and, by this very fact, made it far more rigid and more tyrannical. By subjecting religion to temporal omnipotence, he laicized it.

The universalism which Christianity had known in the Middle Ages had assured the freedom of Christians within the framework of the Church; universally acknowledged, it had been no hindrance to thought and made relations between peoples and individuals easier. Above all political divisions it made a single society of all the peoples, based on a single ideal, under the universal authority of similar religious institutions, and expressed in a single language—Latin. The destruction of this universalism, replaced by groups isolated from one another and subject to absolute authorities, necessarily limited freedom of thought and individual liberty.

The authoritarianism of the counter-reformation can only be explained as a method of defence. The split in Christian unity was the cause of the regression of the individualist principle both in the political and in the religious field. The struggle between diverse authorities led to a reduction of the liberty of each one of them.

By remaining tied to the idea of the closed group, Lutheranism became the defender of feudalism, but of a deformed and barren feudalism. It had lost the vision of Christian unity even as it rejected reason in the name of faith by denying faith the individual approach to God, which had been its greatness in the Middle Ages, and transforming it into a sort of collective fanaticism which was to lead to the most narrow nationalism.

Quite naturally Lutheranism, by the very fact that it was a return to ideas of ancient Germanic origin, broke away from all that Christianity had retained of Hellenistic philosophy. It rejected dogma to adhere to the Bible. The constant use of the Old Testament that it introduced had a profound effect on German thought. Catholicism, formed within the Roman Empire, had been much more influenced in its dogmas by the

schools of Alexandria and Antioch, deeply impregnated with classical thought, than by the Old Testament. In the Old Testament—up to the period of the exile—the Jewish religion had had an essentially nationalist character which Lutheranism adapted to the social structure of Germany which was of tribal origin. The influence of the Old Testament could only reinforce the conception, necessarily engendered by the national character of the religion, of 'the chosen people', an idea which dominated Jewish history even as it was to serve as the basis of Hegelianism and the theory of the *herrenvolk*.

Outside Germany, Lutheranism penetrated only into Scandinavia, but there it abandoned its narrow local character and adapted itself to the monarchy; but by maintaining the episcopal framework it escaped the authority of the rulers and, thereby, of laic state socialism.

Calvinism

In opposition to Lutheranism, Catholicism held its own in all the former provinces of the Roman Empire, or was replaced by Calvinism. Between Calvinism and Lutheranism the contrast was radical. Far from subordinating religion to the temporal authorities, Calvinism based all society on spiritual authority. Instead of being national it aimed at the conquest of the world. It abandoned religious fervour and appealed to reason; but it took from the great movements of mediaeval religious piety the idea of direct contact between God and man. Rejecting mysticism as much as possible, it refused to admit the simultaneity of the omniscience of God and the existence of free will and therefore arrived at the theory of predestination. But being predestined by God the Calvinist escaped even more from temporal control. Faith turned him into an apostle with an iron will, since this free will was the sign placed by God upon him.[1] That was why he was opposed to lay absolutism. His political trends were republican and democratic.[2] In contrast to the Lutherans, who submitted to their ruler, the Calvinists, like the early

[1] It was a similar idea that gave the Moslems their extraordinary energy up to the time when Islam became encased in a rigid dogma; predestination then had the effect of immobilizing them in a resigned fatalism.

[2] However, the democratic character of Calvinism should not be exaggerated. At Geneva it transformed the institutions, hitherto democratic, for sovereignty was in the hands of the Great Council, that is to say the citizens as a whole, and gave them an oligarchic character by handing over the control of power to the restricted councils (1543). By introducing the idea that magistrates held their authority from God, Calvin prepared the way for the formation of a governing oligarchy at Geneva. Democracy in the Calvinist countries, in Holland as in England, was also to take, during the 17th century, the character of a burgher aristocracy relying upon capitalism. It needed the French Revolution to affirm as a natural right the equality of citizens.

Christians, formed communities which elected their own pastors. Thus they became part of the great movement of individualism which had been shown in humanism. Humanist in spirit, Calvinism relied upon reason, encouraged education and trusted science, since it considered that knowledge leads necessarily to God; individualist in practice, Calvinism admitted the most modern economic ideas, prohibited no trade not even trading in money and professed that any activity may be carried out to the glory of God.

These contrasting tendencies are found also in the political evolution of the Lutherans and the Calvinists. The Lutherans, for whom the will of God was expressed by the mouth of the ruler, developed towards absolutist state socialism; the Calvinists, who found God in their own consciences, were favourable to liberal parliamentary régimes.

Certainly, between Calvinism and Catholicism, similar in their universality, by the primacy they accorded to the spiritual over the temporal and by the essential role which they accorded the individual conscience, deep differences also existed.

First of all there was an antinomy in the fact that the Calvinists rejected Papal obedience, refused to admit the intermediary of the clergy between God and man, rejected the ceremonies of worship, the orders of the Church and the monastic orders. There was also a doctrinal antinomy, especially shown in the differing conceptions of the sacraments.

If one looks more closely, the historical explanation of those divergences may perhaps be seen. The Calvinists triumphed in Switzerland, in the northern Netherlands, in England and in the Palatinate, that is to say in those countries which, though subject for a time to Roman influence, had none the less only been for a short time a part of the Roman Empire and in which the invasions had led—Geneva was the only exception—to the almost total disappearance of the Roman tradition, as is proved by their languages. But the tradition of imperial unity had been preserved in the Roman church. The authority of the Pope was derived from that of the emperor, the Councils continued the work of the provincial assemblies and the ecclesiastical hierarchy was modelled on that of the imperial administration. Doubtless the feeling of unity, created by the Roman Empire and continued by the Church, was not totally alien to the loyalty which the masses reserved for Catholicism in the former Roman provinces.

The doctrinal differences between Catholics and Calvinists also seem to have deep roots in historical tradition. Here too the degree of Romanization, more or less deep, played a decisive role. Calvinism, like Lutheranism, attributed a much greater role to the Old Testament than did

Catholicism. It rejected almost all the Christian metaphysic. But it took from the Bible very different elements from those borrowed by Lutheranism. It did not take from it nationalism, which was incompatible with its creed, but the rigorous and abstract monotheism which rejected all symbols and which was so closely linked with its rationalist character. Like Judaism, Calvinism eradicated from worship everything which appealed to the senses or to profane sentiment. Like Judaism it was exclusively religious; so it rejected all the metaphysical elements that the Church had borrowed from Platonism and Aristotelianism. The Christianity of the first centuries was permeated through and through with oriental mysticism and Greek philosophy. St Augustine and Thomas Aquinas were still deeply coloured by them and the Romanized peoples have remained influenced up to our own times by the Greco-Oriental philosophical and mystical tradition. The ceremonies of worship had borrowed from the East its pomp, its incense, its love of decoration and of art which speak to the subconscious and the senses, influencing both heart and spirit.

Calvinism, on the other hand, broke away from the imperial tradition when it rejected the authority of the Pope and from the Greco-oriental tradition which it replaced by the austere conception of an abstract God and refused to invoke Him or to represent Him. Catholic piety, to draw nearer to God, did not hesitate to appeal, as in the classical mysteries, to the ecstasy which dominates the subconscious. Calvinism, in order to find God, wished to do so in thought only. That was why, reverting like Islam to the rigid Judaic tradition, it repudiated images.

It may be possible to find in this exclusive rationalism an explanation of the pragmatism which so easily linked piety to capitalism as well as an explanation of the meagre development of the plastic arts in the Calvinist countries, with the exception of Holland.

Catholicism, on the contrary, continued and preserved intact the ancient tradition. In order to strengthen faith it did not renounce either religious fervour, which the ascetism of the regular orders preserved, or classical culture which was the basis of Jesuit education, or art which it employed for the magnificent decoration of its churches; in its services it did not disdain to impress the senses by the magnificence of its ceremonies. Refusing to deny free will, it respected the personality of every man without, like Calvinism, considering it to be fettered by predestination. It therefore believed it necessary to guide it by authority; and this authority, which it acknowledged to the secular power in temporal affairs, it reserved for the Pope in all things concerned with spiritual life, claiming for him

an infallibility which was almost divine inspiration. In this sense it was based on faith reinforced by revelation and admitted the efficacy of works wherein was expressed the individual's search for the good life and wherein the love of God was made manifest. It was more supple, more varied, more complete and more human, but it was less intellectual and less liberal. Certainly it made use of reason to convince, but it wished above all to persuade by the use of feeling; the multiplicity of its forms allowed it to satisfy all the trends of human nature. Sometimes fervent to the elimination of self, sometimes adapted to the ease and comfort of social life, it accepted all forms of adhesion on condition that they bowed to its authority.

Nothing better illustrates the difference between Calvinism and Catholicism than the bare interior of a tabernacle compared with the pure lines of a Cistercian church or the theatrical gilding of a church in the Jesuit style.

Like Lutheranism and Calvinism, the Roman church had a considerable influence on the political evolution of Europe from the 16th century onward. Its monarchical structure caused it to evolve towards an authoritarianism which grew stronger as the Western monarchies grew stronger. In the evolution of the Church the period of the Councils correspond to the 'parliamentary' epoch of the 14th and 15th centuries. The end of the 15th century saw the triumph of the Holy See over the Councils, even as the kings triumphed over the States-General and the *cortes*; and the struggle against Protestantism led Rome to absolutism at the same time as Philip II introduced it into Spain. In reaction against the doctrinal heresies, which the Reformation meant for the Church, it fixed its dogmas under the undisputed authority of the Pope and tried to impose them by force, whereas Calvinism, which based religion upon individual faith, was split into a multitude of sects. But Catholic authoritarianism took care not to deprive man of his freedom; the profession of free will by the Church assured the independence of the individual conscience. Certainly freedom of thought was subject to the obligation only to express itself within the limits assigned by dogma, but since the Church held its truth from God, dogma, far from restricting liberty, could only on the contrary 'prevent it from error' by serving as a guide.

Such a theory of liberty, founded on inviolable dogma, was bound to lead to a conflict between the Church and freedom of thought on which science was to be built.

But while it introduced authoritarianism in dogma, the Church, after the Council of Trent, broke away finally from the democratic forms

which it had had in the first centuries of its existence and took the form of an absolute monarchy. Its authoritarianism, which was similar to the monarchic absolutism which it supported without accepting its guardianship, was to lead to the emergence of the theory of monarchy by divine right.

Confronted with this alliance between the Church and absolutism, an alliance which may be traced even in Anglicanism,[1] Calvinism seemed a formidable obstacle to dynastic and authoritarian policy. Wherever it took root—in Switzerland, Holland, England or America—the people were to resist victoriously. It was to lead to the triumph of parliamentary, even republican, ideas.

But though authoritarian and anti-liberal, the Catholic church was democratic in its everyday life. The importance which it gave to good works for salvation encouraged charity and love of the poor. The Church was allied with power but it protected the humble.

In eastern Europe also, religious divergences sprang from historical origins. Poland had not known feudalism; it had lived under a seigniorial régime which split it into an infinity of units. The unity given it by Catholicism alone permitted it to unite against the German threat from the west and the Turkish threat from the south. From the end of the 15th century it was continually at war on all fronts, in the north against the German feudal lords who had been converted to Lutheranism, in the east against the Orthodox Russians and in the south against the Moslem Turks. Poland had no political unity but it was a Catholic island and remained one fanatically. Catholicism became both the symbol and the cement of Polish nationality and, through the Jesuits, brought the culture which linked Poland directly with the West.

In Bohemia, a country of great urban development and of humanism, feudal Lutheranism was rejected in favour of western Calvinism, since Bohemia was the only country of central Europe which had developed an urban and humanist civilization. But Catholicism retained strong outposts there which were eventually to lead to its triumph. The evolution of Bohemia, right in the centre of Europe, recalls that of the Netherlands.

As to Hungary, the Reformation penetrated there, as in Germany, as a reaction against the imperial policy which relied on Catholic authoritarianism. It took the form of Calvinism and not of Lutheranism because, firstly, Hungary had no common frontier with the Lutheran lands but only with Bohemia whence the Reformation reached her and, secondly,

[1] But with less force since Anglicanism no longer represented, as did the Roman church, a universal authority.

because the traditions of the Hungarian nobility, since the reigns of the Angevin kings, were hostile to German influence which was associated with the idea of the Holy Empire against which it had never ceased to defend itself, and favoured France whose manners and customs it had adopted at the beginning of the 14th century.

The Orthodox Creed.

There is one more fact of primary importance in the development of the religious history of Europe; the unity which the Orthodox religion continued to preserve. In Europe in the 16th century there were only two religions organized on the monarchic principle: Catholicism and Orthodoxy, both directly derived from the Church of the Roman Empire. For centuries their centres were in its ancient capitals, Rome and Byzantium. In the 16th century Byzantium ceded pride of place to Moscow; but Moscow continued the Byzantine tradition. Thus Roman unity was preserved in the West by the Catholic religion and in the East by the Orthodox. Like Catholicism, Orthodox worship preserved, even more fully, the Greek and Oriental influence. All the pomp of Byzantium is shown in its rites and ceremonies. The golden pineapples of its churches, its towers and cupolas, are derived, like the mitres of its priests, from the court style of Byzantium.

None the less, there was a great difference between them; while the Catholic religion was universal, the Orthodox was imperial. Catholicism was attached to no nation and to no state. It welcomed men of all peoples and of all races. The Church was an autonomous empire. The Orthodox religion, on the other hand, was associated with the idea of the Greek and Muscovite Empires. It extended over all the peoples which had formed, or still formed, part of the empire. But it was limited to these. It carried on no proselytism outside the empire or those peoples which the empire claimed to protect. It was universal to the extent that the empire was universal. But it was inseparable from the empire, even as the empire was inseparable from the Church. That was what gave Russian imperialism its Messianic character. It was not nationalist, it was imperialist because it represented the Christian universalism of Orthodoxy.

In the 16th century the renaissance of antiquity was displayed in western Europe in the fields of art, philosophy, science and trade in its individualist forms, as much in the Catholic as in the Calvinist lands. It did not touch Lutheran feudalism. In Russia, based on the unity of the Orthodox faith, it took the form of a political revival which aimed at the restoration of the universal empire.

Thus, across the turbulence of the spirit of man, the organization of society and the formation of the states, the great crisis of the 16th century, religious, social and political, was directly derived in all its aspects from the traditions which every people and every individual bore within themselves.

It illustrates, in a really striking manner, the grandiose continuity of history.

BOOK IX

The Struggle for Naval Supremacy

CHAPTER XXXVI

PHILIP II TRIES TO CREATE AN ATLANTIC EMPIRE FOUNDED ON AUTHORITARIAN ABSOLUTISM

I. THE POLICY OF DYNASTIC IMPERIALISM

Philip II Bases His Empire on the Atlantic Ocean

THE abdication of Charles V marked the failure of the policy of universal empire based on the domination of the continent. The advent of Philip II in Spain (1556) was the beginning of an imperialism based exclusively on sea-power. The House of Aragon had based the greatness of Spain on the Mediterranean. Philip II was to try to give it world leadership by basing his power on the Atlantic Ocean.

The policy of Charles V had already paved the way. Philip II possessed Spain, the Netherlands, Milan, Naples and Sicily and, in the Americas, Mexico and Peru. His mother, Isabella of Portugal, made him the heir of Portugal and of her immense maritime empire which, in addition to Brazil, gave him the mastery of the African and Indian coasts and control of the China Sea. His marriage in 1554 with the queen of England, Mary Tudor, closely united the Houses of Spain and England. Thus a vast complex was formed around the Atlantic Ocean which looked as if it must unite the Spanish Empire, the Portuguese Empire and the kingdom of England under a single dynastic rule.

Spanish Imperialism Relies on the Counter-Reformation

At the time when Philip II was carrying out his policy of maritime imperialism, the Catholic church, revived by the counter-reformation, was making ready to reconquer the world. The empires of Spain and Portugal opened America, Africa and Asia to the teaching of the gospels and the presence of a Catholic queen on the throne of England gave promise of the restoration of the Roman church. Philip II conceived the

idea of giving his imperialism an irresistible force by allying it to the counter-reformation. He would give it the freedom of his states and place at its disposal all the temporal forces which he possessed; it would make him the champion of the Catholic faith. The alliance of these two forces, temporal and spiritual, would assure the triumph of the Church and of Spain which, relying upon one another, would exercise an incontestable world leadership. The counter-reformation would begin the struggle by affirming an authoritarian ideology supported by the Inquisition; the imperialism of the king of Spain would affirm, in the political field, the same authoritarian absolutism supported by force of arms. His Catholic mission would be his justification.

But Philip II found to oppose his imperialist aims France and her ally Turkey in the foreign field and the Reformation in internal affairs. The war against France, carried on simultaneously by Spain and England, was at once resumed, while a pitiless struggle was begun against heresy. In England the reign of Mary Tudor (1553–1558), who had preserved intact the Catholicism of her mother Catherine of Aragon, began by a return to the Roman obedience. A new parliament, cleverly recruited, annulled the schismatic legislation of Henry VIII. Rome sent a legate to England. In the Netherlands the Inquisition continued its extermination of the reformers. In Spain and in Italy all traces of heresy were at once wiped out; and in the Spanish Empire the Church was triumphant. Everything seemed to presage the success of Philip II's policy, based on the counter-reformation and the English alliance.

Resistance of the Pope and Failure of the English Alliance

Great difficulties arose. The wars of Charles V had exhausted the treasury and aggravated the financial position of Spain to such an extent that, in the first year of his reign, Philip II had not been able to avert a bankruptcy which created a financial crisis in the country, the more severe since the war, rekindled against France, necessitated fresh expenses. In England the policy of Catholic restoration met with a lively opposition, to which the queen replied by bloody persecutions which rendered the dynastic alliance with Spain odious to the people. The Netherlands resisted the activities of the counter-reformation and it was necessary to override a protest by the University of Louvain to allow the Jesuits to settle in Belgium (1556).

The most serious obstacle to the policy of Philip II came from the Pope himself. Though making himself the champion of Catholic orthodoxy, Philip II had no intention of submitting to the tutelage of the Holy

See. But Paul IV, who had vigorously taken in hand the spiritual control of the Catholic world, was determined not to allow the Church to serve the imperialist aims of Spain. The power of Philip II, master of both northern and southern Italy, seemed to him an intolerable threat to the traditional policy of the Holy See and the defeat of France seemed fraught with consequences; the independence of the Pope was far better served by the presence of two powerful Catholic sovereigns than the irresistible supremacy of one of them. Paul IV did not hesitate. Though King Philip II had made himself, in his own states, throughout his empire and in England, the intransigent champion of the Catholic faith and its defender against the Ottoman menace, Paul IV, the pitiless restorer of the Inquisition, took the side of Henry II, the ally of the German Protestant princes and of the sultan; and to his title of 'protector of Germanic liberty' had not been afraid to add that of 'protector of the Holy Roman Church'. While this was going on, the death of Mary Tudor (1558), who left no heir, suddenly put an end to the English alliance and thus compromised the whole political plan so brilliantly conceived by Philip II. As soon as Elizabeth ascended the throne she restored the Anglican church and broke with Spain. It only remained to make peace. The bankruptcy of France a few months later and the intervention of Paul IV who did not lose the opportunity of setting himself up as mediator between the two Catholic kings led to the signing of the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis (1559). This was the end of the wars which France had been waging from the 12th century onward against England and more recently against Spain; France renounced all her claims in Italy, restored Savoy which she had occupied, but finally drove England back from the French coasts by recovering Calais which England was no longer able to hold since she could no longer rely on Spanish aid.

French Entente Policy

By bringing together the two Catholic powers, France and Spain, against Protestant England, the peace marked the reversal of the policy of Philip II. He had wanted to achieve Spanish supremacy over France by the alliance with England; he now sought supremacy over England by the alliance with France. Loyal to the dynastic policy of his family, he confirmed his new attitude by marrying Isabella of France, the daughter of Henry II. He thus became the brother-in-law of the queen of Scotland, Mary Stuart, who had just married the Dauphin. The Catholic powers of Spain, France and Scotland were thus closely united against England. Sixty years of wars for supremacy were ended by the reconciliation of

France and Spain. Spain incontestably emerged the victor. The Netherlands and Italy, over which France had tried to extend her sovereignty time and time again, remained in Spanish hands. The powerful Spanish fleets ruled the seas. There remained only one power to oppose her, England, whose resources were far from able to match hers. The era of Spanish supremacy, based on the sea, was beginning.

This supremacy was indissolubly linked to the Catholic faith. The struggle against heresy which had spread greatly in France brought Philip II and Henry II together. It was as defender of the faith that Philip II opposed not England but its schismatic and heretic queen, Elizabeth. By putting himself forward as the champion of the Catholic queen of Scotland, Mary Stuart, whom he wished to see on the English throne instead of Elizabeth, he appealed for the support of the English Catholics, whose activities he aided by favouring the ordination in the Flemish colleges of English Jesuits who would help to pave the way for a Catholic restoration.

The imperialism of Philip II thus appeared indissolubly linked to the counter-reformation, and his policy could only be conceived as a supplement to the religious wars which resistance to the counter-reformation was to kindle in France and in the Netherlands.

2. THE WARS OF RELIGION IN FRANCE AND THE REVOLT OF THE NETHERLANDS

Policy of Tolerance Fails in France

The wars of religion were a decisive turning-point in the history of France. Like all great crises they can be regarded from various viewpoints. The ideological conflict was complicated by terrible social and political upheavals. The great families dispossessed of their appanages took advantage of them to try to seize power. As in England after the Wars of the Roses there was a final upsurge of the feudal nobility, accompanied by violent social unrest.

The war had drained the treasury; the same year in which peace was signed the state went bankrupt; the rise in prices, which was constant throughout the 16th century, reduced the people to poverty and ruined the petty nobility. The conclusion of peace raised the serious problem of the disbandment of the army.

The religious quarrels began to be threatening. Henry II was eager to re-establish his authority by crushing the heretics. As soon as peace was signed, the Edict of Ecouen ordered the repression of heresy. The *parlement*, in which there were several Protestant counsellors, refused to approve

it. Henry II, in a *coup d'état*, had those who opposed him arrested. A few months later he died, wounded in a tournament, and Francis II, husband of Mary Stuart, ascended the throne (1559).

A political and religious struggle at once began; French troops landed in Scotland to support the Catholic party of Mary Stuart. The Scotch Calvinists appealed to Elizabeth; English forces came to grips with the French. But the death of Francis II, which took place in 1560, broke the close union of the Catholic dynasties. Mary Stuart returned to Scotland where she was obliged to recognize the Presbyterian church which had been given its doctrinal basis by John Knox.

In France the minority of Charles IX (1560–1574) gave the regency to the queen-mother, Catherine de Medici, who, influenced by the chancellor, Michel de l'Hospital, renounced the persecutions and tried to restore internal peace by religious freedom. By reverting to tolerance she also renounced absolutism. To associate the nation with her policy she summoned the States-General which had not met since 1484. At the same time she convoked a meeting of the clergy at Poissy (1560). Her aim was to effect a reconciliation between Catholics and Protestants. But, faced with the deficit which burdened the treasury, the representatives of the Third Estate, influenced by the events in Germany and England, proposed that the state debts be paid by confiscation of the properties of the clergy. To avert this threat, the Poissy meeting hastened to vote a free gift of one million six hundred thousand *livres*. None the less, it proved impossible to reach an understanding between Catholics and Protestants. Determined to keep religious peace, Catherine none the less granted the Protestants (1562) the right of celebrating their worship in the city suburbs and in the countryside. But the people would have nothing of tolerance. The Protestants sacked the cathedral of Montpellier and the Catholics massacred the Protestants at Vassy. The *parlement*, whence Henry II had expelled the reformers, outlawed the Protestants (1562) and civil war broke out throughout the kingdom with atrocious savagery. Immediately religious differences became linked with political claims. In the Midi, the ancient democratic ideas of the Albigenses reappeared; ministers preached that kings had no other power save that which came to them from the people and disputed the right of the nobles to privileges. The Catholics, who were the majority, rallied under the dukes of Guise and demanded a return to the former privileges of the cities and the nobles. Between the two parties the monarchy, which had sought to save peace by tolerance, was abandoned by all. Taking the struggle outside the nation, Catholics and Protestants both appealed for foreign aid. To

prevent French intervention in Scotland, Elizabeth of England made an alliance with the Huguenots, while Philip II openly supported the League.

Revolt of the Netherlands Against Spain

At this time there was serious unrest in the Netherlands. In 1556, the year in which Philip II came to the throne, the Inquisition began an active repression of heresy and the States-General took up a hostile attitude by refusing the taxes which Philip wished to levy as a contribution to the expenses of the war against France; even more, as soon as the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis was signed, it demanded the recall of the Spanish troops in the Netherlands. In 1566 a violent iconoclastic movement replied to the Inquisition. Philip, determined to impose the authoritarian Spanish régime on the Netherlands, sent the duke of Alva to Brussels. He at once began a reign of terror there. A 'Council of the Troubles' was set up which in a few months sent eight thousand persons to the stake or to the scaffold.

The Victory of Lepanto

Philip II undertook a Holy War on all fronts. The same year as the revolt broke out in the Netherlands, the Turkish fleet had seized the island of Chios from the Genoese and, a little later, took Cyprus from the Venetians. Philip, supported by Pope Pius V, decided to organize a crusade against the Turks and, in 1571, the combined fleets of Spain and Venice destroyed the Ottoman fleet at Lepanto. It was an important victory for it made any joining up of the French and Turkish fleets impossible, and even if it did not lead to the disappearance of the Barbary pirates of Algiers and Tunis, it none the less assured the naval supremacy of Spain and gave her an immense prestige in the Mediterranean.

But the treasury was empty and Philip found himself obliged to ask onerous loans from the Genoese bankers. He profited from the victory at Lepanto to undertake fresh persecutions and to expel from Spain a large number of *moriscoes* and *marañas*, that is to say Moors and Jews who were declared to have been insufficiently converted, in order to replenish the treasury by confiscating their goods.

In England he openly supported Mary Stuart against Elizabeth and aided Catholic insurrections in the northern counties and in Ireland. England replied by organizing a privateering war against Spain.

In the Netherlands the situation became serious. The duke of Alva had the counts Egmont and Hoorn, guilty of having presented a petition from the Belgian nobility demanding freedom of conscience, beheaded. At

the same time, to affirm his absolutism, he introduced the Spanish tax system without consulting the States.

Proclamation of the Dutch Republic

The country flew to arms (1572). William of Orange, governor of Holland and Zeeland, placed himself at the head of the insurgents; the States of Holland proclaimed a republic and, to get resources, confiscated the goods of the Church. At last realizing the danger, Philip II recalled the duke of Alva (1573). It was too late. The Estates of Brabant was already levying troops and openly preparing for resistance.

The proclamation of a Calvinist republic in Holland and the liberal revolt, in which the States-General of Brussels took the lead, had enormous repercussions abroad. The religious war opened a new phase in the question of the Netherlands. Elizabeth openly gave financial aid to the insurgents. In France, from 1572, Admiral Coligny, head of the Huguenot party, wanted to involve the king, Charles IX, in war against Spain by occupying the Netherlands. But Elizabeth placed the interests of England above those of the Reformation; she stated her opposition to any French military intervention in Belgium.

Catherine de Medici, whose regency came to an end in 1563, jealous of the influence of Coligny over the young king and fearing lest he push him into a fresh European war which might lead to the reconstitution of the Anglo-Spanish alliance against France, decided to agree to the extermination of the Huguenots which was being plotted by the leaders of the Catholic party. On August 22, 1572, Saint Bartholomew's Day, she allowed three thousand Huguenots to be massacred in Paris. The war was at once rekindled in France, aggravated by the death of the young king (1574), who was succeeded by his brother Henry III (1574–1589) who, only recently elected king of Poland—where France was seeking an ally against the Hapsburgs—returned in haste to France.

Social Unrest and the Role of the States-General in Belgium and France

In France as in the Netherlands the religious wars gave rise to a strong democratic movement among the people. In 1576 the States-General, meeting spontaneously at Brussels, declared that it was assuming sovereign rights. Its first decision was to abolish the Inquisition and to proclaim religious freedom. At the same time the French people plunged frantically into a religious war, the English parliament approved the persecution of the Catholics by Elizabeth, the Spaniards applauded the expulsion of the Moors and Jews and in Germany the people meekly accepted the creed

imposed upon them by their rulers. Belgium showed itself the true homeland of humanism and of liberty.

While at Brussels Catholics and Protestants united to defend their freedom against the king of Spain, France was being torn into two hostile factions. The 'Calvinist Union' formed a virtual state within the state, dividing France into several governments, each led by a military chief and an elected council, thus to a certain extent transforming the kingdom into a federative republic under Henry of Navarre, who became the head of the reform party. The Catholics, however, united in the 'League' under Henry of Guise were still the great majority in the country. Between these two factions, the 'politicals' formed a third party, small in numbers, preoccupied only with the interests of France and advocating religious tolerance. The duke of Alençon, the king's brother, was its leader. But politicals and Calvinists soon joined forces, levied an army of twenty thousand men in Germany and, throwing off the mask, besieged the king in Paris (1576). The Peace of Monsieur, which the king was forced to sign, divided the kingdom; the duke of Alençon received Anjou, Touraine and Berry, Henry of Navarre the government of Guyenne and the prince of Condé got Picardy. The religious wars and the democratic declarations of the Calvinists ended in the restoration of the great feudal appanages and the triumph of the great nobles over the monarchy.

But if in Germany the nobles had been able to make the Reformation a tool of their policy, in France the nation rose to bar their way. The States-General, considering that the kingdom was threatened with dismemberment by the existence of two irreconcilable creeds, met at Blois in 1576 and affirmed their wish that there should be one religion only in France and demanded that Calvinism should be extirpated. The League triumphed. The king proclaimed himself its leader. He thus hoped to hold in check the Leaguers who aimed at restoring to the kingdom its ancient freedoms 'such as they had been in the time of King Clovis I' (!) and, perhaps influenced by what had taken place at Brussels, making the States-General the mandatory of the people considered as the holders of national sovereignty (1577).

Meantime the Calvinists gave a definitely social character to the revolt in the Belgian provinces. The people took over the government in the cities, a revolutionary committee was set up in Brussels and William of Orange entered the city in triumph. The nobility and the property-owning classes became frightened. The anabaptist excesses had not been forgotten. The Walloon provinces, where the cities played a much smaller role than in Flanders, united under the control of the nobles and, by the Union

of Arras (1579), declared their readiness to submit to Philip II, whose troops under the command of Alexander Farnese were arriving in the Netherlands. Flanders, Brabant, Holland and Zeeland replied by forming the Union of Utrecht which finally broke with the king of Spain.

Farnese cleverly exploited this split by proclaiming a general amnesty and restoring all the privileges of the country only demanding in compensation a break with the Reformation. William of Orange countered by declaring himself a Calvinist. Philip II outlawed him (1580). He replied by affirming in his *Apologia* the principle of national sovereignty. The Dutch provinces, henceforth, formed a separate state. It was the first time since the Swiss cantons had proclaimed their independence that a nation had spontaneously determined its own destinies; the republic of the United Provinces was born.

The States-General of Brussels Tries to Create a Dynastic Union of the Netherlands, France and England

The religious troubles between Catholics and Protestants in the Belgian provinces more and more assumed the character of a social struggle; the people were enthusiastic Calvinists while the property-owning classes remained for the most part loyal to Catholicism. However the States-General of Brussels, allied to William of Orange, continued the struggle. But it passed from the religious to the political field. In 1580 the States-General proclaimed the deposition of Philip II and offered the crown to the duke of Alençon, brother and heir-presumptive of King Henry III. It was an international event of major importance. At the same time as the opportunity was being offered to France to realize the policy, which she had been pursuing for centuries, of uniting France and the southern Netherlands (Belgium) in a dynastic union, Philip II inherited the crown of Portugal and with it the Portuguese colonial empire. He thus became incontestably the most powerful monarch in the world. All the New World and all the trade of Asia depended upon him. Throughout the world he was master of the seas.

But war between Spain and England was being openly prepared. On both sides the shipyards were building great fleets. Although war was not yet formally declared, England was already privateering against the Spanish, Indian and American convoys, while Spain aided the Catholic opposition in England.

This was not the moment, when Spain had just received the immense increase in power represented by the Portuguese colonies, for Elizabeth to involve herself in a continental war to oppose the installation of the

future king of France at Brussels. She therefore took the course of making him her ally. In 1581 she publicly promised her hand to Duke Francis of Alençon-Anjou.

Elizabeth wished to match England, France and the Netherlands, closely linked by a dynastic union, against the imperialist power of Spain.

But the duke of Alençon, a paltry politician, betraying those who had chosen him as their king, tried to place French garrisons in Antwerp and Dunkirk. Meanwhile a conspiracy against the queen's life was discovered in London and attributed to Philip II. The Spanish ambassador was told to leave and a violent national movement roused England against Spain and against the Catholics. A few months later William of Orange was assassinated (1584) and the duke of Alençon died, leaving the succession open to the Huguenot prince, Henry of Navarre.

In France the fires of crisis were at once rekindled. Henry of Guise, to keep a Calvinist off the throne, set up against him the old Cardinal de Bourbon. In reality he was preparing for his own advent. He launched out on a propaganda of lampoons, accusing the Capets of being usurpers and claiming the Guises as the direct descendants of Charlemagne.

Philip II profiting by the confusion which reigned in France openly concluded an alliance with the League. Elizabeth landed an army in Holland; and the States-General in Brussels offered the sovereignty of the Netherlands to the king of France, Henry III.

But Henry III, fearing a war with Spain and not daring to ally himself with Calvinist England, refused the crown for which his ancestors had waged so many wars for so many centuries. Left to their own devices, split religiously and socially, the Belgian provinces of the Netherlands surrendered. In 1585 Alexander Farnese took Antwerp, recognized the national institutions of the country and restored it, as much by his moderate policy as by his military successes, to the sovereignty of Philip II.

Now master of the Netherlands, Philip possessed the military and naval bases he needed to undertake the final struggle for Spanish supremacy.

England Destroys the Spanish Naval Power

His justification was to be the defence of Catholicism. In France it won him the allegiance of the League; in England it allowed him to pose as the champion of Mary Stuart, then a prisoner of Elizabeth. The policy of Philip II, who wanted to enforce within his states an uncontested monarchical order based on Catholic orthodoxy, was to try and disintegrate the country he was preparing to invade. The crisis in France was a godsend to him. Pope Sixtus V had declared Henry of Navarre

deprived of all his rights to the throne. Philip II, brother-in-law of Henry III, became the next heir. He at once intervened in French politics by taking the side of the League. But Elizabeth, by declaring herself the protector of the reformers against Philip II, gave her support to the Huguenots and obtained for them the support of the king of Denmark and the prince-palatine of the Rhine. The war for naval supremacy which was then brewing between England and Spain was confounded with a religious ideology in whose name the powers carried on an undeclared war by intervening in the internal struggles which were rending France.

The conflict was soon to pass from the religious to the political field. England took the initiative. She sent Drake to attack the Spanish and Portuguese ports and to destroy a great Spanish squadron in Cadiz (1587). A few months later, Elizabeth, on the pretext of a fresh conspiracy discovered against her, got rid of Mary Stuart by having her condemned by a special commission. Her execution (1587) at last delivered Elizabeth from the rival whom Philip had been supporting against her. He replied by war. The Invincible Armada was sent to the Netherlands to embark an army there which was to invade England under Alexander Farnese. The destinies of Europe were at stake. It was a terrible disaster for Spain. Beaten by the English fleet in the Channel, the Armada, forced to flee northward, brought back to Spain only the debris of its shattered squadrons. Spanish naval power was destroyed at a single blow, to the advantage of England which seized control of the North Sea.

Paris Revolts Against Henry III

While this great drama of supreme importance in world history was being played out at sea, France was plunged into civil war. Henry III, accused of favouring the Calvinists because of his religious tolerance, found himself faced by a revolt of the people of Paris, stirred to fanatical frenzy by the League. To protect himself he brought a Swiss regiment into the capital. The people flew to arms, set up barricades and besieged the Louvre (1588). Henry III managed to escape but was forced to appoint Henry of Guise lieutenant-general of the kingdom. The States-General was convened at Blois and Henry of Guise, posing as the defender of the nation's rights, played the part of a sovereign. Reverting to the thesis developed by Philippe Pot in 1484, the States declared that any decision taken unanimously by the three orders should have the force of law, even against the king's will. Giving himself up for lost, Henry III had Henry of Guise assassinated and dismissed the States-General. The people

of Paris rose. Till then the nobles and the burghers had been the backbone of the League. Now, suddenly, it took on a democratic and revolutionary character. The sixteen quarters of Paris elected an 'insurgents' committee' which declared the king deposed as a 'perjurer, assassin, murderer, blasphemer, spreader of heresy, demoniac, magician, squanderer of the public funds and enemy of the country'[1] and instructed the *parlement* to institute his trial. The Cardinal de Bourbon was proclaimed king. The greater part of the country followed the lead of Paris. All that remained for Henry III was to ally himself with Henry of Navarre and the Huguenots. The two kings laid siege to Paris. But Henry III was assassinated by a monk. The king of Navarre, Henry of Bourbon, became King Henry IV (1589). It now remained for him to conquer his kingdom.

Philip II Claims the Crown of France for his Daughter

This was the moment for which Philip had been waiting. Defeated by England, he would not give up either the struggle or his imperialist plans. As formerly he had wished, by his marriage with Mary Tudor, to unite England and Spain under a single rule, so now he got the chance to unite western Europe under the rule of his dynasty. In the name of the defence of the faith, he claimed the crown of France for his daughter, Isabella, niece of Henry III. Farnese was ordered to abandon the war against the United Provinces and to lead the army raised to invade England against Henry IV. The absolutist ruler Philip II thus made himself the ally of the insurgent commune of Paris which, after the terrible siege which Henry IV had made in vain and during which forty thousand Parisians had died of starvation, asked the king of Spain to put a garrison into the city (1591). For four years Philip II, supported by the Catholic faction, carried on the war against Henry IV, adopting a defensive attitude towards England while awaiting the moment to launch against her the new Armada which he was building at Cadiz. In 1593 the Cardinal de Bourbon died. The States-General met in Paris to appoint his successor. Philip II seemed to have won; but the States refused to give the crown to his daughter Isabella, declaring: 'Our laws and our customs do not allow us to recognize over us for king a prince who is not of our nation.'

Henry IV Abjures Protestantism and is Crowned King

Henry IV did not let the opportunity go by. He abjured Protestantism. The greater part of the country at once acknowledged him. Thenceforward, rather than continue the civil war, he bought the submission of

[1] These events strangely foreshadow the revolutionary days of 1789–93.

the last of his opponents for twenty million *livres*. The governor of Paris handed the city over to him in exchange for a marshal's baton and two hundred thousand crowns. The religious wars, during which the great nobles had tried to restore the appanage system, ended, for want of anything better, by a paid submission (1594).

The return of Henry IV to Catholicism removed all pretext for Philip's intervention. He threw off the mask. The Catholic cause was only a means for him to try to impose a sort of Spanish suzerainty over France. He therefore went on with the war. But since he no longer had the support of the Catholics, the game was lost. In 1596 an English expedition destroyed the Cadiz shipyards and ended all hope of a Spanish revenge on England. Philip II, none the less, refused to acknowledge himself beaten. He went on for two more years. At last, in 1598, he signed the Peace of Vervins which confirmed in every detail the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis.

He died a few months later, leaving Spain financially and militarily exhausted. Its naval supremacy was completely destroyed, the United Provinces were finally lost and were already asserting themselves as a naval power. The English fleet and the Dutch fleet, defying the Portuguese and Spanish monopolies, were setting out to conquer colonial markets.

The grandiose scheme of an Atlantic empire collapsed and Spain emerged greatly weakened by the immense effort which her king had demanded. On the other hand, England and Holland set out on a conquest of the seas and France, weary of civil war, rallied around Henry IV who was to give her peace and unity by enforcing freedom of conscience.

3. AUTHORITARIAN POLICY COMPROMISES SPANISH SUPREMACY

The Idea of the Authoritarian Empire

The plan of Philip II, to unite all the Atlantic states under his leadership, was a great political conception. Certainly, it was in advance of its time. The drama of it was that he tried to achieve it by breaking down the two forces which the Renaissance was bringing to fruition· freedom of thought and freedom of trade.

In order to build up its Mediterranean empire the House of Aragon had appealed to religious tolerance and political liberalism; it had relied on the *cortes*, had preserved the great schools founded by the Arabs and given free rein to the business men, especially the Moors and Jews who held the industry and the international trade of Spain in their hands.

Philip II on the contrary tried to found the greatness of his empire on

the unity of Catholic orthodoxy, on monarchic absolutism and on state-controlled trade. Master of the maritime countries which were the most accustomed to political autonomy, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands, where humanism and the Renaissance had flowered with incomparable splendour and where the activity of the city burghers had resulted in the creation of the wealthiest centres of Europe, he had thought it possible to stifle all the national traditions created over four centuries of effort and struggle and to replace them by the omnipotent will of the king of Spain alone. Instead of making use of the immense powers latent in the Spanish, Italian and Flemish cities and the extraordinary energy of the capitalism of Antwerp to build the empire of which he dreamed, he had wanted to reduce them to mere tools of his power and to found his universal rule on the concentration in the hands of the state of all the wealth of the New World.

Instead of relying upon the great intellectual current which humanism had created in Italy, in the Netherlands and in Spain, he had thought it necessary to subject thought to the twofold authoritarian ideology of monarchic absolutism and the counter-reformation.

In the 15th century the monarchies had identified themselves with the peoples over whom they ruled by collaborating with the forces of the nation represented in Spain by the *cortes*; the empire as conceived by Philip II had to obey only one authority—his. Catholic ideology must be the cement of its unity, monarchical absolutism the brain and the will which gave it life.

This conception of authoritarian imperialism forced him, at the time when he was setting out on a series of wars against Turkey, England and France, to undertake a policy of repression against his own subjects, which either plunged them into desperate revolt or stifled them.

It bore in itself the seeds of its own dissolution.

The Counter-Reformation, Basis of Authoritarian Ideology

The Catholic ideology introduced in the region of Ferdinand of Aragon had an easy triumph in Spain. In 1534 the Inquisition began its struggle against Erasmian tendencies; the first groups of Protestants which appeared about 1550 were extirpated. The struggle against Moors and Jews, which soon passed from the religious to the racial field, was continued against the *moriscoes* and the *marañas* who, after conversion, were still persecuted on the pretext of an insufficient or simulated faith. These racial persecutions were not, however, the work of the Church. They were an indirect result of the counter-reformation, diverted from its true course by the

policy of monarchic absolutism. Not only did the persecutions provide grist for the treasury, always short of means, but by exploiting popular prejudices and rousing the people against the Moors and the Jews, who were described both as infidels and exploiters, diverted the people from political opposition and, by appealing to their hatred, encouraged an ideology favourable to royal absolutism. There thus arose, founded both on religious ideology and cleverly encouraged nationalism, that complex ideology which gave the Hapsburg régime in Spain its moral and political basis.

Dynastic imperialism thus appeared as the primary cause of the decline of Spain. The proud and fervent character of the Spanish people, eager for idealism and adventure, chivalrous yet easily turned to cruelty and fanaticism, was systematically compressed and canalized by the authority of the state, which soon left it no other outlet save that of the inner spiritual life.

But this same inner life, held in check by invading authoritarianism, was to find itself progressively more and more restricted to the domain of faith alone.

Ignatius Loyola, who marked with his personality the Catholic revival, was the Spaniard who had the greatest influence on Western civilization. He was both a soldier and a mystic. He transferred to the spiritual plane the idealism which had formerly animated the military religious orders. But he too did not escape the influence of the Renaissance. He wished to make use of its culture to the greater glory of the unchanging truth which he acknowledged to be in the Church, whose champion he was to become.

With the Society of Jesus (1534), which he organized like an army, he undertook what amounted to a Holy War, but a war without violence, where reason, will, abnegation were placed unreservedly at the total service of the faith. A man of his times, Loyola did not underestimate reason or worldly needs; he adapted himself to them and made use of them for the end towards which he strove, the subjection of all spiritual life to the total, rigid and absolute authority of the Church, as represented by the Pope.

The work done by the Jesuits was immense. After the atrocious religious wars they appeared in all countries as the representatives of order, authority and education. The Jesuit colleges became the centres of advanced culture for the best elements of society. They brought Western civilization to Poland which had remained Catholic. Together with the Dominicans and Franciscans, they were the great teachers of the faith in the new

countries of America, where their sincere efforts to understand the religious ideas of the peoples whom they wished to convert and the protection which they gave them after the excesses of the conquest met with outstanding success. The evangelistic work of St Francis Xavier in India and in China was no less remarkable; and if it turned out to be a failure it was mainly because it met with a civilization as ancient and with ideas of morality as developed as those of Christianity and because the civil and religious authorities opposed it with fanatical intolerance.

Under the impetus of the counter-reformation the Church, in the 16th century, proselytized with an ardour comparable only to the times of the primitive church. The results varied according to the countries involved.

The advanced culture taught in the Jesuit colleges was undoubtedly a ferment of civilization in the new or less developed countries; but their work had quite a different result in the countries with an older civilization where the rigid framework which they forced upon learning paralysed the extraordinary enthusiasm which humanism and the Renaissance, by liberating thought, had provided.

By pouring culture into a fixed mould, by submitting thought to the undisputed authority of the Holy See, the Jesuits made it unnecessary for men to think for themselves and, though giving them a broad and brilliant background, sterilized their creative powers. The whole spiritual energy of Spain was to turn more and more towards mysticism, which was expressed in the Carmelite reform carried out by Saint Teresa and in the ecstatic poems of St John of the Cross.

The religious fervour of the 16th century, directly inspired by an 'authoritarian' faith, was completely different from the mediaeval piety which, like evangelical Christianity, was marked by an ardent individualism. After the downfall of the seigniorial régime, it had signified the rebirth of individual conscience and made itself the starting point of spiritual and social emancipation. In the 16th century, on the contrary, religious thinking was immobilized, piety was congealed in orthodoxy and stripped of the asceticism which could only be satisfied by perpetual sacrifice, akin to agony. It was, on the plane of feeling, an attitude precisely similar to that adopted by Ignatius Loyola on the intellectual plane. Thus, in the strict scientific and theological teaching of the Jesuits and in the pitiless rigour of the inquisitors, it was the same ideology that ruled, the passion for authority.

In contrast to the authoritarianism of Luther which resulted in handing over all authority, whether temporal or spiritual, to the God-inspired state,

the Catholic church also, after the Council of Trent, in whose labours two hundred Spaniards took a decisive part, took refuge in an authoritarianism supported by the Inquisition and based on the condemnation of free thought.

In the 1st century Christ had called upon men to look into their own souls in order to free themselves from the materialism of their times and to find God within themselves. In the 16th century the counter-reformation restored the universalism of Catholicism by enforcing the intermediation of the clergy between God and man, by replacing individual piety by dogma imposed on pain of death. The Apostles, who had been Galilean fishermen, were replaced by the Princes of the Church, recruited from the younger sons of great families. The Church ceased to be in a continual process of development, as it had been till then, and enclosed itself in dogma and in a form which it wished to make eternal.

Nothing better symbolizes the rigid authoritarianism, which was at its most intense in Spain, than the Escorial palace built by Philip II. It was the total and absolute break with the Spanish tradition of fantasy, imagination and tolerance. Passion repressed found an austere delight in immuring itself in this rigid, solemn and proud palace; soulless and without enthusiasm, because without spontaneity, it was intended to surround an immense granite tomb destined to receive the mortal remains of the Spanish rulers who, even in the presence of God himself, intended to remain kings.

Greatness and Decadence of the Arts

The authoritarian ideology did not overwhelm Spain all at once. The breakers of thought rose and crashed over the breakwater which it erected in wonderful and fantastic imagination during the 16th and early 17th century. Even as Rabelais crowned mediaeval France with an outpouring of joy and pride in the world that was to be, so Cervantes in his astonishing *Don Quixote*—in which all the diversity and independence of the Spanish character is shown—linked the last glimmers of the Middle Ages to the splendours of the Renaissance. In it can be felt the drama of the struggle of the idealism, which often leads to illusion, of the ascetic redresser of wrongs living in a world he does not understand, where materialism and realism are forced upon him pitilessly. The imagination, the humanity and the bitter benevolence of the glorious Lepanto pensioner are in strange contrast to the proud haughtiness and implacable spirit of the times.

The individualism of the Renaissance and the authoritarian ideology

struggle against one another in the plays of Lope de Vega where the imagination triumphs despite the aristocratic will to stifle it; but with Tirso de Molina the counter-reformation, so perfectly expressed in his *Damned for Lack of Faith*, is definitely victorious. Thenceforward personality is stifled. From the beginning of the 17th century, the depth and brilliance of Spanish literature is submerged in Gongorism, where empty and factitious grace of form is only a richly embroidered pall of lace thrown over the corpse of thought. Literature never recovers its inspiration save where, as in the plays of Calderon, it is revived by the breath of religion. This was the last glimmer of a great creative civilization extinguished because it thought it could only retain its faith by stifling its freedom.

Painting, on the contrary, favoured by the wealth of the court, of the aristocracy and of the monastic orders and inspired by faith, was to know an age of gold in the 17th century with such admirable artists as Velasquez, Zurbaran and El Greco, whose powerful originality evokes the sober distinction and ardent piety of Spain. But painting, no less than literature, could not exist in a period when individualism was being extinguished; already by the end of the 17th century the grace of Murillo is mingled with insipidity. After him, as after Calderon (died 1681), Spain could do no more than repeat herself, up to the time when the great crisis of the French Revolution was to awake her from her torpor.

Political Authoritarianism

Philip II based his absolutism more on authority than on organizing ability. The *cortes* was summoned only to vote indirect taxation, the nobles lost their influence and the cities were deprived of what little autonomy remained to them. But no new framework was given to Spain. The court became an immense power and was ruinously extravagant;[1] the lust for pensions transformed the nobles into courtiers, but no new organization replaced the ancient structure of the country. It was only in 1596 that Philip II deigned to grant, not only to Spain but to the whole of his empire, a central organ of government. A State Council was created, superimposed on a number of Councils entrusted with the affairs of Castile, Aragon, Italy, the Indies (that is to say, the colonies in general), war, the Inquisition, the religious orders, finance and trade. Assisted by their advice, the king, with his secretaries, governed as a monarch whose authoritarian absolutism was soon to be imitated by the Councils where an oligarchy of nobles was formed. The absence of all

[1] The court of Charles V cost 200,000 ducats; that of Philip II 1,300,000 ducats.

control save that of the king, too distant, was soon to hand over the reins of government to them.

In reality the Spanish Empire was based on three great forces, the Church which was integrated with the royal administration, the armed forces and the colonies. The army, made up to a great extent by the petty nobility, was divided into regiments on the model of the Swiss troops and was the most powerful military force of the times. The fleet, before the destruction of the Armada, was the finest in the world.

State Control of Trade

Like the court, armies and fleets were expensive. Philip II called on the colonies to undertake their upkeep. The wars of Charles V had drained the treasury to such an extent that the reign of Philip II began with a bankruptcy (1557); the treasury promissory notes were replaced by 5% bonds which it was impossible to cash. State control was intensified to restore the financial situation. The royal monopoly was strictly enforced and the semi-liberalism of Charles V was abandoned. The colonies were regarded more and more from the view-point of exclusively metropolitan interests. Stock-breeding, agriculture and industry were developed in Mexico and Peru but exclusively for local markets. All exports to Spain, save for metals, indigo and cochineal, were strictly forbidden. The result was that the great estates began to be organized on the basis of a closed economy, which hampered the improvement of methods of cultivation and favoured serf-labour, thanks to which the colonists lived in aristocratic sloth. Philip II, like Charles V before him, took the most vigorous measures to prevent the enslavement of the natives; despite revolts of the colonists, which went so far as to try to proclaim the independence of Mexico in order to prevent the application of the king's edicts against slavery (1564), the more extreme forms of slavery which regarded the natives as mere beasts disappeared in his reign.

The policy of economic monopoly went hand in hand with political absolutism and Catholic authoritarianism. The institutes created in America were charged with teaching that any pretensions towards liberty were not only a seditious act but a heresy. In 1571 the Inquisition was introduced into America. It did not, however, thunder against the Indians. Its real task was to ensure political and religious conformity and to exercise a severe censorship of books and ideas. Its authority, which was uncontrolled, was exemplified by the stake permanently displayed on the public promenade of Mexico.

Thus Spanish technical skills imported into America were hamstrung

by the restrictions of the trade monopoly, and European civilization, spread by the universities, the colleges and the clergy, was stifled by authoritarian ideology.

In 1569 the Philippines were occupied by Spain. They soon served as staging-posts between China and the American colonies. They would have been able to give Spain control of all the trade of the Far East with the Old World and with America. But in order not to harm the Spanish traders and industrialists, it was forbidden to import Chinese produce from the Philippines or to export it to America. Their role was thus reduced to practically nothing. On the other hand the opening of the Potosi mines provided the state with immense resources in precious metals; they amounted, on an average, to one and half million ducats annually. At the end of the reign of Philip II the royal treasury received 670,000 gold ducats annually. But the expenses rose even more rapidly than the receipts. The court alone cost more than a million ducats. The absence of industry—after the expulsion of the Moors and Jews—obliged Spain to increase her imports continually. It is true that customs dues brought in heavy receipts; at Seville alone import licences and taxes amounted to two million ducats.

Despite all this the construction of the fleet, the costs of the army and the wars added to the ordinary outgoings which became heavier and heavier disorganized the finances. Philip had frequently to ask for enormous loans from the Genoese bankers, which were secured by future profits from the colonies. In 1573 this system led to a fresh issue of treasury bonds, followed in 1575 by a fresh bankruptcy. A third bankruptcy, in 1596, caused the final ruin of the Spanish financiers. Without a policy of exploitation of the wealth imported from the colonies by commerce and industry, the rain of gold and silver slid off Spain like water off a roof and only served to enrich Genoa, Antwerp and French industry.

The policy of state monopoly combined with religious and racial intolerance, which deprived Spain of her best men, led to a serious social crisis. The rise in the cost of living ruined the petty nobles who lived from their land-rents and plunged the people into extreme poverty. Industry was stifled for lack of capital. The Antwerp middlemen and the Genoese bankers dominated all international business. Despite the great convoys, the country lacked precious metals; it had only the vast treasures accumulated in the Church treasuries. Alongside the vast estates of the nobles, which were kept intact by the system of primogeniture, alongside the great properties of the clergy (the revenue of the archbishop of Toledo amounted to 400,000 ducats), the ordinary people were pauperized. The

Moors on the great estates were reduced to serfdom and the condition of the Spanish peasant became more and more precarious.

Behind the façade of its political and military power Spain was being ruined and immobilized in a sterile sloth, powerless to prevent the constant flow abroad of the stream of gold and silver which her galleons unloaded at Cadiz.

4. AUTHORITARIANISM STIFLES ITALY

Authoritarian Rule in Spanish Italy

The wars of the 16th century ended with the establishment of almost total Spanish domination over Italy, which was then passing through a period of rapid economic decadence because of the diversion of the great trade-routes to the west. Except for Venice, still living on the wealth she had amassed, Italy's role in international trade was entirely due to the capital which she still held. It was essentially financial. The Genoese bankers controlled the silver market of Spain and banking had made the Medici dukes of Florence and allied them to the French royal House. The decline in trade caused the urban middle classes to invest their fortunes in land and become an aristocracy of *rentiers*, while the former city governments foundered in economic and social crises.

By linking the duchy of Milan first to France and then to Spain, the Italian wars had caused the ducal government to become a monarchy which, under Philip II, was closely linked with Spain. A Spanish governor held power there, assisted by a senate which acted as a supreme court; all traces of municipal autonomy had disappeared in the great city which had formerly stood up, by its own power alone, to the pretensions of the emperor. Florence still preserved a semblance of independence. In 1555 Charles V had transformed it into the duchy of Tuscany, which was under Spanish protectorate. In 1569 Pope Pius V authorized the Medici to bear the title of Grand Dukes of Tuscany. Despite the marriage of Catherine de Medici with Henry II of France, Tuscany still remained under the influence of Spain, of which it was to some extent a vassal. In Tuscany, as in the duchy of Milan, the former republican institutions were replaced by monarchical absolutism.

Naples which had been an independent kingdom under the Aragon dynasty was reduced to the status of a province under a Spanish viceroy. The parliament, which represented the three estates of the realm, still existed but it was without authority. Power was exercised by the viceroy assisted by a council made up of two Spaniards and one Italian, but the important duties of the administration were still reserved for Neapolitans.

In Sicily the system was similar. The Spanish viceroy governed with the aid of a parliament made up of representatives of the army, the Church and the landowners; it met every three years to appoint a *junta* of twelve members who were entrusted with supervising the actions of the government.

In Sardinia the system was similar, save that the parliament met only every ten years.

Thus Italy, which had once been the most active centre in Europe of trade and city life and where the sentiment of autonomy had been the most vigorous, fell under the protectorate of Spain which, relying on the Church and the privileged classes, governed the country in the interests of the Spanish dynasty alone. The wealth accumulated in Italy was drained by the taxes to support Philip II's policy of Spanish supremacy; in the kingdom of Naples alone the taxes rose from 1·8 million to the colossal sum of five million ducats[1] between 1558 and 1620.

The States of the Church and the Counter-Reformation

Like all the Italian states, the States of the Church developed towards monarchical absolutism. But the Pope who had no other temporal power at his disposal than his immense financial resources could not enforce his rule on the great families in his states which had been so generously enriched by Peter's pence. Sixtus V (1585–1590), though able to suppress the abuses of nepotism and to improve the administration of the Roman finances, was unable to free his states from the dominating influence of the quasi-feudal families with whom, however, he began a pitiless conflict.

In reality, both in the Spanish parts of Italy as in the States of the Pope, the real power was the counter-reformation. It dominated everything political, social, spiritual and intellectual.

While republican institutions were being eliminated in the cities and the influence of the city populations was being replaced by the dominance of the privileged classes, faith disappeared before the sovereign authority of the clergy. Religion was no longer troubled by those explosions of faith which had formerly involved the cities in great social movements; it was adapted to the conservatism of the property-owning classes and was shown in their power and wealth. It dazzled worshippers by the theatrical pomp of a gilded and spectacular architecture, where there was no place for faith or art, which was exemplified in the new style of the Church of Jesus, the great Roman basilica of the Jesuits. The counter-

[1] Fifty million gold francs; about a half of the entire tax-yield of all France at the same period.

reformation, allied to the great social forces of the time, that is to say to the authorities, the nobles and the rich, imposed a luxurious and attractive way of life, easy and comfortable, on the sole condition that its authority was beyond discussion.

In less than half a century it had stifled Italian thought, which by the end of the 16th century had become congealed in an empty but elegant formula, concealing its poverty under a screen of verbiage. Virtuosity replaced art. The mannered extravagance of Marino (died 1625) conquered Italy even as that of Gongora had seduced Spain; the success which they enjoyed among their contemporaries proves the spiritual decadence which everywhere accompanied religious conformity and monarchic absolutism.[1]

The 16th century had opened in Italy in the glory of free thought and renascent art, which blossomed in the midst of political, economic and social crises; it closed in the orderly, amiable and empty atmosphere of worldliness and slickness which could only end in tragedy when Giordano Bruno, guilty of wanting to find God for himself not as a rigid conception but as a living reality, paid the penalty for his freedom of thought by dying at the stake amid flames lit by the Inquisition (1600).

Venice and Savoy Retain Their Independence

In Italy two states alone escaped Spanish ascendancy: Venice and Savoy. In the 16th century Venice continued to play the part of a great power, allied, moreover, with Spain against Turkey. But her prosperity had been greatly diminished by the loss of the spice market taken from her by the Portuguese and by the formidable competition of Marseilles which, under the protection of the capitulations signed in 1536 by Francis I with the Porte, had successfully disputed with Venice the markets of the Levant. Venice thenceforward was hostile to France and, in order to compensate for her losses, became the heart and soul of the anti-Turkish alliance. Compared with the great maritime powers, she lost ground everywhere; in 1534 her privileges at London were withdrawn and Antwerp took her place as the great international business centre. The conquest of Cyprus by Soliman the Magnificent finally impelled her to take part in the great naval expedition organized in accord with Spain, but under Spanish command, which ended in 1571 with the brilliant victory at Lepanto. But it was a success without morrow, since the Turks continued to hold Cyprus, and France retained her position in

[1] Euphuism also became the fashion in England with Lyly (died 1606). The preciosity of Voiture (died 1648) in France belongs to the same sterile movement, but in England and in France these were only passing phases.

the Levant where, in 1584, an English company also succeeded in finding a place.

By the end of the 16th century the decline of Venice was an irremediable fact, but the wealth she had acquired and the greatness of her fleet still made her a power to be reckoned with.

Venice also preserved, together with her independence, her brilliant civilization. In Italy she alone refused to allow the Inquisition within her borders or to accept the decisions of the Council of Trent. She rejected all authority save that of the rich merchant oligarchy which governed her. Up to the end of the 16th century she remained the centre of a great school of painting which, from the times of Giorgione (died 1511), shone with the splendour of its colour, its taste and its magnificence. Titian, court painter to Charles V, was its master, and it was distinguished by the incomparable brilliance of Veronese, Tiepolo and Tintoretto.

Alongside the great merchant city of Venice, the small land-state of Savoy-Piedmont was the only other Italian state which emerged independent from the wars of the 16th century. Momentarily annexed by Francis I, Savoy was restored to independence by the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis (1559). Its duke, Emmanuel-Philibert, at this time played a European role because of the strategic importance of the Alpine passes controlled by Savoy. The House of Savoy, henceforward, took its place among the European powers. In imitation of the great Western states, it at once inaugurated a monarchical policy and ceased to summon the States, made up till then of representatives of the nobles and clergy. The House of Savoy, masters of the poorest of the Italian principalities, made the most of its situation as a buffer-state between France and the Spanish possessions in the peninsula and thus was to become the protector of Italian independence.

5. THE LIBERALISM OF THE BELGIAN PROVINCES DEFIES SPANISH ABSOLUTISM

Belgium Becomes an Autonomous State (1598–1621)

During the revolt of the Netherlands a basic contrast was revealed between the authoritarian and dynastic conception of the policy of Philip II and the deeply liberal tendencies of the Belgian and Dutch peoples. The Dutch States-General preferred Calvinist reform to Catholic conformity (1572) and the States-General of Brussels stood for liberty of conscience (1576).

After twenty years of war Philip II was forced to acknowledge that not

only was it impossible for him to master the republic of the United Provinces, but it was even impossible to force upon the Belgians, over whom Alexander Farnese had re-established Spanish rule, the authoritarianism which he had introduced into Spain and Italy. By the Peace of Vervins (1598), which ended the war between Spain and France, he ceded the southern Netherlands, with the approval of the States-General of Brussels, to his daughter Isabella who married the Archduke Albert, son of the Emperor Maximilian II, with the stipulation that if they had an heir he would succeed them as sovereign of the country. Thus the autonomy of Belgium was guaranteed by the two branches of the Hapsburg dynasty, the Spanish and the Austrian. The Archduke Albert was a subdeacon and a cardinal. The Pope authorized the marriage which was, however, barren. In 1621 the Netherlands reverted to Philip IV.

None the less they existed as an independent state for twenty years. The States-General claimed the government. It demanded peace with the United Provinces and, when it did not obtain this, demanded the withdrawal of the Spanish troops fighting in Holland and refused to vote the war credits. From 1600 the Archduke Albert, held in check by the States-General, ceased to summon it and governed the country with the collaboration of the former provincial Estates as if it were so many autonomous principalities. Revived by the peace, Antwerp again became prosperous though without recovering its former position as a great international port; Brussels, where the court and the foreign diplomatic missions resided, became a cosmopolitan capital and one of the main centres of European diplomacy. The editing of the customary laws, undertaken by Charles V in 1531 and interrupted by the troubles, was completed. An era of splendour began, exemplified by the Antwerp school of painting, which rivalled that of Venice. During the wars of religion the great Brussels painter Pieter Brueghel had been for Flanders what Rabelais had been for France and Cervantes for Spain. Rubens was the most illustrious representative of Belgian culture at the time of the archduke. His fame dominated the painting of his times. Henry IV entrusted him with the decoration of the Louvre with great frescoes glorifying the French monarchy. One of his pupils Van Dyck, who became court painter to Charles I, was the inspirer of the English school and Franz Hals the founder of the Dutch school.

But at the time of the archduke, surrounded by Spanish etiquette, the counter-reformation took root in the country which soon became one of its main fiefs. Humanism was slowly extinguished.

On the death of the Archduke Albert (1621) Philip IV, who had just

ascended the Spanish throne, once more began the war against the United Provinces and prepared the way for the restoration of the Netherlands to the Spanish crown. Isabella was treated as a governor. The foreign embassies left Brussels. The independence of Belgium had been only an ephemeral dream, followed by two centuries of poverty and humiliation brought by the dynastic policy of the kings of Spain.

CHAPTER XXXVII

NAVAL EXPANSION OF HOLLAND AND ENGLAND

I. CAPITALISM CREATES THE POWER OF THE UNITED PROVINCES

Beginnings of the Republic

AFTER more than thirty years of struggle, during which the sailors of Holland and Zeeland—'the sea-beggars'—had driven back the Spanish fleet weakened by the defeat of the Invincible Armada, exhausted Spain had recognized the *de facto* independence of the United Provinces by signing the Twelve-Year Truce (1609).

Treating with King Philip III as an equal, they were already a great naval power.

While they had been carrying on the war, the United Provinces had organized themselves, as formerly the Swiss cantons had done, as a federative republic, a direct result of the ancient autonomy of the mediaeval principalities.

The seven insurgent provinces were organized as so many little sovereign republics, in each of which the States, replacing the king of Spain, assumed the reins of government. The two maritime provinces of Holland and Zeeland had from the first held the leadership because of their merchant fleets transformed into ships of war. In the cities the burghers of Amsterdam, Harlem, The Hague, Delft, Leyden and Rotterdam, organized in powerful guilds, formed an oligarchy comparable to the one which governed Venice. Because of their wealth—in 1609 Holland provided 58% of the resources of the republic[1]—the burghers of Holland and Zeeland had forged ahead of the canons of Utrecht, who still existed in the Calvinist church as a survival of the former episcopal principality, ahead of the free peasants of Frisia who, like the Swiss, had broken away

[1] Under Charles V Flanders paid four times as much in taxes as Holland; from this one can judge how great was Flemish prosperity.

from the Holy Empire in the 13th century and ahead of the landowning nobles of the other principalities.

To replace the former royal governors, the Estates in the provinces had elected 'pensioners', amongst whom the Pensioner of Holland took the leading role, while the former governor of the provinces of Holland and Zeeland, William of Orange, who had put himself at the head of the insurgents, had been kept as chief of state with the title of stadtholder (*stathouder*).

In 1581 the Act of the Hague had sealed the union of the insurgent provinces by creating a States-General, within which the provincial Estates, each with one vote, were represented by their deputies. Thenceforward the republic had an organized form; the States-General took over the task of representing the republic abroad, of appointing the 'Grand Pensioner'—always, in fact, the Pensioner of the republic of Holland—who, alongside the stadtholder, the chief of state, acted as head of the government, of appointing the army and navy chiefs, of voting, unanimously, the state expenses and of acting as arbiter in any conflict which might arise among the federated republics. In 1584, when Maurice of Nassau had succeeded his father, William of Orange, a State Council was formed, as a permanent executive organ, made up of twelve representatives of the provinces and one member of the family of Nassau, from which the stadtholder should be chosen.

Maritime and Colonial Expansion of the Capitalist Companies

While they were giving the republic a political structure, the United Provinces were still at war with Spain. The spearhead of their attack was the fleets of Holland and Zeeland.

In the southern Netherlands the Spanish army had astonishing success. In 1585 Antwerp, still one of the richest cities in Europe, was taken and put to sack. The panic which ensued caused the mass of the business men to flee and seek refuge, with their capital, in Amsterdam. This caused a sudden and extraordinary flowering of Dutch commerce. Its pioneers were emigré Belgians, Jews expelled from Spain and Portugal and French Huguenots. It was the Belgians, amongst them Steven Stévin the famous Brussels physician, who were the first Dutch deep-sea navigators and the first captains were refugees from Antwerp or English officers sent by Elizabeth to fight the Spaniards.

The revolt against Spain destroyed the role of middleman between the Baltic and Spain which had been the reason for the prosperity of the Dutch merchant marine. Even during the war, it was searching for fresh

outlets. The first company was formed to trade with Guinea and the Levant. A little later the States of Holland and Zeeland created the India Company (1594) which set up a post at Java, while the Amsterdam bankers sent an expedition to search for a passage to India by doubling South America (1596); it reached Japan, where it obtained a licence to trade. Encouraged by this success, other companies were founded which, in defiance of the Portuguese monopoly, set up trading-posts in the Moluccas, in Ceylon and at Malacca, carrying on a pitiless competition amongst themselves, attacking the Portuguese traders and combining commerce with piracy. The war carried on by the United Provinces against Spain was transported to India against the Portuguese Empire which had been united with Spain since 1580.

The struggle against the Spanish and Portuguese forced the rival companies to amalgamate. On the intervention first of the States-General and then of the burgomaster of Amsterdam, they merged to form two great companies, the Dutch Company and the Zeeland Company (1600); but private interests again gained the upper hand and, as soon as formed, the two companies entered into a cut-throat competition against one another. But just at that time the East India Company, formed on the initiative of the English government and open to all the merchants of the country (1600), proved a fresh and formidable adversary for the Dutch companies. Under the pressure of the Grand Pensioner, Oldenbarnevelt, they united in 1602 to form the General East India Company, with the enormous capital of six and a half million florins. The capitalists dominated the States-General. It granted the company a monopoly of the India trade. Contrary to what had been taking place in Spain, where the king had put all colonial trade under state control, the Dutch capitalists used the power of the state to their own advantage. Supported by the public authorities, private initiative very soon made the Dutch fleet a serious rival to Spain. In 1607 the fleet of the United Provinces defeated the Spanish fleet at Gibraltar and forced Spain to sign the Twelve-Year Truce (1609), which gave the Dutch the right—denied by the king of Spain to the Spaniards themselves—to trade with India. The Dutch merchants had broken the power of the king of Spain, then the greatest in the world.

Conflict Between Republicans and Monarchists

The triumph of the republic did not altogether allow it to escape the influence of monarchical absolutism which was then evident throughout all Europe. This trend was, in fact, parallel with the trend towards capita-

lism and, like it, aimed at the concentration of forces which opened illimitable possibilities for expansion. While Philip III was forcing upon Spain the idea of monarchy by divine right, while Henry IV no longer summoned the States-General and introduced a liberal absolutism into France, while James I was trying to create a dynastic alliance of the continental sovereigns to support him against English parliamentarianism, Maurice of Nassau (1584–1625) was to try to destroy the republic of the United Provinces in order to replace it by a monarchy under the Orange dynasty. The war of independence, waged against Spain with all the forces of the nation under his command, had made Maurice a true head of state. The triumph of the Twelve-Year Truce (1609) made him the hero of Dutch freedom. It not only assured the political independence of the nation but by opening the Spanish colonies to Dutch trade it also assured the republic a rapid and prodigious prosperity. To exploit this, the capitalists founded in the very year peace was signed the Bank of Amsterdam which was rapidly to become the greatest financial power in the world and, in internal politics, the bastion of bourgeois capitalism.

But no sooner had she triumphed over Spain than Holland found herself faced with the British East India Company, ready to contest her mastery of the Indian Ocean. To meet this threat the General East India Company set up a sort of government at Bantam on the island of Java, presided over by a governor-general assisted by a council and entrusted by the company with the administration and defence of its trading-posts (1610).

Once settled in India the Dutch, on the heels of the English, turned their attention to America. In 1614 the establishment of New Belgium, founded a little earlier by Belgian emigrés on the site of the present New York, was occupied and, under the name of New Amsterdam, soon became a cosmopolitan market.

The General East India Company, closely associated with the prosperity of the Bank of Amsterdam, soon became a state within the state.

Against the military and, consequently, authoritarian power of Maurice of Nassau, who was aiming at the monarchy, it rallied the forces of liberal and republican capitalism.

The struggle began between the republican and autonomist party, represented by the business interests led by the Grand Pensioner Oldenbarnevelt, and the Orangist and unitarian party which, in opposition to the burgher oligarchy, rallied the peasants, the sailors and the lesser nobles around the monarchist aims of Maurice of Nassau. To the political conflict was added a religious division. After the death of Calvin, the

Reformation, following a similar line to the counter-reformation, yearned for religious conformity. It at once aroused against it a liberal opposition which in Holland rallied around Arminius and in England led to the formation of the sect of 'the independents'. Arminius, who denied predestination, was followed by the republican middle classes; the common people, the nobles and the House of Orange, on the other hand, held fanatically, with the 'Gomarists', to orthodoxy. Thus the conflict between humanism, represented by the middle classes, and authoritarianism, supported by the prince and by the people, was brought into the Calvinist republic.

Ten years after the recognition of its independence and while its ships were conquering the seas of Asia, the republic of the United Provinces was rent by an internal conflict which was almost a civil war. To put an end to it, the Synod of Dordrecht condemned the Arminians (1618). Maurice of Nassau profited by this to have condemned and executed on a charge of high treason the Grand Pensioner Oldenbarnevelt who, with William of Orange, had been the real founder of the republic. Arminianism was broken. But it was still to survive and, in the 19th century, was to give birth to liberal Protestantism. The Orange party triumphed. But it was not powerful enough to force its will on the Dutch burghers on whose activities the prosperity and consequently the power of the republic depended. A sort of compromise was effected. The stadtholder kept the command of the army and took over executive power; the States kept the control of internal administration and economic affairs. The stadtholder, by keeping the forces of the state intact, and the bourgeoisie, by becoming the source of its wealth, put the republic in a state which enabled it victoriously to resist Spain when three years later, on the expiry of the Twelve-Year Truce, war again broke out (1621).

2. CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE MONARCHY AND LIBERAL PARLIAMENTARIANISM PAVES THE WAY FOR THE GREATNESS OF ENGLAND

Parliament Checks Elizabeth's Attempts at Absolutism

During the reign of Elizabeth (1558–1603) the struggle against Spain was the central feature of the political, economic and religious life of England. After the Catholic restoration under Mary Tudor, Anglicanism was re-established under Elizabeth who wanted to keep at an equal distance from both Protestants and Catholics. The clerical hierarchy was retained, with all the ceremonial pomp of Catholic worship, by the

Thirty-Nine Articles (1563 revised 1571) which, with the third edition of the Prayer Book, fixed the rule and the doctrine of the Anglican church.

The war against Philip II, who posed as the champion of the Roman church, drove parliament to a bloody persecution of the Catholics, who were regarded as traitors, and forced Elizabeth to consent. At the same time England was hostile to Calvinism, which in Scotland, England's traditional enemy, had taken the form of puritanism. The English parliament wanted worship to be organized according to political and social needs. The puritans regarded the state as a theocracy. A fierce struggle began between English realism and Scotch piety. A 'Court of High Commission' was created to organize the repression of puritanism. English individualism reacted against all these persecutions which had been undertaken on the initiative of the state. Robert Brown, rejecting the idea of an official church, demanded the formation of autonomous and independent churches. He had many followers.

This was directly opposed to the policy of the monarchy which wanted to make Anglicanism the basis of absolutism. The queen unleashed a war to the death against the 'independents' (1593).

More than twenty thousand of them emigrated to the Netherlands and the United Provinces, where they provided a number of naval officers for the colonial companies. The political conflict between absolutism and parliamentarianism was thenceforward complicated by the duel between authoritarian Anglicanism and the liberalism of the puritans and the independents.

Thus, like Philip II, Elizabeth aimed at absolutism by associating her rule with that of the state church. As Philip II had made use of the *cortes*, so Elizabeth tried to avoid coming into conflict with parliament. She did not dispute its right of voting the taxes and the laws, but she summoned it as infrequently as possible; it met only thirteen times in the forty-five years of her reign. Furthermore, she tried to form within it a party favourable to her interests by granting peerages to her loyal adherents and conferring on new cities the right of sending members to the House of Commons.

In order not to have to ask for fresh taxes, which would have exposed her to the remonstrances of parliament, Elizabeth did her utmost to effect economies, which explains the lack of luxury at the English court compared with those of France and Spain, and also the good administration of the English finances. Parliament's right to vote the taxes also helped England to avoid the disastrous bankruptcies which the lack of control over the policy of their rulers had meant for France and Spain.

But it was not enough for Elizabeth to economize; her policy demanded greater resources. Most of the magistrateships were unpaid. Elizabeth could not, like the French kings, raise money by selling state positions. She therefore turned, in imitation of Philip II, to a policy of fiscal state control and sold monopolies for the sale of wine and basic necessities. The immediate result was disorganization of the country's economy and an increase in living costs. Parliament demanded the abolition of the monopolies and its opposition became so intense that the queen had to give way and thank parliament for having prevented her from 'falling into error solely for her lack of true friends'. Parliament saved the country from the abuses of fiscal power which had become so heavy a burden on the absolutist monarchies.

Forced to respect the prerogatives of parliament, Elizabeth tried to consolidate the monarchy by strengthening the executive power. Her two private secretaries assumed, with the title of State Secretary, the role of ministers. The Privy Council became a government council made up of a score of appointed members chosen by the queen from the most varied milieux and amongst whom parties were formed which, each in turn, exercised their influence on the royal policy. The Council conferred with the Queen and intervened in the government of the country by its Orders in Council.

It is a remarkable thing that the development of the executive power did not involve England in bureaucracy and red tape. It was a unique case. Being short of funds, which parliament refused to approve, the queen had to adapt her centralizing policy to existing institutions. In the parishes and in the towns she entrusted the administration and application of the social laws which she obtained from parliament to unpaid Justices of the Peace chosen in the countryside from amongst the gentry and in the towns from the merchants and traders. Finding it impossible to create a body of royal officials, owing to lack of funds, the English monarchy, in order to govern, was compelled to favour the formation of an independent ruling class, whose practice in justice and administration gave it an excellent political education and which provided the majority of the members of parliament. The result was that, instead of being superimposed upon the nation as was the case in all the other monarchies, the administration in England was a part of it. The citizens were judged and administered by their own representatives. In the 17th century it was the class from which the justices of the peace created by Elizabeth were drawn which prevented the realization of the absolutist policy of the Stuarts.

Parliamentarianism which enabled England to avoid bureaucracy also

spared it militarism. The queen, unable to recruit mercenary soldiers because of the paucity of the resources voted her by parliament, organized the army as a militia, in which all men were called upon to serve if they could not provide a substitute. The citizen militia representing the people was thenceforth the only armed force in England; except for it, the ruler had only a bodyguard of a hundred men for personal safety and a few companies of foreign mercenaries. Since then, England has always been the least military country of Europe; the national character of its army coupled with parliamentary control prevented its rulers from undertaking any wars save those of which the nation approved; for that reason it was to escape the dynastic wars which successively destroyed both Spanish and French supremacy.

Like the army, the navy also was an expression of the nation. In 1515 Henry VIII had created a Ministry of the Marine under the direction of a High Admiral. Elizabeth, unable to construct, like Philip II, a huge fleet which would have cost an enormous sum, introduced the right of requisitioning merchant ships as fleet auxiliaries in time of war. By thus linking the power of the state with the prosperity of the shipbuilders, Elizabeth was the real founder of the naval greatness of England.

The reign of Elizabeth was the turning-point in English history. By maintaining its right to refuse the monies demanded by the crown, parliament prevented the monarchy from squandering the nation's revenues for purely dynastic reasons, as happened with Philip II and even more with his successors. Forced to adapt its policy to the modest financial resources at its disposal, the English monarchy had no choice but to link itself closely with the forces of the nation and base its policy on national prosperity. England managed to avoid the state-controlled economy, bureauracy, militarism and wars of dynastic prestige which drove all the absolutist monarchies into crises which, one after the other, brought them to disaster. By forcing upon the monarchy, which was always striving to strengthen its powers, the co-operation of parliament, parsimonious with the state's resources, the English middle classes, during the reign of Elizabeth, laid the foundation of British power.

Policy of Repression in Ireland Leads to Revolt Against England

Tudor policy, like that of all the monarchies of the time, was centralizing and unitary. In 1536 Wales had been divided into counties by Henry VIII, who had forced English institutions on the country. Henceforward it was to be represented in parliament.

The assimilation of Ireland was much more difficult. Ireland was, in

fact, socially very different from England. The Wars of the Roses had led to anarchy there. The parliament which sat at Dublin alongside the Lord Deputy had no authority outside the Pale. The rest of the country was divided among the great Anglo-Norman lords, now entirely assimilated, who had settled there under Henry II, and the more or less unstable tribes, whose chiefs were elected from the leading clan families. The lords, who were still entirely feudal, occupied almost all the plains, while the clans lived in the mountains. Constant insecurity reigned, the lords fighting among themselves and the clans descending from their mountains to raid the farms in the plains.

On taking the title of King of Ireland, Henry VIII had undertaken a policy of assimilation. Edward VI divided the country into counties and tried to impose English customs on the Irish; those who refused were expelled from their lands and replaced by English colonists who regarded the Irish as barbarians and did not hesitate to massacre them pitilessly. A real racial war began, soon complicated by the struggle between Catholics and Protestants. The Irish lords, from the 15th century onwards, had appropriated the properties of the monasteries to their own advantage, but when the English wanted to introduce Anglicanism into Ireland Catholicism became the symbol of national independence. The religious policy of Elizabeth unleashed a very bitter war. During the war against Spain, Pope Gregory XIII had sent bands of Spanish and Italian soldiers into Ireland (1580) to aid the national insurrection. Ireland thus found herself in the Spanish camp and the English troops behaved as if they were in an enemy country. Munster, in the south-west of the island, became a desert, the lands of the Irish lords were confiscated and given to English owners, and English peasants were sent to colonize the country; the colonists were massacred, but the English owners kept the land.

After the reign of Elizabeth the policy of colonization was resumed, despite its failure in Munster. The Lord Deputy Chichester (1604–1614) tried to impose English institutions and Anglicanism by force, and massacred pitilessly all who resisted. The vassals of the Irish lords were forced to acknowledge themselves to be directly dependent on the English crown, and thus Irish feudalism was destroyed. Among the clans and on the Irish estates, a large area of land was regarded as common-land. Chichester confiscated this, especially in Ulster, and gave the land to English colonists, reducing the native population to poverty. A merciless war broke out in Ulster, which was completely depopulated and resettled with English immigrants. The Irish resistance was broken, but a terrible

hatred for England was born among the Irish which was to prevent their assimilation once and for all.

Economic Liberalism Favoured by the Monarchy

In the 16th century the economic future of England, like its political future, was at stake. Both its political greatness and its economic expansion were then determined by the forced co-operation of the spontaneous forces of the people and the monarchy.

Elizabeth, checked by parliament in her attempts at economic intervention, did all she could do to encourage and not to hinder the private initiative which was being developed in England. Taking advantage of the decline of the Flemish industrial cities, English capitalists developed cloth-weaving in the countryside, exploited the lead and tin mines of Cornwall and Wales and opened the first coal mines. The Merchant Adventurers founded the Eastland Society to compete with the Dutch in the Baltic trade and the Muscovy Society to establish trade relations with Russia. In 1584 they extended their operations as far as Goa, while they organized the slave-trade and made privateering raids against Spanish shipping. A lust for gain swept the country. The nobles themselves did not hesitate to venture into piracy and the queen invested funds in slave-trading enterprises. Enormous fortunes were made. Capitalism, which developed freely regardless of all the ancient economic rules established by the mediaeval guilds, conquered the economic life of the country and introduced an utterly unscrupulous spirit into business enterprises. Merchants cornered wheat for export even in times of shortage, selling only spoiled grain within the country. Banking took a predominant role in business.

This extraordinary expansion took place without any sort of plan under the impetus of private interest and without the state doing anything either to direct it or to hinder it by fiscal intervention.

None the less, the royal government did intervene not, as Philip II had done, to take the lion's share of the sea-borne trade but to organize the anarchy and to stabilize the disordered results of private enterprise. The chancellor of the exchequer, William Cecil, put the financial life of the country in order by demanding loans to the state from the English banks, and not from foreigners as hitherto, for the needs of its policy. From 1572 England contracted no foreign loans. The English state thus associated its destinies with the wealth of its capitalists. It was to do its best to favour them by every possible means; in 1579 the London Exchange, created by private initiative, was granted a royal charter. In

1597, in order to encourage the country's business, the Hanseatics, who had played a large part in the economic life of England, were expelled from London; and in 1600 the queen, in order to correlate the individual efforts of the adventurers and capitalists who were trying to break the Portuguese monopoly in India, caused the East India Company to be founded and granted it a monopoly of trade in the Indian Ocean.

This rapid development of business did not take place without upheavals. The rise in prices was felt in England as elsewhere and faced the government with fiscal and monetary difficulties. Spain and France, with their easy-going financial policy, slid from bankruptcy into bankruptcy. This was, it is true, the simplest way for the state to re-establish its financial situation. But by refusing to face up to its commitments, the state merely shifted the burden on to the capitalists and business men, making them bear the burden of the deficit which it had itself evaded. The consequences were disastrous for Spanish economy. The English government, whose policy was subject to parliamentary control and whose credit was maintained by private banks, followed a diametrically opposite path. By giving preference to private interests it adopted the principle, from which it was never afterwards to depart, of assuring a sound and stable currency for the English merchants, which greatly facilitated their transactions. It was to become one of the essential elements of the prosperity of London which, after the sack of Antwerp, became a great financial centre able to compete with Amsterdam; it was also one of the reasons for the political stability of England.

The spread of capitalism brought with it pauperism. The English parliament, where the business middle classes were in power, paid no heed. It was the queen who, after a tour of inspection through her lands, took up the cause of the disinherited classes. Under Henry VIII it had been enough to treat beggars and vagabonds as criminals. Elizabeth, the first in Europe, had social legislation passed which did not aim, as in France, at assuring a cheap labour force, but at organizing work and lessening poverty. In 1563 a Statute of Labourers was drawn up; apprenticeship, fixed at seven years, was made obligatory even outside the guilds. The Justices of the Peace, assisted by experts, were entrusted with fixing wage scales, to keep wages in relation to increases in living costs. Thanks to this, the depreciation of wages, which was so heavy a burden on the continental countries, was avoided for a century. Already in the times of Henry VIII, inspectors had been placed in all parishes to collect gifts intended to help the poor. These voluntary gifts were transformed by law into an obligatory tax. Public assistance was organized not, as in the

Netherlands, on a charity basis but on one of social unity. Modified in 1597 and in 1601 this 'poor law' was to remain the basis of English social legislation until 1834.

While Spain was building an empire in Mexico and Peru, England was founding commercial companies. The royal monopoly prevented Spain from adapting itself to capitalist concentration, while English liberalism, by giving free rein to individual activity, allowed a new social balance to be spontaneously created. The Spanish state wanted to control the country's economy and to reserve for itself the greater part of the profits; the English government limited itself to organizing the various currents created by private interests and, rather than seize as much as possible, linked its prosperity to that of its business classes.

The war between Spain and England was not merely the clash between two political powers; it was also, perhaps it was above all else, the conflict of two contrasting economic systems, state-controlled economy against liberal economy.

Foreign Influences and Individualism Favour Intellectual Advancement

In accordance with an unalterable law the free development of trade brought with it a parallel progress in the arts. In the social field, economic liberalism took the form of the ruin of the ancient feudal nobility and the enrichment of the gentry and the middle classes by the diffusion of luxury and comfort. In the intellectual field, individual initiative, by freeing the exercise of personal taste, created a magnificent flowering of the arts. Increased foreign contacts encouraged artists to come to England from all the countries with which she maintained a regular traffic. The first to influence English painting were a Fleming, Jean de Mabuse, and a German, Holbein. Flemings, amongst them Antony More, Italians, amongst them Zucchero, were the founders of the first school of English painting in the second half of the 16th century. Under French and Italian influences a national style, the Tudor style, was formed. At the same time the great wars and the breakdown of Christian universalism led to the beginnings of typically English literature. Latin was abandoned. Writers wrote in English to reach not only an intellectual élite, as had Erasmus and Sir Thomas More, but the largest possible public. Patriotism was shown in the taste for history. A number of chroniclers brought a knowledge of the past glories of England to the public. Roger Ascham adopted the method of Alciato in his study of the ancient national customs of the country.

However literary inspiration, like commerce, remained for the most part international. In the 16th century literary trends closely reflected the

historical evolution and the economic and social trends of the country which, at the same time traditional and progressive, devoted to its own past and yet responsive to new ideas, both national and cosmopolitan, was above all liberal and—as in the Netherlands—hostile to the authoritarianism of monarchical absolutism, whose influence was spreading more and more in Europe. The sea brought with it the influence of the Spanish theatre, Calvinism that of the Bible, while the break with Rome and the formation of national feeling led men to study their own history. The Renaissance opened England to Italian and French influences and to the study of antiquity. At the end of the 16th century English literature was influenced by all the currents which were at that time passing through Western civilization. Spenser imitated Ariosto and Francis Bacon wrote his *Essays* under the inspiration of Plutarch and Montaigne. Lyly, inspired by Italian Marinism, introduced the finical affectations of euphuism. The clash of all these diverse influences and the great transformations then taking place in society led English thinking to dwell on moral questions. Marlowe, in his masterpiece *Dr Faustus* (1587), reviving the idea of the theatre, which was still modelled on the mediaeval mystery plays, began a great theatrical tradition. And Shakespeare (1564–1616) created modern literature by producing a body of works richer in art and thought than anything written in any literature at any time. Coming from that English middle class to which freedom had revealed such immense horizons, he posed all the moral and political problems and united in a single synthesis the most uncommitted idealism and the most subtle sense of reality, adapting his language, sometimes as pure as Dante, sometimes as coarse as Rabelais, to his state of mind; he was the greatest of all writers since he understood everything and loved everything, because he would neither stifle his conscience nor deliver it to pride; because he understood everything without imitating anything. His genius was the highest peak reached by the Renaissance.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

LIBERAL ABSOLUTISM AND A POLICY OF CONTROLLED ECONOMY LEAD TO FRENCH SUPREMACY

Evolution of France During the Wars of Religion

DURING the terribly troubled period of the wars of religion France passed through a great and in many ways remarkable evolution. With Francis I and Henry II the intellectual and artistic renaissance entered a new period, neo-classicism, which in the times of Henry II finally broke away from mediaeval art. At the same time as the last of the appanages was taken from the Duke de Bourbon the Gothic style finally disappeared. The career of the artists illustrated, as did their works, the distance that separated them from the Middle Ages, now entirely forgotten. They were no longer masters of a guild; like Michelangelo or Raphael at Rome, Titian at the court of Charles V or Leonardo da Vinci at the court of Francis I, they were distinguished guests. Under Henry II artists became great personages of the state. The sculptor Germain Pilon was made controller of finances, the architect Philibert de l'Orme inspector of the royal buildings and the architect Pierre Lescot a privy counsellor. All of them were granted rich abbeys. The wars of religion did not halt the artistic and intellectual evolution of the country. Montaigne, withdrawn in his château and disgusted at the intolerance of the men of his times, opened the way wide in his *Essays* to freedom of thought, foreshadowing the encyclopaedists, even as Ronsard foreshadowed classical French poetry.

The taste for order and reason, which triumphed in art during the anarchy of the religious wars, also marked the legal reforms of the same period. Michel de l'Hospital, in the heat of the civil war, paved the way for the new France which he constructed on the emancipation of the individual and on the unity of law; by limiting to two degrees the beneficiary entail he completed the destruction of the great estates of the nobles, by establishing the same commercial jurisdiction throughout

the kingdom he put an end to mediaeval economy, by organizing proof by evidence he foreshadowed modern procedure whose aim is not to assure order but equity. While the great nobles were making a last attempt to split the kingdom into appanages, he finally established unity. This unity, moreover, corresponded to a deeply felt need which the States-General had continually claimed, as much on the religious as on the economic plane. The protection of national industry, the stabilization of the currency and a uniform legislation on price increases and on wages made France a more and more compact economic and social unit.

But the war had drained the treasury and the king, while organizing his kingdom, was obliged, in order to get the resources he needed, to burden the cities with 'free gifts' and the clergy with 'tenths' and to sell public offices and titles of nobility. Taxes continually increased, from seven million *livres* in 1576 to eighteen million in 1588; and while the people were ruined by the exactions of war and taxation, the tax-farmers who rented the collection of the taxes made huge fortunes very rapidly. The king lived from expedients to such an extent that he was forced to pledge the revenue of his estates not only to the bankers but even, after the bankers refused him following his bankruptcy in 1559, to foreign states. Elizabeth of England, the elector-palatine, the grand duke of Tuscany, the Swiss Republic and Venice were granted the revenues of the royal domain for sums which were sometimes less than their annual income.

The financial exactions aroused a lively opposition among the people. The Church, oppressed with taxes, obtained in 1580 a stabilization of the 'free gift' at one million three hundred thousand *livres* and a union of clerical assemblies which, until 1789, ensured its internal administration.

The people, for its part, took up a more and more independent stand in the States-General. Opposition, more organized among the Protestants and more revolutionary among the Catholics, was aroused against the royal absolutism introduced by Francis I. The feeling of national sovereignty, which was to burst out so violently at the end of the 18th century, was born in the great crises of the 16th century.

The Tolerance and Authority of Henry IV Revives France

When Henry IV came to the throne in 1593 he found a devastated kingdom in the throes of anarchy. A part of the nobility had broken away from the monarchy and the people, in the words of Cardinal d'Ossat, 'wanted neither sovereign nor nobles'. The governors behaved as princes in their provinces, levying troops, administering justice, raising

taxes and trying to transform their posts into hereditary offices. Many villages were almost deserted; the famished peasants organized bands of looters. And to meet such disasters there was only an empty treasury burdened with heavy debts.

But beneath this appearance of anarchy there was a deep desire for unity, peace and order. Henry IV, like a great statesman, restored unity to France and gave it peace and order by tolerance and by an authority strong enough to be obeyed and enlightened enough to be accepted. Tolerance was the first need, without which there could only have been war and persecutions. On April 13 1598 he proclaimed the Edict of Nantes which guaranteed freedom of belief throughout the kingdom and authorized the celebration of the reformed cult; the Protestants obtained a hundred strongholds—in order to assure them of the sincerity of the peace they had been granted—and equality of rights with the Catholics; in each *parlement* chambers were created with half the members Catholics and half Calvinists. The *parlement* of Paris tried to oppose this, but Henry IV paid no heed to its resistance. France, first of all nations, began a régime, imposed on it by the king, of religious freedom.

This freedom did not prevent Catholicism from having a dominant position, which the king tried to make use of for the needs of his absolutist policy. The authoritarian tendency of the Jesuits could not fail to please him. In 1603, despite the opposition of the *parlement* and the Sorbonne, he founded for them the *Collège de la Flèche* and allowed them to have a considerable influence in the country. But he did not allow them to control his policy. It was in his reign that Pierre Pithou published his *Code des libertés gallicanes* which, by demanding the autonomy of the Church of France, ran completely counter to the ultramontane policy of the Jesuits.

The policy of tolerance went hand in hand with a régime of authority. To control the anarchy in the country Henry IV concentrated all the executive power in his hands. He governed alone, assisted by two councils, the Privy Council and the Council of State and Finances, and four state secretaries. The *parlement*, which had tried to oppose the publication of the Edict of Nantes, lost the right of refusing to register the royal edicts and to make remonstrances. As for the States-General, whose religious intolerance and parliamentary tendencies Henry feared, it was no longer summoned, nor—from 1596—was the Assembly of the Notables which had been formed earlier by Francis I. Only the provincial Estates, which still existed in Brittany, Burgundy, Dauphiné, Provence and Languedoc, were frequently summoned to assess the distribution of the taxes.

The cities were placed under mayors appointed by the king. The guilds, throughout the kingdom, were also placed under royal control.

The intervention of the people in government, which had been evident since the 14th century and which Francis I had already tried to restrain, was finally wiped out. The rule of the absolute monarchy had come to stay.

In England the parliamentary monarchy had organized a militia army; in France, as in Spain, the absolute monarchy relied on a permanent army. Henry IV tried to restore to it the national character which it had lost during the Italian wars, without however renouncing the use of mercenaries. Its effectives were increased to almost a hundred thousand men and the officers were no longer recruited from the nobility alone.

But it was not enough for absolutism to impose itself by force. The Spanish monarchy, in order to justify itself, had appealed to the ideology of the counter-reformation. Henry IV, who wanted to base his power on religious tolerance, could not invoke divine right; he demanded a justification of his absolute power from the legal theory of Loyseau which, comparing sovereignty to property rights, recognized the king's exclusive right to make laws, to declare war and to coin money, and conferred especial honours on ministers and magistrates in so far as they represented the state, whatever their personal merit might be.

Such a conception of monarchy, divorced from all religious sanction, separated from the people and superimposed upon it, meant a virtual political revolution. It could only become a tyranny or be accepted as a beneficent force. It was in this latter form that it appeared to France, which offered no opposition; neither from the intellectuals whom the intolerance and narrowness of the States-General, the popular masses and the nobles inclined towards enlightened despotism, nor from the middle classes who were favoured by the policy of national economy and mercantilism practised by the king, nor from the peasants who, assured of security, never even dreamed of protesting. It was enough for the nation to have again found peace and order for it to become reconciled to the monarchy, whose tolerance, humanity and care for the disinherited made it forget the loss of its political rights. The parliamentary régime, which had begun to take root in France during the religious wars, disappeared without causing the slightest crisis, since it seemed linked with anarchy—for which it had been in no way responsible—whereas absolutism had restored security and prosperity.

The foundations of all absolute government rest on its finances. In order to strengthen them Philip II had tried, by racial persecution and colonial

monopoly, to concentrate every possible source of wealth in the crown. Henry IV, who had restored order in his kingdom by enforcing tolerance, remained faithful, in the economic field, to a similar conception of controlled liberty. Reverting to the mercantilist policy of Francis I, who saw the wealth of the state in that of the nation, he set himself to restore French finances by a policy of fiscal order and industrial development.

The Spanish kings, instead of organizing their finances and developing the trade of their kingdoms, had adopted the policy of reserving for themselves a monopoly of the precious metals imported from their magnificent empire. Happily for her, France could find prosperity only in the activities of her people. Sully, who was minister of finances, of public works and of war, granted her, by peace and order, stable finances. He redeemed the sources of revenue which had been pledged to foreign powers, restored a balanced budget by curbing the extravagance of the court, and introduced an accounting system into the administration which made it possible to put an end to the embezzlements which were then universal among the finance officers, whom he subjected to the strict control of a judicial commission (1597).

Like a wise administrator he reduced taxation which weighed too heavily upon the peasants,[1] but, in revenge, suppressed all tax exemptions extorted from the king during the time of troubles and enforced an 'annual right' on all the offices which had been sold to legal and financial officials; however, this 'right', by acknowledging the factual hereditary nature of these duties, was to lead to very great abuses.

Taken all in all, with all the faults inherent in the times and in all human organization, Sully carried out a great financial task. In 1609 the treasury, which had been burdened with debts amounting to three hundred millions at the advent of Henry IV, contained twelve millions in cash; and the peasant class, instead of living in poverty and revolt, became the most prosperous of the times.

Mercantilist Policy

If Sully was able to make France a great financial power, it was because it had become, under Henry IV, the richest country of Europe. His merit was to have understood that the wealth of the state depended on that of its subjects. The policy of controlled economy which he systematically

[1] In the districts where there were provincial Estates taxation was equitably distributed and reasonable; in the districts where the administration fixed the taxes it became a heavy poll-tax which almost exclusively affected the peasants. Henry IV reduced it from twenty to fourteen million *livres*.

pursued was regulated by his continual attention to the enrichment of the people. To attain this end he vacillated between two theories, that of Loyseau who considered that all wealth came from the soil and wished to improve the yield of agriculture by ensuring a free exchange of agricultural produce, and that of Laffémas and Olivier de Serres, upholders of the mercantilist theory which made the prosperity of the country depend on a favourable trade balance.

To develop agriculture, Sully authorized the export and circulation of cereals, forbade the fiscal authorities to seize the peasants' tools and stock, entrusted great drainage works to Dutch experts and had roads made and canals cut which, linking the Loire to the Seine and the Saône, put the Channel and the Mediterranean into contact with one another.

To develop industry Laffémas planned to give the country a new economic structure; he wanted to place over the whole guild system 'work councils', composed of masters of the guilds, entrusted with fixing wage scales and acting as arbiters in labour disputes, under the control of 'great manufacturing councils' elected, in every region, by all the guilds.

To eliminate unemployment 'public houses' were to be formed in the cities, intended to put the idle and vagabonds to work and to take care of abandoned children by placing them as apprentices. Absolutism replaced the political representation of the people, which had formerly been achieved by the States-General, by a representation of interest.

This great plan—which, however, only took into consideration the interests of the employers—was only partially carried out, but it paved the way for the system of Colbert.

Envisaging for the first time the economy of the country as a single whole, Laffémas created the 'trade commission'. Its role was to stimulate industrial production and, by creating within the country the industries which it lacked, to make it as independent as possible of foreign imports. Its activity was considerable. It set up silk factories at Lyon and Tours, brought Dutchmen into the country to organize cloth-weaving at Paris and developed the manufacture of silk stockings, lace and leatherwork.

But it is not enough merely to manufacture; goods must be sold and exported to assure the home market as a whole. This was attempted by reinforcing the protectionist system introduced by Francis I and conquering foreign markets, especially by encouraging exports to the Levant and Spain. The trade balance became very favourable for France towards which the precious metals of Spain flowed in ever-increasing quantities.

Exports made France look seaward; Sully tried to inaugurate a colonial policy. A project for an India Company failed. But Samuel Champlain

gave France Canada (New France) and founded Quebec in 1608. Trade agreements were signed with England and Turkey.

The mercantilist policy of Laffémas clashed with the ideas of free trade, of which Lyon, like Antwerp, was a champion. Won over to the idea of economic liberty, the Lyon industrialists did not want either a guild system or a protectionist policy. They ended by getting what they wanted; in 1603 Lyon was exempted from the legislation on guilds. Thus the foundation stone of the economic liberalism which was to triumph in the 19th century was laid, despite the state-controlled mercantilist policy.

Policy of Peace

The economic policy of Henry IV could only be carried out in times of peace, both internal and external. During his reign, absolutism, tolerant in internal affairs, was resolutely pacific in foreign affairs. Repudiating all forms of imperialism, his foreign policy aimed only at assuring the security of the country. To assure this, it resorted not to war but to diplomacy. The danger of the encirclement of France by the Hapsburgs still existed. Henry IV worked patiently to destroy it. His marriage with Marie de Medici, coming after the marriage of Henry II with Catherine, created a tradition of friendship which freed Florence from Spanish influence and placed it, with Venice which feared Spanish imperialism, under French patronage. By supporting the union of Ferrara with the Papal states, after the extinction of the D'Este family, Henry assured the friendship of the Holy See, despite his policy of tolerance so little in conformity with the spirit of the counter-reformation.

Savoy was a real buffer-state between the duchy of Milan and Franche-Comté. The Treaty of Lyon (1601) concluded with Charles-Albert ceded to him the duchy of Saluzzo in Piedmont[1] in exchange for the Bresse, Bugey and Gex regions which were ceded to France; all contact was cut between Savoy and Franche-Comté.

Furthermore, in order to prevent Spain from using the Alpine passes, Henry pursued a policy of close friendship with the Swiss cantons; the Diet of Soleure (1601), by renewing their alliance with France, allowed her free passage through Switzerland.

The Spanish stranglehold on the eastern frontier was broken.

To protect himself against the House of Austria, Henry continued his policy of friendship with the Protestant princes of Germany; he remained in close friendship with the duke of Bavaria whom he tried in vain to persuade to become a candidate for the imperial crown.

[1] The Peace of Vervins had left the fate of the duchy of Saluzzo in suspense.

At the end of his reign the succession to the duchies of Clèves-Juliers, key to the lower Rhine, threatened to involve the empire in a war in which, it seemed, France and Spain were both about to intervene when Ravaillac assassinated Henry IV, in order to prevent a Catholic king from fighting alongside Protestant princes (1610). The war, which might have broken out at that moment, was not, however, delayed for more than a few years. The monarchical policy of the Austrian Hapsburgs, reverting to their aims of imperial hegemony, was to rekindle a European conflagration which, during the Thirty Years War, was to attain such proportions as no war hitherto had ever known.

CHAPTER XXXIX

REPERCUSSIONS OF THE MARITIME EXPANSION OF THE WEST ON CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

I. THE INFLUENCE OF THE SEA ON THE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES

THE shift of the trade axis from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic and the maritime expansion of England and the United Provinces had a very great influence on the evolution of central and eastern Europe.

The Scandinavian countries, after their period of great naval expansion between the 10th and 12th century, had been cut off from the sea by the Hansa League. The decline of the Hansa cities and the development of Dutch shipping had once more left the seas open to them and again brought them into touch with the West. At the beginning of the 16th century they had been greatly influenced by central Europe, as was shown by the penetration of Lutheranism. But a social evolution had taken place there which had given the Lutheran reformation in Scandinavia a form quite different from that it had taken in Germany. Instead of becoming the tool of feudalism, the Reformation had led to the triumph of the monarchy; the reigns of Gustavus Vasa (1523) and Christian III (1533) opened the era of monarchy in Sweden and in Denmark, made them look seaward and, at the same time, made the Baltic lands enter the field of sea-borne trade and, consequently, of Western politics.

By accepting the Reformation, the kings destroyed the power of the diets which, in Sweden and in Denmark, were made up of the clergy and nobility. By the confiscation of church properties, of which they themselves took the lion's share, the kings were able, because of the wealth they had acquired, to overcome the nobility; and, by abandoning to the nobles a part of the spoils, they obtained from the diets their acceptance of the monarchy, hitherto elective, as a hereditary power.

At the same time the decline of the Hansa cities gave supremacy in the Baltic to the Dutch and opened vast possibilities of exploitation to the iron mines of Dalecarlia. In Sweden metallurgy developed rapidly. In the 17th century Sweden provided 30% of the total iron production of Europe. This economic revolution was to give Sweden great power within a very few years. Denmark, controlling the Straits, was involved in the same maritime development. A middle class which supported the king was formed in the Scandinavian countries. Christian IV founded Christiania (Oslo) and Christiansand; Copenhagen, by the trade influence of Amsterdam, became the spice market for Germany. The Lisbon-Amsterdam-Copenhagen sea-route replaced the ancient Venice-Augsburg-Luebeck land-route. The Baltic opened the Scandinavian countries to international trade. Sweden, because of her mines, was the main beneficiary. But she was still subject to Dutch shipping and to the tolls levied by Denmark in the Straits. To gain her freedom, Gustavus Vasa set out to conquer supremacy in the Baltic. But Russia, then in the flood-tide of expansion, was also looking seaward. To bar her way, Vasa tried to push eastwards the frontiers of his Finnish provinces. This involved him in a long war with the tsar at Moscow (1554–1557). At the same time he tried to gain a foothold on the southern Baltic coasts, then held by Poland, by obtaining the hand of Catherine Jagellon, heiress to the Polish crown, for his second son, John Vasa. Seduced by the policy of dynastic imperialism, upon which the Hapsburgs had founded their enormous power, John was unable to resist the opportunity offered of uniting Poland and Sweden under his sole rule; in 1568 he had his brother Eric IV (1560–1568) assassinated and succeeded him as king of Sweden.

In order to pave the way for a union of Sweden and Poland he tried, if not to restore Catholicism in Sweden, at least to establish a new form of worship which would minimize the difference between the two religions. But he aroused an opposition which was to become almost a civil war when Sigismond Vasa tried to unite Poland and Sweden under his rule alone.

2. THE IMPERIALIST POLICY OF THE VASAS IN POLAND

Manorial Economy Strengthens the Seigniorial Régime

The Jagellon dynasty came to an end in 1572. Though it did not succeed in giving Poland a true monarchical government, it had none the less given it a *de facto* hereditary royalty and, under its intelligent rule, Poland had evolved a consistent national policy.

But the development of Baltic shipping in the 16th century had a tre-

mendous influence on the political and social structure of Poland. The export of wheat, wood and tar from the ports of Danzig, Stettin and Riga had greatly increased, to the benefit of the great landowners who made huge profits. In order to provide the maximum yield, the manorial régime adopted capitalist methods. In the duchy of Prussia, in northern Germany, in Poland, the landowning lords were like petty sovereigns. The serf populations of their estates and the villages of free peasants dependent on them were unable to resist them. In order to increase the yield of their lands they had introduced a forced labour system, rapidly reducing the whole of the people to slavery. In order to export wheat and rye, the German and Polish landowners forbade their consumption by the peasants who were forced to eat barley and oats.

Originally the Polish peasants had been free and only subject to a landlords' tax. During the 16th century they were all reduced to serfdom.

The position of the landowners was thus greatly strengthened. Whereas in Sweden the crown, enriched by the confiscation of church properties, overcame the nobility, in Poland the enrichment of the nobles, by the export of agricultural produce, and their growing hold over the population allowed them to recover their ascendancy over the monarchy.

A country without a bourgeoisie, where only the Jews formed a middle class, Poland became a federation of nobles, who held both the land and the political power. The sole organ of government was the diet of the nobility which legislated in unanimity according to the various pressures exerted upon it.

Monarchical Policy of the Vasas

There was only one source of unity in the kingdom, the Catholic church, dominated by the Jesuits. They were the great teachers of Poland. By their work the Polish nobility, despite the archaic social régime, became familiar with Western customs and civilization. Sandwiched between German Lutheran feudalism and Orthodox Russia, Poland, long before Germany, found in the Catholic faith the source of its national unity.

After the extinction of the Jagellons, the hour seemed to have struck for the Vasas. But Austria had not abandoned its dynastic pretensions to Poland. A conflict seemed imminent between the Vasas and the Hapsburgs when the Ottoman Empire, which exercised a sovereign influence in Poland, intervened to support the candidature of Henry of Valois, brother of the king of France, Charles IX. France, in order to resist the Hapsburg pressure, was trying to strengthen her alliances in the East. With the aid of the Porte, Henry in 1574 gained the upper hand over John Vasa. He

at once tried to establish friendly relations with Russia, based on a trade agreement. But immediately after his enthronement he was recalled to France by the death of Charles IX. The question of the Polish succession remained in abeyance and the crown was put up to auction by the nobles.

The sultan, who wanted at all costs to prevent the accession of a German prince and had no interest in strengthening Poland by a dynastic union with Sweden, supported the candidature of the Polish prince Stephen Batory; the diet elected him king in 1575.

But the growing power of Russia modified the attitude of the sultan in favour of increasing the power of Sweden and Poland. In 1587 on the death of King Stephen, he supported the candidature of Sigismond Vasa. The Swedish dynasty was to hold the crown of Poland until 1668. It was to try to restore the monarchical régime.

Sigismond III wished to enforce his monarchical policy in Poland by relying upon the resources which Sweden drew from her rapid economic development. But when he wanted to succeed his father John III as king of Sweden, the Swedish people revolted. The religious differences and also the great social gap between Lutheran Sweden and Catholic Poland made a union of the two countries under a single rule impossible. Civil war broke out in Sweden. It was to end with the defeat of Sigismond and the coronation of Charles IX (1604). Henceforward conflict between the two branches of the Vasa family was constantly latent.

Sigismond III tried to compensate for his defeat in Sweden by undertaking an imperialist policy towards the east. Profiting from the anarchy which had been raging in Russia since the extinction of the dynasty of Rurik in 1598, he invaded Russia and captured Smolensk (1609). But the Polish invasion aroused a violent national resistance among the Russian people who sank their differences and rallied around Michael Romanov (1613) and halted the advance of the Polish armies.

Checked on all sides Sigismond tried to give the monarchy the resources which it lacked by looking seaward. The struggle for the supremacy of the Baltic then became inevitable. It was to bring into the lists Sweden, a maritime country, Poland, a great seigniorial state, and the vast territorial empire of Russia.

3. TERRITORIAL EXPANSION OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN EUROPE AND ASIA

The Russian Empire Extends Both Eastward and Westward

The extraordinary expansion of Russia in the 16th century was closely

linked with the general evolution of Europe and Asia, between which it formed an immense buffer state. In the reign of Ivan III (1462–1505), that is to say after the fall of Constantinople, when the wave of Turkish invasion submerged the Danubian lands, the Muscovite Empire rejected the suzerainty of the Moslem Tatars and broke through to the Black Sea. It was by this route that Byzantine civilization and Christianity had reached Russia in the 9th century and it was through this influence that the magnificent cathedrals of Kiev and Novgorod had been built and cities had arisen along the Russian rivers which were to become the bastion of Europe against the Turkish and Mongol hordes.

The Asiatic tide in Russia turned during the 15th century. To reach the Black Sea Ivan III concluded an alliance with the Tatar khan of the Crimea. He was granted the use of the port of Kaffa, and Russia was able to re-establish contact with Asia and, through the Dardanelles, with Italy. In the north, Novgorod had never ceased to be in touch with the Baltic through the Hansa merchants. The trade-route across Russia, from the Black Sea to the Baltic, came into use again. Trade caused a merchant middle class to reappear in the big Russian cities. It embarked on great business enterprises in the markets of Constantinople and Brusa, the terminal points of the caravan routes from the depths of Central Asia, from India and from China.

Trade relations with Europe led naturally to diplomatic relations. Rome, Venice, Milan, the Hansa cities, Denmark and Hungary, all entered into relations with Ivan III. Europe accepted Moscow as the heir of Byzantium and, faced with the Turkish menace, tried to get into closer touch with Russia. Maximilian I demanded, but did not obtain, the hand of the daughter of Ivan III and proposed an alliance with him. Charles V, to prevent a conflict which would have weakened the Christians, intervened as mediator between the Jagellons and Basil III (1505–1533). As for the Holy See, it reverted to its traditional policy of the reunion of the churches which it had in the past pursued so consistently with Byzantium. Faced with the Porte and the Reformation, Rome dreamed of a vast Russian empire. Leo X and Clement VII did not hesitate to promise Basil III the throne of Lithuania and their support for the conquest of Constantinople if he would restore the Orthodox church to Papal obedience.

The monetary economy brought by trade and the profits made by the exchequer allowed Ivan III and Basil III to form a permanent mercenary army equipped in the Western manner. When he ascended the throne Ivan IV (1533–1584) held in his hands everything needed to inaugurate a large-scale monarchical policy.

It was in his reign that English and Dutch naval expansion began in the northern seas. In 1554 the English 'merchant adventurers' set up a trading-post at Archangel, where they were soon followed by the Dutch. A sea link was established between Russia and the Atlantic nations. Englishmen and Dutchmen were cordially welcomed at Moscow. The barrier which Poland, Lithuania and the Hansa had been for centuries between Russia and central and western Europe was broken down. Russia resumed her role as the great transit-route between northern Europe and Asia. From the second half of the 16th century the English established by way of Moscow and the Volga a link with Persia, then in full tide of revival. Under the stimulus of English and Dutch trade Russia returned to international economic life.

The intervention of the English and Dutch in Russia led to an economic evolution similar to that created in the ancient merchant-cities of Italy, Spain and the Netherlands by the advent of large-scale capitalism. The conflict began between the mediaeval city economy represented by Novgorod, the most eastern outpost of the Hansa, and the economic liberalism which the Western merchants, supported by the tsar, wished to establish. In 1570 Novgorod revolted and was ruthlessly destroyed by Ivan IV who withdrew its ancient privileges after mass executions. Thirty years after Charles V had shattered the privileges of the Flemish communes and the Italian cities, Novgorod in its turn became a part of the national economy which the tsar established in Russia.

Trade, by reviving the cities, strengthened the monarchy. The taxes levied in the thirty-six royal cities of the empire—for in Russia, as in mediaeval France, the sovereign had made the cities directly dependent on his rule—soon made up the principal part of the state budget. But the middle class was not yet strong enough to resist the state-control which the tsar desired. Foreign trade was mainly in furs, honey and wax, and the tsar, looking for funds to finance his monarchical policy, adopted a trade policy similar to that practised by the kings of Spain and Portugal and seized the monopoly. He stifled private trading which, as formerly in the 10th century, had begun to restore life to the empire. He thus checked the development of Russia.

This profound transformation of the Russian economy led quite naturally to consequences similar to those which capitalism had brought to the West.

Up to the times of Ivan IV the institutions of the Muscovite state had developed in two different ways. The ruler, heir of the Byzantine emperor, was both the sole sovereign and the head of the Orthodox church. In the political field Russia, in the 15th century, was a far more developed

state than Poland, Hungary or Germany. But this imperial power was combined with institutions derived from the former feudal state of Moscow. Alongside the ruler was the *duma*, a supreme council distinct from the former princely court, which was originally composed of the personal attendants of the sovereign and where the *boyars*, the former territorial princes, had seats. The people took part in the government through the *sobor*, an assembly elected by the three orders, which more or less corresponded to the French States-General. In the cities the elected magistrates, the *starostas*, dispensed justice and were the local administrators; in the country districts they were the representatives of the petty nobility. Their electors were collectively responsible for their possible malversations.

On these mediaeval institutions the prince of Moscow had superimposed the structure of a central government; within the privy council, specialization of functions had led to the appearance of departments, *prikaz*, entrusted with secret affairs, petitions, embassies, police, the royal residences and artillery. These *prikaz* had their representatives in the various provinces. The tsar organized a system of finances, based on the taxes; land taxes, hearth charges, similar to the French *taille*, taxes levied in the cities on commercial transactions and public baths. Extending the monopoly principle to fiscal affairs, the tsar made the leasing of taverns a state prerogative.

Thus, far from presenting, as has frequently been asserted, an Asiatic character, Russia in the 16th century had institutions which exactly recalled those which the Western states had had between the 13th and 15th century, but in which, due to the influence of Byzantine law, many imperial traditions had been preserved.

Absolutism of Ivan IV

The reign of Ivan IV, which witnessed the transformation of the mediaeval economy of Russia under the influence of Western trade, was marked, in the political field, by important but definitely absolutist reforms.

While the French kings during the wars of religion were able to break the political power of the great nobles, Ivan IV was carrying on a merciless struggle, based on terror, against the *boyars*. The political privileges of the nobles were abolished at the same time as those of Novgorod. The *duma* and the *sobor* lost all importance. Ivan IV revived the Roman imperial title of Tsar (Caesar) and aimed at absolute power. He governed with the aid of a privy council made up of men of humble origin; he entrusted the administration of his finances to merchants and took the administra-

tion of justice into his own hands. He gave the empire a single penal code wherein were juxtaposed—characteristic of Russian civilization—carefully worked out ideas of law derived from the ancient legal science of Byzantium and customs as primitive as procedure by conjuration or debtor-slavery.

To strengthen the army and eliminate the influence of the anarchic nobility, Ivan IV formed a class of men-at-arms who were granted fiefs in land and who were to form a new imperial nobility to replace the ancient seigniorial aristocracy. But this class could only live and give military service if the peasants assured its subsistence. The former free peasants, who at one time composed the militia, were therefore tied to the soil and placed under the rule of the enfieffed military men (1597); it was the beginning of serfdom.

In the cities the merchant middle class which had been formed was divided into guilds, graded according to the value of the taxes they paid. To hasten the development of a burgher class, Ivan IV appealed for Italian doctors and German artisans.

But the advance of Russian economy was hampered by lack of capital. To provide liquid capital for the country, the tsar put into circulation the wealth accumulated in the monasteries. It served as a basis for the primal needs of capitalism.

Not having at his disposal the resources amassed over centuries of activity, as had the Western states, Ivan IV organized absolute power by mobilizing all the forces of his empire and especially its population. The state socialism known to the later Roman Empire reappeared as a means of assuring the emperor the resources which he lacked.

Political and Economic Expansion

The absolutism of Ivan IV went hand in hand with an imperialist policy. The conquest of the two Tatar khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan made him master of the whole course of the Volga. All that remained to be done to restore the great river-route from the Caspian to the Baltic was to conquer Livonia. He therefore became involved, from 1558 onwards, in constant wars against Lithuania. Russian expansion aroused the opposition of Sweden. Gustavus Vasa, to bar Russia from the Baltic, extended his possessions in Finland (1554–1557). The great northern wars were inevitable.

The Conquest of Siberia

The political expansion of Russia also meant her economic expansion.

Having conquered the Urals, Ivan IV leased the exploitation of the mines and salt deposits of the country to the Novgorod merchants. New men, bold and adventurous, they were to play in the history of the Russian Empire a similar role to the 'merchant adventurers' in English colonization.

The Volga pioneers soon clashed with the Turco-Mongol khan of Siberia. To overcome him, they hired the Don Cossacks and, with them, penetrated into Siberia. They were soon followed by Ivan IV (1582).

The Mongol tide, originating on the shores of the Pacific, had ebbed on the banks of the Danube, submerging on its way the brilliant Kiev-Novgorod civilization. The tide was now on the turn. The conquest of Siberia was the work of the merchants, assisted by the Cossacks and followed by the peasants who, in order to escape the serfdom forced upon them by Ivan IV, emigrated to the Siberian steppes where the Kirghiz and the ancient Turco-Mongol tribes still roamed as nomads. While the English and Dutch mariners launched out on the conquest of the seas to set up their trading-posts, the Russian merchants, in quest of furs, penetrated more and more deeply into Asia. It needed scarcely half a century for them to reach the Pacific Ocean (1643); by the end of the 17th century they had occupied Kamchatka (1696) and crossed over into America. As they advanced they set up trading-posts which helped to create trade. In Transbaikalia they came into contact with the Chinese and, from 1638 onward, opened a caravan route across Siberia for the export of tea.

The settlement of the Russians on the steppes of Central Asia stabilized the nomads, who had for thousands of years threatened Asia and Europe, and transformed them into peasants. Thus took place the conquest of one of the vastest empires ever known. No conquest cost less blood, none spread more widely the feeling of European civilization. The Turkish invasions from the Altai had transformed the civilized countries of Central Asia into semi-desert steppes; the Russian conquest won the Siberian steppe for agriculture and creative toil, which was at once undertaken by the Russian colonists. Thus, while the Western nations ruled the seas and brought European civilization to America, the Russians settled on the vast spaces of northern Asia and reached China by way of the continent, even as the Portuguese, the English and the Dutch had reached there by sea. The ascendancy of Europe was extending in all directions.

The Crisis of Absolutism

There was a violent reaction against absolutism on the death of Ivan IV. His successor was his incapable son, Fyodor (1584–1598), in whose

name his brother-in-law, Boris Godunov, ruled. The *boyars* organized a resistance movement against him. But the clergy and the military nobility supported the centralizing and absolutist power. When Fyodor died, the *sobor*, setting aside the tsar's cousin who represented the party of the great nobles, brought Boris Godunov (1598–1605) to the throne. Civil war broke out. It was the last great effort of the landowning nobility to oppose the setting up of a monarchical régime. It was at once complicated by social troubles; the enslaved peasants plunged into a *jacquerie* of the *boyars* and nobles, while the petty military nobility in the service of the tsar also rose, though they refused to make common cause with the serfs. The rapid political and social transformation of Russia was accompanied by crises which recall those of Europe in the 14th century. But here too there was a great difference between the Western lands and the Russian Empire. In the West, the monarchy was a phenomenon parallel to the rise of urban economy and the liberation of the serfs. It was accompanied by a great movement of individual emancipation and was caused, to a great extent, by the economic and social evolution which tended towards the suppression of privileges. In Russia, on the contrary, where urban economy affected only a very small number of people, commerce, introduced by foreign capitalism, took the form of a royal monopoly formed in a state mould; the monarchy did not appear as a consequence of social evolution; it was imposed. It did not limit itself to destroying the framework of mediaeval economy, but created a totally new structure. In the West, the monarchical structure was founded on a salaried bureaucracy, since trade gave the kings the financial resources for their policy; in Russia, where the tsar had not got these resources, he could not pay his officials or the soldiers upon whom his rule was based. He therefore compensated them by enslaving to their advantage the peasants on the estates which he granted them. In the West the kings had adapted themselves to a régime of freedom because their fiscal resources were thereby increased. They did away with the social repressions of feudalism and replaced them with fiscal burdens. In Russia lack of liquid capital did not allow the tsar to levy the taxes required by his policy; he could therefore only destroy the social repressions of the former feudal régime to replace them by fresh social restraints which were of advantage to the unitary state. And as the needs of the unitary state were very much larger than those of the former *boyars*, the social repressions of the monarchical régime were even more severe than those of the feudal régime.

For the first time in the history of Europe this profound difference

between the centralizing systems of the maritime countries and of a great continental state appeared. In the maritime countries, France, England, Spain, the Netherlands, where overseas trade created an active, numerous and rich middle class, the centralized state was reconciled with a liberal social formula, because it had the support of capitalism which was a reaction against the former system of privileges. In the continental empires, where land was all-important and where the middle class was only a very small part of the population, the central government was not able to rely on the mobilization of capital, which was either non-existent or insufficient. It had to mobilize the land and the workers on the land and reserve for itself, by state monopoly or controlled economy, the profits of the trade and industry which its policy sought to develop.

That was why centralization was carried out in the West, in the maritime and capitalist states, on a formula of individual freedom; whereas in Russia in the 16th century, as later in all the great continental states, it was achieved on a state socialist formula of social repression.

The struggle between these two political conceptions, the one feudal and the other state socialist, plunged Russia into anarchy. The city population of Moscow was ruined, since this anarchy hampered its commercial activity. This led it to acclaim Basil Shuisky as tsar. Since the Moscow merchants lived from foreign trade, Shuisky turned quite naturally to foreign countries (1608), appealed to Sweden and relied upon the English and Dutch merchants whose trade had ceased because of the social unrest.

It was at this time that, profiting by the anarchy in Russia, Sigismond Vasa, king of Poland, laid siege to Smolensk (1609).

But the invasion of its territory by the Polish nobility aroused the Russian people for the defence of its soil and of the Orthodox faith. Filled with an intense patriotic feeling—as in France at the time of Joan of Arc—the Russian people forgot their internecine squabbles and made common cause against the invaders, land-grabbers and schismatics.[1]

In 1612, after three years of war, Sigismond was driven out. The *sobor* met at Moscow to elect a new tsar. All the foreign candidates were rejected and the *sobor* called to the throne Michael Romanov as the legitimate heir of the House of Rurik, which had become extinct with Fyodor. Monarchic legitimacy triumphed and national sentiment—as in France under Charles VII—rallied around the person of the ruler.

During the civil war the Romanovs had been the leaders of the *boyars'*

[1] Orthodoxy, which regarded the Catholics as having broken away from the primitive Christian church, was, it will be recalled, the justification of the Russian Empire, heir to Byzantium.

opposition to the monarchy. Like Henry IV who, having fought the monarchical policy all through the wars of religion, made himself its champion as soon as he became king of France, so Michael Romanov, once invested with the imperial crown, reverted to the policy of Ivan IV. Russia entered a period of absolutism during which she was to try to attain, by repression, the economic and social structure which had been spontaneously created in the West under the stimulus of individual emancipation.

4. THE DECLINE OF GERMANY

Ruin of the Cities of the Hansa, the Rhine and the Danube

The discovery of the New World and the naval expansion of the Atlantic countries, which involved the seaward policy of Scandinavia and the restoration of contact between Russia and the West, meant a great economic decline for Germany. Up to the 16th century the great trade-routes from Venice, from Bruges—and later from Antwerp—and from Luebeck crossed the continent; from Venice trade reached the Netherlands through France, by way of Augsburg and Nuremberg; important routes linked Luebeck to Cologne and Novgorod.

But the Marseilles-Amsterdam sea-route, by replacing the Venice-Antwerp continental route, halted the expansion of the Swiss and Rhenish cities. The ruin of the Hansa, supplanted by Dutch shipping, and the expulsion of the Hanseatics from London under the pressure of the English merchants, who wanted to win the German market for themselves, ruined both Luebeck and Cologne to the advantage of Hamburg where the English trade was concentrated and the cities of Zeeland which had taken over the Rhineland trade.

Augsburg had been the centre of the Venetian spice trade with Germany; the shifting of the spice traffic from Venice to Lisbon deprived Augsburg of this to the advantage of Copenhagen, where the Amsterdam merchants settled. Augsburg, Nuremberg, Ratisbon, formerly stages on the trade-routes from Venice to Luebeck and Strasbourg, were abandoned by international traffic for the sea-route which went from the Levant directly to Antwerp, London and Amsterdam by way of Venice or Marseilles.

Up to the middle of the 16th century Augsburg had been one of the centres of large-scale capitalism because of the exploitation of the mines of Styria, Bohemia and Saxony. Enormous fortunes were made there in the course of a few years.[1]

The Augsburg bankers rivalled the Medici of Florence. Like them,

[1] About 1550 the exports from the German mines to France alone reached six million *livres*.

they became an international force; even as the kings of France, Henry II and Henry IV, brought to the throne of France the daughters of the Florentine bankers, now become dukes of Tuscany, so did the Elector-Palatine Frederic the Glorious, Duke Albert III of Bavaria and the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria marry daughters of the great Augsburg capitalists. The fortunes of the Hapsburgs in the 16th century were based to a great extent on those of the Welsers and the Fuggers. It was the Fuggers who provided Charles V with the means of bribing the electors whose votes gave him the imperial crown. As for the Welsers they made such vast loans to Charles V that he secured them by pledging Venezuela to the Welsers and they armed a naval squadron to take possession of it.

In the 16th century, however, the Augsburg capitalists, enriched by the exploitation of the mines of central Europe, had been attracted by Antwerp; the sea alone provided sufficient outlets for their vast capital resources. But it was the sea which drained the sources of the wealth of Augsburg. The continental mines, nearing exhaustion, could not compete with the flow of precious metals imported from America or the tin exports from Wales and Cornwall, given a wide distribution by English shipping. The imperialism of the Hapsburgs drew the German financiers to Spain, where they were involved in that country's successive bankruptcies.[1]

The decline of the Styrian mines completed the ruin of the Danubian traffic. Augsburg and Nuremberg ceased to be a part of international trade and sank to the status of local markets. Henceforth all German trade, formerly dominated by the cities of the Hansa League, of the Rhine and of the Danube, was completely subordinated to Western economy. The new centres were to be Frankfurt, which was to act as an entrepôt for Dutch trade, Hamburg, the main port for England, and, in the east, Leipzig, the fair where the Western merchants came into contact with Russian and Oriental traders.

Feudal Isolation of Lutheran Germany

The commercial splendour of the Danubian and Rhenish cities had made them, by the beginning of the 16th century, centres of civilization. Reuchlin at Cologne, Duerer at Nuremberg, Holbein and Melanchthon at Augsburg, all made their contribution to humanism and the artistic renaissance of the West; and Frankfurt became a great market for printed books.

[1] The Fuggers lost eight million florins in the Spanish bankruptcies of the 16th century.

But the flame of intellect was spent when international trade ceased. Literature in the German tongue, inaugurated by the translation of the Bible by Luther, had no morrow; only coarse and valueless works were published. And while Italy, France, Spain, England and the Netherlands were experiencing an extraordinary intellectual and artistic flowering, Germany—save for the painter, Cranach—fell back into an utter intellectual void. The University of Wittenberg, which had been the birthplace of Lutheranism, was suffocated by its own triumph for, by breaking with the universal and individualist character of Christianity, Lutheranism, enclosed within itself and subjected to the sterile ideology of the feudal princes of central Germany, became barren.

This economic and intellectual decadence was paralleled by political and social regression. The feudal dismemberment of all the Lutheran regions of Germany became more and more evident. While in France Loyseau was elaborating the theory of monarchical absolutism, John Philipson of Sleiden was teaching the legal thesis of feudal sovereignty, which had such a vogue that it ran into eighty editions. After the Peace of Augsburg (1555) which made the local princes heads of a religion split up into countless national cults, justice, currency, mining, tolls, education, all passed entirely into the hands of the feudal rulers. But the feudalism which then divided Germany into three hundred and fifty sovereign states no longer, in the 16th century, possessed the grandeur which the universal power of the Pope had given it during the Middle Ages. It was no more than an anarchic chaos, dominated by petty princely courts more and more absolutist, enclosed within themselves, which, trying to imitate the external luxury of the Western potentates, foundered in financial disorder.

Monarchical Evolution of the Catholic and Calvinist States

In contrast to Lutheran and feudal Germany, the Catholic and Calvinist states of the Rhine and Danube regions, which had remained in touch with the outer world, were the only centres of civilization within the borders of the now defunct Holy Empire.

While Lutheran Germany moved towards absolutism within a feudal framework, Catholic and Calvinist Germany, where urban civilization still existed though much diminished, turned under the influence of the West towards the monarchical idea. At the end of the 16th century there were only two cultural centres in Germany, the Catholic university at Ingolstadt on the Danube, where the Jesuits ruled as masters, and the Calvinist university at Heidelberg in the Palatinate. Nothing original

came from either of them, but at least they maintained contact with international culture.

It was in these areas that the first German states were organized, the Calvinist Palatinate and Catholic Bavaria and the Hapsburg states. The Palatinate, under the elector, Frederic V, in 1603 became the centre of the Evangelical Union founded by the Calvinist princes, amongst whom the marquis of Baden and the prince of Württemberg were clearly under the influence of France and the United Provinces. The Catholics replied by forming the Holy League (1609), under the presidency of Duke Maximilian of Bavaria, which looked to Spain.

At the beginning of the 17th century Germany was split by its religious differences. The most progressive districts, those which had experienced a great economic and intellectual development, were, in the 16th century, Calvinist or Catholic; those in the east, backward and seigniorial, were Lutheran. Henry IV tried in vain to unite Lutherans and Catholics against the emperor.

The Catholic states were the first to adopt centralized institutions. In Bavaria, Duke Maximilian organized a financial administration and a standing army and tried, by basing his ducal power on Catholic ideology, to carry out a monarchical policy.

5. HAPSBURG IMPERIALISM, CHECKED IN THE EAST BY THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, TURNS WESTWARD

The Austrian Hapsburgs Pay Tribute to the Sultan

The policy of joint hegemony, carried out simultaneously by Charles V in the West and by Ferdinand I in central Europe, clashed with the power of the Ottoman Empire, whose armies in 1529 advanced as far as Vienna. The alliance concluded in 1536 between Francis I of France and the Porte was the insuperable barrier in the path of Hapsburg imperialism. The double defeat of Ferdinand I before Buda and Charles V before Algiers (1541) assured the supremacy of the Porte in south-east Europe. While the Muscovite Empire, free from the tribute which it had been paying to the Tatars for two centuries, broke through to the Black Sea, Ferdinand I in 1547 signed a treaty with the Porte by which he agreed to pay tribute and to cede almost all Hungary, retaining only a few areas in the north and west with Croatia and Slavonia. Transylvania was made an autonomous principality, vassal to the sultan. The rest of Hungary was transformed into *sandjaks* and the cathedral of Pest became a mosque. Thus, while Charles V was embarking on the conquest of

America and establishing his rule over all the oceans, the Ottoman Empire was victoriously advancing in the Danube valley and forced the German emperor to acknowledge himself humbly as its tributary. Civilization shifted more and more to the shores of the Atlantic, which was becoming a European lake, while it retreated on the continent, isolated in Lutheranism or submerged by the tide of Islam.

The Hapsburg dynasty was the greatest power in central Europe; as well as its patrimonial states it disposed of the two crowns of Bohemia and Hungary. It would none the less have succumbed to the Turkish arms had not Philip II, allied to the republic of Venice, broken the naval power of the Ottoman Empire at Lepanto (1571).

Check to Hapsburg Imperialism

The loss of almost all Hungary and the emperor's obligation to acknowledge himself a tributary of the Porte (1547) halted the territorial imperialism which the Hapsburgs had been practising in the Danubian regions since the reign of Frederic III. The Peace of Augsburg, signed shortly afterwards (1555), marked the triumph of feudalism and the failure of the monarchical policy which Charles V, relying on the financial and military power of Spain, had tried to force upon the Holy Empire. It meant the failure on all fronts of the Hapsburg power, which had had its brief moment of triumph.

Vanquished by the Turks and unable to force his rule on the German princes, Ferdinand became involved in the general decadence of Germany and divided his states among his three sons. He gave Austria, Bohemia and what remained to him of Hungary to Maximilian II (1564–1576); his second son received the Tyrol and Alsace, and his third son received Styria, Carinthia and Carniola, including Trieste. The Hapsburg states were so essentially continental that Ferdinand I, in dividing them, did not hesitate to separate them from Trieste, their only access to the sea.

Rudolph II Bases His Monarchical Policy on Bohemia

Threatened by the Turks in the Danube basin, Maximilian II, instead of making ready to oppose them, reverted to the territorial extension which had always been Hapsburg policy and tried to obtain for his family the crown of Poland, which the extinction of the Jagellon dynasty had left unclaimed. But the Polish nobility feared the Hapsburgs; it turned to Sweden and brought Sigismond Vasa to the throne (1587). The Hapsburg policy of eastward expansion, stopped by Turkey and by Poland, was finally abandoned. There was no other alternative than to turn westward

and to base their policy on Bohemia, the richest and most powerful of the Hapsburg states. Rudolph II (1576–1612) transferred his capital to Prague, then the greatest city of the empire. Brought up in Spain by the Jesuits, Rudolph was a convinced believer in absolutism and the counter-reformation. But Bohemia was firmly attached to the principle of freedom of worship among the various religions into which its people were divided. Lutheranism had taken root among the nobles who wanted to secularize the properties of the church; Calvinism had aroused among the city burghers a real enthusiasm which recalled that of the reformers in the Netherlands; while, with the support of the Jesuits, a part of the population, mainly the lesser nobles, remained firmly devoted to Catholicism. Rudolph II was forced to temporize. In 1609 he recognized freedom of worship throughout Bohemia. Except for France, Bohemia was the only country to possess it. But while France owed it to her king, Henry IV, Bohemia owed it to the middle classes, the most civilized element in all the Hapsburg states.

Rudolph, however, did not give up his designs. Imbued with Spanish absolutism, he paved the way for a monarchical policy by relying on the Catholic party within the country. The Calvinists and the Moravian Brethren—who perpetuated the Hussite tradition—resisted, both from the religious and the national viewpoint. Calvinism was allied to liberalism, Catholicism to absolutism. The conflict was imminent between the dynastic policy of the Hapsburgs and Czech national sentiment. The crisis in which it ended was to plunge all Europe into the great mêlée of the Thirty Years War.

CHAPTER XL

IDEAS OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FROM THE 15TH TO THE 17TH CENTURY

THE importance of international trade and the scale of the wars of the 16th century resulted in a longing for peace which, in all countries, was shown by the search for a stable international order.

The Middle Ages had conceived a universal power under the twofold authority of the Pope and the emperor. But the formation of the national monarchies and the decadence of the Holy Empire had marked the end of this conception.

Podiebrad's Plan for a Continental Federation

In the 15th century a new feeling of international solidarity began to appear, which was shown in the first glimmerings of a law of nations. The idea of a concert of European powers took form for the first time after the signature of the Peace of Arras (1435). After a veritable congress of powers, which met on the initiative of Philip the Good, it was decided to fix the conditions for a final peace between Burgundy, France and England, which was to be guaranteed by the representatives of the Pope, the emperor, the princes and the main cities of the West. Baldus introduced into law the idea that the Catholic peoples should be regarded as allies between whom, in consequence, diplomacy should take the place of war.[1] The capture of Constantinople by the Turks and the threat to Europe of the Ottoman armies gave this idea of a united international policy a burning immediacy. The king of Bohemia, George Podiebrad, tried to give it form in the organization of a federation of European nations.

His plan was a complete break with mediaeval ideas. The Hussite wars

[1] That was how it was put by the Belgian historian Chastelain in *L'instruction d'un jeune prince.*

had ranged Bohemia against both the emperor and the Holy See. Podiebrad therefore refused to place his proposed federation under the moral authority of the Pope. For him, the emperor and the Pope were sovereigns like any others; on the contrary, he recognized the virtual leadership of the king of France, who had just emerged victorious from the Hundred Years War. The federation which he conceived was—like Bohemia itself—exclusively continental. In it all nations were regarded as completely equal, had no right to make war upon one another and were placed under the rule of a council which was to meet every five years and in which each nation had only one vote (1464).

Podiebrad's plan failed because of the hostility of the Pope and the opposition of the Catholics.

Half a century later, the Reformation destroyed the last factor of European unity—Christian unity. The imperialist hegemony of Charles V and Philip II rose out of the ruins of Christian universalism. It meant eighty years of war for Europe.

None the less, despite the war, international life was being organized, The custom of exchanging permanent ambassadors spread. The development of international trade led to the conclusion of commercial treaties and monetary conventions. The humanists, like Erasmus and van Clichthove in the Netherlands, Vives in Spain and Colet and Thomas More in England, directly addressed their rulers and denied them the right to make war. 'Say that war between Christians is criminal and evil,' wrote Vives to Pope Adrian VI, and to Francis I: 'Condemn it utterly among members of a single body, since in Christ there are neither French nor Spaniards.'

The Federation of Sovereign States Conceived by Sully

Peace was restored with the ideas of tolerance upon which Henry IV based his whole policy of rehabilitation in France. Peace restored prosperity to France, and Sully[1] formed the plan of extending it to all Europe. He wished to ensure its continuance by an international balance which would in the future prevent any imperialist wars. To do this he wanted to dismember the Hapsburg empire, restore autonomous governments to the Netherlands and Italy and give to each people a political régime in accord with its traditions.

In France the monarchy under Henry IV had become closely associated with the nation. Absolutism, renouncing any attempt to justify itself,

[1] *Mémoires des sages et royales œconomies d'estat, domestiques, politiques et militaires de Henry le Grand* (1570–1605), published in 1635.

as in Spain, by a religious ideology, appealed to law. Sully hoped to be able to replace Christian universalism, which had been destroyed by the Reformation, by an international agreement based on a legal statute which, by guaranteeing political liberty and freedom of worship, would create a lasting peace.

Was he aware of the plan for European federation drawn up by George Podiebrad and brought to France by a Czech mission in 1464? It is probable. He seems, in any case, to have been inspired by it in his 'Great Design'.

Bohemia was an essentially continental state. Podiebrad conceived a federation which did not include England and only envisaged Spanish participation as contingent. The two greatest naval powers of the times would therefore have been absent. It was, in fact, a federation of continental Europe under French presidency.

But the France of Henry IV was both maritime and continental; maritime because its prosperity was derived from the sea and the maritime nations, continental because its security was dependent on the maintenance of peace on the continent. The European federation envisaged by Sully extended over all Europe. It included England but not, however, Orthodox Russia.

It included six hereditary monarchies—France, Spain, England, Denmark, Sweden and Lombardy—six elective monarchies—Rome (to which he joined Naples), Venice, the Empire, Poland, Hungary and Bohemia—three federal republics—the Helvetic, which included Switzerland, the Tyrol, Savoy, Franche-Comté and Alsace, the Belgian, which comprised the southern and northern Netherlands, the Italian, comprising Genoa, Lucca, Florence, Modena, Parma and Piacenza. Three religions—Catholicism, Calvinism and Lutheranism—were to be permitted, the ruler in every country having the right to expel dissidents.

The common affairs of Europe were to be entrusted to six local councils, over which would be a general council, composed of seventy members elected for three years from all the federated states, which would meet in a city of central Europe. It would have at its disposal an army composed of men from all the countries—which would be required to disarm—to enforce its decrees.[1]

War between Christian nations was forbidden; it could only be permitted against the Turks.

The analogies with Podiebrad's plan are striking. Sully too wanted to restore the unity of Europe by uniting it against the Turks, a fact the more

[1] It was, in fact, the application to Europe of the classical Greek League system.

remarkable as, since 1536, France had been the ally of the Porte. Like Podiebrad, Sully treated the empire as a state amongst other states and the Pope as a simple sovereign. Mediaeval mysticism gave pride of place to modern law. For the universalism of the Holy Empire, based on the monarchic idea and the divine right of power, it substituted a universalism, republican in form, derived from an international contract. Going even further than Vittoria, who wanted to found the law of war on Christian morality, Sully did not hesitate to outlaw war between Christians.

So new a conception, which affirmed the right of peoples to liberty, restricted sovereignty in favour of an international community, recognized monarchies and republics as equal in law, abolished the idea of the universal empire and only accepted the Pope in the community of nations as a temporal prince, and which, by refusing to Christian sovereigns the right to make war, rendered all policies of hegemony impossible, was a stage of cardinal importance in the evolution of European political thinking; it opened the era of international law.

However, modern as it may seem, the 'Great Design' was foreshadowed in 1464 by Podiebrad's 'European League' and was the culmination of the democratic and parliamentary idea of the Middle Ages, transferred from the urban to the national plane.

The mediaeval cities were in effect republican states which had acquired democratic institutions based on the idea of social contract. The idea, which Demosthenes had recalled to the Athenians in his harangues, had been put into effect by the Flemish cities in the 12th century by the 'sworn commune' which based the city state on a contract to which all its citizens adhered by oath. It was an idea similar to that which had inspired the speeches of Philip Pot to the States-General of 1484 on national sovereignty and the declarations made to the Estates of Blois in 1588, in which it was stated that their votes were above the king's will. The Commune of Paris, by electing in that same year an 'insurgent committee' which pronounced the deposition of the king, also acted by virtue of the sovereignty of the people. The same idea was found in the decision taken by the States-General of Brussels in 1576 which replaced the sovereignty of the king by that of the nation which it represented, as also in the proclamation of the republic of the United Provinces in 1579. The Jesuits, in the 16th century, had transferred this idea from the practical plane to that of doctrine. Two Spanish Jesuits, Suarez[1] and Mariana,[2] considering

[1] His *Tractatus de legibus ac Deo legislatore* is the most remarkable work on international law written in the first half of the 16th century. It maintained the legality of war on condition that its cause be just and that it be waged with moderation.

[2] *De Rege et regis institutione.*

the foundation of monarchy to be a contract made with the people, deduced that it was legitimate to kill every usurper and put to death any monarch who betrayed the Catholic faith. Contemporaries accused the Jesuits who supported this tyrannicidal theory of having been the cause of the assassinations of William of Orange and Henry III.[1] The same idea, however, was to be found at the same period among the Huguenots.[2]

It was by introducing the ideas of social contract and national sovereignty into the law of nations that Sully replaced the universal empire as the Middle Ages had conceived it by the idea of a federative Europe made up of monarchies and republics bound by a contract and governed no longer by an emperor but by an elected council. The idea of a league of nations was born.

Crucé Proposes a League of Nations Based on Freedom of Trade

This idea was taken up again in 1623 by Crucé[3] who, under the growing influence of economic questions, conceived a league of all nations, Christian or not, based on freedom of trade and universal peace. Like Sully, he renounced the legality of war but, going still further, he even refused to allow war for religious motives; war must be totally proscribed. For the first time he put forward the thesis of liberty of trade regarded as the essential principle of peace.

As executive organ of the league of nations Crucé recommended a Council of Ambassadors which should meet, not in a city of central Europe as Sully had wanted, but in Venice, a great sea-port open to the entire world. The Council of Ambassadors would act as an international court entrusted with arbitration in disputes between states; the Pope would have the task of putting before it disputes between Christian states and the king of France differences between Christian and Moslem states.

The order of precedence fixed by Crucé for the representatives of the different states reveals an entirely fresh conception of the international community. He gave first place to the Pope; then came the Ottoman emperor, the emperor of the Holy Empire, the kings of France and Spain, the shah of Persia, the emperor of China, the king of Ethiopia, the khan of Tartary, the tsar of Russia and only then the kings of England, Scot-

[1] The theses upheld by de Ayala in 1581 were regarded as responsible. They admitted the legitimacy of war against heretics and the murder of the rebellious. In 1611 the Jesuit Keller in *Tyrannicidium* limited the tyrannicide theory to usurpers alone.

[2] For example in the manifesto: *Vindiciae contra tyrannos.*

[3] *Nouveau Cynée ou discours d'Etat représentant les occasions et moyens d'establir une paix générale et la liberté du commerce par tout le monde*, Paris, 1623.

land, Poland, Denmark and Sweden; finally there were the emperor of Japan, the sultan of Morocco, the Great Mogul of Delhi &c. It was doubtless merely an intellectual exercise, but it foreshadows the views of the 20th century.

Hugo Grotius Founds International Law

Such ideas found their legal expression in the work of Hugo Grotius, the famous Dutch lawyer who, after Vittoria, may be regarded as the founder of international law. More realist than Sully and Crucé, Grotius did not go so far as to outlaw war, but he proposed to subject it to legal requirements and to create an international jurisprudence. He tried to distinguish between just and unjust wars, classing among the latter wars of conquest, of dynastic ambition, of ideological propaganda and of colonization. He condemned war as a profession. He wanted to shelter from the effects of war children, women, old people, tillers of the soil, artisans and men of letters, in fact the whole of the population unsuited for fighting or which made up the material and intellectual wealth of states. It was the revival, in legal form, of the Peace of God which the Church had introduced in the Middle Ages as a moral obligation. Grotius wanted to introduce into the conduct of war good faith, respect for the rights of neutrals, justice and humanity. Not content with wanting to reduce war to a simple military operation, developing within the framework of known laws, he wished to extend the protection of law to the conquered peoples, to guarantee them territorial and personal liberty and freedom of worship.

Taking up once more the thesis first put forward in the 14th century by Angelo degli Ubaldi[1] that 'the sea and its shores are common to all, like air and water, by virtue of the law of nature and the law of nations', again adopted by the Belgian lawyer Everardi[2] and by the Spaniards de Castro[3] and Menchaca,[4] Grotius in *Mare liberum* went farther than Crucé and claimed that freedom of the seas was a condition necessary for trade and consequently for peace.

International law presupposes an authority and Grotius found it in organization and arbitration. 'It would be necessary,' he writes, 'for the Christian powers to form among themselves some sort of body at whose meeting the contentions of each would be ended by the judgment of other and disinterested parties and they should also seek for some means to

[1] *Consilia, consilium.*
[2] *Topica juris sive loci argumentorum legales*, 1516.
[3] *De potestate legis poenalis.*
[4] *Controversiae illustres.*

compel the parties concerned to consent under reasonable conditions.'[1] This meant to organize the nations in a society under contractual rules.

The Universal Monarchy of Campanella

Even as mediaeval 'parliamentarianism' culminated in the 'Great Design' of Sully, so did the idea of universal sovereignty, which had haunted the Middle Ages and had been revived by Charles V as a foundation for his imperial policy of dynastic absolutism, find in 1559 its theoretician in the Dominican monk Campanella.[2] For him Europe was not a league of nations but a universal monarchy over which the kings of Spain, as heirs of the Germanic Holy Empire, should preside. He regarded the empire as merely continuing the tradition of the Roman, Macedonian, Persian and Babylonian empires. The universal empire was presented as the normal and eternal form of government. To restore it on the foundation of Catholic unity Campanella appealed to Spain, France and Italy. Since he understood that the backwardness of social evolution in Germany was a hindrance to the formation of a 'European empire', he conceived a vast plan to educate German youth, especially in the art of navigation, in order to break down its intellectual and economic isolation and thus restore it to the Catholic faith. Campanella's plan, exclusively Catholic, took no account of schismatic England and Russia.

First Plans for a Continental Hegemony by Germany

The plan of Campanella provoked a reply by the Lutheran Gaspard Scioppius 'in the name of German patriotism'. After the wars of religion German feudalism had parcelled out the empire. Scioppius, who already looked on the world from the viewpoint of the mission of the German people, concluded from this that the time of the great empires was over, and proposed a sort of balance, in the name of which he called upon the German princes to unite.[3] It was the first of a series of works preaching a union of Germany against Spain; it foreshadowed that which Boyneberg and Leibniz, at the end of the 17th century, proposed against France.

Berger, at the beginning of the 17th century,[4] when Sully was formulating his 'Great Design', saw a Europe formed by the union of Germany, Bohemia and Hungary, that is to say all the countries of seigniorial structure, 'against' France, Spain and Italy, that is along the division between the continental and maritime countries. The unity of Europe,

[1] *De jure belli ac pacis.*
[2] *De monarchia hispanica.*
[3] In Goldast, *Imperialia*, 1614.
[4] *Trinubium europaeum*, 1612.

according to Berger, must result from the conquest of the latter by the former. Neither England nor Russia was taken into account. Europe must be continental and Germanic.

The Liberal Dream of Pannonius of Belgrade

It was from the countries under the Turkish yoke that the voice of tolerance and liberty was to come. In 1608 Pannonius of Belgrade[1] conceived the Christian empire re-established by the expulsion of the Turks from Europe and the Holy Land and by the union, in equal tolerance, of all men who believe in the Holy Trinity. He saw this empire as made up of three parts; in the east, in addition to Judaea and Greece, there would be Hungary, Bohemia and Poland, in the west England, Spain, the Netherlands, France and Italy and between them Germany, which he dreamed would become the centre of a new civilization founded on the great men of each country, and which would respect the nationalities, languages and institutions of all peoples under the rule of the emperor, heir of the Roman Caesars.

Thus every people formulated a plan of international organization which reflected its own particular tendencies. Two desires for hegemony were revealed in them: one in Spain, the other in the Germanic Holy Empire, both emanating from the Hapsburg states which, in the 17th century, were to try to establish their supremacy, both relying on the dynastic formula of personal absolutism.

In France, the liberal Sully envisaged a system of balance which was later to become that of Richelieu, of Mazarin and of Colbert.

In England no interest was shown in plans for a European organization. She dissociated herself more and more from the continent and kept her gaze fixed overseas.

What deep stirrings of the European conscience can already be perceived in these theories and dreams, which were to reappear in the 18th century and cause great waves from whose depths would emerge the French Revolution and the world wars of the 19th and 20th centuries.

[1] Also in Goldast.

BOOK X

Europe Becomes the Centre of the World

CHAPTER XLI

ASIA RESISTS EUROPEAN INFLUENCE

I. MOSLEM ASIA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 17TH CENTURY

At the beginning of the 17th century Asia consisted of five great states clearly divided into two distinct types of civilization. In the west there were two Moslem empires, the Ottoman Empire which extended over all Nearer Asia including Mesopotamia, and Persia which bordered on Turkestan and stretched to the Indus; in the centre was India where the people, who had remained faithful to Brahmanism, were subject to a conquering Moslem caste; and in the east the Chinese Empire and the feudal state of Japan, where Buddhism had been superimposed on the ancient national religions of Taoism and Shintoism. Practically no communication existed between these two worlds, one dominated by Islam and the other by Buddhism. The caravan routes of Central Asia, formerly invigorated by the silk trade, were almost abandoned, to the extent that, in 1603, the Portuguese Jesuits tried to rediscover the route from Delhi to Pekin by way of the Tarim valley. Communication by sea between the Far East and the Moslem lands had also almost ceased since European navies had taken possession of the China and India seas. The acclimatization of the silk worm in Persia, in India, in Syria, in Greece, in Italy and in Spain had reduced to a very great extent the export of Chinese silk which, in the times of universal trade, had played an important role in the exchanges between China and the rest of the world.

Decadence of the Ottoman Empire

At the end of the 16th century the Ottoman Empire was the most powerful of all the continental empires. The Tatar khans of Russia were its vassals; the king of Poland, the emperor and the prince of Moscow paid tribute to it. In Valachia, in Moldavia, in Bessarabia and in Transylvania it appointed the local princes as vassals of the Porte. In 1567 the sultan brought back ninety thousand slaves from an expedition which

he led as far as the Austrian frontier; in 1571, the same year as he suffered the naval defeat of Lepanto, he burnt Moscow and made a fresh haul of a hundred thousand captives destined to be sold on the markets of Constantinople. The Porte intervened in central Europe as a sovereign arbiter; in 1574, when Henry of Valois abandoned the Polish crown to become King Henry III of France, it forced the election of its protégé Stephen Batory (1575) and, after him, of Sigismond Vasa (1587), because it did not want to see Poland come either directly or indirectly under Hapsburg influence. With this in mind, it sent a Turkish ambassador to Vienna to prevent the emperor from putting forward the candidature of any German prince to the Polish throne.

The sultan had an incontestable supremacy throughout central Europe, which was strengthened by his alliance with the king of France. He treated the French, however, with marked condescension; the ambassadors of the shah of Persia and the sultan of Delhi had precedence at Constantinople over those of the court of France. All the states of Europe and Asia acknowledged his supremacy, backed by military force.

Essentially continental, the Ottoman Empire relied also upon the sea, not to use it, as did the Western lands, as a field for the expansion of trade, but as an advanced military post which ensured its defence and allowed it to impose its rule on the African coasts over the sultans of Morocco, Algeria and Tunis.

Turkish fleets dominated the eastern Mediterranean. Defeated in 1571, its squadrons were rebuilt by 1573; they finally broke the naval power of Venice by seizing Cyprus, and forced the Barbary states and Morocco to accept Ottoman suzerainty.

Like its armies, whose periodical forays kept the treasury supplied, the Ottoman fleets also reaped a good harvest. Even as the English and Dutch carried out privateering ventures in the oceans, the Porte organized piracy in the Mediterranean as a profitable trade. While Christian shipowners enriched themselves by the slave-trade, the sale of white slaves, captured along the coasts, was a source of wealth for the peoples of the Barbary states and for the Turks.

The activities of the Turks reduced Mediterranean shipping more and more. The Black Sea was practically closed to Europeans, and French ships, protected by the capitulations of 1536, were the only ones to reach the Syrian ports in safety.

The naval expansion of Portugal in the Gulf of Oman, by closing the Red Sea, had dealt a heavy blow to Egyptian prosperity. Cut off from India, Alexandria, one of the main centres of Moslem wealth, lost all

importance. Its ruin, it is true, was compensated by the revival of the caravan routes which ran from India, by way of Persia, to Constantinople, whose population increased to a million inhabitants.

In Nearer Asia the wealth of Constantinople was matched by that of Baghdad, whose trade with India was worth two hundred and fifty thousand ducats to its governor alone. But these great cities which gave it financial wealth only interested the empire to a very small degree. The Turks were essentially landowners. Their evolution was totally different from that of the states of western Europe. Everywhere they ruled, they aimed at settling on the land a governing military oligarchy which amassed enormous wealth. The grand vizier of Soliman the Magnificent left a fortune in cash which could be reckoned as the equivalent of twenty-six million gold francs, equal to that of the greatest capitalists of the times. Sultan Ahmed IV possessed a personal treasure of fifty million ducats (five hundred million gold francs), infinitely greater than the monies at the disposal of Philip II or Louis XIV.

None the less, at the beginning of the 17th century, the expansive power of the Ottoman Empire was broken. To bar its way in Europe there were the Russian Empire, Poland, the Hapsburgs and Venice; in Asia there was Persia. The Porte countered by concluding an alliance with France and supporting the Protestant princes against the emperor.

But the weakening of the Franco-Turkish alliance under the pacific reign of Henry IV, the war against Persia and the revolt of the Shiite Moslems in Asia Minor, who were aided by Persia and the Christians in Europe, marked the turning point of Ottoman power. In 1606 the sultan was forced, by the Peace of Sitvatorok, to recognize the Hapsburg right to the title of emperor, which he had formerly claimed for himself alone. It was the end of Turkish hegemony.

The true reason for Ottoman decadence was, however, to be found not in external affairs but in internal evolution. The Turkish Empire was an army. It could live only from victories. However, its fighting value was diminished by the settlement of the military caste of spahis on the conquered lands. By the end of the 16th century their fiefs had become patrimonial properties, transmissible to women and minors. Instead of being payment for military service, they had become hereditary properties burdened with a military commitment. The janissaries, originally composed of Christian children brought up to become soldier-monks of Islam, were now only recruited from Moslem beggars.

Power, by ceasing to be military, lost its primitive brutality and thereby became less warlike. The sultan, instead of being a commander-in-chief,

became an autocrat. Formerly his younger brothers had been put to death as soon as he mounted the throne, in order to prevent court intrigues. By the end of the 16th century this custom had fallen into abeyance. Thenceforward autocracy granted the power to whomever could seize it and the court and the harem became centres of conspiracy. The Turkish régime was based on terror and became its prisoner; like all 'strong' régimes it could not free itself without weakening itself.

During the heroic period the sultan, fearful of becoming the plaything of an oligarchy, had—like the Mongols—governed with the aid of foreigners, usually Christian renegades. But by the end of the great wars the power had passed to the Moslems. The clergy used their influence; the doctors of Islam formed a council around the sultan which claimed, by its interpretation of the divine will, to dispose of the imperial dignity. As around all autocrats an oligarchy was formed which delivered the empire to favouritism and intrigue; the plunder which the great men could no longer seize from the conquered lands would from now on be filched from the resources of the state.

By 1600 Turkey portrayed all the vices of a decadent military régime. Its whole structure was only a servile hierarchy subject to the most absolute and bloodthirsty arbitrary will.

Furthermore, by dividing the population into two classes, Moslems and others, the empire, as soon as it could no longer impose its rule by force, tended to break up. The peoples of the Balkans, which had for the most part remained Christian, were to look more and more towards the Russian Empire which, freed from the suzerainty of the Moslem khans, was advancing victoriously to the Black Sea.

None the less, the Ottoman Empire still had an imposing façade. Its army possessed the best artillery in the world, cast and manned by Christians. Its wealth, which drained the provinces like so many conquered lands, remained very great. As far as Asia was concerned, Constantinople had not lost its prestige as the imperial capital. The ambassador of the Porte, at Ispahan and at Delhi, took precedence over all Europeans. Asia had not yet become used to the idea that, by losing the mastery of the seas, she had ceded her supremacy to western Europe.

Revival of Nationalism in Persia

Meanwhile, alongside the Ottoman Empire, whose decadence had already begun, Persia and India at the end of the 17th century passed through a period of splendour. The Persian Empire had been an insurmountable barrier to Ottoman expansion in Central Asia. The Safevid

dynasty, under whose rule Iran was to know, from 1502, a vigorous national revival, reached its zenith under Abbas I (1587–1629). Contrary to the Ottoman Empire which possessed no culture of its own, Iran had preserved a great tradition of civilization. Under Abbas I it again flowered in the splendour of its architecture and in the minor arts—miniature painting, carpetry and jewellery—which made its capital, Ispahan, with a population of six hundred thousand, one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

Till this time the Safevid shahs had governed with the support of a military caste of Turkish former feudatories transformed into soldiers who had been allotted small fiefs. Abbas I, having become a truly national ruler, shook off their patronage by reducing their numbers from eighty to thirty thousand and to complete the effectives of his thus depleted army he used slaves bought in Georgia from the Turks. He thus formed a strong standing army of a hundred and thirty thousand men, with artillery cast in England.

But there was an essential difference between the shah and the sultan. The sultan was only the leader of an army, whereas the shah was the leader of his people, whose prosperity and safety he sought to assure by his social and economic policy, founding hospitals and colleges and building roads which linked Ispahan to the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf.

As regards art and luxury-industries Persia was able, in the 17th century, to challenge comparison with the West. Her trade activity was considerable. Tabriz, the centre of trade with the West, and Kachan, which looked towards India, were cities of several hundred thousand inhabitants. Agriculture, fostered by a system of irrigation canals, made the situation of the peasants, free and only lightly taxed, far better than in Europe.

Thanks to a taxation system which did not spare the property-owning classes the state had huge resources at its disposal; the public revenue amounted to sixty million gold francs without counting the immense levies in kind; the treasury had a reserve of ninety millions in precious metals. But the luxury of the court and the very high living standards of the upper classes gave Iran an unfavourable trade balance with India—mainly for cloth imports—which, little by little, drained the country of its gold.

Other signs of decadence soon showed themselves. Despite its great traditions, Persian civilization was no longer developing. Like China, Persia was living on her past; her art and her thinking created nothing new. She was entirely dependent on Europe for her technical skills, especi-

ally for military equipment. This stagnation was undoubtedly due in great part to her isolation. The sea, instead of opening her to the outer world, separated her from it, since she had no ships. Up to 1515 she had been dependent on Arab shipping. After the seizure of Ormuzd, the Portuguese had laid hands on the entire trade of the Persian Gulf. When in 1622 Abbas I wanted to free himself from their control, he had to appeal to the English East India Company.

Certainly Persia was in constant contact with China by the caravan routes of Central Asia. But the caravan trade, which had had a revival of prosperity after the seizure of the sea-route by the Portuguese, had slackened because of the closer and closer control which the Turkish feudal lords exercised in Central Asia and because of the inquisition set up by the Moslem theologians who adopted Bukhara as their Holy City.

Thus, hostile to the Ottoman Empire and more and more cut off from China, Persia turned to India and Europe. With India she was in direct touch. As for Europe she came into contact with it on her sea frontiers through the English East India Company and on her land frontiers by the caravan routes which led to Russia.

But Europe was only a supplement to the economic and intellectual life of Persia. It was to India, upon whose aristocracy she had a very great influence, that she mainly turned.

2. INDIA UNDER THE MOGULS

The Portuguese Isolated from the People

When the death of Baber (1530) led to the break-up of the feudal empire he had formed with Delhi as its centre the Portuguese penetration into India was in full swing. Northern and central India were subject to Turkish sultans; in the south Hindu princes reigned, amongst whom the prince of Vijayanagar was the chief. A close alliance was concluded between the Hindu princes and the Portuguese, whose capital, Goa, was on the boundary of the territories conquered by the Turks. They had been forced into conflict with the sultan of Gujerat, master of the great sea-port of Baroch—the former Barigaza—who had assumed the leadership, thirty years before, of the naval coalition between Venice and the Arabs against the Portuguese fleet.

In 1546 he tried to seize Goa; he failed. A coalition of Moslem princes of central India was then formed against the Hindu prince of Vijayanagar under the leadership of the sultan of Bidjapur. In 1565 the states of the

prince of Vijayanagar were conquered. The Turkish coalition, having thus isolated the Portuguese, turned once more against Goa and an army of a hundred thousand men laid siege to the city whose defence was in the hands of only eight hundred and fifty Portuguese, of whom three hundred were in holy orders. Goa held out (1569).

But henceforward, surrounded by enemies, the Portuguese in India were completely isolated pockets. In order to hold out, they wanted absolute possession of the cities in which they had settled and to make them purely Portuguese. Goa, where there were only a thousand of them in the midst of a population of two hundred thousand, received its institutions from Lisbon and Catholicism was enforced as the sole religion. It meant a break with the Hindu population which remained as unaffected by Christianity as it had been by Islam. To compel the Hindus, the Portuguese destroyed all the religious buildings which were not Christian. But evangelization by force, even as by persuasion, was a total failure; it did not even succeed in assimilating the hundred thousand Nestorian Christians whose communities had survived for centuries in the ports of western India. The only result of the religious fanaticism of the Portuguese was to make them hated by the people, who began to leave the cities where they were in control. They were thus condemned to a decadence which was to mean the decline of the Portuguese Empire in India.

The Mogul Empire of Akbar (1556–1605)

While all this was happening on the Malabar coast and in southern India, Akbar was rebuilding the Empire of Delhi, which he extended over the Indus and Ganges basins and as far as Godavari in central India. The sultans of Bidjapur and Golconda were forced to acknowledge his suzerainty. Akbar, a Turkish prince and essentially continental in his ideas, was not interested in the sea. He accepted the situation of the Portuguese as an accomplished fact. As for the Hindu cities of the south, they had no part in his ambitions. The business community continued to devote itself to export trade as freely as in the Western lands the great Italian and Flemish communes had done in feudal times.

Outside the great cities, which were extremely wealthy centres of capitalism, the immense empire of Akbar was essentially a land-state. The cities lived their own lives, whereas the total absolutism of the sultan of Delhi was enforced on the country people, an absolutism even more complete than that of the Ottoman sultan for no control, not even that of the Moslem clergy, could be exercised on his government. All power and all justice was in the hands of the emperor who, absolute owner of

the whole land, was free to govern and impose taxes as he pleased. The Mogul Empire could not exist without the emperor whose power was a perfect example of what is called oriental despotism. As in Turkey the basis of the empire was the army; it numbered two hundred thousand men, possessed an artillery train cast and manned by Europeans and a corps of five thousand war-elephants.

Akbar, however, did not want to be a despot. Attracted by Brahmanic thinking, educated in Persian mysticism, he renounced Islam and tried to set up a solar worship which, by combining the essential elements of Hinduism, could be accepted by his Hindu subjects and could justify in their eyes the absolutism by divine right which, like his contemporary Philip II, he claimed to possess.

While preserving the Turkish and Mongol tradition, by which the sultan governed with the help of foreigners, Akbar suppressed the inferiority of status to which the non-Moslems in his lands had been reduced, exempted the Hindus from the land-tax imposed on unbelievers and abolished the régime of the lash set up by Baber. But being surrounded by immense luxury he needed ever-growing resources. He demanded them, as did all Turkish sultans, from land-taxation which at first fixed at one-third of the gross yield of the land soon increased to a half. He therefore destroyed, by the burden of his fiscal exigencies, the reforms which he had hoped would ease the poverty of his people and win their loyalty. Since he did not have at his disposal a sufficient administration for the collection of the taxes, he entrusted this to notables who thus formed, like the *decurions* of the later Roman Empire, a fiscal aristocracy; it was to become the instrument of the severest oppression.

Akbar introduced into India the magnificance of Persian architecture and a literature inspired by Persia. On his death the treasury contained three thousand millions in silver coins and piles of precious stones. He was, by far, the wealthiest ruler in the world. A very few landowners and business men in his lands also possessed vast fortunes. But under this veneer of wealth, for the most part sterile, the great mass of his hundred million subjects lived in the most abject poverty, and was no more than a mob of taxable material for the military and absolutist government of the Turkish sultan superimposed upon the country and linked with it only by the tie of inexorable subordination.

The empire of the Great Moguls reached its zenith under Shah Jehan (1627–1658) whose reign, though mild and paternal, marks the summit of the splendour and luxury of this sumptuous and brilliant façade behind which the great Hindu civilization was dying.

The Dutch supplant the Portuguese

The Portuguese had practically no connections with Akbar's empire, and played only a secondary role in its economic life. Indian exports to Persia and Constantinople which yielded large profits—especially for the export of cotton goods—went by the land-routes. It was only the spices which went by sea. Even this traffic was greatly reduced. It was all concentrated at Goa whence a convoy left every year for Lisbon. Between 1498 and 1576 three hundred and sixty-four ships—that is between four and five a year—left India. The royal monopoly hampered the development of trade; furthermore, since private initiative had no part in it, the merchant navy, being exclusively in state hands, rapidly declined. Portugal was short of ships. The peculations of the officials who administered the Indian trading-posts and the weakness of Portuguese industry paralysed by the policy of monopoly reduced the yield of the trade between Portugal and her empire to such a point that in 1607 the treasury gained only three hundred thousand ducats[1] profit from the spice trade. The Portuguese Empire stifled the sea-borne trade of India more and more.

At the end of the 16th century, however, the Dutch appeared in the Indian Ocean. Even as the Portuguese had destroyed the Arab shipping in the Gulf of Oman, so the Dutch put an end to what remained of the naval power of Java after the Portuguese occupation of Malacca. In 1595 they gained a foothold in Sumatra; in 1619 Batavia, in the very heart of the ancient kingdom of Madjahapit (Java), became the centre of the India Company, founded in 1602. Dutch shipping was to take up again, in the China seas, the role played by the Javanese shipping since the 13th century. The duel for the mastery of the China seas began between the Dutch capitalists and King Philip II who had, since 1580, united in his own hands the colonial empires of Spain and Portugal. Privateering was organized against the Portuguese convoys; of the one hundred and fifty-seven ships which sailed from Goa between 1580 and 1618 fifty-seven were lost, almost all of them sunk by the Dutch.

Since the Portuguese were unable to stop them, the Dutch set up trading-posts at Surat on the Malabar coast and at Palikat on the Coromandel coast. Without bothering about preaching the gospel, they entered into relations with Delhi and soon afterwards founded a settlement in the very heart of the empire, in the great city of Agra on the Ganges. Dutch fleets came every year to India, laden with goods from the West. From 1636 Goa was permanently blockaded. The conquest of

[1] Three million gold francs.

Malacca in 1641, till then held by the Portuguese, gave the Dutch control of the navigation between India and China. In 1657 Ceylon passed into Dutch hands and in the years that followed they seized from the Portuguese all the trading depots on the Malabar coast. The struggle thus began between the Calvinists and Catholics, which led to the total disappearance of Christianity from India, with the sole exception of the community which continued to exist at Cochin.

The ruin of the Portuguese Empire in India coincided with the decline of Antwerp in Europe. The India route to Lisbon had been extended to Antwerp which, under Charles V, became the great European spice market. The emigration of the Antwerp business men to Amsterdam after the sack of Antwerp by the Spaniards (1585) marked the end of the colonial greatness of Portugal. The Antwerp Jews who controlled the spice market transferred it to Amsterdam, while the war between the United Provinces and Spain, by developing Dutch shipping, prepared the Dutch for their great colonial expansion. While the political absolutism and the economic state control of Philip II were ruining the Portuguese thalassocracy in India, the forces of capital, transferred from Antwerp to Amsterdam, undertook the struggle against the royal monopoly. In comparison with the Spanish royal treasury, emptied by the imperialist wars which plunged it periodically into bankruptcy, the Dutch East India Company, formed as a great share company—the first in Europe—had amassed by 1648 a capital of forty million florins[1]—more than a hundred million gold francs—and paid out three millions annually in dividends. Furthermore, it created enormous economic activity. In 1648 it paid out two million florins in wages and salaries in its shipyards and offices in Holland, and exported four million two hundred thousand florins worth of Dutch goods. Compared with such figures, what were those of the Portuguese trade? Quite naturally the Dutch were favoured by the Turkish and Hindu princes, because of the advantages they provided, especially since they did not carry on any religious proselytism. Instead of trying to force their institutions and their religion on their customers, they accepted local customs and became the exporters of Hindu cotton goods to China, Japan and Insulindia. Whereas in the Philippines the king of Spain restricted trade in order not to harm the Spanish merchants and industrialists, the Dutch introduced the cultivation of sugar-cane into Insulindia and laid the foundations of a sugar industry which was soon to become one of the mainstays of their economic power.

[1] The florin was worth 2·75 gold francs.

The English Appear in India and Rely on the Moslems

The Dutch penetration into India was the more difficult for the Portuguese to resist, since at first it was backed by the English East India Company, founded in London in 1600.

The Portuguese in India had made common cause with the Hindu princes against the Moslems; the English, on the contrary, carried on a policy of friendship with the Moslem princes. In 1613 in order to oppose the Portuguese who were hostile to the court at Delhi the English made an alliance with it and with its support founded trading-posts at Surat, Baroch, Ahmadabad and Agra. From their bases in Malabar they came into touch with the shah of Persia and in 1622 aided him in chasing the Portuguese out of Ormuzd, where they replaced them, thus gaining control of all the sea-traffic of the Persian Gulf, and re-established, to their own advantage, the sea-route between Persia and India which the Portuguese had cut. The Portuguese Empire collapsed. Now that the spice trade had been made impossible by Dutch competition, the Portuguese trading-posts became centres of piracy and began to kidnap Hindus and sell them as slaves. To protect his subjects, the successor of Sultan Akbar organized an expedition against them which, in 1632, wiped out all the Portuguese establishments on the Malabar coast. In 1650 the Arabs did the same at Muscat on the Persian Gulf.

But once Portuguese competition was eliminated, it was not long before the Dutch and the English came to blows. In 1623 the Dutch, who wanted to keep Insulindia to themselves, massacred the English in the island of Amboina, one of the Moluccas. Fearing Dutch superiority, the English then turned to the Portuguese. An Anglo-Portuguese alliance was concluded in 1635 and what remained of the Portuguese Empire in India became, to all intents and purposes, an English protectorate.

From then on English ascendancy developed rapidly in India. Madras on the Coromandel coast, transformed into a strong fortified base, was its centre. In 1661 Charles II on his marriage to Catherine of Braganza received as part of her dowry a trading-post in Ceylon and the port of Bombay, where the East India Company organized its first armed force from a few hundred Europeans and Rajputs. The Dutch had kept Insulindia to themselves and Batavia became the Amsterdam of the East, while the English established a firm foothold in India, not as a hostile force but as allies of the sultan of Delhi.

The India route was finally diverted from Lisbon to Amsterdam and London.

But while Dutch and English power was being firmly established in

India, the Empire of Delhi was foundering in family quarrels. In 1658 Shah Jehan was dethroned by his son Aurungzeb (1658–1707) who relied upon the Moslem minority and began a policy directly opposed to his father's. He re-established the Koranic poll-tax on the Hindus and unleashed a terrible religious persecution. The result was widespread revolt which plunged the empire into anarchy, brigandage and piracy. There was no longer any power able to contest the ever-growing European control over India.

3. THE FAR EAST

First Contact Between Chinese and Portuguese

The Far East, caught sight of for a moment after the voyages of Marco Polo, had again become separated from the rest of the world after the Chinese national reaction against the Mongol dynasty. The Ming dynasty enthroned in 1368 had had a period of power which, after a state socialist crisis, had become stabilized in a régime of oligarchic absolutism. Chinese civilization, however, survived. The Chinese cities, which held about 10% of the total population of the country, remained great business centres, wealthy and prosperous, especially on the coasts and along the great rivers. Pekin was an immense capital, where the court, the courtiers and the officials provided a living for an enormous population devoted to the luxury industries, trade and subordinate employment of all kinds. The mass of the people were peasants upon whom almost all the burden of the public expenses fell. The empire was living upon its own resources. Chinese civilization had lost its expansive power, teaching was repetitive, thought did not develop but remained somnolent within a limited field where nothing was renewed and which regarded China as the sole civilized country in the world. But peace reigned and, despite the abuses of the oligarchy and despite the disproportion between the immense wealth of the high state officials[1] and the business men and the semi-poverty of the peasants, a social balance was maintained and China preserved the still brilliant façade of its culture, its art and its refinement.

The empire, pacific in policy, was kept going by its acquired wealth and by its size. Since the beginning of the 16th century the population had increased enormously, from sixty to more than a hundred million inhabitants. The military power of the Ming was weak, but it was strong enough to meet the needs of defence. Since their conversion by the Tibetan Buddhists, the Mongols had become stabilized and ceased to be a danger.

[1] One court-eunuch left a fortune of 140,000 pounds of gold and sixteen million pounds of silver.

It was from the south, along the Burman frontier, and from the north-east, where a sort of Manchu empire, warlike and semi-nomad, had been formed, that the invasions were to come.

From 1516 a fresh danger had appeared on the southern coasts; the Portuguese, armed with artillery. In 1521 the Portuguese viceroy in India, Perez, had come on a diplomatic mission to Pekin. He had been received with full honours by the emperor. But as at the same moment the Portuguese had been carrying out abominable acts of piracy at Canton, the emperor had Perez and his suite sold as slaves. The incident, however, had no further repercussions. Christian missionaries had come to China without being molested. Francis Xavier died there in 1552. Meanwhile the Portuguese, who had occupied Malacca, seized control of the China seas. Though trade relations between China, Indo-China and Insulindia were of small importance they nevertheless existed, and the Canton merchants found they could not do without the Portuguese middlemen and got permission for them to set up a trading-post on the island of Macao (1557). Portuguese penetration went slowly on. In 1578 European merchants were permitted to live for three weeks every year in Canton. In 1600 the first Christian missions were set up at Pekin while the Jesuits, settled in India, tried to re-establish the caravan route between Delhi and China (1603). The knowledge and technical skill that the Jesuits brought with them gave them real influence. In 1610 they obtained official recognition of Catholic worship in the empire; by this time they had already built three hundred churches and made fifty thousand converts.

In the meantime the Spaniards had settled in the Philippines (1564). This was the first territorial acquisition of an Asiatic country by Europeans. Commercial ties were established between the Philippines and China and Insulindia. Colonization of the country was organized. The Spaniards who came were, however, few in number; in 1602 there were still not more than eight hundred colonists. The Chinese, on the other hand, emigrated there in such numbers that the Spaniards became uneasy and did not hesitate to organize a general massacre which cost twenty thousand Chinese lives.

Economic Development and Naval Expansion of Japan

In 1542 the Portuguese reached Japan and landed on the island of Kagoshima. By 1549 they had reached the capital of the empire, Kyoto, a great city built in the 8th century as the hub of the centralized state which the emperors had tried to create and which had slowly disintegrated into feudalism. The emperor, deprived of all power, none the less still existed;

his rule—somewhat similar to that of the emperor of the Holy Empire—was a legal fiction which gave Japan a theoretical unity. Without resources and without power, he went on living in his great capital of a million souls where Buddhist colleges preserved an intellectual class of lettered men. The Portuguese merchants were immediately followed there by missionaries, led by Francis Xavier.

Japan at that time was a prey to constant feudal wars. But along the coasts the ports were becoming important and the nobles headed piratical expeditions against the Chinese ports which brought them great profits. Regular trade, carried on by the merchants of Kagoshima, Hirado and Nagasaki to China, the Khmer Empire, the Philippines and Insulindia, also began to expand. Already the feudal wars aimed at possession of the ports. The arrival of Portuguese merchants, whose ships were armed with cannon, was at once exploited by the feudal lords who ruled over the merchant ports. To gain the support of the Portuguese, they had their subjects converted to Catholicism; but the Buddhist monks rose against the Jesuits. Several local princes expelled them; but others tried to conciliate them, in order to make use of their knowledge. Once settled in Japan, the Jesuits had revived the art of printing,[1] cast artillery, introduced clocks, improved ship-building, made maps and introduced the use of tobacco. Their influence was such that Western books began to be translated into Japanese, notably Aesop's fables. The Europeans were imitated wherever they went.

In 1590 Hideyoshi, the powerful prince of Osaka who controlled Sakai, the greatest port of Japan, became sole master of all the Japanese feudal lords; he took the title of *taiko*,[2] which gave him military power throughout the country; his supremacy restored internal peace.

Meanwhile Spanish Dominicans landed in Japan and at once began intriguing against the Portuguese Jesuits, accusing them of preparing for an invasion of the empire. Hideyoshi, who did not trust the Jesuits and was afraid lest Christianity should become the basis for a league of feudatories, sent envoys to Persia and as far as Rome to get information on the plans of the Europeans. He learnt of the massacre of St Bartholomew and the activities of the Inquisition and of the slave-trade organized by the Christians in Africa. When he became aware of these facts Hideyoshi no longer hesitated. He expelled the Portuguese missionaries, but not the merchants, whom he continued to employ to assist his policy of

[1] Wood-block printing had been known in Japan since the 10th century.

[2] Which means 'great gate'; the humble origin of Hideyoshi prevented him from bearing the title of *shogun*.

imperialism and naval expansion. He attacked the Spaniards at Manila (1568), gained a foothold on Formosa and subjected Siam to tribute. He also tried, though in vain, to take possession of Korea, whence he wanted to launch out on the conquest of China. Japan, under Hideyoshi, became a naval power and was making ready to be the centre of a great maritime empire. The Portuguese, who played the role of naval intermediary between Japan and China, would have been of invaluable help to him. He tried to increase their trade by granting them leave for an annual voyage to Cambodia and Annam (1598), where the magnificent Khmer civilization had collapsed since the trade-routes had been diverted from the sea.

But on the death of Hideyoshi (1598) a violent feudal reaction took place in the country; the princes of Osaka lost their supremacy which passed, in 1615, to Ieyasu of the Tokugawa family (1615–1860), princes of Tokyo, which became the capital of Japan. The two hundred and seventy feudal lords of the empire came under the direct rule of the *shogun* who, however, was forbidden to interfere in their fiefs, where there were five thousand sub-vassals. The great commercial cities—Osaka, Sakai, Nagasaki—were under his direct rule. The advent of the Tokugawas marked the beginning of a policy of monarchical unity. The rudiments of a central government were formed; the *shogun* created a legal and judicial administration, published a penal code, and organized a financial system based on property-taxes payable in rice. The empire had a revenue of twenty-eight million *koku* of rice (a hundred and forty million bushels) of which eight million was the share of the *shogun* and only four hundred thousand that of the emperor whose theoretical sovereignty continued to exist; the rest was shared among the local princes according to their importance.

Japan—which at that time had between twenty-five and thirty million inhabitants—left the stage of feudal-seigniorial civilization; the serfdom of the peasants became *métayage* and the sea-ports assumed a preponderant role. The first laws concerning carriage by sea appeared.

The Spanish and Portuguese Check Japanese Naval Expansion

At first Ieyasu tried to revive Hideyoshi's policy of naval expansion. He offered the Spaniards reciprocal freedom of trade between Japan and the Philippines. But they refused. Ieyasu then turned to the Dutch who had appeared in the empire in 1600. By contrast to the Spanish and Portuguese they carried out no religious proselytism. The intrigues among the Jesuits, Dominicans and Franciscans, who bad-worded each other, made Ieyasu uneasy; the refusal of the Spaniards to sign the pro-

posed trade agreement and, shortly afterwards, the massacre of twenty thousand Chinese in the Philippines made him fear an invasion. He proscribed Christianity in 1613 and, in order to prevent any surprise, forbade his subjects to make sea-voyages (1633). Japan which, under the stimulus of the sea-coast towns, was about to launch out on a policy of naval expansion was suddenly enclosed within her own frontiers and, in consequence, reverted to a seigniorial policy. The result was social unrest among the peasants who rose against their lords (1637); and as three hundred thousand peasants had been converted, Christianity served as a support to the revolutionary movement. The princes reacted by ordering a bloodthirsty persecution of the Christians. The Spanish and Portuguese merchants and missionaries were expelled (1638) and Christianity was extirpated at the same time as the peasant insurrection was put down. Only the Dutch were allowed to remain in Japan and load a few ships each year. The building of deep-sea ships was prohibited. Just at the moment when the country was about to be opened to international trade, Japan was hermetically sealed off from the outside world. She was, henceforward, to develop within her own frontiers without the slightest contact with the outer world until the middle of the 19th century.

The Manchu Dynasty in China (1644–1911) and the Attempt at Catholic Penetration

As soon as they had gained a foothold in Japan, the Dutch tried to enter China. In 1622, after being driven back by the Portuguese whom they had tried to dislodge from Macao, they established a port in Formosa.

In 1630 the Danes gained a foothold in Canton despite the opposition of the Portuguese; and in 1637 the first English fleet reached China. All these Europeans fought openly among themselves and each tried to gain the support of the emperor against the others.

Meanwhile the Manchus, whose main centre was in North Korea, continued to spread over eastern Mongolia and Manchuria. In 1616 their leader took the title of emperor; and in 1618 he invaded China.

The Chinese Empire, weakened by the venality of the palace eunuchs and the ministers, was unable to resist them. The exactions of the authorities had aroused a nation-wide opposition which undermined its force. The Manchu invasion dissolved the empire into anarchy.

The emperor then appealed to the Portuguese artillerymen of Macao, promising them freedom of trade throughout all China. But the Canton merchants opposed this concession. In 1629 the Manchus reached Pekin, which fell in 1644; and while the Manchu dynasty of the Tsing was being

established in China, the Russians appeared in northern Asia, founded Irkutsk (1632), reached the Amur (1638) and created Albazin (1648) on the Mongol frontier. In 1653 the first Russian ambassador presented his credentials at the court of Pekin.

The Manchus did not appear to the Chinese as conquerors so much as administrators; it was a phenomenon somewhat similar to the Mongol rule in China. Chinese institutions were not changed, but they were purged. Corruption was abolished. Personal liberty and freedom of private property were scrupulously respected. Taxes were reduced. The Manchus made up the army and the Chinese were freed from all military service. They became the masters of the country but did not try to exploit it. In order to keep their cohesion and not be absorbed by their conquest, they adopted, like the Mongols, a racial policy. They retained their own language to which they gave preference, as also to their race. Though far less civilized than the Chinese, whose customs and culture they adopted, they wanted to remain a master-race. So, quite naturally, in order to assert their rule over the Chinese, they relied upon foreigners and especially upon the Jesuits whose knowledge and technical skill seemed to them of enormous value. By reverting to the Mongol policy, the Manchu dynasty opened China to European penetration.

CHAPTER XLII

AMERICA IS CONQUERED BY WESTERN CIVILIZATION

Portuguese Civilization in Brazil

DESPITE the great importance of the India route, it was the Atlantic which had the greatest influence on European expansion.

In South America Portugal had been developing emigration to Brazil and the islands by fits and starts ever since the 16th century. In 1532 Catholics from all countries were admitted; but in 1591, owing to the development of sugar-cane cultivation, Portugal wanted to keep the benefits for her own nationals and the colony was closed to foreigners. It was the islands, the Azores and Madeira, which were above all the object of a population policy. In the 16th century the Portuguese government opened them to the immigration of the Jews expelled from Portugal, but after the union of Portugal with Spain Philip II had forbidden them access (1587). In 1601 Philip III, on receipt of large sums of money, had again authorized entry to the Jews but from 1610 it was once more closed. Emigration of Portuguese colonists was then encouraged, each family of emigrants receiving about 2,350 acres, agricultural implements, two cows and a mare from the royal herds. Condemned criminals were also sent to San Thomé, to the Azores and to Madeira. In fact the greater part of the population of the islands was made up of Jews and common-law criminals.

The sugar industry, spontaneously organized by the initiative of the immigrants, brought to the treasury in 1585 a hundred and sixty thousand ducats worth of export taxes from the islands and a hundred and fifty thousand ducats worth from Brazil, that is to say as much as the total profits of the spice monopoly.

The protection afforded the Brazilian population by the Jesuits led to the disappearance of slavery among the Indians. But as the sugar plantations were organized on the basis of slave labour, according to a develop-

ment of agrarian capitalism somewhat similar to that which at the same time reduced the country people of the Baltic provinces to slavery, the importation of negroes from Guinea continued to increase. The slave-trade became an important branch of trade by sea as well as a source of considerable revenue for the treasury which enforced a duty of 10% on the sale of slaves. Africa thus took a larger and larger part in Portuguese overseas trade and soon, in addition to slaves, Portugal added large quantities of gold. Since the beginning of the 15th century the import of gold from Africa was an important monopoly which in 1585 brought a hundred thousand ducats to the treasury. Besides slaves and gold Portugal gained no other advantage from Africa. But from the 15th century onward Portugal possessed bases in Morocco to safeguard her shipping. These were formerly prosperous centres; Tangier, Arzila and Alcazar. But their occupation by Portuguese garrisons ruined them and they became so heavy a burden on the Portuguese treasury that by the end of the 16th century they represented an expense of three hundred thousand ducats. That is to say Portugal spent to protect the India route from the Moroccan pirates all the profits that it brought her.

Spanish Civilization in Mexico and Peru

Spain, mistress of Mexico and Peru, organized them, under Philip II, as Castilian provinces. At the same time she encouraged the exploration of the interior of the country by considering the colonists in the new lands as agents of the crown and granting them all the benefits they might derive from their settlement there.

During the reigns of Charles V and Philip II cultivation had been systematically encouraged by the importation of European plants and livestock; and in order to increase the population, all Catholics, even foreigners, had been admitted as colonists. In Paraguay and in California the missions organized an unusual type of agrarian civilization. In addition to the colleges, primary schools were set up for the natives from the beginning of the 17th century. In 1640 printing was introduced into Mexico. It was above all the Church which brought European civilization to the Spanish colonies, because it did not consider them merely as lands to be exploited but as a new province of Christendom. In the reign of Philip III five archbishoprics, twenty-seven bishoprics, four hundred parishes and four hundred monasteries gave Spanish America a religious framework similar to that of Spain; and already the Church had opened its orders to the natives.

Economic life, developed by private initiative, progressed. In Cuba

sugar-cane cultivation was greatly extended and copper mines were exploited. The silk-worm was acclimatized in Mexico and silk-weaving was organized; sheep-farming led to cloth manufacture. But as soon as these industries began to show a profit, the Spanish government intervened to monopolize the trade and to close the country to foreigners. Under Philip III colonial policy changed. The Spanish government, exclusively preoccupied with dynastic interests, no longer took any interest in its overseas territories save as a source of taxes. The protection of the natives, their development, the formation of an Indian intellectual class and the creation of a sound economy in the new lands, which had been the basis of the policy of Charles V and Philip II, were no longer taken into account. Philip III needed money to finance his policy of hegemony in Europe, and to procure it he strengthened the policy of monopoly and yielded to the pressure of the Spanish merchants—often acting as cover-men for foreign capitalists—who wanted to keep for themselves all the profits of the colonial trade.

But Spain had no industry and not enough trade to become the centre of a real colonial development. The lack of capable business men, after the expulsion of the Jews and Moors against whom Philip III continued to fulminate, forced Spain to appeal to Catholic foreigners to take the colonial trade into their hands, on the sole condition of taking Spanish partners in their enterprises.

To protect the interests of these foreigners, who carried on their activities under cover of Spanish names, silk-weaving was forbidden in America and the mulberry trees planted for the cultivation of silk-worms were cut down. The cloth manufacturing workshops were closed. To enforce the import of Spanish wines the vineyards planted in the 16th century were torn out. It was forbidden to trade with any country other than Spain and the right of the colonists to trade with one another was withdrawn. One galleon only was authorized to leave Mexico for Manila every year and exchanges between Mexico and Peru were limited to the ridiculous sum of a hundred thousand pesos. A trade which might have become of great importance had begun with the Philippines, the intermediary between Spain and the Far East; it was ruthlessly suppressed.

Only mining was left entirely free, against a payment of 20% of production to the state; the export of precious metals to Spain remained open, where the royal monopoly reserved them for itself in order to fill the war chest or pay the expenses of the court. The exploitation of the mines, which were the great source of wealth to Mexico and Peru, led to the creation of great mining cities.

Colonial shipping, exclusively reserved for Spain, soon suffered from a shortage of ships. Furthermore, the total closure of the colonies to foreign merchants and sailors—those found in them were immediately killed—led to the organization of English and Dutch piracy, not to speak of the buccaneers who settled in the Antilles and carried on piracy for their own interests. These were the cause of considerable losses for Spain which was in a constant state of naval war. The cloth and silk industries, after their suppression in America, were set up at Toledo, Seville and Segovia to supply the colonies, but they soon found their exports so harried by the Dutch privateers that they were unable to carry on. This privateering war, justified by the hostilities which Spain had begun once more against the United Provinces in 1621 and which were carried on continually until 1648, became one of the main activities of the Dutch West India Company. Between 1623 and 1636 the Dutch corsairs seized five hundred and forty-five ships from Spain. The booty from one such privateering venture amounted to sixteen million gold francs.[1]

After the union of the Portuguese and Spanish Empires, Spain, despite her principle of state control, was unable to unite the countries of her empire in a single vast economic whole. Customs barriers were maintained between Portugal and Spain and also between their colonies. In Spain itself, customs frontiers existed between the kingdoms of Aragon and Castile. Only Castilians were permitted to trade with America and then only through the ports of Cadiz and Seville. Catalonia, with its great port of Barcelona, the only district in Spain which might have been able to provide the empire with the business men which it needed, was thus kept away from the whole of the colonial trade, which was not to be opened to it until after the advent of Philip V of Bourbon.

But a still more serious consequence of the policy of Philip III, which was perpetuated by his successors, was to halt the rapid development evident in Mexico and Peru by introducing racial restrictions which paved the way to the social crises which were to afflict Mexico in the 19th and 20th centuries. The Indians were completely expelled from the community, into which Charles V and Philip II had, on the contrary, tried with the help of the Church to integrate them on equal terms with the whites. The colleges for the Indians which, for half a century, had been educating an Indian lettered class fell to the status of primary schools where, little by little, only the creoles—the Spaniards born in America—were admitted. The Indians were excluded from the clergy, from the administration and

[1] It will be recalled that the spice monopoly brought Portugal, at the end of the 16th century, an annual profit of three million gold francs.

from the liberal professions. No longer protected by the viceroy or even the Church, they became the subject of all possible exactions by the creoles. The first viceroys had genuinely tried to protect the rights of the Indians to those lands which had not been expressly conceded to the immigrants. In the 17th century the government gave the creoles a free hand to seize them. It was a new conquest of the country. Immense *haciendas* were transformed into seigniorial domains on which the Indians were reduced to slavery; it was thus that the landed aristocracy was formed which was to arouse the great social movement with communist tendencies which began in the first years of the twentieth century. The mines also were usurped by the creoles; small-scale mining, which had produced such remarkable results up to the beginning of the 17th century, was replaced by vast enterprises whose labour force, enslaved and subjected to the worst possible working conditions, could neither preserve the technical skill which the Spanish pioneers had brought with them nor maintain the yield which they had obtained. The cloth manufacturers who survived the industrial restrictions made use of an Indian labour force which was treated with the greatest inhumanity.

The native population numbered from three to four millions. Those Indians who were not forced to work on the estates, in the mines or in the workshops, withdrew into the mountains where they lived independent of the Spanish authorities, far from any contact with the whites and with a deep hatred of them. As for the class of half-breeds, which numbered a million at the end of the 17th century and which Charles V and Philip II had done their best to develop, it also became the victim of racial prejudice. Rejected by the creole population, it was forbidden to live even in the Indian villages where it was feared that it might introduce a spirit of revolt. It was forced to live on the fringe of all regular society, poverty-stricken and hunted. The result was a great lack of security throughout the country, menaced by the brigandage in which the half-breeds took refuge; they were to remain a revolutionary element all through the history of Mexico.

The policy of fusion of the races and the development of the new lands by the adherence of the natives to European civilization completely failed. Above the debased, despised and miserable people—which had none the less shown a remarkable aptitude for adaptation—the creoles became an inactive and uneducated aristocracy, itself subject to the exploitation of the Spanish oligarchy which controlled the whole administration, the ecclesiastical offices and large-scale trade. The government, under viceroys usually inactive or incapable, wallowed in corruption;

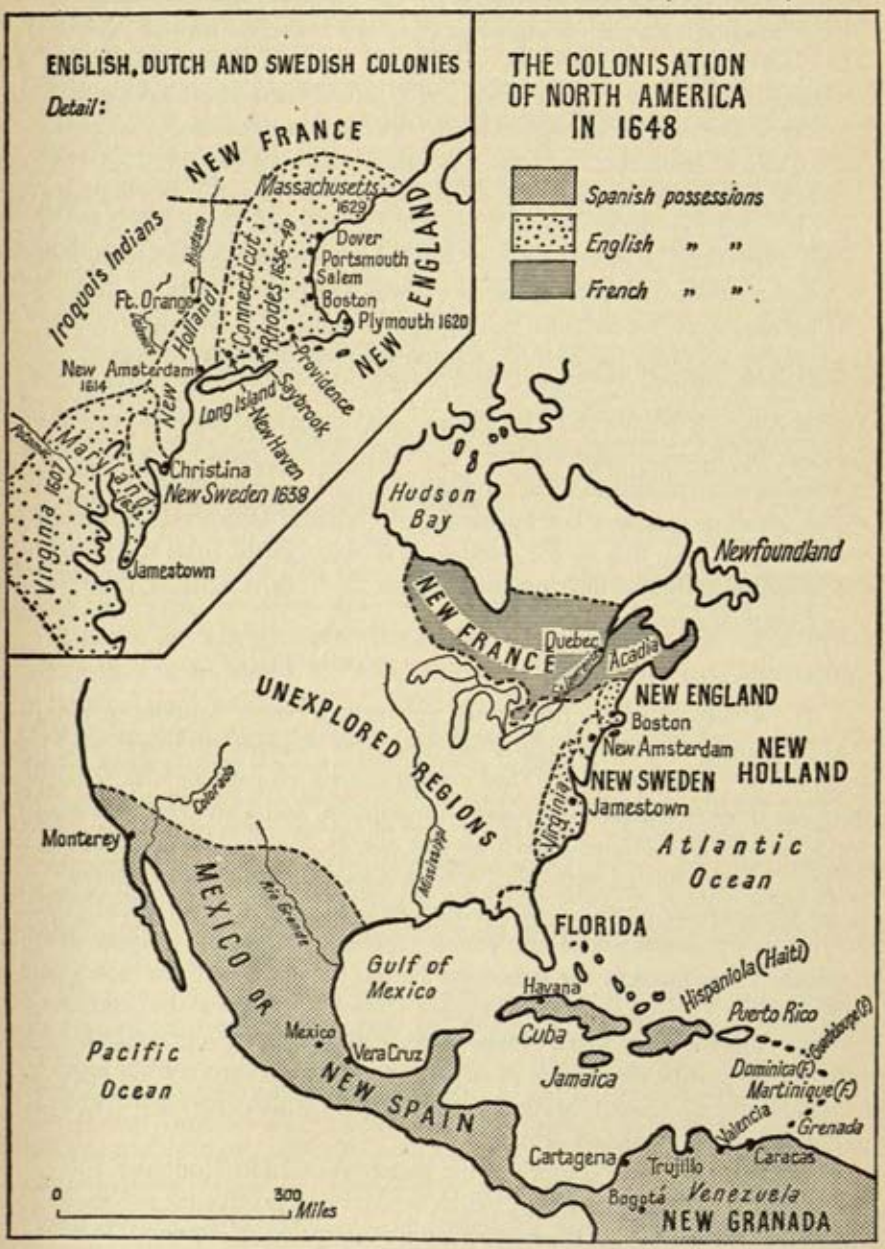
it was merely a source of profit, legitimate or not, for the officials sent from Spain. The clergy, appointed by the king, became as decadent as the administration; the concubinage of priests became a normal practice. Large-scale trade became concentrated in the hands of a handful of Spaniards who came from Europe and returned there after making their fortunes. The monopoly assured them enormous profits—imported goods were sold at from three to four times their value—which prevented the normal economic development of the colonies. Thus any development of the Spanish civilization, which under Charles V and Philip II had in less than fifty years achieved one of the most astonishing conquests that Western civilization had ever known, was completely stultified. But all its benefits were not lost, as is shown by the architecture of Latin America which, by adapting the Spanish baroque style to the decorative art of the Indians, created an original art form. None the less it was true that the great effort made after the frightful excesses of the conquest was rendered useless by Spanish state control. Only the Jesuits went on with their work of true civilization. Their colleges formed an intellectual and moral élite, small in numbers but outstanding in quality, which was to permit the New World, despite these setbacks, to draw profit from the sources of Spanish culture which retained, up to the 17th century, a powerful and original energy.

Dutch Expansion in America

The settlement of the first Dutch colonists in North America in 1614, in New Belgium, afterwards to become New Amsterdam (New York), led to the formation of the Dutch West India Company in 1621. Shares in this company, issued for public subscription, had a tremendous boom not only in the United Provinces but also in France. The burghers of Paris, Rouen and La Rochelle, who at about the same time refused to risk their capital in the colonial companies of Richelieu, contributed huge sums to the enterprise of the young republic, despite the dangers with which it was faced in the same year by the resumption of the war with Spain. By resuming the war against the United Provinces at the expiration of the Twelve-Year Truce (1609–1621), Philip III made a grave mistake. It was to justify the Dutch in organizing privateering ventures against Spanish shipping and in breaking the monopoly which Spain and Portugal claimed in the American seas.

The first and main activity of the Dutch West India Company was to organize the privateering war, which was to bring it immense profits, and to support the navy of the republic in its enterprises of conquest. In 1634

Map No. 32


ENGLISH, DUTCH AND SWEDISH COLONIES
Detail:
NEW FRANCE
Massachusetts 1629
Iroquois Indians
Dover
Portsmouth
Salem
Boston
Plymouth 1620
NEW ENGLAND
Connecticut
Rhodes
Ft. Orange
New Holland
New Amsterdam 1614
Providence
Saybrook
Long Island
New Haven
Christina
New Sweden 1638
Jamestown
Virginia
Maryland
THE COLONISATION OF NORTH AMERICA IN 1648
Spanish possessions
English " "
French " "
Hudson Bay
Newfoundland
NEW FRANCE
Quebec
Acadia
NEW ENGLAND
Boston
New Amsterdam
NEW HOLLAND
NEW SWEDEN
Jamestown
Virginia
UNEXPLORED REGIONS
Atlantic Ocean
Monterey
Colorado
Rio Grande
Missisippi
MEXICO OR NEW SPAIN
FLORIDA
Gulf of Mexico
Havana
Hispaniola (Haiti)
Puerto Rico
Cuba
Jamaica
Dominica (F.)
Martinique (F.)
Grenada
Valencia
Cartagena
Trujillo
Caracas
Bogotá
Venezuela
NEW GRANADA
Pacific Ocean
Mexico
Vera Cruz
0
300 Miles

the Dutch fleet after a bitter struggle seized from Portugal the magnificent empire of Brazil, where, under the direct government of the stadtholder Maurice of Nassau, a régime was introduced which for the times was particularly liberal. Liberty of persons and goods as well as freedom of worship were guaranteed to the Portuguese.

The Dutch West India Company also gained a foothold in Guiana (1629) and in Africa on the Gold Coast. They seized Angola and the important staging-post of San Thomé (1641) and inaugurated a new type of colonization by granting, under a sort of métayage contract, vast territories to the small-holders. It was an adaptation of the feudal idea to the capitalist system, the concessionaire being in the position of a vassal of the sovereign company.

The Dutch occupation meant a period of great commercial expansion for Brazil, which yielded copious dividends to the company shareholders and whose influence was to continue after the reconquest of the colony by Portugal in 1645. Angola and San Thomé were in their turn recovered by Portugal in 1651. The following year, as a compensation, the Amsterdam Chamber of Commerce occupied the Cape as a staging-post (1652).

Dutch colonization in America was checked by the development of the English navy and by the Anglo-Portuguese entente of 1635, which was confirmed by the marriage of Charles II with Catherine of Braganza after the restoration of Portuguese independence in 1640. The activity of the Dutch colonizers which, for twenty years, had been exceedingly prosperous, left, however, no visible trace. But the little settlement which was the origin of New York, whose first colonists were emigrés from Belgium who went there to seek not material gain but freedom to think and to believe, and later were business men from the United Provinces who gathered around them a cosmopolitan population of bold adventurers, strongly marked with its imprint the intellectual and social élite which was to play so great a role in the history of the United States and of the modern world.

French Expansion in Canada

The first voyages of the French to America were made by sailors from Dieppe and the Norman and Breton coasts to Newfoundland for the cod fishing. Francis I, following the example of the Emperor Charles V, wanted to establish French settlements in America. Since he was unable to fight against the Portuguese and Spanish fleets, he supported the expeditions of Jacques Cartier to Canada (1534–1543) and gave him

orders to explore the St Lawrence. An attempt at settlement, made in 1541, failed.

In 1603 Champlain, financed by a group of merchants, returned to Canada. His plan was to create an agricultural colony there with the aid of the natives. From Canada to Florida the semi-barbarous Indians—they had not been touched by the Toltec civilization—lived in tribes, in scattered villages where a few dozen families lived in skin tepees. The French settled among them and, alone of the colonizers of America, did not try to enslave them. Quebec was founded on the St Lawrence in 1608, the year after the foundation of Jamestown by the English and shortly before the foundation of Santa Fé in northern Mexico by the Spaniards.

Canada developed very slowly. The Jesuits settled there in 1625 and made themselves masters of the colony which was now closed to Protestants. In 1642 there were only two hundred Frenchmen in Canada.

In the Antilles, on the other hand, which became the centre of a clandestine trade with the Spanish colonies, French penetration was more rapid. In 1635 Richelieu by founding the Atlantic Islands Company laid the bases of the French colonial empire. Martinique, Guadeloupe and Santo Domingo were occupied. A few years later, the islands, under a governor-general appointed by the king, had a French population of seven thousand inhabitants. However, the troubles in France after 1648 led to the liquidation of the company in 1651. But the colonies, sold to French subjects, were not lost to France. They were to play a leading role in the economic development of France in the 18th century.

The English Colonists Bring Parliamentarianism to North America

English expansion in the Atlantic began with Hawkins' voyages to Africa which were the origin of the profitable trade in negro slaves to the Spanish colonies (1562). Then, following the example of the Dutch corsairs, the puritans Martin Frobisher and Francis Drake undertook a privateering war against Spain, the support of 'papism', and raked in enormous profits. The naval war between Spain and England which led to the destruction of the Armada (1588) was the climax of the naval raids organized by Cavendish against the Spanish colonies.

Trade succeeded piracy. James I granted privileges to two merchant companies which had been formed spontaneously, one at Plymouth and the other in London, to found settlements in America. In 1607 the London company founded Jamestown, and began a series of English settlements on the Atlantic coast of North America. At first organized under a military

government, Virginia—where Walter Raleigh had already landed in 1587—was authorized in 1619 to form a parliament known as the 'House of Commons', entrusted with the administration of the colony. The governor retained the right of veto; he was assisted by a council, appointed by the king, which acted as a sort of House of Lords. England had brought her parliamentary institutions to America. It was one of the most important dates in the history of the world.

In the same year the import of negro slaves was permitted. The present United States saw the birth, simultaneously, of its political régime and its negro problem.

The creation of new colonies proceeded apace. In 1620 Protestant Independents, fleeing from the persecutions which James I had reintroduced to support his policy of absolutism, founded a settlement at Plymouth; in 1629 the Massachusetts Company laid the foundations of New England, whose capital Boston, like Plymouth, was soon the seat of an autonomous parliament.

Then came the four colonies of Providence (1636), Connecticut (1638), Newhaven (1639) and Rhode Island (1647) which became federated in 1648.

The religious conflicts of Europe were soon transferred to this new England. In Virginia the colonists demanded the establishment of Puritanism; in Massachusetts the Independents made their sect the official and exclusive church. Providence alone introduced religious tolerance at the same time as the prohibition of slavery.

English social differences were equally marked in the colonies, according to their origins. In Virginia the country was divided into vast estates, often granted to younger sons of good families, and, after Cromwell's triumph, to emigré cavaliers who became a ruling aristocracy which was granted the monopoly of tobacco imports to England. They first entrusted the exploitation of their estates to colonists engaged on contract, but they soon replaced them by black, or even white, slaves—criminals, vagabonds, political prisoners and Irish rebels whom the London government sold to the colonists, or, quite simply, Englishmen shanghaied by speculators who made much money out of this trade in white slaves.

In the federated colonies, on the other hand—from which Providence was excluded because of its tolerance—the land was divided into smallholdings whose owners lived in villages, without aristocracy, proletariat or slaves. No negroes were brought into the colony, but the land was conquered from the Indians with an indescribable ferocity which led to their complete extermination. The democracy set up there was a

privileged democracy[1], reserved for adherents of the Reformed church.

In this way the conditions were laid down which were to lead to the American Civil War of the 19th century, the North against the South, anti-slavery democrats against slave-owning aristocracy.

In the northern colonies trade was organized with Virginia and the Indians of the interior. A system of education was organized and Harvard College was founded in 1636; Massachusetts became the intellectual centre of New England.

Charles I, who had tried to introduce an absolutist policy in England, also tried to break with the system of parliamentary colonies; he therefore adopted the 'small-holders colony' system recently introduced by the Dutch and, in 1632, created the colony of Maryland for the benefit of the Catholic Lord Baltimore, where Catholicism was tolerated alongside Anglicanism. Because of the contrast between their régimes it became the enemy of the neighbouring colony of Virginia.

In 1650 these colonies, the kernel of the future United States, had a population of eighty thousand English.

While she was firmly settling on the American continent, England also gained a foothold in the islands. A trading-post was set up in Bermuda in 1612, which from 1620 had its own representative assembly.

The Antilles had been overlooked by the Spaniards, who were looking for gold, and scarcely touched by the Dutch; it was the English who first paid any real attention to them. In 1605 they occupied Barbados. Negroes were introduced in large numbers and Cromwell sent many prisoners and sold thousands of Irish rebels there. The Bristol merchants organized a market of white slaves pressed in England. Barbados became the most active centre of the English corsairs, supported by the home government in their raids on Spanish shipping.

[1] This system of colonization recalls that of the Greek colonists from the VIIth to the Vth century BC.

CHAPTER XLIII

EUROPEAN SUPREMACY

THE first half of the 17th century decided the destinies of the world by giving the Western nations the mastery of the seas and the empire of America.

Up to the 12th century the East had been incontestably the main centre of civilization. But the Mongol conquests had stifled the creative spirit of Asiatic civilization and the Turks, by subjecting the countries of central and western Asia to an essentially military rule, had plunged them, from the 14th century onwards, into irremediable decline. By the end of the 15th century the intellectual activity of the Moslem world had withered. The last great Persian poet dates from the 15th century and the last great Moslem historian, Ibn Khaldun (died 1406), who wrote in Tunis, also dates from this time. The Ottoman Empire, built on the ruins created by the Turkish invasions, had only a borrowed civilization. It was not a state, still less a nation; it was an army. All the spiritual life of Islam was dominated by a narrow-minded and fanatical clergy, bound by rigid and immutable dogma. In India Islam, which had not been successful in winning over the population, had extinguished its philosophical spirit and replaced Hinduism by a Persian culture which was only a brilliant and superficial importation out of touch with the people. China, under the Mongol emperors, had lost her creative ability and the reaction which followed turned to barren nationalism and xenophobia. There were still books published in China, but only dictionaries and encyclopaedias.

Europe had nothing more to learn from Asia.

Certainly Asia was still wealthy. The revenue of the sultan of Delhi was ten times more than that of the king of France. With the exception of a few great cities where a rich and cultivated merchant-class still existed, its wealth accumulated in the hands of the rulers or of little oligarchies and was shut away in treasure-houses and became sterile.

Throughout the Moslem world, divided into great land-states, a land-owning and military class-system immobilized the people. Absolutism,

enslaving the people, had delivered them into the power of autocrats who lived in splendid luxury upon their poverty. The sentiment of liberty no longer existed; individualism was replaced by universal servitude. Intellectual and economic sterility coincided with the stagnation of trade. Throughout all Asia, sea-borne trade had almost disappeared. Asia had withdrawn from the sea and was bound in the rigid framework of a continental structure.

While life seemed to have withdrawn from Asia, western Europe had revived the classical tradition. In the 12th century the Arabs had restored its contact with Greek thought and in the 13th century China had initiated Europe into its technical inventions. Europe had thenceforward recovered the scientific spirit, broken the bonds of class which it had forged in the times of its decadence and restored the possibility of individual initiative. The city burghers, by their spirit of enterprise, had become sources of wealth. The national states had been founded by their activity, with limited resources it is true but magnificently exploited by nascent capitalism which developed a dynamic civilization.

In the 16th century Spain and Portugal and in the 17th century Holland and England had won the mastery of the seas and entered into direct contact with all the peoples of Asia.

But no mutual understanding was established between Europe and Asia.

In the IIIrd century BC trade between the Hellenistic world and India had led to cultural exchanges. India had been greatly influenced by the Mediterranean. The whole world had been affected by the great current of individual emancipation, and civilization had become to a great extent universal.

Nothing similar took place in the 16th and 17th centuries. The two worlds, which previously had fertilized one another, now seemed to have become mutually impenetrable.

The religious fanaticism of Islam was matched by that of the Christians, exacerbated by the recent conflicts between Reformers and Catholics. The intolerance of the Portuguese and Spanish Catholics closed India to them and, after a favourable welcome, caused them to be expelled from China and Japan. Instead of recalling Asia to life, the Europeans made her withdraw even more within herself. Japan had renounced her dreams of naval expansion to escape their rule; India and China withdrew almost entirely from the sea.

Asia, whose intellectual classes were intent on mystical dreaming which, although rigid, still preserved an unusual spiritual distinction, turned from the brutal materialism of the European sailors and adventurers who brought with them only their lust for gain. Only the Jesuits made a loyal

effort to understand the refinements of Chinese civilization, whose purity they praised, and the subtlety of Hindu thought. They alone conceived their exalted mission as teachers of the gospel not as one of masters but as one of collaborators, trying to reconcile the moral wealth of Christianity with the rich traditions of India and China. It was in vain. Islam was too close to Christianity to be affected by it; India and China were too distant. If Europe and Asia clashed without mutual understanding, it was because Christian monotheism could not adapt itself to the pantheist conception of the world on which the religious and moral thought of the Far East and India was based. In India Christianity met with the same opposition as Islam, because both being monotheistic and based on rigid dogma they could find no place for themselves in that free search for God which was the basis of Hindu religious thinking. As for China, which had ended by fusing Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism in a religious synthesis whose diverse aspects excluded all intransigence, it would willingly have enlarged its electicism to include Christianity also,[1] but it could not, without denying its ancient culture, break with its religious traditions to replace them by an exclusive faith which had no link with the immense and precious intellectual treasury bequeathed by history. Represented by a foreign clergy, whose intransigence claimed the undisputed power of an unknown leader who from Rome claimed to impose his will on the emperor of China himself, Christianity was bound to provoke opposition no less violent than that formerly aroused, in the name of national sentiment, by the Mongol domination.

Between the Asiatic peoples, made sterile throughout all Nearer and Central Asia by the static supremacy of their Turkish conquerors and in China immured in a nationalism which precluded any revival, and the young peoples of western Europe, whose political and economic energy corresponded to an intellectual and scientific awakening which surmounted all barriers, there was no co-operation possible. Any contact between them had necessarily to lead to the domination of one by the other. Paralysed by inaction, the Asiatic peoples were gradually to resign themselves to accepting the domination of the Europeans whom they despised.

The tremendous drama of the decadence of the empires of India and China, which had for so many centuries been the great world centres of civilization, began. The era of the colonization of Asia had begun.

While they were taking their place in ancient Asia, without being able to make themselves acceptable to her, the maritime peoples of the West,

[1] It will be recalled that Christianity had made its influence felt in the Lamaist reform of Buddhism.

Portugal, Spain, Holland, England and France, set out, one after the other, for the conquest of the New World and founded empires there to which they brought their civilization. Portugal marked Brazil with her imprint, as Spain did to Central America and Peru; France settled in Canada and England in North America.

A century after its discovery America was subject to the ascendancy of the institutions, the religions and the languages of western Europe. With excesses certainly, but not without idealism, Europe was preparing to multiply her forces and to rule the world, by making the Atlantic Ocean a closed European sea.

While the ocean delivered America over to Western civilization, Russia, which had become the largest continental empire in the world, also set out for the conquest of unknown lands. The immense spaces of Siberia, whence for fifty centuries hordes of invaders had poured out, became stabilized by the activities of the Russian merchants, Cossacks and peasants.

The West conquered the world by ruling the seas. Russia spread over Asia like an immense tide which covers all that does not resist it. Two hegemonies were being created, the one maritime which belonged to the people bordering on the ocean, the other continental paving the way to the formation of the immense Russian Empire.

Mistress of the high seas, tamer of America, prepared to enforce her supremacy over Asia which she held enclosed between the southern seas and the vast open spaces of the north, Europe had become the centre of the world.

But though she became mistress of the world, Europe at the same time became more and more affected by the influences which divided her. Central Europe, lying between the maritime peoples drawn to the Atlantic Ocean and Russia drawn to Asia, deserted by the international trade which the sea had taken from her, was abandoned to her own resources.

While strongly built national states were formed in the West under outside influences and an immense unitary empire was being formed in the East, central Europe remained split up into a multitude of feudal principalities without horizon and without capacity for expansion.

Europe was split more and more deeply. The western lands became more and more involved in vast colonial projects; Russia saw opening before her distant perspectives of the universal empire of which she considered herself the heir. The states of central Europe, enclosed within the rigid framework of their national and religious boundaries, turned to a political and cultural policy to which lack of contact with the outside world was to give a rigidly nationalist form.

BOOK XI

Conflict Between Authoritarianism and Liberalism

CHAPTER XLIV

SETBACKS TO HAPSBURG DYNASTIC AND AUTHORITARIAN ABSOLUTISM. THE THIRTY YEARS WAR

I. THE POLICY OF DYNASTIC HEGEMONY OF PHILIP III

The Dynastic Power of the Hapsburgs

OF the various plans for international organization drawn up at the beginning of the 17th century only those which aimed at the union of continental Europe under a single dynastic authority became a part of practical politics.

Philip II's policy of maritime imperialism, which aimed at uniting under his rule the Atlantic Ocean and the powers which controlled it, had utterly failed. The defeat of the Armada (1588) had been rapidly followed by the decline of Portuguese shipping in India and by the naval supremacy of the United Provinces and England. In the struggle for the mastery of the seas, Dutch and English individualism triumphed over Spanish and Portuguese state-control. The India route, upon which the spice trade depended, was lost to Portugal which, like Spain, only with difficulty maintained its communications with its American colonies.

But the prestige of his empire and the wealth which he drew from it allowed Philip II to survive these reverses. Spain remained a universal empire. In Europe, Philip III reigned over Spain, Portugal, the Belgian provinces of the Netherlands, Franche-Comté, Sicily, Naples and the duchy of Milan; despite their decline, the Portuguese establishments in India and Africa still remained, and the Philippines were under his rule; finally, the union of the Spanish and Portuguese Empires gave him all South America and, in North America, Mexico and Florida. In Europe more than fifteen million men, all Catholics, obeyed his will alone. He had at his disposal the immense resources of his colonial empire.

This colossal power, spread over all the continents, was backed up by the close family alliance which united the Spanish to the Austrian Haps-

burgs. Like the House of Spain the House of Austria had built its empire on the dynastic formula. But whereas the Spanish Empire was made up exclusively of maritime countries and distant colonies scattered through all the oceans of the world, the empire centred on the former Austrian march was a compact block of territories in the centre of the European continent.

In addition to the imperial crown, it held the patrimonial duchies of Austria, Carinthia and Styria, and the kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary. It is true that the Austrian Hapsburgs did not wield a monarchical authority over their subjects comparable to that of the kings of Spain. The empire was a feudal amalgam within which the will of the emperor, since Charles V's lack of success, was no longer of great account; in Hungary, greatly reduced by the Turkish conquests, and in Bohemia the crown was elective; only the duchies were theirs by right of inheritance. The seigniorial régime which existed in their states reduced their financial and consequently their military resources to very little. But, in law, their sovereignty extended over about twenty million people. Their whole policy aimed at making this legal fiction a reality.

At the beginning of the 17th century France had fifteen million inhabitants and England five million; distant Russia had only about eight million. The Hapsburgs, who reigned over almost forty million subjects, possessed an incontestable superiority over the other reigning families. The head of the powerful House of Hapsburg, the proud Philip III,[1] surrounded by an almost religious luxury in his enormous palace of the Escorial, seemed, despite the setbacks which Spain had known, incomparably superior to all other sovereigns. His policy aimed at making this primacy a European system.

Philip III Inaugurates a Policy of Dynastic Hegemony

Philip II had conceived his imperialist policy as based on the twofold foundation of dynastic absolutism and Catholic authoritarianism. To achieve it, he did not hesitate to act as the champion of Catholicism everywhere and to defend it by force of arms.

Philip III loyally revived his father's ideology, but he made it support a very different policy. To maintain her supremacy Spain needed resources; the war had exhausted them. The imperialism of Philip III had therefore to be pacific. Rather than undertake wars of supremacy designed to increase his states or to restore Catholic worship in the Protestant countries, he tried to unite under his dynastic rule all the great Catholic monarchies

[1] The House of Spain was the elder branch of the Hapsburg family.

and establish Spanish hegemony under the primacy of the House of Spain. The policy of authoritarian absolutism, by claiming power by divine right —that is to say unlimited power—for sovereigns, opened up great possibilities for his plans. Extended to the great Catholic monarchies, it ended by parcelling out Europe among families invested with a divine mission. The union of these families, grouped by dynastic marriages around the king of Spain, would make him the undisputed master of the world, surrounded by a glory and a prestige associated with the power of God himself. In fact it was, transferred to the dynastic plane and freed from the tutelage of the Holy See, a restoration of the mediaeval idea of universal empire justified by the divine will.

A new balance could thus be given to Europe and to the world, which would become, to some extent, a federation of Catholic monarchies under the rule of sovereigns by divine right, linked by ties of faith and blood under the high authority of the king of Spain.

To assert the divine origin of his power, Philip III surrounded himself with spectacular and semi-sacerdotal pomp, which placed him above the common plans of humanity and which his brother kings were soon to imitate. The rulers isolated themselves like supernatural beings endowed, as Louis XIV was to say, with the 'omniscience of God'. Replacing the theory of the 'common good of the kingdom' by the all-powerful authority of the monarch, confounding the ideas of king and state, dynastic absolutism was to introduce the idea that sovereigns are appointed by God to dispose, without limitation, of the persons and goods of their subjects.

The unlimited authority of the rulers in temporal affairs was to correspond to the undisputed authority of the Pope in spiritual affairs.

Philip III (1598–1621) by giving his daughters Anne of Austria in marriage to the king of France, Louis XIII, and Marie-Anne to the future emperor, Ferdinand III, made them the brothers-in-law of his son and successor, Philip IV, who himself married Elizabeth of France, sister of Louis XIII, and, after her death, Marie-Anne of Austria, daughter of Ferdinand III. Thus the king of Spain, the king of France and the emperor were united by the bonds of a close family alliance around the Spanish dynasty.

James I, who wanted to introduce absolutism into England, also begged for the honour of a Spanish infanta as bride for his son Charles I. But Philip III could not depart from the principle which based the union of dynasties on community of Catholic worship. The conversion of Charles to Catholicism, imposed as a condition of the marriage, was an obstacle.

None the less Charles tried to adhere to the dynastic alliance by marrying the sister of Louis XIII.

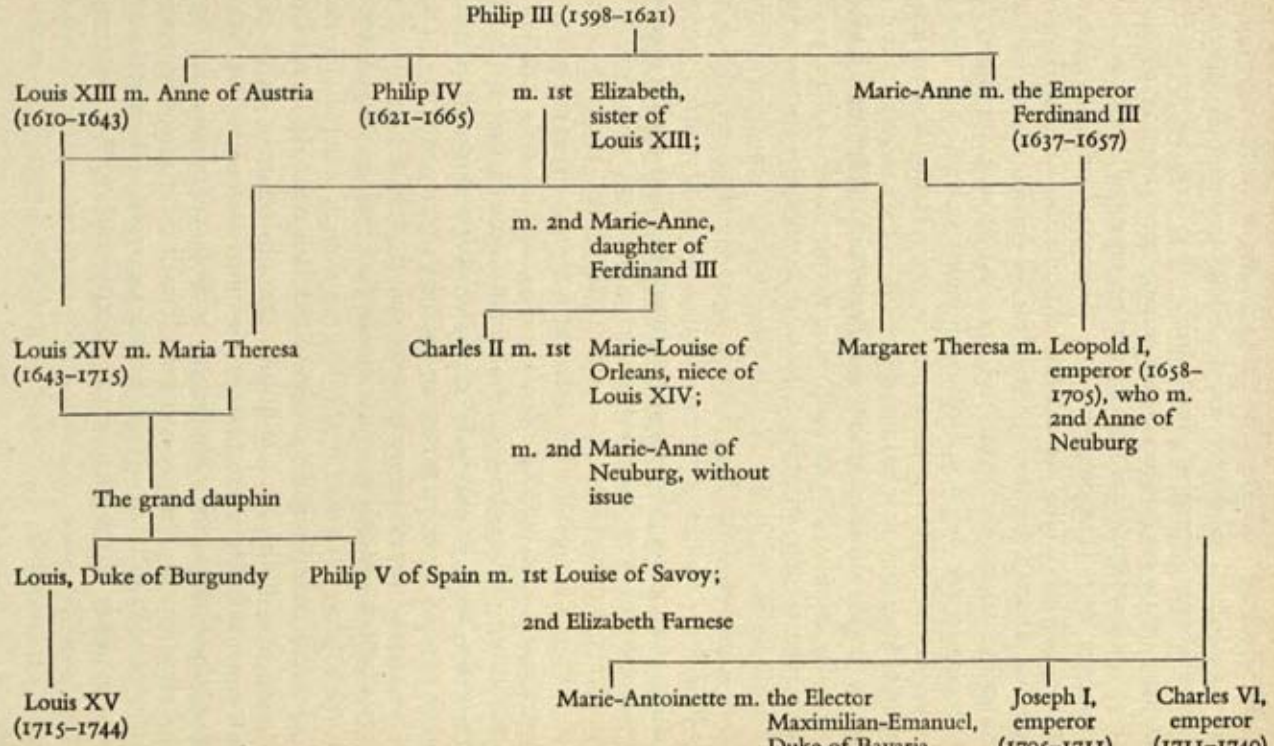
These dynastic unions were maintained in the following generation around the king of Spain, Philip IV (1621–1663) who, by the marriage of his daughters Maria Theresa to Louis XIV and Margaret Theresa to the Emperor Leopold I, made them the brothers-in-law of his son Charles II, of whom they were already, by the marriages of their fathers, first cousins. Charles II himself married the niece of Louis XIV, Marie-Louise of Orleans. Thus all the great Catholic sovereigns and their wives were the direct descendants of Philip III.[1] The Spanish dynasty asserted itself as the guardian and the keystone of the absolutist system.

Such a family policy should have been able to give Europe a certain unity and create a balance guaranteed by monarchic legitimacy and the reciprocal respect of kings within the framework of the same Catholic authoritarian ideology. Its influence was shown in the internal policies of the monarchies; in the 17th century it was the great instrument of absolutism by divine right. But, in foreign affairs, far from checking conflicts it provoked them for, by uniting in the same hands the rights of succession to various crowns, it was the cause of wars of succession which, by endangering international balance, plunged Europe into general conflagrations for the successions of Spain and Austria.

The dynastic policy, as well as introducing degenerate traits into the ruling families,[2] separated the interests of the rulers from those of their subjects. The Western monarchies, which had been the inspiration of national sentiment and which had become instruments of the political cohesion and social emancipation of their peoples, now regarded their states and their subjects as mere pawns of their policy. Under the rigid structure of absolutism, the internal evolution of the nations was to go on, not as formerly around the person of the king as in the centuries of national monarchy, but parallel with it or even against it. To survive, absolutism was forced to act against the nations which had formerly been created under the aegis of the kings. National sentiment, aspirations to political and intellectual freedom, were to clash with absolutism, which became an obstacle to the progress of the normal development of modern peoples. This was to be the origin of the great crises of the monarchy which, wherever it remained loyal to the absolutist formula, was sooner or later to be swept away by the irresistible flood of the life which it had thought itself able to check.

[1] See page 647.

[2] The king of Spain, Charles II, was a degenerate.


Philip III (1598–1621)
Louis XIII m. Anne of Austria (1610–1643)
Philip IV (1621–1665)
m. 1st Elizabeth, sister of Louis XIII;
Marie-Anne m. the Emperor Ferdinand III (1637–1657)
m. 2nd Marie-Anne, daughter of Ferdinand III
Louis XIV m. Maria Theresa (1643–1715)
Charles II m. 1st Marie-Louise of Orleans, niece of Louis XIV;
m. 2nd Marie-Anne of Neuburg, without issue
Margaret Theresa m. Leopold I, emperor (1658–1705), who m. 2nd Anne of Neuburg
The grand dauphin
Louis, Duke of Burgundy
Philip V of Spain m. 1st Louise of Savoy;
2nd Elizabeth Farnese
Louis XV (1715–1744)
Marie-Antoinette m. the Elector Maximilian-Emanuel, Duke of Bavaria
Joseph I, emperor (1705–1711)
Charles VI, emperor (1711–1740)

Oligarchy Masters Absolutism

It was in the very nature of the dynastic theory, which aimed above all at making the king the font of all authority, that Philip III was less preoccupied with organizing power than with centralizing it. Over the many states under his rule he concentrated the government in the hands of three royal secretaries, whose competence extended respectively over the northern lands (The Netherlands and Franche-Comté), the Spanish kingdoms and Italy. They were assisted by a number of councils, whose members were recruited from the nobility; the council of state entrusted with foreign affairs, the councils of war, the inquisition, finance and the crusade. Their authority, which mingled political and religious interests, was exercised by an administrative network which was the more overstaffed inasmuch as it had to adapt itself to the differing institutions of the six kingdoms of Spain, to Portugal, the various Belgian principalities, the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily and the duchy of Milan. The councils, free of all control, soon became an oligarchy in each of the various countries and by the role they played in the government became more powerful than the king himself. Formerly the *cortes*, which still met from time to time to vote the taxes, had sometimes opposed the king, relying on the rights it possessed from its ancient liberties. The councils, invoking the absolute power of the monarch, suppressed it.

Absolute in principle, divided in fact into as many sovereignties as his empire had states, usurped by agents entrusted with making it respected, the rule of Philip III had only the sumptuous façade of autocracy given it by the court, where a multitude of pensioned courtiers replaced public opinion, usurped the royal power and plundered the treasury.

This immense superstructure created to support absolutism and which in fact stifled it demanded enormous resources. The king demanded them from the colonies. But their wealth was not enough to supply the needs of the court and the administration, at whose expense, at the end of the reign of Philip III, one-fifth of the inhabitants of Spain lived. The Secret Council was the brain of this immense bureaucracy, which acknowledged only itself. To prevent it from falling into the hands of the oligarchy, the king reserved for himself the right of appointing its members whom he chose from among his intimates. It was the reign of the favourites. Corruption, waste, judicial venality, took root under the façade of the more and more costly court ceremonial. Behind the stage-set of absolutism the Spanish government slipped into organized anarchy.

The Clergy Dominates the Government

Since the reign of Ferdinand of Aragon, Spanish absolutism had been based on community of faith, which had acted as a justification of its claim to divine right. The clergy, font of the faith, quite naturally assumed a dominating role in the state. The large properties which had fallen into its hands after the confiscations of the Inquisition had made it the most important economic force in Spain. Its authority, inseparable from that of the king and alone able to make headway against the influence of the oligarchy, became preponderant in all walks of life. The Superior of the Dominicans presided over the Council of the Indies; the king's confessor had a seat on the Secret Council. The clergy directed everything, even the negro slave trade.

Authoritarianism Stifles Intellectual Life

In the thirty-two universities and four thousand schools of Spain the influence of the Jesuits was all-powerful. In no other country were there so many high schools and colleges. None the less, by the end of the 17th century, Spain, under the authoritarianism of the king and the counter-reformation, let herself slide—after a period of splendour—into intellectual stagnation. Kept rigorously isolated from any influence of foreign thought and sheltered from all contamination, her universities were limited to a purely doctrinal curriculum based on mediaeval scholasticism. They were, moreover, only for the social élite; if there were more schools in Spain than in any other country there were, on the other hand, more illiterates than in any other Western land. Alongside the clergy, the privileged nobility, robbed of its political rights, lived on pensions from the court, immured in a pride of caste due to the universal custom of *fideicommission*, absentee landlordism, thanks to which the great estates on which the people had become a miserable proletariat of wage-earners remained intact.

The Decline of Her Naval Power Puts an End to Spanish Prosperity

If in all fields Spain was stagnating behind the splendour of a brilliant façade, it was because her civilization, based on the high seas, had in order to preserve its energy to remain in contact with the overseas world it claimed to rule.

Spanish supremacy was linked to the might of her navy, which had in fact come to an end after the destruction of the Armada. Only continually increasing colonial resources could have enabled Spain to carry on the policy of Philip II. But Philip III no longer had sufficient naval forces at his disposal to protect his convoys against the Dutch and English privateers.

Driven to ruin, he made peace with England in 1604 and with the United Provinces in 1609, This permitted him to save his prestige which had been brought into question by his policy of dynastic hegemony. The Twelve-Year Truce signed with the United Provinces, which forced Spain to open her colonies to trade with the Protestant Dutch, was a serious setback for the policy of state-controlled economy and Catholic unity inherent in Spanish absolutism. Philip III revived it again with even more rigour in internal affairs. It was to serve him both to deflect public opinion from his defeats and to turn it against an internal enemy, while at the same time replenishing his treasury exhausted by the wars.

As soon as peace was signed he ordered the expulsion of all the *moriscoes*, that is to say the converted Moors who, till then, had been spared by the Inquisition. Preoccupation with unity of race was to be grafted on to that of unity of faith. The *moriscoes* were accused of usurping the arts and trade, of having too great wealth, of not entering holy orders. In reality, Philip III, whose government was once more going bankrupt (1607), had need of funds. The persecution of the *moriscoes* was, through the confiscation of their wealth, to bring enormous sums to the treasury. They were ordered to leave the kingdom within three days by specified ports. Four hundred and fifty thousand of them, representing all that was most active in Spain, were deported to the Barbary coasts where three hundred thousand of them perished of poverty and hunger. It was debated whether the children should be reduced to slavery or be massacred after having been baptized; it was finally decided to deport them also. The following year the emigration of Jews to Brazil was forbidden.

Spain never recovered from the deportation of the *moriscoes*. The expulsion of the Moors and Jews under Ferdinand of Aragon had already deprived her of seven hundred thousand artisans, traders and farm-workers, whom it had not been possible to replace. Spanish trade and industry suffered a fresh and heavy blow and what little remained of them passed mostly into the hands of foreign capitalists. As for the landowners, they were unable to replace their *morisco* tenants and a large area of land remained fallow. The nobility, seriously affected in their revenues, demanded and obtained compensation. Spain sank deeper and deeper in the economic and financial slough. The properties confiscated from the *moriscoes* gave her the means of avoiding fresh bankruptcies for a score of years, but their immense capital value to the country was irremediably destroyed. In Portugal the persecutions had the same disastrous consequences. The expulsion of the Jews was so cruelly felt

by the economy of the country that Philip III, despite his ideological policy, was forced to revoke the laws which restricted their activities, a measure which, on the other hand, led to violent opposition from the lower clergy and the monastic orders.

Having thus 'restored order' in his kingdom, Philip III began a far-reaching colonial enquiry (1616): he suppressed the sale of offices introduced by his father towards the end of his reign, and tried to strengthen the authority of the Spanish state by accentuating the monopoly régime and introducing the principle of the primacy of the exchequer into the colonial administration. To give life to Spanish trade he had the silk-weaving and cloth-manufacturing workshops in Mexico closed and the vineyards uprooted; but Spain no longer had either the craftsmen or the business men who might revive her industry. The silk-weaving workshops set up at Segovia and Seville alone became prosperous, but the war with the United Provinces which began again in 1621 endangered this prosperity by almost completely wiping out their exports to America. Generally speaking, the destruction of Mexican industry did not improve Spanish industry. The colonial trade declined disastrously, hampered, despite the signature of peace, by the Dutch and English privateers and also by the buccaneers of the Antilles. The spice market was irrevocably lost. The development of the sugar-cane plantations in the Americas to some extent compensated for its loss; and the galleons continued to bring gold and silver to Spain. But the profits which the king gained from his empire were of small account compared with the immense profits made by the Dutch companies. India no longer provided anything; American sugar provided 300,000 ducats, the gold and silver of Peru from 300,000 to 700,000 ducats, African gold 100,000 ducats; but the Moroccan garrisons alone absorbed 300,000 ducats.[1]

But the expense of the court and the state continued to increase, justified by the theory that spending creates wealth. This might have been the case had the purchases of the court been made in the country; but the national industry could not provide its needs. Spain became an exclusively consumer country, whose colonies had to provide the money for her spending. So much so that the silver and gold of Peru served above all to enrich France, whose exports to Spain increased continually. The trade balance was constantly unfavourable to Spain, and the government was forced to borrow from the Genoese bankers by mortgaging its colonial revenues in advance.

[1] The colonial profits of Spain therefore amounted to a total of from 400,000 to 800,000 ducats, that is to say from 4 to 8 million gold francs.

2. THE IMPERIALISM OF FERDINAND II AND PHILIP IV LEADS TO THE THIRTY YEARS WAR

While the policy of Philip III was driving Spain into irremediable decline, it served as a model for the Emperor Ferdinand II (1618–1637), who decided to introduce into his various states the theory of monarchy by divine right. Rudolph II had moved his capital to Prague. Ferdinand II was to make the kingdom of Bohemia the foundation of his monarchical power. But the crown of Bohemia was elective and in the empire the Czechs alone had managed to get Rudolph II to recognize freedom of worship.

Ferdinand II wanted to enforce both absolutism and Catholic unity.

The 'Revolt' and Germanization of Prague

Prague, endangered in both its political privileges and its religious liberty, replied by insurrection. A provisional government was set up under the leadership of a 'defender of the faith' (1619), which declared Ferdinand to be deposed and offered the crown to the elector-palatine, Frederic V, a Calvinist.

This was the first revolution, after that of the Netherlands against Spain, which roused a people against its sovereign in order to be able to dispose of its own destiny.

The conflict between Prague and Ferdinand II was only a revolt. Frederic V, by accepting the crown of Bohemia, which gave him a second vote in the Electoral College, plunged the empire into war. For this reason the majority in the Electoral College became Protestant. It was an event of primary importance; not only the imperial crown of the Hapsburgs was endangered but also Catholic predominance.

Ferdinand II, by pledging them increases of territory, obtained the support of the Catholic princes. As for the Lutherans, they spontaneously joined with the Catholics against the Calvinist Frederic V. Among the contestants only Duke Maximilian of Bavaria had a standing army. It crushed the Czechs at the battle of the White Mountain.

To strengthen his position Ferdinand II, once Bohemia had been defeated, undertook the first policy of Germanization by force known to Europe.

Since the Hussite wars the social structure of Bohemia had been radically changed. The tenants on the seigniorial estates had been kept in subjection. The position of the small-holders was precarious. The forced labour dues imposed on them by the great landowning nobles had rapidly transformed

the peasants into serfs. The country had been parcelled out into great landed estates administered by bailiffs who, being badly paid, lived from exactions. The country people, reduced to slavery, had not supported the Prague revolt. Its repression was thus made so much the easier.

After his victory Ferdinand II suppressed all the liberties of the Czechs. The monarchy, till then elective, was proclaimed hereditary. Catholicism was enforced as the sole religion and the Protestants were persecuted. The properties of the Czech nobles were confiscated to the profit of the emperor who distributed them to favourites or entrusted their sale to commissions charged with getting the best price for them. What remained of the national nobility was replaced overnight by a new nobility consisting mainly of German adventurers. The peasants were enslaved and treaties were concluded with Poland and Hungary to prevent them leaving the country. A pitiless legal status was accorded to the serfs; adultery was punished by death, all dancing and games were forbidden and also—though in vain—the use of the Czech language. All the peasants were made liable to forced labour from the age of fourteen for the benefit of their seigneurs for a period varying from three to seven years. No craft could be practised without permission of the lord, who must also give his consent to the marriage of his serfs. The Czech coinage was seized and replaced by another coinage of half its value.

To destroy Czech national sentiment Ferdinand II did everything possible to destroy Czech culture. German replaced Czech as the official language. Czech books were proscribed. The humanist movement which since the end of the 16th century had been totally extinguished in Germany was at that time passing through a phase of brilliance at Prague, where Comenius was one of the greatest thinkers of the time. He was persecuted and forced to emigrate. His work, which covered all subjects, made him a forerunner of the French encyclopaedists of the 18th century.

The policy of denationalization ruined the country. The cities became depopulated. In a century the population fell from four to one million. The counter-reformation ruled and the University of Prague lapsed into the same somnolence as the German and Spanish universities.

The enslavement of Bohemia aroused such hatred between Czechs and Germans that it was never to be wiped out.

Philip IV Renews the War Against the United Provinces

While Ferdinand II was assuring the triumph of the Hapsburg monarchical policy in Bohemia by crushing the Czech revolt, Philip IV ascended the Spanish throne (1621–1665). He decided, with the aid of

his minister Gaspar de Guzman, to assert the hegemony of his house by force. The Spanish army was considered the best in Europe. The fleet, although weakened, was still a powerful force. International events played into the hands of Spanish policy. In the year of his coronation, the Twelve-Year Truce signed in 1609 with the United Provinces came to an end and the death of the Archduke Albert, for whom Philip III had promoted Belgium to be an independent state, gave him the chance of restoring the direct rule of the king of Spain. He did not delay. The same year as Ferdinand II triumphed over the Czechs, Philip IV declared his intention of restoring Spanish rule and the Catholic faith in the Netherlands. Belgium was again reduced to the status of a province and the war against the United Provinces, which were regarded as rebels, was renewed.

The War Spreads to Europe

While Philip IV was rekindling the war in the West in order to restore his monarchical rights over the whole of the Netherlands, Ferdinand II was profiting by his victory to enforce an authoritarian policy on the empire. The Elector-Palatine Frederic V having accepted the crown of Bohemia offered him by the insurgent Czechs, Ferdinand declared him dispossessed of all his sovereign rights and granted the Palatinate to Duke Maximilian of Bavaria, the most powerful of the German Catholic rulers (1623). This consolidated his power over all the states of the empire by a virtual *coup d'état*. Only the Electoral College could deprive one of its members of his electoral rights. The threat was the more serious for the Protestant princes in that the grant of the Palatinate to Maximilian of Bavaria reduced to two—the rulers of Saxony and Brandenburg—the Protestant party in the Electoral College. It was a triumph for both the monarchical policy of Ferdinand and for the counter-reformation. The Lutheran rulers at once united to resist; and the king of Denmark, Christian IV, who was also a Lutheran, took the imminent religious conflict as a pretext to intervene on their side (1625). In actual fact he coveted the Baltic coasts.

Danish Intervention

The Danish intervention was due to purely maritime reasons. The decline of the Hansa had given the port of Copenhagen, which relied on the United Provinces, an important role. Its ships traded with Amsterdam, Spain and Portugal, and the royal policy was based on the sea. In 1616 Christian IV had founded an East India Company on the Dutch model[1]

[1] In 1630 it was to set up a trading-post at Canton.

and granted a monopoly to an Iceland Company to search for a northwest passage to India (1619). In 1620 he founded the Guinea Company and favoured the establishment in Denmark of export companies for the sale of wood from the northern lands to Spain and the import of wine and salt (1621).

He was hampered in his policy by the opposition of the landed nobility who feared lest the commercial development of the country might lead to the liberation of the serfs. The Danish cities were not yet powerful enough to support the king, and under-populated Denmark—it had scarcely half a million inhabitants—had neither the middle classes nor the land area which might have allowed it to reassume the naval role which it had played earlier. The war against the emperor offered Christian IV a pretext for laying hands on the German Baltic coast and its ports. He did not hesitate to launch an attack on the continent.

But the continent, at this time, had two powerful armies, that of the duke of Bavaria and the professional army organized by Wallenstein, a German adventurer who had carved out a vast domain for himself in Bohemia by purchasing confiscated Czech properties. He had made a contract with Ferdinand II, by which he placed an army at Ferdinand's disposal without asking any other remuneration than the right to pillage the lands which he occupied. In England and Holland adventurers organized privateering ventures; on the continent war and ransom became a lucrative profession.

Christian IV was not strong enough to resist these armies. He was defeated and, in 1629, forced to sign the Peace of Luebeck by which he pledged himself not to interfere again in the affairs of the empire. Ferdinand II thus became undisputed master. He at once published an Edict of Restitution (1629), by which all lands secularized since 1552 reverted to the emperor. The archbishops of Magdeburg and Bremen, twelve bishoprics and more than a hundred and twenty abbeys came under the terms of this edict, whose execution was entrusted to Wallenstein.

The goal for which the Hapsburgs had been working since Frederic III was at last to be achieved; instead of a federation of four hundred principalities, the empire became a huge monarchy under the House of Hapsburg which, because of the alliance between the Houses of Spain and Austria, could dominate Europe.

Poland Allies With Austria

Shortly before the Prague revolt, Sigismond Vasa had decided upon war with Sweden for the possession of the Baltic provinces (1617). A

completely mediaeval power, Poland, despite its size, could not defeat Sweden whose economic development had allowed King Gustavus Adolphus (1611–1632) to create a modern army and fleet. The conflict went on and on.

While Poland was engaged in the war against Sweden, Christian IV of Denmark had intervened on the continent on the side of the German Protestant princes against Ferdinand II. Quite naturally, Poland was closely bound to Austria. The two great continental Catholic states, Poland and Austria, were leagued against the two maritime kingdoms, Denmark and Sweden, to contest the control of the Baltic provinces.

But at the moment when Ferdinand II made Christian IV of Denmark sign the Peace of Luebeck (1629), Sigismond of Poland, after twelve years of war, had to acknowledge himself beaten and cede the province of Livonia to Sweden.

Faced with this danger, Poland linked her destinies closely with those of victorious Austria. Hapsburg hegemony, extending outside the frontiers of the empire, was triumphant. The chimaera of universal empire once again appeared in Europe.

Intervention of Sweden and France

Since Ferdinand II had revived the policy of Charles V, France had necessarily to reply by reverting to the policy of Francis I. But France was at that time paralysed by the struggle rekindled against the Protestants. Besieged in La Rochelle, they had appealed to England.[1] Richelieu did not want to create a European coalition against France by entering into hostilities with the emperor and England at the same time.

The activities of Ferdinand II did not threaten France alone. By laying hands on Bremen, ceded to him by the Edict of Restitution, he was in a position to make the empire a naval power. Appointing Wallenstein Admiral of the Baltic and the Ocean Seas, he occupied the duchies of Mecklenburg and Pomerania which gave him control of the sea-coast. He thus came into conflict with Sweden which, by its victory over Poland, had gained a foothold in Livonia. Sweden was then on the full tide of economic expansion. Glass, paper, starch and sugar factories, set up by the Dutch, and the considerable production of the Swedish iron, copper and sulphur mines made it an important exporting country with a great sea-borne trade.

The occupation of Mecklenburg and Pomerania by Ferdinand II ruined the imperialist policy of Gustavus Adolphus who wanted to make the

[1] See page 673.

Baltic a Swedish lake. He countered by the creation of a shipbuilding enterprise (1629).

Sweden, however, had not sufficient financial resources for a long war. Richelieu, by the Treaty of Berwald (1631) concluded with Gustavus Adolphus, guaranteed to provide him with the necessary funds for a military intervention. France was to fight against the empire with the financial power given her by the development of her industry since the reign of Henry IV. In the same year Ladislas IV (1631–1648) ascended the throne of Poland. He determined to take advantage of his Austrian alliance to carry out his own very ambitious plans; he claimed the crown of the tsar of Moscow and invaded Russia.

Meanwhile the Swedish armies had crossed the sea and attacked the Holy Empire.

Gustavus Adolphus was one of the greatest soldiers Europe had ever known. He replaced the bands of mercenaries with their baggage-train and camp-followers by a disciplined army divided into uniformed tactical units armed with new, light and easily-handled weapons and quick-firing artillery. The mobility and discipline of his troops enabled him to achieve some striking successes. The Bavarians were beaten at Breitenfeld near Leipzig. Maintz and Munich were occupied.

The Swedish victories menaced the policy of joint hegemony of the Spanish and Austrian Hapsburgs. Philip IV sent a Spanish army to help Ferdinand II. The fortunes of war changed. Gustavus Adolphus was killed after the victory of Lutzen (1632). It was the last success of the Swedish army which was crushed by the Spaniards at the decisive battle of Nordlingen (1634). The German Protestant princes, left to themselves, were unable to continue the struggle. They hastened to sign the Peace of Prague (1635). The Hapsburg coalition was thenceforth master of Europe. At the same time Poland, defeated by the Romanovs, acknowledged herself beaten. The Peace of Viazma (1634) put an end to the imperial dreams of Ladislas IV.

The United Provinces Seize Control of the High Seas

In order to carry on the war on the continent Spain, which had employed all her resources in supplying her armies, was forced to neglect her fleet. While she was winning costly victories on land, Holland seized the mastery of the seas.

The truce signed in 1609 had opened the Spanish colonies to Dutch trade. In 1621 the war closed them again. The United Provinces replied by founding, on international subscription, the West India Company,

thus asserting their intention of breaking the monopoly which Spain claimed over South America and Africa.

The Dutch burghers countered the Hapsburg military alliance which aimed at supremacy on the continent with a capitalist coalition for the conquest of the seas.

The shares of the West India Company—they were issued for seven million florins—had an immense success in France. French finance was the main ally of the little republic in its struggle with the Spanish Empire.

Holland began a blockade of Spain, seizing the American convoys and organizing a pitiless privateering war on the high seas. This gave a tremendous stimulus to Dutch shipbuilding. Within a few years the republic had twenty thousand ships. The India trade was wrested from Portugal, then united with Spain under the sovereignty of Philip IV. The privateering war against the American colonies destroyed Spanish shipping; between 1623 and 1636 the Dutch corsairs seized five hundred and forty-five ships.

In 1629 the superiority of her fleet enabled Holland to gain a foothold in Africa on the Gold Coast and in America in Guiana. In 1634—the same year as the Spanish victory at Nordlingen—Holland seized from Portugal Brazil, Angola in the very heart of Africa, and the island of San Thomé which she made an important staging-post.[1]

Thus, just at the time when the Peace of Prague sealed the triumph of Hapsburg arms on the continent, the Spanish colonial empire broke under the Dutch blows which, by ruining Spanish finances, sapped the foundations of Spanish military power.

France Declares War on Ferdinand II and Philip IV

Compared with the empire and Spain, France was in a strong military and political position. She had replied to the threat of Hapsburg supremacy by considerably increasing her armed forces, relying on a continual understanding with England. In 1640 the French army had a hundred regiments and three hundred squadrons, made up of a hundred and forty-two thousand infantry and twenty-two thousand cavalry. Having learnt the lessons of the naval war carried on by the Dutch against Spain, Richelieu had given France two fleets, one in the Mediterranean and one in the Atlantic, based on Toulon and Brest, whose arsenals were far superior to those at Cadiz and whose eighty ships of the line were able to hold their own with the most powerful warships of the time. Thanks to her naval power, she had been able to sign a permanent peace with the Barbary

[1] Holland kept Brazil until 1645, Angola and San Thomé until 1651.

pirates of Algiers (1628) which protected French shipping from their attacks. Her finances, based on a sound economic structure, were prosperous.

Faced with the direct threat of the Peace of Prague, France entered the lists and declared war on both Ferdinand II and Philip IV, making herself the centre of all the small states which feared the twofold Hapsburg hegemony: Sweden, the United Provinces, the Swiss cantons, the Protestant princes of Germany and the Italian rulers, amongst them the duke of Savoy who had evaded Spanish suzerainty.

The war entered its decisive phase.

Philip IV Relies on a Nationalist Ideology

This war held no interest for the Spanish people. It was the king's war. His aim was to install Hapsburg authoritarian supremacy in Europe. To gain support, Philip IV launched out on a great ideological propaganda aimed mainly at Spain but also, more widely, at all Europe. From the time of Ferdinand of Aragon, the kings of Spain had supported their absolutism by a religious ideology; under Philip III it became racial. Philip IV was now to give it a clearly defined nationalist character. Pamphlets were distributed describing the Hapsburgs as the sole true descendants of Charlemagne, Spain as the first country to be inhabited after the Flood and the Spanish nation as the creator of all others. It was therefore legitimate that its kings should rule the world.

Spain is Dismembered

All the states of Philip IV were more and more rigorously subjected to the authoritarian policy of the king, based on this nationalist ideology, and were asked to make a great effort in men and money. Catalonia replied by an insurrection and, in 1640, following the example of the United Provinces, declared itself an independent republic. At the same time Portugal, whose army had been ordered to join up with the Spanish army, also proclaimed its independence and brought to the throne the viceroy, the duke of Braganza, who assumed the crown under the name of John IV. He at once concluded alliances with France and Holland and entered the war against Philip IV.

The Naval War Ruins Spain and Enriches the United Provinces

While the war was ruining and dismembering Spain, despite the victories of the Spanish arms, it enriched the United Provinces, thanks to their control of the seas.

Privateering and the profits made in India, Brazil and Africa allowed the Dutch companies to distribute dividends amounting, in some years, to 50% of the nominal capital. The shares of the companies, which represented a total investment of fourteen million florins, rose to as much as forty million florins in 1648. The Dutch bankers drew from India three times as much as the monopoly had, even in its best days, for the king of Portugal. The Bank of Amsterdam, inaugurating a cheap credit policy to take advantage of the economic upheavals caused by the war, gave Dutch industry an extraordinary stimulus and at the same time profitably exploited its capital by loans to its allies. By 1640 the Dutch business men had made such good use of the wealth they had gained from the colonies and from their privateering ventures and by the foundation of industrial and commercial enterprises that the India trade, though still flourishing, represented only a twelfth part of the trade of the United Provinces. Java played in the sea-borne trade of India, Insulindia, China and Japan—whence the Spaniards had been finally expelled in 1638 because of their religious fanaticism—the role which Amsterdam played in Europe.

This immense prosperity which the naval war brought to Holland was confirmed by the great victory which the Dutch won in the Channel and which finally broke the naval power of Spain. Holland, thenceforth, was a great power. The stadtholder Frederic-Henry married his son, the future stadtholder William II (1647–1650) to the daughter of Charles I of England, and gave his daughter Louise-Henriette in marriage to the Great Elector of Brandenburg, Frederic-William.

Thus, while the sacrifices demanded for the war led to the dismemberment of Spain, Holland, strengthened by the wealth brought her by her control of the seas, drew closer to England, whose interests in the Indian Ocean coincided with hers, and to Brandenburg which had a common frontier with her on the Rhine.

The Naval Blockade Confirms the Defeat of Spain

The United Provinces had vanquished Spain at sea by the power of capitalism, which it made its principal weapon. French financial power was to play a great part on the continent also. It was not enough for France to have allies; they must be in a position to carry on with the war. Neither Sweden nor the German princes had such resources. Richelieu, who was convinced that French money would defeat Austria, poured out annual subsidies of a million *livres* to the king of Sweden and two and a half million to Prince Bernard of Saxe-Weimar, the only German Protestant ruler capable of raising an efficient army.

For two years France was forced to wage a defensive war on her own soil. But from the year when Ferdinand II died and was succeeded by Ferdinand III (1637), the balance of forces began to change. The duke of Saxe-Weimar conquered Alsace with his army of mercenaries; and his death, which took place in 1638, permitted France to pay off his armies and acquire Alsace for herself.

On the northern frontier the Dutch naval victories decided the outcome of the war by cutting the Spanish army which was fighting on the Belgian frontier from its bases. Despite its victories it could only grow weaker and weaker. Belgium, the rallying point of the Spanish and imperial forces, was the solar plexus of the Hapsburg power. The victory of Condé at Rocroi (1643), by breaking the unity of the Hapsburg front, was therefore decisive.

Domination of the continent had shown itself to be impossible without command of the seas. It became even more impossible because the war at sea continually increased the financial power of Holland while the continental war ruined the countries where it was raging. Neither Philip IV nor Ferdinand II could afford to continue their war effort any longer. The Dutch blockade drove Spain to bankruptcy and the passage of the armed forces reduced Germany to such misery that its richest provinces were ravaged by famine. The great Rhineland villages had no longer more than a few dozen inhabitants. In 1644, on the initiative of the Pope and the republic of Venice which had been trying to restore peace since 1636, the plenipotentiaries of the warring and mediating powers met in Westphalia while the military operations were still going on. It took four years of effort to find a solution which could put an end to hostilities.

3. THE TREATIES OF WESTPHALIA

The treaties of Westphalia which ended the Thirty Years War[1] were drawn up by the first of the great European congresses. They confirmed the failure of Hapsburg imperial policy. The idea of the imperial unity of Europe was provisionally set aside. The Congress of Westphalia was the first attempt to give Europe a political and religious status. The offensive of the counter-reformation disappeared at the same time as the Hapsburg imperial dream. Europe was to adapt itself to the diversity which its economic, social and religious evolution had imposed upon its political structure.

[1] The treaty between France and the empire was signed at Munster; that between Sweden and the empire at Osnabruck.

England, which had taken no part in the war, did not take part in the congress either. The problem which it had to solve was purely continental; England was disinterested.

The main feature of the treaties of Westphalia was the total absence of any theoretical principles shown in them. No alternative was offered to the absolutist, authoritarian and Catholic ideology of the Hapsburgs, but only the realist preoccupations insisted on by France with the sole aim of assuring peace and maintaining the security and primacy of France.

The work of the congress was tendered even more incomplete by the refusal of Spain to take part. Even while his empire was collapsing, Philip IV obstinately adhered to his policy of supremacy and, encouraged by the troubles which had broken out in France, signed a separate peace with the United Provinces in 1647 in order to be able to concentrate all his forces on France.

The Separate Peace of Munster Between Spain and the United Provinces

By this peace Spain finally acknowledged the independence of the United Provinces; she ceded all northern Brabant and the fortress of Maestricht on the Meuse, thus making the Netherlands indefensible against an attack from the east and sacrificing Antwerp by consenting to the closing of the Scheldt.

Thus, in order to be able to continue an exclusively dynastic war against France which could not bring Spain any political or economic benefit and which was not liked by Spanish public opinion, Philip IV renounced the great sea-port of Antwerp which had been the economic centre of the empire of Charles V. Obsessed by the sole aim of getting his dynastic hegemony recognized on the continent, where he was to exhaust his last resources, Philip turned away from the sea which had been the origin of Spanish greatness. By consenting to the closing of the Scheldt, Philip IV not only injured Spain but also betrayed the Netherlands people whose legitimate sovereign he was. Certainly, Antwerp, since the religious wars, was no longer what it had been before 1585; its place had been taken by Amsterdam. But it was still one of the main ports of Europe as well as a great centre of wealth, art and culture. The whole economic life of the Netherlands was organized around Antwerp. Philip IV paid no heed to the total ruin he was to cause the country, now condemned to die of asphyxsia. One thing only mattered to him—his glory.

To set up monarchical absolutism in central Europe, Ferdinand II

Map No. 33

CENTRAL EUROPE AFTER THE TREATIES OF 1648
Brandenburg
Acquisitions of Brandenburg
Acquisitions of France
Acquisitions of Sweden
Countries declared independent of the Empire
Spanish possessions
Possessions of the Austrian Hapsburgs
KINGDOM OF SWEDEN
KINGDOM OF DENMARK
Copenhagen
DY. OF SCHLESWIG
DY. OF HOLSTEIN
Lubeck
Stralsund
Colberg
Danzig
DUCHY OF PRUSSIA
LITHUANIA
DY. OF MECKLENBURG
SWEDISH POMERANIA
Bremen
Verden
Minden
Amsterdam
Rotterdam
UNITED PROV.
DY. OF CLEVES
DY. OF Munster
DY. OF BRANDENBURG
Berlin
Posen
Warsaw
KINGDOM OF POLAND
DUCHY OF SAXONY
Leipzig
Dresden
DUCHY OF
Breslau
KINGDOM OF SILESIA
Cracow
Bruges
Cologne
SEE OF LIEGE
LOW COUNTRIES
ARTOIS
Arras
HOLY ROMAN (GERMANIC) EMPIRE
Maintz
Prague
BOHEMIA
MORAVIA
D. of Teschen
Paris
Rheims
Verdun
Metz
PALATINATE
Nuremberg
UPPER PALATINATE
Ratisbon
Augsburg
DY. OF BAVARIA
Vienna
ARCH-DUCHY OF AUSTRIA
KINGDOM OF HUNGARY
Buda
Pest
Orleans
Troyes
Toul
Strasbourg
D. of WURTTEMBERG
ALSACE
BRISGAU
KINGDOM OF FRANCE
Dijon
FRANCHE-COMTE
Basle
Berne
SWISS CONFEDERATION
TESSIN
CTY. OF TYROL
ARCHDY. Salzburg
D. OF STYRIA
D. OF CARINTHIA
D. OF CARNIOLA
See of Trentino
VENETIAN REPUBLIC
Dy. of Venice
Mantua
Milan
DUCHY OF MILAN
Genoa
Turin
PIEDMONT
D. of SAVOY
BUGEY
Lyon
Vienne
Grenoble
DAUPHINE
D. of PARMA
Modena
PAPAL STATES
OTTOMAN EMPIRE
Nimes
Avignon
Arles
PROVENCE
Marseilles
REP. OF GENOA
Lucca
Pisa
Florence
GD DY OF TUSCANY
CORSICA
0
150 Miles
E.G.M.

had ruthlessly wiped out the prosperity of Bohemia, then the richest of his states. Philip IV, in order to preserve a vain prestige for a few years more, destroyed with his own hands the only part of his empire which remained active and vigorous and condemned the Belgian provinces to a stagnation akin to death. This monstrous political error was to be the death-blow to Spanish power. By sacrificing Antwerp Philip IV signed his own death-warrant.

For the United Provinces the Peace of Munster was a striking success. Not only did it set the seal on their naval supremacy, but the closure of the Scheldt, by making Antwerp a dead city, increased the wealth of Amsterdam which thus became sole heir of the former economic splendour of Flanders. The former immense prosperity of the Netherlands now passed almost entirely to Holland. Belgium, considered henceforth by Spain as a mere causeway, became the currency with which Spain paid for her defeats.

Holland, on the other hand, took her place among the great powers.

The Treaties of Westphalia

Since Spain had committed suicide by the Treaty of Munster, it only remained for France to safeguard her security by organizing the empire in such a way as to prevent its being reunified under the Austrian Hapsburgs. That was why Mazarin, while working to make France a strong national unit within her natural frontiers and subject to an uncontested monarchic absolutism, continued Richelieu's policy and ensured the triumph of feudal organization and political dismemberment in Germany. In France freedom of worship was firmly established; in Germany the treaties of Westphalia confirmed the principle of *cujus regio ejus religio*, which excluded all freedom of worship and made religion dependent on the state.

This total absence of principle was, however, a proof of the wisdom of the diplomats who drew up the treaties. It was impossible—Charles V had already proved it—to apply similar political and religious principles to western and to central Europe, since their social development was entirely divergent. One system only, that of absolutist state control which made the nation the passive instrument of the state, could be indiscriminately applied to all states whatever their degree of evolution. From the time when the absolutist ideology was abandoned, as it had to be since it represented Hapsburg domination, there was no other unity possible in the institutions of Europe since European unity did not exist.

The treaties of Westphalia did not impose political dismemberment on

Germany; they only confirmed what already existed with the approval of all the German rulers. It would no longer have been possible for them to approve the religious split in the empire without again plunging Europe into war. To restore peace to Europe, France merely reverted to the solution which Charles V had adopted in 1555 at the Diet of Augsburg. Germany was divided into three creeds; Calvinism which had become rooted in the south-west, Lutheranism in the former feudal lands and Catholicism in the more progressive regions of the Rhine and Danube. From the political point of view the congress merely approved the situation which had existed before the war. The imperial title remained elective in law, though in fact it had become a hereditary right of the Hapsburgs and the empire continued to be an aggregate of four hundred sovereign states under the purely nominal role of the emperor. The electors received a guarantee of the absolute independence which their states already enjoyed. The empire emerged from the Thirty Years War even more divided than when it had entered it.

It was in vain that Ferdinand II, in order to give the empire a unity which it did not have and did not want, had plunged the German people into such terrible misery that it needed more than a century to make it good.

Thus in the duel between two political conceptions, that of continental unity dominated by authoritarian absolutism and that of national states aiming at expansion overseas, it was the latter which had won. Victorious France did not try—as Ferdinand II and Philip IV would have done had the victory been theirs—to dominate all Europe. She tried only to establish a balance of power in central Europe which would give it peace by breaking up the empire. To prevent the Hapsburgs from reviving their imperial dreams, French diplomacy set up a barrier of states against them. Sweden, installed on the estuaries of the Weser and the Oder, was granted the former bishoprics of Bremen and Verden, western Pomerania and Stettin, that is to say the most important parts of the German Baltic coast and the North Sea. The Baltic became a Swedish lake and the naval imperialism of the Vasas triumphed. Sweden, by these annexations, became a member of the empire and took her seat in the diet; and in order to prevent any future attempt by the Hapsburgs to unify the empire under their rule, the electorates of Bavaria and Brandenburg were considerably strengthened. Bavaria, increased by the cession of the upper Palatinate, became the trustee of all the lands between the Rhine and the Danube, while French diplomacy made the electorate of Brandenburg the main beneficiary of the war on the continent.

The Electorate of Brandenburg Becomes a Land Power

Brandenburg had been a Carolingian march set up against the Slavs on the left bank of the Elbe. In the 10th century the Emperor Henry the Fowler had extended its territory from the Elbe to the Oder. In the 12th century Brandenburg extended over the right bank of the river. In 1356 it became an electorate. It was one of the poorest districts of the German plain.

In the 15th century it had passed to the Hohenzollern family, descendants of minor Swabian seigneurs who, in the 13th century, had obtained from Rudolph of Hapsburg the landgravate of Nuremberg, a principality made wealthy by the trade of its capital city. The dues which it charged enabled the family to amass great wealth. It lent money to the emperor who, in exchange for Nuremberg, granted it in compensation the electorate of Brandenburg (1415).

East of Brandenburg the Knights of the Sword and the Teutonic Order, who had returned from the Holy Land in the time of Frederic II, had conquered Prussia in the 13th century and made it a border march against the Slavs. In 1525 the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Albert of Hohenzollern, had been converted to Lutheranism, had secularized the duchy and made it a hereditary principality, vassal of the kingdom of Poland.

In 1609 the duchy of Clèves, straddling the Rhine—small but rich, and forming part of the Netherlands civilization—passed to the Hohenzollerns of Brandenburg by marriage. In 1618 another marriage gave them the duchy of Prussia.

The states of Brandenburg, acquired by the fortunes of succession, had no unity. Clèves and Brandenburg itself were a part of the empire, Prussia was a Polish fief. The only bond uniting them was the ruler. In each state there was a diet, which was sovereign in financial affairs. The taxes were imposed and collected by order of the diet and for the needs of the state alone. The ruler lived exclusively from the income of his domains.

In 1618, at the time when the Elector John-Sigismond (1608–1619) succeeded to the Polish fief of Prussia, the Thirty Years War began. During the war, George-William (1619–1640) had not been strong enough to make his neutrality respected; Brandenburg was ravished and lost half its population. Frederic-William (1640–1688), the 'Great Elector', turned to France and concluded an alliance with her. After the signature of the treaties of Westphalia, France insisted that he receive, in compensation for the damage he had sustained and for western Pomerainia which he had had to cede to Sweden, eastern Pomerania with the port of Colberg, the secularized bishoprics of Magdeburg and Halberstadt on the Elbe,

and Minden on the Weser. The Hohenzollerns thus found themselves masters of the most extensive territories of any of the princes of the empire; they had a foothold on all the great German rivers—the Rhine where they held Clèves, the Weser, the Elbe and the Oder. Saxony, outflanked by Brandenburg to the north and east, passed under its economic control.

France Assumes Continental Leadership

France, victorious over the Hapsburg coalition, was in a dominant position. She did not ask for large territorial aggrandizements but for a new political organization of Europe.

For her part she pursued the plan, earlier put forward by Philip the Good and taken up again by Richelieu, of restoring to France the frontiers of Roman Gaul. In the Netherlands, Franche-Comté and the region of the Pyrenees the war with Spain went on; the treaties could only settle a part of her eastern frontier. It confirmed French possession of the three bishoprics of Metz, Toul and Verdun, which the Protestant princes had already ceded to Henry II, as well as possession of the Hapsburg lands and the ten free cities of Alsace, where only the city of Strasbourg remained outside the kingdom. For the first time in her history France set foot on the Rhine.

Established on the Rhine and closely allied to Sweden and Brandenburg, France assumed, as far as the empire was concerned, a dominant position. The supremacy of Austria was broken. The empire recognized the independence of the United Provinces and of Switzerland which, by holding the Alpine passes, covered the French eastern frontier.

On the other hand, by destroying the work of the Treaty of Cambrai, the Treaty of Munster reintegrated the Burgundian lands in the empire, that is to say the Belgian provinces less Flanders, and Franche-Comté. This was no more than a simple humiliation for the king of Spain for, by placing him under imperial suzerainty for his Burgundian lands, it placed him under the authority of the Imperial Diet, over which France had decided to exercise a direct influence.

The diet, which sat at Ratisbon, emerged from the Thirty Years War greatly changed. Sweden had a seat there because of her Baltic provinces and the question arose whether France would also be represented for Alsace. But the question remained open. Thus the alliance of Sweden and France would operate even in the internal affairs of Germany. Furthermore German unity was broken even within the diet itself, which was now given the right of dividing when dealing with religious questions

the Lutheran, Calvinist and Catholic rulers meeting separately. The emperor, a Catholic, was thus in fact reduced to being no more than the leader of the Catholic regions of the empire. The Lutherans came under Swedish control and the Calvinists under that of the margrave of Brandenburg who, though retaining Lutheran worship in his states, was himself a Calvinist.

The diet would no longer be the Council of the Empire but an assembly of sovereign rulers. The long struggle carried on by the rulers against the emperor since the times of Charles V had ended with their victory. The empire would no longer be a Hapsburg monarchy; it would remain an archaism, empty of any living meaning, since the rulers were in agreement with France and Sweden to keep it politically divided. The empire had not been destroyed by the treaties of Westphalia; they had merely taken account of its internal collapse.

By 1648 central Europe, which the Hapsburgs had had the arrogant idea of uniting under their rule, was no more than a mosaic of sovereign states amongst which the Danubian states of Austria, and Saxony, Bavaria and Brandenburg began to emerge as real monarchies. Republican Switzerland, detached from the empire, took its place among the independent states. France, the United Provinces and Sweden replaced Spain as naval powers. The kingdom of France, strong and united, rallied around her military and financial authority all those states which were asserting themselves on the continent as rising powers—the United Provinces, Sweden and Brandenburg.

The era of universal empire which, from the 9th century, had been the aim of so many attempts both by land and sea, was replaced by the new era of the national monarchies.

Spain, whose kings had tried to use their magnificent resources to assert their power over Europe, emerged broken and exhausted by the too great efforts demanded of her.

France, which since the time of Francis I had concentrated all her forces on internal consolidation, became the leading power in the world.

By contrast to the hegemony which Spain and Austria had claimed, France appeared as the champion of the balance of power. The ideal of Campanella's universal monarchy was replaced by Sully's concert of sovereign states. Europe rallied around France which, after the collapse of the unity of Christendom known to the Middle Ages, introduced a new conception of a stable balance. Not only was she the victorious power, she was the controlling power. The era of French expansion and influence had begun.

CHAPTER XLV

NATIONAL AND LIBERAL ABSOLUTISM PAVES THE WAY FOR FRENCH LEADERSHIP

Absolutism Based on National Consent

THE absolutism foreshadowed in France by Francis I and achieved by Henry IV in no way resembled the formula which triumphed in Spain under Philip III. Abandoning the national tradition of Aragon, Philip III introduced into Spain the purely dynastic policy of the Austrian Hapsburgs. He regarded Spain and his other states only as tools of his dynastic power to enforce his suzerainty over the other sovereigns of Europe. It was a complete break with the idea of the national monarchy based on the States-General which had gradually been forming in the West since the 14th century.

The absolutism of Henry IV, on the contrary, was directly derived from the 15th century national monarchy. It renounced, it is true, any collaboration with the States-General which had not been able, during the wars of religion, to abandon the viewpoint of the privileged classes and adopt that of the general interest of the nation. But even though Henry IV refused to admit the thesis of national sovereignty he was none the less supported by the almost unanimous public opinion of the country which wanted peace, order and security and which counted on the king to try to deliver it from the excesses of the nobles and the factions.

The absolutism of Philip III was by divine right; he relied upon the uniformity of worship enforced by the Inquisition. He represented the Spanish nation, not by appealing to its consent but by claiming to be the guardian of its faith and race, persecuting heretics and recusants and expelling Moors and Jews from the country. Nationalism, which Philip IV made the official foundation of his policy, was treated as a by-product of authoritarianism; it was not a sentiment born of the nation itself but a theory imposed by the monarchy to assure the triumph of an

absolutism which claimed to be the incarnation not of actually living citizens but of the eternal spirit of the race which must override all other considerations and which the king alone was capable of imposing upon the outside world.

Henry IV did not justify his power by invoking his divine origin. He did not marry a princess of that blood royal which flowed in the veins of those whom God had destined to rule over His creatures but Marie de Medici, whose ancestors, sprung from the people, had made banking the springboard whence they had leapt upward to become dukes of Tuscany. He did not justify the absolutism which he claimed by appealing to nationalism but by demanding the unanimous consent of the country. Instead of imposing an ideology as the foundation of his power, he based that power on religious tolerance; he did not invoke the eternal rights of race but made himself the defender of the personal freedom of his subjects. In foreign affairs, the 'Great Design' did not regard Europe as a hierarchy of sovereigns under the suzerainty of one of their number but envisaged it as a community of free nations each with equal rights.

The dynastic monarchy by right divine set no limits to its ambitions; since power was of divine origin, there were no limits to the will of the sovereign and since power was personal there was no reason why it should not extend over various peoples. It tended naturally to be universal, like the divine authority from which it proceeded and to which it claimed kinship.

The monarchy based on the people's consent had quite different trends. The absolutism of the king was only legitimate insofar as it was supported by public opinion. It was national and therefore not valid save within the frontiers of France.

In internal affairs Hapsburg policy had tended to increase the royal power and prestige by centralizing all the resources of the nation in the hands of the king, even going as far as confiscations on religious or racial pretexts. The policy of Henry IV aimed at enriching the state by increasing the prosperity of his subjects. The aim of his economic policy was not to concentrate the wealth of the country in the hands of the king but to increase it. The former was expressed in the policy of royal monopoly and by the confiscation of the goods of the persecuted; the latter in mercantilism.

For Philip IV society was a hierarchy of which he was the apex. He governed with the help of an oligarchy made up of the clergy and nobles. For Henry IV the king was the master and protector of all his subjects; none save he could, by right of birth, have the right to govern. He did not

share his power with the nobility, but exercised it through his officials.

Spanish absolutism represented an authoritarian ideology. French absolutism was merely the form taken, because of the needs of the times, by a régime based on national sentiment and individual freedom of conscience. All the differences in the political attitudes of the kings of Spain and of France up to 1685 were the direct consequences of these two contrasting conceptions of monarchy.

The Minority of Louis XIII and the Opposition of the Nobles

From this point of view the reign of Louis XIII (1610–1643), which began with the regency of Marie de Medici, was a direct continuance of the reign of Henry IV.

The absolutism of Henry IV had met with opposition within the country from one source only, the nobility, which had been excluded from the conduct of public affairs. The minority of Louis XIII might have been expected to favour a restoration of its influence. To prevent this Marie de Medici governed with the aid of an Italian, Concini, and agreed to buy the loyalty of the great nobles by granting them the huge pensions which they demanded. Four years of this régime exhausted the treasure which had been accumulated by Sully. France was heading for disaster; the pensions would have to be abolished. The great nobles of the kingdom, led by Condé, at once took up arms in the name of public interest and demanded the convocation of the States-General. Concini gave way and promised to remit four hundred and fifty thousand *livres* to the prince of Condé, leader of the Protestant nobility, and three hundred thousand to the duke of Mayenne, leader of the Catholic party,[1] and to hand over to them the fortresses which they claimed. The monarchy passed under the guardianship of the great nobles who, from then on, ceased to demand the convocation of the States-General. But it had already been summoned and therefore met in 1614; it was not to meet again until 1789.

The attitude of the Third Estate showed remarkable political maturity. The demands made by its deputies included the suppression of internal customs, unification of weights and measures and of the legislation of the kingdom. By contrast to the great nobles, who were plundering the state finances, the middle classes dictated a policy to the king which, half a century later, the crown was to do all in its power to put into force; it was only to be fully adopted by the Convention of 1793.

The nobles feared this intervention by the Third Estate, whose power

[1] These sums represented 5% of the whole French budget.

had been growing in proportion to its wealth. Marie de Medici, for her part, had no intention of sharing her power; nor did she want to see the disastrous party quarrels revived. While these dissensions were going on between the nobles and the Third Estate, the hall of the States-General was closed in the name of the king. During the Hundred Years War, and more recently during the wars of religion, the people of Paris had taken up arms to support the independence of the States-General. This time the country did not react. Public opinion was disinterested in political freedom.

The same trend caused the monarchy to become influenced by the dynastic ideas of Spain, then at the height of her glory. Philip III based his ambitions on a peace policy which was confirmed by the signature of the Twelve-Year Truce with the United Provinces in 1609. All Europe seemed to be on the threshold of a period of peace. The court, inclined to favour an understanding with Spain and wishful to strengthen the royal power by increasing its prestige, made preparations for the marriage of Louis XIII with Anne of Austria, daughter of Philip III.

The alliance of the kings was thus centred on the court of Madrid and the threat which it represented was fully understood by France. The Protestants, fearing lest Spanish influence rekindle the religious persecutions, rose. But once again Concini, a realist, restored order by buying the prince of Condé for a hundred and fifty thousand *livres*.

On Concini's death (1617) the great nobles demanded a share in the power. To support his claims Condé once more stirred up Protestant unrest in the Midi. To prevent a recurrence of civil war, made imminent by the coincidence of a Huguenot revolt and a rising of the nobles, Marie de Medici gave way. Duke Albert de Luynes succeeded Concini. Condé, now satisfied, joined with the king in a campaign against the Protestants.

But Marie had not surrendered. In 1624 she managed to get a seat in the privy council for Richelieu, whose position she strengthened against the nobles by getting him appointed a cardinal; his abilities soon made him chief of the council, that is to say prime minister. He was to govern France until his death in 1642.

The Constructive Work of Richelieu

The policy of Richelieu never wavered for a moment. His aim was to ensure the uncontested power of the king; in internal affairs by checkmating the nobles and the Protestants who were trying to form a state within the state, in external affairs by giving France a strong military

and diplomatic position based on a policy of peace and a constant understanding with England against the threat of Hapsburg hegemony.

He laid this down in his *Maxims of State*, in which he wrote that there can be no half-way house between absolute monarchy and anarchy, that the nobility must be excluded from public affairs and must devote themselves to the profession of arms alone, and that in questions of religion only one form of Christianity must be favoured, but at the same time there should be no persecution. He justified his sometimes arbitrary methods by saying that it was better for a few individuals to be sacrificed, even were it unjustly, than to allow the state to be endangered.

The struggle began at once against the Protestants who, from the beginning of the reign, had based their opposition on continual threats of revolt. La Rochelle was then the capital of the party. Richelieu laid siege to it. England intervened and sent a fleet to raise the blockade of the city, and at the same time attacked the French settlements in Canada. It failed; in 1627 the city was taken. Richelieu deprived the Huguenots of their cities of refuge which Henry IV had granted them, but by the Grace of Alais he confirmed their freedom of worship and absolute equality with the Catholics. The Edict of Nantes had given religious peace to France, but it had been an armed peace in which the war might have revived at any moment since it had granted fortresses to the Protestants to defend themselves in case of need. Richelieu, by granting Protestants and Catholics equal rights, established true freedom of worship in France as a civil right.

Now that the Protestant question was solved, it remained to subdue the nobles who, under the leadership of the king's brother, the duke of Orleans, claimed to hold a privileged position in the kingdom. Before beginning the conflict, Richelieu wanted to appeal to public opinion; in 1625 he summoned the Assembly of Notables. This assembly, which had been summoned for the first time by Francis I to replace the States-General, was made up of leading persons belonging to the councils or chosen by the king. It was asked to give its advice on a series of legislative measures; the replacement of the death penalty by confiscation of goods for the crime of rebellion, abolition of the tax on incomes, the creation of a powerful navy and a policy of colonial expansion. The assembly, less reformist than Richelieu, did not approve all his proposals but supported him against the abuse of the privileges claimed by the great nobles. He was therefore able to inaugurate a ruthless campaign against them. Throughout France their castles were destroyed, often after real military operations. The conspiracies which were organized against him

were shattered by prison sentences and death penalties, often of an arbitrary nature. The power of the nobles was finally smashed. The decisions of the Assembly of Notables were recorded in the *Ordonnance* of 1629, known as the Code Michaud, which abolished the last vestiges of the feudal system; by proclaiming the king 'supreme feudal chief of the kingdom' he placed all vassals and sub-vassals under direct royal authority and thus destroyed the feudal bond on which the great nobles had relied to impose their will on their former vassals. It was a legal revolution. Several *parlements*, denouncing the blow to their ancient rights, refused to register this decision; and the nobles took refuge in a policy of opposition to the king which was to break out, a few years later, in the insurrection of the Fronde.

After Richelieu's reforms there was no longer any social force capable of withstanding the royal authority. But there were still the legal organs of power whose prerogatives could check royal absolutism. The States-General no longer met. But the *parlement*, after the closing of the States in 1615, had made strong remonstrances to Marie de Medici and protested on several occasions against the arbitrary methods which Richelieu had not hesitated to use during his struggle with the nobility. In 1641 Richelieu silenced the opposition of the *parlement* by forbidding it to make any protest unconnected with financial affairs. Thenceforward all the organs of power derived from the feudal monarchy were deprived of any intervention in the government.

The monarchy, for its part, created a number of councils in order to centralize power. These became the real organs of government; other than the *parlement*, there were the Great Council, the Audit Office and the Board of Excise which were entitled sovereign courts. In Spain equivalent councils had immediately become oligarchies which imposed their power on the king. Richelieu, who had just destroyed the power of the nobles, evaded the formation of an oligarchy by composing the councils of men of law, centralizing the government under the control of four state secretaries and entrusting the *intendants* created by Francis I with the close surveillance of the governors of the provinces, offices which remained filled by the great nobles.

But no internal power and no external security could exist without means of enforcement. Because of the continual activities of the nobles and the two-fold policy of hegemony of the Spanish and Austrian Hapsburgs, such means could only be military. Richelieu therefore gave the monarchy an army and a fleet capable of matching the Spanish forces. The Thirty Years War had led him to increase French manpower to a

hundred and sixty thousand men. Spanish absolutism, which aimed at supremacy, had naturally come, like the Ottoman Empire and the oriental autocracies, to regard the army as an essential instrument of power. The other monarchies had to follow its example. Absolutism forced Europe to begin an armaments race.

Like a great statesman, Richelieu understood that no real power could be acquired without control of the sea. Spain had begun her decline because her naval power had been broken at the end of the 16th century. The United Provinces and England owed their rapidly growing prosperity to their fleets. From the time of Francis I, France had been carrying out a policy of economic hegemony in the Mediterranean which could not be maintained without sea-power; and the understanding with England, essential to the peace of France, could only be conceived if France were able to put powerful fleets on the high seas.

Maritime and Colonial Policy

Richelieu therefore built up from scratch a naval force to safeguard French commercial expansion. In 1626 he set up, within the government, a naval and commercial supervisory department of which he took personal control. Bearing in mind that no economic policy could succeed without the support of public opinion—Spain had been a striking example—he submitted his colonial programme to the Assembly of Notables. He wanted France to win control of the seas and to found an overseas empire based on colonies of Frenchmen. As in Spain the initiative would come from the state but, as in England and Holland, the exploitation of the plan would be handed over to great privileged companies without state control. The absolutism of Richelieu, faithful to the tradition of Sully, wanted to build the greatness of France on co-operation between state and private enterprise. But whereas the Dutch companies, founded by capitalists, were interested only in profits, Richelieu wanted to entrust the companies, founded on royal initiative, with the mission of winning vast overseas territories for France and of duplicating European France by a France in the New World.

It was for this purpose that he founded the Morbihan Company for expansion in the northern regions and in America, and the French East India Company to open the trade of India and the Far East to France. Both failed utterly. The Company of the Hundred Associates (1627), founded to develop French settlement in Canada, also had no success; in 1642 there were still no more than two hundred French colonists there. The Company of the American Islands (1635) drew France to the Antilles

and took possession of Martinique, Guadeloupe and Dominique. The Cape Verde Company (1633) founded an establishment in Senegal to organize the slave-trade to the Antilles; and in 1642 the French first set foot in Madagascar. In 1628 a trading-post was set up in Algiers and in 1631 the first French consuls were appointed in Morocco where Portugal was fast losing her privileged position.

The colonial policy of Richelieu came at the right moment to make France a great universal power. But French public opinion did not follow his lead. The nobles were not interested in colonial enterprises and the business men of Marseilles, La Rochelle, Nantes and Rouen, who subscribed to the Dutch companies, were hostile to Richelieu's plans because, conceived on a long-term basis, they promised no immediate profits.

Economic and Social Evolution

To make France the best governed state of the times, to give her an army which was to prove superior to the Spanish army and a fleet comparable with those of the United Provinces or England, Richelieu was forced to demand from the country—which was rapidly growing in wealth—a supreme financial effort. Between 1610 and 1642 the yield from taxation increased from seventeen to forty-four million *livres*, yet the state budget was constantly in deficit. Taxation, based on the system already in force, weighed almost exclusively on the peasants, who were further burdened by the feudal dues payable to the nobles. Drained dry, they revolted, but their revolts were ruthlessly suppressed. The monarchy, which had just destroyed the last vestiges of the political structure of feudalism, did not realize that the new political hierarchy, in which the state replaced the nobles, required a parallel reform of social organization. By allowing the social dues created by the feudal régime, which it had abolished, to continue to exist under the centralized monarchy, the authorities created a severe social crisis which was little by little to sap the foundations of the country. By superimposing the state taxation system on the ancient feudal-seigniorial system which it allowed to go on existing on the social plane, the absolutist monarchy crushed the people under the weight of a double tax exaction. The taxation due to the king was legitimate because it made it possible for him to equip the country and make it a modern state. As for the ancient feudal dues, they were no more than an out-of-date survival; formerly, indeed, the feudal dues were of public benefit since they were, in fact, only the ancient Roman dues which the seigneurs had usurped because they had become the heirs of the state infinitely fractioned. They were, at that time, legitimate

because of the public services rendered by the nobility. But since the king had concentrated in his hands all the powers formerly held by the local rulers the feudal dues had lost their public form; they had been transformed into private property rights which the nobles collected without rendering any compensating service to the state. They had become merely a free privilege. Under the feudal system the nobles had been a political as well as a social class; under the monarchy they were only a privileged, and consequently parasitical, caste. The social balance of the nation was broken. No one, at that time, understood this. But this retarded social evolution was gradually to accumulate those forces which were to burst out so violently in 1789.

Whereas the taxation, superimposed on the feudal dues, drove the peasants into greater and greater poverty, the wide development which it gave the power of France greatly enriched the middle classes. By contrast to Spain which was dying because, in order to enrich the state, the authoritarian monarchy had destroyed the business and industrial classes, essentially represented by the Moors and the Jews, France reaped the fruits of the policy of Laffémas, which aimed at encouraging business, and the middle classes grew large and rich. The agricultural and industrial deficit created in Spain by the expulsion of the *moriscoes* and the Jews opened fresh outlets for exports from France, towards which flowed the precious metals from America. At Lyon and at Tours silk-weaving developed and luxury industries, particularly at Paris, prospered rapidly. The capitulations signed by Francis I with the Porte made Marseilles the greatest port of the Mediterranean and a great industrial centre where the leathers of Sardinia, the Orient and the Maghreb, the oils of Italy and the Levant, the molasses of Syria and also that which was beginning to be imported from the Antilles were processed or manufactured. Montpellier, which relied on the markets of the Levant, became a great manufacturing centre. The ports of La Ciotat, La Seyne, Toulon and Saint Tropez grew in importance. The decline of Italy drew great numbers of Italians to Provence, who brought with them their capital and their skills. France garnered the industries which were dying in Spain and Italy.

Intellectual Life

The great economic development of France under Richelieu was because his absolutist policy left individual initiative free to reap its rewards. It did not try to impose either economic monopolies or a state ideology. The consequences were similar in intellectual as in business life. Spanish absolutism, allied to the counter-reformation, was in the long run to

produce intellectual stagnation. The absolutism of Richelieu, guardian of tolerance, left the way open to the upsurge of French thought which took place in the 16th century.

Since the time of Henry IV the French language had been given form under the influence of Malherbe. Close to the royal court, where manners and customs were still somewhat coarse, the Marquise de Rambouillet, educated at Rome where her father had been ambassador to the Vatican, opened a *salon* which soon became the centre of French courtesy. One of her guests, Conrart, assembled in 1628 a number of writers, for the most part mediocre and Italianate: Voiture, Balzac, Vaugelas. Richelieu, who wanted to unify and co-ordinate the language as he had unified and co-ordinated the state, gave them in 1635 his official blessing by forming the *Académie Française* and entrusted them with the compilation of a dictionary. The somewhat over-strict purging of the rich language of the 16th century showed perhaps some trace of the *beaux esprits* who gave it their imprint.

At that time France was entering a new phase of her artistic and intellectual history. Solomon de Brosse built the Palais de Luxembourg in the Italian style for Marie de Medici. Lemercier derived from the Italian baroque an architectural style of an admirable sobriety which he applied in the chapel of the Sorbonne, topped by the first great dome built in France. In 1636 Corneille, influenced by Spain, published *Le Cid*; and Descartes published, in Holland where he had gone in order to think freely, his *Discourse on Method* which was to have an influence on the history of modern thought as great as that of Aristotle on ancient thought.

Far from becoming self-centred like Spanish culture, French culture remained wide open to foreign influences, ancient and modern, and made of them a synthesis which paved the way for the great classical school of France. Narrow nationalism and authoritarian ideology had ruined the genius of Spain; universalism and freedom of conscience expanded the genius of France.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE TRIUMPH OF PARLIAMENTARIANISM IN THE UNITED PROVINCES AND ENGLAND

I. THE UNITED PROVINCES MOVE TOWARDS CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY

WHEN Philip IV renewed the war against the United Provinces in 1621, treating them as rebels and wishful to reduce them, like Belgium, to the status of a Spanish province, they entered the struggle under the joint government of the stadtholder, Maurice of Nassau, and of the States-General which was dominated by the capitalist middle class. This compromise was extremely suitable to the needs of the time. The stadtholder was the commander-in-chief while the States-General continued to support the bold exploits of the sailors and merchants who controlled the overseas companies. Maurice of Nassau commanded the armed forces while the business men, in order to seize from Spain the mastery of the seas on which she had founded her power, formed the West India Company and in this way French finance, which had subscribed a great part of its capital, also took part in the war of Holland against Spain.

The Thirty Years War was a period of glory for the United Provinces. Not only was it a complete victory for them under the leadership of the stadtholder Frederic-Henry, who succeeded his brother Maurice of Nassau in 1625, but the exploits of the capitalist companies won them the complete control of the Indian seas and furnished them with the financial resources which made them one of the greatest European powers.

In 1631 the States-General, in recognition of the outstanding services which its stadtholders had rendered the country by keeping its military forces intact, thanks to which it had been able to assure its safety by land, voted the 'Law of Reversion' which by making the office of stadtholder hereditary in the family of Orange made it a dynasty. Up to 1648 the semi-

monarchic rule of Frederic-Henry had kept the Spanish land and sea offensive in check while the republic, under his protection, gave free reign to the individual initiative which had given it a fleet of twenty thousand ships, immense reserves of gold, rich colonies and a rapidly developing industry.

Combining parliamentarianism with personal power, the United Provinces thus created constitutional monarchy. It was the instrument of Dutch greatness.

2. PARLIAMENTARY REVOLUTION IN ENGLAND

Stuart Absolutism

From the times of Henry VIII the monarchy in England had tended to an absolutism which sought its justification by divine right in the Anglican religion. But, in contrast to the German people who had accepted without resistance the national churches imposed on them by their rulers, the English, essentially liberal, had reacted against the establishment of an official church. Refusing to admit the principle of a state church, the basis of Anglicanism which asserted as a dogma the authority of the king and made disobedience to him a mortal sin, the middle-class parliamentarians embraced Calvinism. Some adhered to puritanism, similar in its austerity to Genevan Calvinism, liberal in politics but authoritarian in matters of religion; others joined the sect of the 'independents', similar to the liberal Protestantism which Arminius had tried to introduce into Holland, which was opposed to all forms of clergy and favoured the most complete religious liberty. The Catholics, however, had not quite disappeared; they, like the Anglicans, represented an authoritarian tendency, but looked to Rome.

Queen Elizabeth had tried an absolutist policy based on the religious authority of the Anglican church and on the resources which should have been brought her by the fiscal monopolies which she demanded. She was forced to give it up because of the energetic reaction of parliament.

James I

James I (1603–1625), son and successor of the Catholic Mary Stuart[1] declared himself the champion of the absolutism which was then triumphant at the Spanish court and which had an irresistible influence on all the ruling houses of Europe. Philip III based his rule on the ideology of the counter-reformation; James I wanted to impose his personal rule

[1] See page 682.

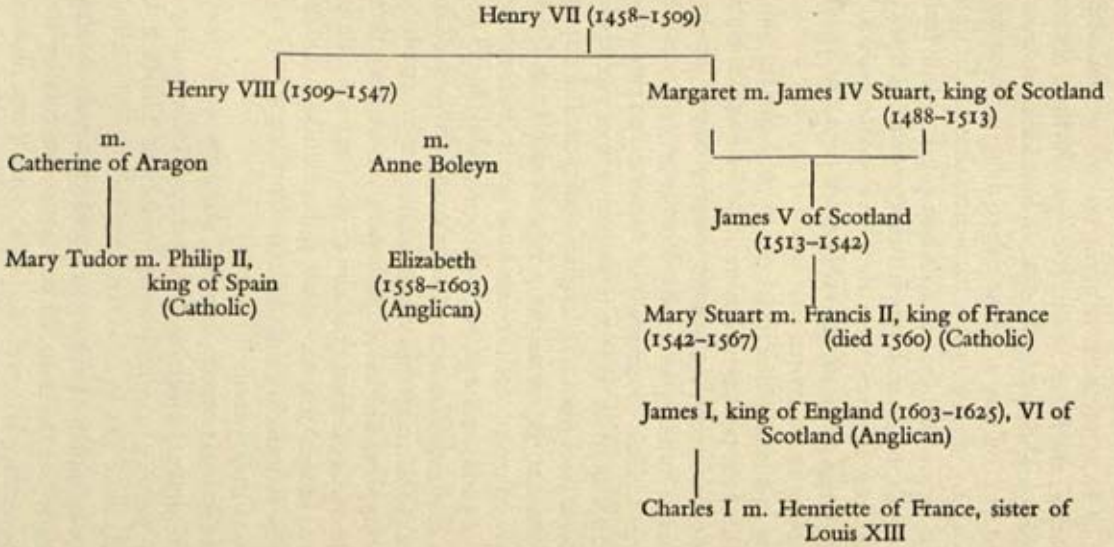
on the foundation of Anglican orthodoxy. All power based on an ideology, and slave to its principles, must justify itself by persecution. Even as Philip II had persecuted the Protestants and as Philip III proscribed the Moors and Jews, so James I undertook a persecution of the Catholics. In the first year of his reign there were no less than six thousand persons condemned. Even as the kings of Spain, to justify their absolutism and gain the support of public opinion, exploited hostility against the infidels, so James I made use of the traditional aversion of parliament to the 'papists', in order to triumph over parliament itself. The 'gunpowder plot' (1605) to blow up parliament at its opening session when the king and his family would be present was attributed to the Catholics. Popular indignation burst out against them, they were outlawed and excluded from all public office; it went so far as to remove their children from their care and bring them up as Protestants.

By placing the spiritual authority of the Pope above that of the king, Catholicism limited the powers which the king claimed for himself. Once the Catholic opposition was eliminated with the help of the Protestants, it only remained for him to overcome parliament, which was a Protestant stronghold. James I ceased to summon parliament[1] and turned against the Calvinists and the Independents. Religious intolerance went hand in hand with authoritarian absolutism. The victims emigrated in great numbers to America. Thus the authoritarian policy of the king, by providing colonists for the Plymouth and London companies, contributed greatly to the triumph of parliamentarianism in America while James I was trying to destroy it in England. The persecuted puritans who settled in Virginia brought their religious and political convictions with them. In 1619, after the king had ceased summoning parliament in London, they claimed and obtained the right of electing a 'House of Commons'. Royal absolutism applied to a colonial country whose prosperity depended on freedom of trade ended by introducing into America the régime which James was trying to suppress in England.

To evade parliamentary control, it was necessary not to have to ask it for the fresh resources which were becoming indispensable. Like the kings of Spain, James I, reverting to the policy of Elizabeth, demanded fiscal monopolies.

But it was not enough for an absolute monarch merely to exist; he must have great resources at his disposal to impose his rule by his prestige. The English monarchy, however, had neither men nor money. James I had to have these in order to stand up to the latent parliamentary opposi-

[1] Parliament did not meet from 1614 to 1621.


Henry VII (1458–1509)
Henry VIII (1509–1547)
Margaret m. James IV Stuart, king of Scotland (1488–1513)
m. Catherine of Aragon
m. Anne Boleyn
James V of Scotland (1513–1542)
Mary Tudor m. Philip II, king of Spain (Catholic)
Elizabeth (1558–1603) (Anglican)
Mary Stuart m. Francis II, king of France (1542–1567) (died 1560) (Catholic)
James I, king of England (1603–1625), VI of Scotland (Anglican)
Charles I m. Henriette of France, sister of Louis XIII

tion. He tried to find them in the dynastic alliance over which Philip III presided, and asked the hand of a Spanish infanta for his son Charles. But the dynastic alliance was based on the principles of the counter-reformation. Philip III demanded that Charles be converted to Catholicism. This was clearly impossible. James I therefore turned to France and arranged the marriage of Charles with Henriette, sister of Louis XIII, while he gave his daughter to the Elector-Palatine Frederic V,[1] whose influence was very great in the Rhineland and could be of advantage to the English merchants who were competing there with the Dutch. Thus English royal policy, demanding alliance from both Catholic and Calvinist rulers, mainly preoccupied with commercial interests took, by force of circumstances, a very different route from Spanish policy which was exclusively preoccupied with dynastic interests and had a fixed religious policy.

The breakdown of the Spanish marriage led to a rupture with Spain (1624). The king had now either to stage a *coup d'état* and levy taxes on his own authority or summon parliament. He did the latter. Parliament, dominated by the merchant class, wanted war with Spain, already involved in a disastrous naval war against Holland, to break the monopoly which Spain enforced in her colonies and to allow England to have a share in the profits which the United Provinces were getting from their privateering activities. The war was the more urgent insofar as Dutch competition was becoming a threat to England. In India the conflict was latent. In 1623 the Dutch had not flinched from massacring the English merchants who had settled in the island of Amboina, in order to keep the spice trade for themselves. Holland should not be allowed to get all the profits from the war with Spain. Thus, in foreign affairs, the policy of James I coincided with that of parliament. But before promising any co-operation with the king, parliament demanded the abolition of the fiscal monopolies and the billeting taxes in which the state traded. Furthermore, introducing its religious passions—which from the king's viewpoint were only political expedients—into foreign affairs, parliament opposed the marriage of the heir apparent with the Catholic sister of the king of France. It meant the isolation of England and the king, who had hoped to find in his alliance with Louis XIII a strong support for his absolutist aims. Co-operation with parliament proved, once again, irreconcilable with the king's authoritarian policy. He must therefore rid himself, at any price, of its control. The only way to do so was to make himself financially independent.

[1] This was the same Frederic who, a few years later, played a leading role at the beginning of the Thirty Years War.

The American colonies were just beginning to bring in huge profits. James I was to try, like the Spanish kings had done, to reserve them for the crown. His absolutism led him along the fatal road to economic state-control. But the whole organization of English commercial life was based on the initiative and autonomy of the great capitalist companies, which had allowed local parliaments to be set up in the colonies. The king did not delay; he took the administration of Virginia from the London company into his own hands, intending to suppress the young parliamentary régime which had just been established there.

Thus the monarchy, in order to assure its absolute power, came into conflict with the two most active forces in the country, parliament and capitalism; and just at that time, when the crisis was becoming acute, James I died, leaving the throne to his son Charles I (1625–1649).

Charles I

Determined to assure the triumph of absolutism, Charles I at once adopted an authoritarian attitude. Despite the opposition of parliament he married Henriette of France and asserted his will to rule as an absolute monarch. When parliament reminded him of its rights to financial control, he dismissed it (1625) and to get resources had recourse to forced loans.

These could be no more than expedients. Continuing his father's policy, Charles tried to get the revenues he needed from the colonies. His first aim was, therefore, to ensure English expansion by preparing an alliance with the maritime countries, France and the United Provinces,[1] in order to break the Spanish colonial monopoly. He also made an alliance with the Protestant princes in Germany in order to check Hapsburg supremacy which had become stronger after the victory of Ferdinand II over the Elector-Palatine Frederic V[2] and the Lutheran princes of the empire. Thus absolutism involved England in the general conflagration which was imminent in Europe.[3]

His political plans were thwarted by Richelieu's conflict with the French Protestants. The siege of La Rochelle aroused a vigorous opposition to France in the English parliament. The people expressed their religious convictions in opposition to Charles' policy which was aimed, above all, at preserving the French alliance against Spain. In order not to break with public opinion, the king broke off relations with his brother-in-law,

[1] This policy was to lead, in 1641, to the Dutch marriage.

[2] It will be recalled that he was brother-in-law to Charles I.

[3] 1625 was the year in which the main outlines of the coming Thirty Years War became apparent.

Louis XIII, and sent a fleet to raise the siege of La Rochelle. The war required financial means. Parliament only agreed to provide them after it had presented the Petition of Rights, in which it claimed a share in the government. The intervention in favour of the Huguenots of La Rochelle was a failure. To continue the war against Spain and France would have meant the triumph of parliament, which the king needed to levy taxes. Absolutism separated Charles I from the will of the nation. Rather than co-operate with parliament, he preferred to renounce his great plans for a naval war and decided on a policy of peace; in 1629 he concluded peace with France and in 1630 with Spain. Parliament had prevented the participation of England in the Thirty Years War, in which Spain was to exhaust her resources. Checked by parliament in his great political plans, Charles decided to eliminate it and to enforce his absolute power over the country; he thenceforth governed as an authoritarian monarch, with the help of his two ministers, Stafford and Laud.

Stafford, in order to free himself from parliamentary control, levied arbitrary taxes, granted monopolies for the sale of wine, salted herrings, coal, lace and soap. Absolutism reverted persistently to the policy of monopolies and state control. Laud, for his part, wanted to enforce religious unity by crushing the puritans. The country resisted. To overcome this resistance, the Star Chamber was entrusted with breaking the political opposition and the Court of High Commission with suppressing the religious dissidents; sentences of confiscation, mutilation and corporal punishment were pronounced in great numbers. Emigration to America redoubled, producing results similar to those of the persecutions of James I. The Massachusetts Company, founded in 1629, successfully took over once more the colonization of New England. The colonies of Providence (1636), Connecticut (1638), Newhaven (1639) and Rhode Island (1647) were organized by colonists who were hostile to the royal absolutism and to the Anglican church which supported it. The privileges possessed by the companies allowed the colonists to set up the parliamentary régime which the king was trying to destroy in the mother-country. Each new attempt at absolutism resulted in an extension of the parliamentary system in America.

King both of England and of Scotland, Charles I wanted to introduce Anglicanism in Scotland. The result was an insurrection in 1638. In Ireland, the king, who wanted to support the people against the ruling classes, favoured the peasants and tried to develop agriculture and the cloth industry, but the authoritarianism of his governors created a resistance which led to open revolt (1632–1640). However, with a clear view of

English interests which he wanted to make independent of Holland in sea-borne trade, Charles I imposed 'ship money', which obliged all sea-coast towns either to provide ships or pay the money to have them built. This measure, excellent in itself, aroused the resistance of the middle classes, who refused to pay any taxes which had not been authorized by parliament.

Faced by revolts in Scotland and Ireland and the growing opposition of England, Charles I, in imitation of Richelieu, wished to replace parliament by an Assembly of Notables. He summoned a council of nobles at York; but they refused to meet there and demanded the recall of parliament. Absolutism met with the resistance of the nation in all fields. It only remained for the king to give way in order to restore peace; he summoned parliament in 1640.

The Parliamentary Revolution

As soon as it met, parliament, in the 'Great Remonstrance', demanded that the government be handed over to it. The two theses of absolutism and parliamentarianism, instead of joining forces as in Holland, faced one another without hope of reconciliation. The king, once more, dismissed parliament.

Meanwhile the royal army was retreating before the insurgent Scots. Money was needed to raise troops. The king was forced to recall parliament. But this time, under the leadership of Pym, the parliamentarians decided to put an end to absolutism. Parliament declared its precedence over the king, declared that it could not be dissolved without its own consent and had Stafford arrested and executed in 1641. A massacre of Protestants by the Irish rebels, which took place at this time, was attributed to the king. Parliament replied by a resolution opposing the raising of an army without its consent. Charles went to parliament to arrest Pym. The people of London, led by the lightermen's guild, flew to arms. The king left the capital. Civil war broke out between king and parliament. On his side the king had the Anglicans, the Catholics and the gentry. Parliament was supported by the middle classes, the merchants, the Puritans and the Independents. The Catholic Irish held for the king, the Presbyterian Scots for parliament. The war at once assumed a two-fold character, political and religious. A member of parliament, Oliver Cromwell, raised a regiment of 'independents' who looked on the struggle as a Holy War against the king's 'cavaliers'. This little troop of roundheads (those who did not wear wigs) served as a model for the army which parliament was to raise and which it put under the command of Cromwell.

After four years of war Charles was defeated at Naseby (1645); he surrendered to the Scots. The minister Laud was beheaded. In 1647 the Scots handed over the king to parliament for four hundred thousand pounds.

Execution of Charles I

After their victory the insurgents split between parliament, puritan and fanatic, and the army, made up of liberal independents. Each of the parties sought the support of the king who, instead of allying himself with one side or the other, tried to manoeuvre with both, till he was at last forced to flee to the Isle of Wight, where he was arrested. Parliament was ready to return to legality and make its peace with the king. But the army wanted to put him on trial. Cromwell, by a *coup d'état*, expelled a hundred and forty members of parliament who favoured the king; the remainder voted to put him on trial. The people, however, in whose welfare the king had taken an interest, remained loyal to him. But the middle classes were fanatically hostile. On February 9, 1649 Charles I was sentenced to be beheaded as a 'tyrant, traitor, murderer and enemy of the country'.

CHAPTER XLVII

ADVENT OF LIBERALISM IN THE MARITIME COUNTRIES

IN the middle of the 17th century Europe was divided into three clearly distinct zones. The West, having become master of the seas, was the economic centre of the world, influenced by various trends amongst which individual emancipation clashed with the concentration of economic and political power. Central Europe, reliant on its own devices, stagnated in a feudal and seigniorial organization, which isolated it from all creative activity. Finally, the Russian Empire, only just liberated from the Tatar yoke, launched out on vast territorial conquests and devoted itself to the building up of a centralized monarchy, theocratic, landowning and state-controlled.

There were no institutions or culture common to these three parts of Europe. The Western states alone represented what is usually called Western civilization. Since the Reformation, their evolution had been dominated by the conflict between the two opposing trends of liberalism and authoritarianism, which developed contemporaneously on the economic, political and intellectual planes.

The treaties of Westphalia and the English parliamentary evolution, together with the end of Hapsburg hegemony, marked the advent of liberalism. A new era began in the history of Europe; but, before considering it, we must try to understand its origins.

I. LIBERAL CAPITALISM TRIUMPHS OVER STATE CAPITALISM

The 16th and 17th centuries saw on the economic plane the concentration of capital, and on the political plane the concentration of power, while intellectual life was dominated by the struggle between authoritarian ideology born of the wars of religion and the liberal aspirations of the humanists and the Renaissance. Western Europe in the 17th century was dominated by three forces; capitalism, absolutism and liberalism which,

in politics, had taken the form of parliamentarianism. According to economic and social circumstances, absolutism had taken the form of dynastic authoritarianism or of a national, that is to say liberal, power; it developed, on the economic plane, towards state socialism or controlled economy. To justify itself it appealed to divine right based on the state religion, or to an order based on law and balance.

In Spain capitalism had become state capitalism; in France it was closely associated with absolutism; in England and the United Provinces it supported parliamentarianism.

This phenomenon of the concentration of capital and of power was shown in many aspects which illustrate the diversity and complexity of historical evolution.

State Capitalism in Spain and Portugal

From the end of the 15th century Spain had chosen the path to state capitalism. Whereas in Italy, in France, in the Netherlands, in England and in the cities of the Danube this concentration of capital was in the hands of a new class of men who broke the framework of the mediaeval guild system, in Spain and in Portugal the persecution of the Jews and Moors and the confiscation of their goods placed enormous capital sums in the hands of the ruler. The state was the principal, if not the only, great capitalist force. State capitalism, put at the service of the centralized monarchy, allowed it to set up a political absolutism, thanks to its financial resources which were independent of any control—either from the *cortes* or the capitalist class—which soon developed into authoritarianism; in the economic field, it gave the monarchy the means of carrying out those great enterprises which led to the discovery of the New World and the foundation of colonial empires in India and the Americas.

Spain and Portugal had constructed their empires to one financial end; their reason for existence was to support, by the resources they provided, the monarchical and absolutist policy of their rulers. Quite naturally, the monarchy tried to reserve these profits for itself by setting up a state monopoly. As long as the constructive period of discovery went on, state capitalism, by the unity of effort which it could ensure, was at a considerable advantage. Only the immense resources at the disposal of the Spanish and Portuguese monarchies made possible the conquest of the high seas of the world within a quarter of a century. But once these empires had been created, state capitalism became an obstacle to their development. By concentrating almost the entire colonial revenue in the

king's hands, the policy of royal monopoly deprived the people of the capital it needed to exploit the wealth of its empire. Excluded from all commercial activity, the profits almost exclusively served political ends; but the political expenses soon became greater than the yield of the monopolies. It was therefore necessary to augment continually the capital of the state by fresh expropriations; after those of the Moors and Jews, Philip III extended his persecutions to hundreds and thousands of the 'ill-converted'. This constant displacement of capital, taken from economic life and devoted exclusively to political ends, drained the country of its productive wealth. Spanish trade and industry were ruined; capital, transformed into a tool of the monarchy, was spent outside the country or became unproductive. On the other hand, to administer the royal monopolies it was necessary to entrust them to functionaries, which involved huge unproductive expenses and a corruption which was completely unchecked, or else lease them to business men; but as the liquid capital of the country had been expropriated by the state, the king was forced to apply to foreign financiers and merchants.

State capitalism, therefore, ended by destroying Spanish economic life almost completely and handing over the profits from colonial trade to foreign capitalists. The social consequences were great. The business middle class lost the essential role which it had hitherto played. The resources at the disposal of the king were distributed to the oligarchy on which his absolutism relied, that is to say to the clergy and the nobles who invested them in land. The clergy thus became owners of a sixth of the arable land of the country and the nobles of a half. This became concentrated in vast estates, held inalienably, on which a miserable agricultural proletariat existed. Thus wealth became immobilized, preventing any possibility of economic growth, and the terrible social hatred over the agrarian problem was created for which Spain has not even now succeeded in finding a solution.

Unable to make a living in industry, trade or agriculture, the people flocked into the administration and the church. By the end of the 17th century a fifth of the population was employed by the state and 30% of Spaniards belonged to the clergy[1] or lived from it which, together with the persecutions, explains the great diminution in the population of Spain during the 17th century. State capitalism, the support of the policy of absolutism by divine right, thus ended by making the Spanish people a horde of retainers of the court or the church, ruled by a barren courtier oligarchy.

[1] Including the laymen who formed part of the third order.

Economic Liberalism in the Netherlands

While the monarchy, for political reasons, was driving Spain along the road to state-controlled economy, the Netherlands (Belgium and Holland), whose development was due to the natural action of spontaneous forces, moved towards economic liberalism. Capitalism, rising from the ruins of the urban economy which had broken down in the ancient communes, was triumphant at Antwerp, a new city where its activity was not hampered by privileged guilds, organizations or monopolies. Breaking away from the regulations in force in Venice, London and Bruges, which required all transactions to be carried out through the intermediary of local agents, Antwerp introduced the principle of absolute equality of rights between foreigners and burghers. The result was that Antwerp, like Rhodes in the IIIrd century BC, attracted capital and business during the reign of Charles V. Its bourse, founded in 1531 by private initiative, was the great international centre. The vast amount of capital accumulated at Antwerp made it the greatest port in the world and was exploited not only in Belgium but throughout all Europe.

The prosperity of Antwerp, halted by the wars of religion, passed to Amsterdam which became, at the beginning of the 17th century, the principal centre of capitalism.

Liberal Capitalism in the United Provinces

The republic of the United Provinces, created by revolution, was, when it was formed, scarcely a state; it was a federation of principalities dominated and governed by a business middle class. Once the monarchy had been rejected, there was no other real power in Holland except that of the capitalists who, immigrants for the most part, had outside their Calvinist faith only one interest—to make money. It was not, therefore, the state which made use of capitalism, it was capitalism which made use of the state to obtain colonial concessions or to assure itself the protection of the naval forces of the republic. Concentration of capital was achieved not by the state but by the companies which issued their shares in Holland and abroad. The capitalists who administered them were also those who exercised a predominant influence in the States-General; and they endowed their companies with sovereign powers in the colonies which they founded. Thus, far from confiscating the properties of individuals, as happened in Spain, the state placed all its powers at the disposal of the business men.

The profits made by the companies, distributed among the shareholders, enriched the population. Once again concentrated in the Bank of

Amsterdam, they served as a basis for the organization of credit which allowed private initiative of all sorts to have capital at its disposal without any state protection, so that Dutch industry and shipping became the most prosperous in the world.

State capitalism allowed Spain to carry on a policy of political imperialism which, in the long run, could only ruin her. Private capitalism, through the intermediary of the Bank of Amsterdam, was for the Dutch burghers an instrument of financial imperialism; by granting loans to foreign states it found a fresh source of profit in their political activities.

By immobilizing wealth, state capitalism in Spain had ended by creating an agricultural proletariat; by mobilizing it, industrial capitalism in Holland led to the appearance of a proletariat of workers.

State capitalism had fixed the Spanish people in the rigid framework of almost unbreakable class-system; economic freedom released fresh energies among the Dutch people, which made the middle class a class in perpetual evolution. But, liberal in internal affairs, the Dutch capitalist régime abandoned the free-trade policy inaugurated by Antwerp for an economic imperialism which was no less exclusive than the dynastic imperialism of the kings of Spain. For the Spanish Hapsburgs war must enforce the supremacy of their House; for the Amsterdam capitalists it must bring them economic mastery. That was why the war between Spain and the United Provinces ended, in 1647, by the closing of the Scheldt. Even as Philip IV, after seizing a vast colonial empire by force of arms, reserved for himself the monopoly of exploiting it, so the Dutch business middle class, by demanding the closing of the Scheldt, appropriated to its own advantage the trade of Antwerp.

'National' Capitalism in England

In England, where the king governed with parliamentary control, capitalism was able to develop without state restrictions. The many attempts made by Elizabeth and the Stuarts to introduce a system of fiscal monopolies for the benefit of the crown met with the most resolute opposition from parliament. The colonial companies, endowed as in Holland with sovereign powers by a parliament dominated by business interests, developed freely under royal protection. Far from trying to seize all the capital for herself Elizabeth did not disdain to invest her own funds in overseas enterprises.

The system of royal monopoly had allowed Spain to build up a colonial empire directly administered by the king. The freedom of the companies made the English colonies in America autonomous states which spon-

taneously created their own parliamentary institutions. The authoritarian system penetrated the Spanish colonies in America as a consequence of the state capitalism of the Spanish kings. Freedom took root in the English colonies of North America under the aegis of the capitalism of the great companies.

In England the profits of overseas and colonial trade did not give rise to a great capitalist industry as they had in Holland. Certainly the cloth industry and the new rural industries like the Cornish tin-mines and the Welsh lead-mines which were again exploited broke the framework of the mediaeval guild system. But it was private overseas trade which was the main source of prosperity.

These profits, which found no outlet for investment in industry, were used, in the 16th century, for land speculation and led to the usurpation by the capitalists of the common lands. Smallholding declined and an agricultural proletariat began to appear. In the 17th century, however, the development of finance turned the attention of the capitalists to the money market. Banking spread in England; it did not at first seek, as in Holland, to organize credits for industry, but put the trade profits at the disposal of the state. The Bank of Amsterdam made loans to foreign states with no other aim than to pocket the interest. The English banks, by lending the English state the resources amassed by the business community, freed England from the need of raising loans abroad and gave her a financial independence which permitted the creation of a strong monarchical structure. In Spain the king could make use of the state resources to carry out a policy of dynastic interest uncontrolled by the nation; in England the state budget remained balanced because parliament prevented the monarch from using for a policy of prestige the resources which it doled out. The king of Spain, in order to obtain the means he needed for his policy, expropriated the wealth of the richest and most active part of his burgher class and thus gave a mortal blow to the prosperity of the country. The king of England, after aiding his business men to enrich themselves, borrowed from them on interest the sums needed by the state; he thus to some extent linked the power of the kingdom to the prosperity of its subjects, who found in the state, made stronger by their loans, the surest support for their economic growth. Thus English liberal capitalism, directly linked to the state by bonds of common interest, increased the power of the ruler as well as its own profits. Dutch capitalism regarded the state only as an instrument of its prosperity; English capitalism, by placing its funds at the disposal of the state, under the control of parliament, paved the way both for the greatness of the kingdom and for the prosperity of private enterprise.

Controlled Economy in France

Modern capitalism developed in France at the end of the 15th century outside the mediaeval guild structure. It at once launched out on great international enterprises. But the monarchy at that time was giving the country centralized institutions; it standardized the taxes and minted coins. Capitalism supported the monarchical policy, took over the collection of the taxes and the conduct of the mint. The state thus became a source of great profit for the capitalists, which they at once exploited and carried the scene of their enterprises far afield—Jacques Coeur went as far as Famagusta. By granting the king the necessary credits for his policy the capitalists made him independent of the States-General. The monarchy and capitalism were thenceforth close allies. The capitalists had a great influence on policy, notably in the Italian wars. But the king was not, like the Dutch republic, the instrument of speculative business and capitalism was not, as in Spain, subjected to the state. The extraordinary revival of French economy in the 16th century after the terrible crisis of the wars of religion was due to the development of private capitalism. The monarchical policy was only possible if supported by private wealth. This fact, translated into economic doctrine, was the basis of the mercantilist system which regarded private wealth as the foundation of public wealth. It became the official state doctrine under Henry IV. The king therefore carried out his policy with the aim of enriching the nation; this led to the policy of controlled economy based on a protectionist system intended to give the kingdom a favourable trade balance, both by the creation of new industries and the increasing of exports and by the building of roads, canals and ports. The consolidation of the royal absolutism also consolidated the control of the country's economy. Laffémas conceived a plan for giving the country economic institutions which, under the direct control of the king, would regulate conditions of work, would stabilize wage-scales and arbitrate in trade disputes.

The kings of Spain had tried to found their financial power on a policy of colonial monopoly. England, involved by her companies in overseas trade, let capitalism lay the foundations of her overseas empire. France sought to build her power on the great industrial possibilities which were open to her in the 17th century. The middle class, which grew rich from the development of industry within the country, was not interested in colonization which thus assumed, by contrast to what had occurred in Holland and England, the form of a state-controlled enterprise.

Triumph of Private over State Capitalism

Capitalism was both an index of prosperity and a source of wealth. Up

to the 16th century the main centres of capitalism had been the Italian and Flemish cities. For this reason international policy, from the 13th century, had been dominated by the desire of the great political powers to extend their rule over Italy and the Netherlands. The Hohenstaufen, the Angevins and the Aragonese had successively aimed at possession of the coastal districts of Italy; France and England contested for the Netherlands, sometimes by force of arms, sometimes by dynastic alliances.

Capitalism encouraged the extension of the economic structure, which in its turn favoured the establishment of monarchical power. By uniting territories under one rule, the monarchies developed commercial possibilities and consequently made easier the concentration of capital. This, in its turn, made possible an imperialist policy which led to the conquest of trade-routes, which favoured the development of capitalism and provided the sources of wealth which it sought to exploit. From the 16th century capitalism—both private and state—aimed, like the monarchies, at gaining mastery of the seas and founding colonies in order to reap the sole benefits from them. That is why capitalist expansion coincided, in the 16th century, with the creation of colonial empires and wars of naval supremacy.[1]

Success therefore went to the greatest concentrations of financial power. The result was to dispossess the ancient free cities, which lost the control of trade to the advantage of the monarchies. First among these were Spain and Portugal which, thanks to their policy of state control, had the greatest financial means at their disposal; they, therefore, were the first states to found colonial empires, from which they obtained fresh resources which Spain—under Philip II who united the two empires—used for its imperialist policy. But by diverting them from their economic purposes, the kings of Spain dissipated their immense capital and made it unproductive.

In England and the Netherlands the private capitalists did not seek to conquer territories but to make profits. The concentrations of capital, small at first, made by the overseas companies were therefore used exclusively in the search for profits which, as soon as made, were exploited. The policy of dynastic supremacy, which always cost more than the funds available, led to the ruin of state capitalism. The mercantile policy of the companies, on the contrary, thanks to the profits which they made, multiplied their capital till finally, by the end of the Thirty Years War,

[1] These causes were similar to those which produced the great wars of naval supremacy in the IIIrd and IInd centuries BC.

it made Holland the greatest money market of the world. State capitalism, unable to keep up the struggle, was forced to turn to foreign banks. The Spanish money market fell into the hands of the Genoese bankers who therefore became involved in its successive bankruptcies.

Holland and England, on the contrary, nourished by the activity of the capitalists who granted them the funds they needed, shared their prosperity. In the wars for naval supremacy, Holland and England, politically far less powerful than Spain, gained the lead thanks to the superiority of their capital resources.

In 1648 state capitalism was finally bankrupt, while private capitalism, represented in Holland and England by the overseas and colonial companies and in France by manufacturing, gained such impetus that the business community held a predominant influence in these three countries which were henceforth to dominate world trade.

2. THE DOWNFALL OF AUTHORITARIAN ABSOLUTISM AND THE ADVENT OF PARLIAMENTARIANISM

Genesis of the Monarchic Régimes

The revival of commerce in western Europe in the 11th century had been marked by the creation of cities, that is to say groups of burghers who formed autonomous legal units and were granted a law of their own based on individualist principles. In England, in Flanders, in Italy, in the French Midi and in Spain their economic importance made them political entities within which governments were organized which were dominated by the rich burghers, with whom, from the 14th century onwards, workers' unions contested power.

Thus, alongside the privileged orders of the clergy and the nobles, a third estate was formed, made up of the urban middle class which, in its turn, became a privileged class.

When the royal power, in order to enforce its rule over the feudatories, began its centralizing policy it had to get funds from the privileged classes, the clergy, the nobles and the cities. Thus in Spain it was obliged to summon the *cortes*, in England parliament and in France the States-General. This participation of the nation, through its elected assemblies, in a monarchical government was an entirely new conception of power which then appeared for the first time in history. The ancient world had known the principle of direct local government in the Greek cities, and Rome gave it its widest application by trying to adapt city institutions to the state. But never, either in Asia or in Europe, had any ruler appealed for the direct

co-operation of the people by consulting elective assemblies. The union, in a single system of government, of the continuity of power represented by the royal authority and the principle of national representation was the great political discovery of western Europe. In the 14th century the parliamentary assemblies became, in England, in Spain, in France and in the Netherlands, organs of government. At the end of the 15th century the kings of France and England, by introducing into them representatives of the rural population, ended by making them virtually national assemblies. They immediately asserted the principle of their sovereignty. But just at the time when the parliamentary assemblies were claiming to dispose of the national sovereignty, monarchical centralization triumphed over the last vestiges of feudalism, and capitalism was exerting its influence on economic life which ceased to be centred on the cities and became national in scope. The two principles of royal authority and parliamentary control, upon which the monarchies were founded in the 15th century, were, in their development, to move one towards absolutism and the other towards the thesis of the primacy of the will of the nation over the authority of the king. Conflict broke out between them. It was to take a very different course according to the political and social constitution of the different countries.

In England Parliament Shares Power With the King

In England, where there was no great vassals, parliament was divided, under Edward III, into the House of Lords, made up of prelates and the great hereditary seigneurs, and the House of Commons, made up of representatives of the merchant middle class and the gentry. Parliament, whose co-operation was forced upon the king, was therefore made up of two elements, the clerical and noble aristocracy and the wealthy classes. But the continual strengthening of the monarchy diminished more and more the political importance of the aristocracy, while the shipowners, the merchants, the rural industrialists and the landowners, who were the leaders of the cities and counties, gained the upper hand in the House of Commons. The free play of political institutions thus gave capitalism a preponderant influence in parliament. The kingdom of England, from the end of the 15th century, was dominated by two forces, the king who concentrated the political power in his hands and capitalism which controlled the House of Commons. To obtain the resources which his policy required the king, therefore, despite the efforts he made to avoid it, had to accept the co-operation of parliament. Capitalism, therefore, to some extent assured the triumph of parliamentary power.

In France the Monarchy Relies on the Capitalists

In France where the nobility, for historical reasons, had great power the States-General remained divided between the three orders, voting separately. The Third Estate was dominated by the city burghers. But capitalism was created in the 15th century as a reaction against the narrow privileges of the city guild system. The capitalists, therefore, found no place for themselves in the States-General, as they had in the English parliament, and drew closer to the king, providing him with the credits which his policy required; on his side, the king granted them the privilege of minting and entrusted them with the administration of the finances. Thenceforward there was a close alliance between the king and the capitalists; and the monarchy, financially supported by them, ceased to summon the States-General. Thus, in France, capitalism paved the way for absolutism.

Authoritarianism in Spain

The evolution of the royal policy in Spain was quite different. The division of Spain into six independent states, each possesssing its own *cortes*, made the monarchy the sole unifying element in the country. The power of the cities had delivered the *cortes* into their hands and the representatives of the clergy and the nobility had been excluded. But the prosperity of the cities was threatened, at the end of the 15th century, by international capitalism. The decadence of the cities involved that of the *cortes*, which became mere local councils.

The middle class represented in the *cortes* was not, save in Catalonia,[1] the controlling class of the nation's economy, as it was in the English parliament. This class was made up of the Moors and Jews who, living under their own institutions, aroused the hostility of the people of the cities because of their wealth, a hostility which was, quite naturally, tinged with religious hatred. The king of Spain, in order not to have to submit to the control of the *cortes* by asking them to approve taxation, or to borrow funds at high interest from the capitalists, began a religious persecution of the Moors and Jews in order to confiscate their property, citing religious ideology as the justification of his actions. Thus, while in France the king, to safeguard his independence from the States-General, relied upon the capitalists, whom he therefore sought to enrich, in Spain the king, by making use of the social hatreds and religious passions of the people for political ends, was able to lay hands on an immense reserve of capital which enabled

[1] This explains the liberalism of Catalonia which it has retained up to our own times and which created the separatist movement against the royal authority.

him to free himself from the control of the *cortes* and from the co-operation of the great capitalists. This was the genesis of state absolutism based on religious ideology.

The three types of Western monarchy were thus fixed. In England, continuing the tradition which had been built up since the 13th century, the monarchy was to be parliamentary. In France, where it had escaped the competition of the States-General thanks to the capitalist and liberal middle class which had been formed within the country, it was to be—under Henry IV and Louis XIII—absolutist, national and liberal. In Spain, where the religious conflict had made it possible to invoke faith for the benefit of the state, it was to become, thanks to the vast amount of capital expropriated from the Moors and Jews, authoritarian and state socialist.

The Burgher Republic of the United Provinces

An entirely different régime was established in the United Provinces. The break between the country and its sovereign, the king of Spain, left only one of the two elements of mediaeval power—the Estates of the insurgent provinces, After the proclamation of the republic, they set up as the central organ of power the States-General, made up of delegates appointed by the provincial Estates. There was, therefore, no power save the States-General. The capitalists had an uncontested control of it and arrogated to themselves the government of the state. The régime of direct government, known to the mediaeval communes, was transferred to the nation and worked for the benefit of a burgher oligarchy.

Failure of Authoritarian Absolutism in Spain

In each of these régimes, from Spanish authoritarianism and French liberal absolutism to the English parliamentary monarchy and the capitalist republic of the United Provinces, power was based on the concentration of political and financial force. It was to find its maximum of power in Spain where this concentration was exclusively in the hands of the king, whereas in England it was shared between king and parliament, in France between the king and the capitalists, and in Holland it was devoted exclusively to the interest of the middle classes.

Authoritarian absolutism thus gave the king of Spain an incontestable superiority of financial power which allowed him to carry on his policy of political hegemony which arose quite naturally from the union in his hands of the heritages of the Houses of Spain, Burgundy and the Hapsburgs.

However, at the time when the Spanish monarchy succeeded in

imposing its imperialist aims, the counter-reformation was making ready to reconquer the world for Catholicism by setting up a spiritual authoritarianism.

The absolutist policy of the kings of Spain clashed with the liberal movement which, from the 15th century, had triumphed politically and intellectually in all the Western states. In the Netherlands and in Spain the opposition of the cities, of the States-General and the *cortes* rose against it. To overcome it, the crown, which since the time of Ferdinand of Aragon had based its absolutist policy on Catholic orthodoxy, naturally allied itself with the authoritarianism of the counter-reformation. The freedom which had been displayed in the political and even the intellectual field was henceforth regarded as a sin. There was a violent reaction against humanism and the Renaissance. In opposition to the theory of national sovereignty which had been asserted in all the parliamentary assemblies during the 15th century, the king, in order to justify his omnipotence, invoked the divine origin of his rule. In Belgium the Counts Egmont and Horn, who demanded liberty of conscience, were beheaded and a régime of terror introduced which in a few months led to the death of thousands of victims guilty of thinking freely or rebelling against the royal authority. At Naples, Campanella, who preached ideas contrary to absolutism, was thrown into prison, while in Spain the persecutions against the Jews and the 'insufficiently converted' Moors assumed the scale of a war of extermination which ended by concentrating their great wealth in the state treasury.

The financial power which these confiscations gave the monarchy at the end of the 15th century allowed it to launch out, in Europe, on a policy which aimed at establishing Spanish political supremacy and, in America, to the conquest of an immense colonial empire where authoritarianism, transferred to the economic plane, embarked on a policy of state capitalism.

Authoritarian absolutism, therefore, paved the way to totalitarianism. It could not, however, do so without the support of the mass of the Spanish people which it obtained by allowing free rein to those instincts which humanism had specifically tried to restrain.

All great moral movements have always tried to subordinate instinct to conscience, that is to say to the advancement of individual values. But authoritarianism presupposes the submission of conscience to an external will which claims to impose its wishes, if needs be by force; it therefore demands the abdication of individual conscience. To obtain such an abdication there are no other means save force or recourse to the elementary

instincts of hatred and interest. Authoritarianism cannot avoid this. To justify the persecutions of the Moors and Jews which were to provide the *gleichschaltung* of Spain and the confiscation of their goods for the benefit of the state, it appealed to social hatred, to religious hatred and to racial hatred; while to obtain the co-operation of the ruling classes it associated them, by grants of high office and rich pensions, with the profits of its policy.

Thus distorted to serve as a justification for unrestrained temporal ambitions, Christian morality, which had canalized human instinct to make it a creative force in the service of a spiritual ideal of faith, hope and charity, was submerged by the instincts upon which authoritarianism was forced to rely in order to anaesthetize individual conscience.

The political power which the monarchy thus gained allowed it to create the most powerful army and fleet of its times, to build a magnificent colonial empire and to assure its dynastic hegemony in Europe.

None the less the Spanish monarchy was to be destroyed by the twofold reaction which it had itself created. In Spain, economic state-control, a necessary corollary to the destruction of the Moorish and Jewish middle classes, paralysed the activity of the country. The spectacular pomp with which the court was surrounded for propaganda purposes and its imperialist policy which involved it in a series of interminable wars exhausted even its enormous resources and soon forced it to ask for the aid of foreign finance. By basing the government on a privileged class which it made a partner in its profits it became the slave of an oligarchy which, free of all control, sacrificed state interests to its own, while the mass of public opinion, reduced to passive obedience, could no longer serve as a stimulus for a creative policy.

But while the wealth and power of Spain, on which authoritarianism wanted to found a universal dominion, was being exhausted 'the empire' resisted. In the Netherlands the people revolted; the United Provinces broke away from Spain (1572) and directed the exploits of their business community against Spanish colonial power; the Belgian provinces, firmly attached to their liberalism, became an autonomous state (1598–1621); Sicily and the kingdom of Naples, overburdened with taxes, were troubled by continual revolts; insurrection even reached the Iberian peninsula and Portugal, breaking the dynastic link with Spain, turned its arms against her (1640); Catalonia, where Spanish greatness had been born under the Aragonese and whose active burghers had maintained their liberal tradition, followed the example of the United Provinces and declared itself a republic (1640–1651).

It was in vain that authoritarianism, to resist the internal disintegration which it had itself engendered, tried to maintain its position by accentuating its totalitarian tendencies. The religious hatred which authoritarianism had exploited no longer yielded any results since heresy had been suppressed and the Moorish and Jewish population of Spain either destroyed or converted.

Philip III therefore appealed to racial hatred; the Moors and the Jews were persecuted not because they were unbelievers but because they were not Spaniards; by expelling them, as well as all the half-breeds, from the countless offices of state employment it was still possible to revive a current of opinion by an appeal to instinct and interest. But after the massive persecutions of Philip III racial ideology had nothing on which to feed. Philip IV could only fall back on racial propaganda. The pride to which he appealed served to isolate Spain but it was not enough to rouse the enthusiasm of the masses with whom the monarchy, more and more enclosed within its authoritarianism, had lost touch. It was the end. The defeat confirmed by the treaties of Munster (1647) and the Pyrenees (1659) marked the failure of authoritarian absolutism.

The Current of Authoritarianism

Before its collapse after the treaties of Westphalia, the authoritarian absolutism of the kings of Spain had a great influence on the other European dynasties and attracted them also towards authoritarianism. Though in France Louis XIII remained loyal to the liberal absolutism of Henry IV, he none the less sought alliance with the House of Spain and thus became involved in its vast plan of dynastic hegemony. In the United Provinces, the stadtholder, Maurice of Nassau, acting as the champion of orthodox Calvinism, began a political struggle with the States-General which ended in the execution of the Grand Pensioner Oldenbarnevelt and the arrest of Hugo Grotius. Ferdinand II, relying on the ideology of the counter-reformation, introduced an authoritarian régime into Bohemia and undertook the forced Germanization of the Czechs. In the Belgian Netherlands, the Archduke Albert ceased to summon the States-General of Brussels.

The English Parliament Breaks the Absolutist Policy of the Stuarts

In England, where parliament had become an essential and integral part of the government, the struggle began with the advent of the Tudors. Parliament reacted against the attempts at authoritarianism of Henry VII and, on his death, had his ministers executed. But Henry VIII tried again

and, even as Spain was allied with Catholic orthodoxy, he founded the Anglican church as a basis for his monarchical absolutism. The opposition he met with was broken by persecutions.

His daughter, Mary Tudor, a Catholic and married to Philip II of Spain, associated England with Spanish policy and tried to set up an absolutist régime by restoring Catholic worship and appealing to the forces of the counter-reformation. She too was compelled to resort to religious persecution in order to break the opposition to her policy, which earned her the name of Bloody Mary. Elizabeth, reverting to Anglicanism, was halted in her attempts at economic state control by parliament.

The conflict became acute under the Stuarts. They needed resources to overcome the resistance of parliament. Formerly, Philip the Fair in France and Richard II in England had financed their policy by confiscating the wealth of the Templars who were accused of heresy. The kings of Spain, from the time of Ferdinand of Aragon, had built their financial power on the confiscation of the goods of the Moors and Jews. Charles I tried to give the monarchy the financial backing indispensable for any absolutist policy by expropriating a sixth of the wealth of England. But he could not justify this measure by any religious ideology. The instinctive basis upon which all autocracy must be founded was lacking. To win, he could only resort to force. But in England the king had not got this force; it was in the hands of the capitalist middle class which dominated the House of Commons and which, through the overseas companies, controlled the financial resources of the country. The king was defeated, and the English middle class, by beheading Charles I, assured the triumph of parliamentarianism and the principle of national sovereignty, at the same time as the treaties of Westphalia (1648) marked the downfall of the Hapsburg theory of authoritarian absolutism by divine right.

Triumph of Liberalism Over Authoritarianism by Divine Right

Europe thus entered a new era in her history when the Thirty Years War came to an end. The downfall of Spanish supremacy marked the failure of the authoritarian policy. Its failure was complete, both in the economic field where the private capitalism of the English and Dutch business men completely vanquished the state-controlled Spanish system, and in the political field where the haughty authoritarian monarchy which dreamed of universal sovereignty and claimed to be the guardian of Catholic orthodoxy collapsed, defeated at sea by the navy of the Dutch republic and on the land by army of the French monarchy, whose power was built upon religious tolerance and the wealth of its industrialists.

The authoritarian ideology was replaced by a liberal and republican sentiment. All the maritime powers, Venice, Genoa, the United Provinces, Catalonia and England, became republics ruled by the middle classes. The monarchical ideal was no longer represented by the imperialist authortarianism of the Hapsburgs but by the absolutism of France, which was tolerant and national and which, because of its mercantilist policy, was at one with the nation.

The ruin of state-controlled economy and political authoritarianism involved also the ruin of the policy of universal hegemony as conceived by the Spanish kings. Here too liberalism replaced authority. Balance replaced hegemony; and the alliance of monarchical France with republican England marked the triumph of national over dynastic policy.

French primacy replaced Spanish hegemony. But the victory of France did not mean that Hapsburg imperialism was replaced by a new imperialism. The thesis of a Europe dominated by hegemony was replaced by that of independent states, guaranteed by an international unity asserted at the first of the great European congresses.

3. AUTHORITARIANISM RETREATS BEFORE FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Authoritarianism Stifles Spanish Thought

The authoritarian sentiment which was shown in the economic field by state capitalism, in the political field by absolutism by right divine and in the international field by dynastic hegemony was shown in the intellectual field by Lutheranism, the counter-reformation, Anglicanism and even, after the time of Calvin, by Calvinist orthodoxy. The counter-reformation alone, however, claimed to enforce its authority over all intellectual activity. To prevent new heresies, it attacked humanism and the Renaissance and organized an orthodox offensive based on the pain of death, which had at first a fervent and austere phase. Even as it attacked liberal humanism, it attacked the glorification of the human body which had been celebrated in art under the influence of antiquity. Every form of pleasure, every exuberance was banished from life. The Escorial is the most striking example of this ascetic tendency which triumphed with the *auto-da-fés* of the Inquisition, when the king of Spain claimed to be God's representative on earth. In Italy, thought was extinguished on the pyre of Giordano Bruno (1600) who was accused of pantheism and heresy for having taught the heliocentric thesis of Copernicus. The extraordinary intellectual vigour of the Renaissance ended with the insipid conceits of

Tasso's *Jerusalem Liberated* which aroused great enthusiasm at the end of the 16th century.

In Spain, which Erasmus had regarded as the most brilliant centre of humanism and where the dynamic energy of its civilization had produced works as full of life and feeling as those of Cervantes, Lope de Vega and William de Castro, asceticism introduced, with St Teresa and John of the Cross, a mystical current of novel inspiration which, rejecting all contact with the outside world, tried to find God in the renunciation of thought.

At a time when religious and political authoritarianism had reduced thought to a sterile and rigid conformity, the fervour of asceticism prevented the Spanish genius from being overwhelmed. Thought can only live by the search for truth. Any doctrine which claims to enforce truth stereotyped in a final and immutable form is a factor of decadence. Spanish religious fervour being, even for those of the most ardent faith, an impassioned search for God prevented the religious idea from becoming void of any significance, as it did during the same period in Italy. The plays of Tirso de Molina and Calderon, the pictures of El Greco and Zurbaran, were the most remarkable productions of religious asceticism.

But in contrast to the popular fervour of the Middle Ages which strove to adapt society to evangelical ideals and was an extraordinary leaven of individual emancipation, Spanish mysticism, born of the counter-reformation, by seeking God in the annihilation of personality, in a passionate negation of self, in a submission which went almost as far as intellectual suicide, could only inspire exceptional and isolated natures and extinguish, by its very rejection of thought, any sort of free intellectual life. After Calderon, Spanish literature died of exhaustion. Unable to rise to the complete abnegation of self—which would have led to its total disappearance—Christian society, in which the mystics were isolated and which the censorship forbade to think for itself, took refuge in form. In Italy Marino and in Spain Gongora guided it to a false semblance of sterile elegance which was given rules by the Jesuit Gracian.[1]

In fact the Church itself, as soon as it had won its battle with the spirit of the Renaissance, abandoned an asceticism which frightened it, because of its impassioned nature, and which alienated the powerful and worldly. Immobilized in its vigil for orthodoxy, watchful against 'error', it developed two opposing trends, one towards a burning devotion, the other towards a formal piety. Books of devotion, from the most mystical to the most worldly, had an extraordinary vogue. Francis de Sales (died 1622) in his *Introduction to the Religious Life* adapted piety to everyday life.

[1] In *Finesse et art de l'esprit.*

In this new form of controlled devotion, the essential was to observe the rules fixed by authority. Conscience was replaced by submission. It offered an easy way to control instinct, so long as certain limits were not passed. Art placed itself at the service of this formalistic conception of life. Nothing is farther from the deep faith of the Romanesque style, or from the militant and triumphant faith of the Gothic, than the gilding and the theatrical and vain embellishments of the Baroque which overwhelmed religious art in Italy and Spain and which was expressed in the great religious compositions, rich in life and colour but devoid of faith, of the great genius of Rubens. Only among the mystics, including the Jesuits, did faith tend to become a rule of life; that is why it ceased to be an inspiration and even when it managed to touch human passions it was no longer as an appeal to conscience but to instinct. That explains the struggle against witches accused of having direct connection with the devil and the passion with which the Spanish people associated themselves with the persecutions systematically organized by Philip III, the worst known to the world before those which have dishonoured the 20th century.

In all the countries where the authoritarianism of the Spanish kings and the counter-reformation were allied, in Spain, in Italy and in Belgium, civilization which had only just come to know the creative freedom of humanism was moribund.

The Coming of Classicism

At the end of the 16th century authoritarianism, then in the ascendant, gave Spain the role of custodian of the Catholic faith. Though already threatened with anchylosis by authoritarian rule, she still exercised a dominant influence both on literature and politics.

In France, on the other hand, while the wars of religion were raging, a great sentiment of freedom emerged from the conflicts of partisan fanaticism. While Montluc and d'Aubigné were breathing fire and slaughter in their works, one in defence of the league and the other of the Huguenots, La Boétie in *Contra Un* attacked tyranny and Des Perriers in the *Cymbalum Mundi* asserted the right of free thought, and a group of lettered burghers in Paris in the *Satire Ménippée* showered the king, the league, the Spaniards and the excesses of religious fanaticism with ridicule.

England, for her part, crowned her period of humanism by a magnificent flowering of poets and playwrights and, in Shakespeare, produced the most liberal writer of the times.

The wave of authority which flooded the West after the wars of

religion could not, however, spare either France or England. In France parliamentarianism which had assumed sometimes a conservative and sometimes a revolutionary character during the internal struggles of the 16th century disappeared when faced with the absolutism of Henry IV because it had not been able to reconcile its liberal political aspirations with the religious tolerance which the king enforced. In England the conflict between king and parliament was still brewing. The sense of order, which was everywhere invoked after the civil wars, was averse to overbold gestures and too highly coloured expression. In France Malherbe and in England Waller gave rules to the literary language which, even if it gave it greater precision, took from it perhaps some of its subtlety and charm.

The period of Spanish hegemony also had an influence on writers; it extended even to the works of Shakespeare (died 1616) and Corneille.[1] The reign of Philip IV saw its end. And the treaties of Westphalia marked the beginning of the great intellectual influence of victorious France.

However the field of politics and philosophy, which had been so greatly extended in the 16th century, was now everywhere closed to free thought, even in the United Provinces whence Hugo Grotius, arrested for his liberalism through the influence of the orthodox Calvinists, was forced to seek refuge in Paris to write his *De jure pacis ac belli*.

Even in France, despite the religious tolerance proclaimed by Henry IV, it was dangerous to adventure into the terrain of dogma; one could be Catholic or Calvinist, but freedom of thought remained proscribed. The stake at which Vanini, accused of atheism, perished at Toulouse (1619) tragically reminded Descartes that, to write freely, it was more prudent to withdraw to Holland (1629).

There remained one vast field for free thought: antiquity. From the IIIrd to the Ist century BC Hellenistic civilization, cosmopolitan and individualist, had known the most complete freedom of thought. The 17th century, with its capitalist forces and the absolutism of its rulers, but also with its aspirations to the universal and to individual emancipation, was groping towards an ideal very similar to that which Hellenism had achieved. The Renaissance had led to a greatly enhanced knowledge of the ancient tongues; printing had diffused Greek and Latin books more widely than ever before, even in ancient times. Mediaeval thinking had been abandoned for that of the ancient world. The world gave the impression of emerging from a twilit period into the light of day. The literature, the science, the art of classical times, seemed like summits

[1] *Le Cid* was written in 1606.

impossible of attainment. In Spain the counter-reformation had been able to cut short any such return to ancient times; but in France the régime of tolerance made this possible. Censorship itself made writers turn to classical themes where they found full freedom of expression and ran no risk of clashing either with monarchical theories or with the dogmas of the various Christian creeds. From that time the biblical inspiration, which held so great a place in the literature of the states of the reformed church and which Du Bartas had introduced into France, was almost entirely superseded by subjects drawn from classical writers. At the end of the 16th century Jodelle, Garnier and Montchrétien borrowed the subjects of their tragedies from the mediocre works of Seneca. It was the great turning-point of literature. Mairet by introducing into his *Sophonisba* (1634) the unities of action, place and time of the Greek classical theatre and Corneille by adopting the Alexandrine verse inaugurated this slightly pompous style which enforced respect for discipline of thought as well as form and put an end to the exuberant freedom which the 16th century had known.

The influence of this classical revival was evident far beyond the field of art. Individual emancipation, no longer evident, as in the 16th century, in political matters, eliminated national preoccupations from literature and opened a broad field for a new humanism. At the same time as Philip IV was launching out on a nationalist propaganda which was to help to keep Spain isolated from the world, French thought, renewing its links with the great universal tradition of the Renaissance, was making ready to conquer it. The same trend towards universalism was shown in England. French thought and English thought became closely allied, both of them concerned with the eternal nature of great human problems. Both came under the direct inspiration of the philosophy of the ancient world and thus served to divert moral problems entirely from the religious field, in England by the *Essays* of Francis Bacon and in France with Descartes' *Traité des Passions*. The counter-reformation, by claiming to make dogma immutable thus encouraged the renascence of a philosophy which was quite alien to the religious idea.

The Church Renounces Control of Science

The dam which authoritarianism had tried to erect against freedom of thought was breached. After more than fifteen centuries science resumed, on the foundations laid in ancient times, its disinterested search for truth. Astronomy with Galileo, physics with Simon Stévin, mathematics with Cavalieri, Descartes and Desargues, led the way to new discoveries. In

1626, the year of his death, Francis Bacon, in the *Novum Organum*, finally differentiated the paths along which were to travel faith and theology on the one hand and science and philosophy on the other. None the less, the Church did not abandon the struggle. In 1633 Galileo was brought before the Inquisition and only escaped condemnation by denying that the world turned around the sun.

But it was impossible to subordinate science to dogma as the scholiasts had left it. The wars of religion, by setting Christians at one another's throats, had led to widespread scepticism. A new society was being formed on the ruins of the mediaeval world, now finally abolished. The Renaissance had restored contact with the science of classical times. It was no longer possible to halt the march of reason, to which the return to science had opened illimitable horizons. The struggle between authority and freedom of thought was bound to come; and the reaction would be the sharper in that the Church, to win, would persist in violence. Already a militant atheism was developing in Italy behind the façade of conformity set up by the counter-reformation; but the unity of the Church was not threatened. The religious conflicts died away. The bishop of Ypres, Jansenius (died 1638), was the last to arouse, within the Church itself, a reaction against formalism by reverting, in his *Augustinus*, to the intransigent spirituality which was to become the Jansenist movement.

Science, as soon as it became aware of its own powers, ceased to be a danger to faith. With its remarkable ability of adapting itself, the Church understood this. After 1633 it renounced the authoritarian position it had taken up under Paul IV and gave up interfering in scientific matters. As the 'mysteries' had done in Hellenistic times, it was to limit itself more and more to morals and doctrine, leaving metaphysical problems to philosophy and the study of the laws which govern the universe to science. Only a few years after Galileo's recantation, Descartes published his *Discours sur la Méthode* (1637) in Holland, which was soon to be followed by his *Meditations*. It was he who founded modern scientific method. Taking up a viewpoint in direct opposition to scholasticism, which organized research on the basis of revealed truths, Descartes refused to admit *a priori* any idea as true and adopted an inductive reasoning from first principles—'I think, therefore I am'—and drew up a system of concepts ever wider and more universal.

It was on these new foundations, closely associated with the discoveries of science, that philosophy was firmly to resume its study of the problem of the knowledge of God, unhampered by the rules of theology and scholastic dialectics. Descartes came to the conclusion that God is that

infinite substance upon which all things depend but which itself depends on nothing. Contact with the pantheism of the ancient world had been resumed.

Discoveries had already been made which surpassed those known to the Hellenistic world. Galileo established the law of falling bodies, Descartes discovered that of refraction; Viète rediscovered algebra and Descartes, by applying it to cubes, founded analytical geometry. Pascal created hydrostatics and Harvey described the circulation of the blood.

Science, by its continuity, at once restored the universal character it had had in Hellenistic times. Christian unity had been destroyed by the Reformation but already, by the free flight of thought, the idea that civilization is a unity, beyond the frontiers of state or creed, once again appeared; that it forms a whole which not only links men of the same time with one another but unites them with men of all times.

The Advent of Liberalism

Thus western Europe entered, in the middle of the 17th century, a new period of its history. In economic affairs, private capitalism triumphed over state control; in political affairs, parliamentarianism took root in the United Provinces and England at the very time when authoritarian absolutism by divine right had failed utterly in Spain and in the Holy Empire. The system of international balance in Europe, represented by France, replaced the policy of hegemony. At the same time as the authoritarian régimes were collapsing, the counter-reformation abandoned the alliance which it had made with the monarchies by divine right and renounced authoritarianism, leaving the field open to science. The domains of philosophy and theology, of reason and faith, were separated. Science, freed from all fetters, made its first discoveries. Everywhere liberalism shook itself free of the bonds with which authority had sought to bind it. A new world was being born which, forgetting the centuries of the Middle Ages, resumed contact with the free thought of ancient times. Above the religious fractioning caused by the Reformation a new humanism appeared, of which France and England, which already were prepared for the mastery of the world, were to be the standard-bearers.

CHAPTER XLVIII

AUTHORITARIANISM IN THE CONTINENTAL COUNTRIES

I. DECLINE OF ECONOMIC LIFE IN WESTERN GERMANY

UP to the 15th century urban civilization had linked the cities of the Hansa League, the Rhine and the Danube to Western economy. The Danubian cities had even played a leading role in the 15th and 16th centuries in the formation of large-scale capitalism, thanks to the silver and copper mines of central Europe. But the discovery of the New World, which so greatly expanded the trade of the West and marked the triumph of capitalism, ruined the German cities. They had developed within the framework of a continental economy. Up to the time of the conquests of the oceans, the sea had played an essential, but none the less complementary, role in European trade movements. Only the route which linked the Italian and Catalan ports to Syria and Alexandria was intercontinental; the other sea-routes only served to link the various parts of the European continent with one another. The centre of trade was the continent, surrounded by seaways and crossed by the great trade-routes which led from Venice to Bruges and Luebeck. In this continental economy, mining—especially silver mining—fulfilled a task whose importance increased with the development of international business which required a constant increase of the money in circulation.

The discovery of the New World and the colonial policy of Portugal and Spain destroyed the continental character of European trade.

In the XIth century BC when the Phoenicians had discovered the Mediterranean and the silver mines of Spain, the economy of the Eastern world, till then continental, was entirely changed. The sea, which up till then had been only a means of communication, became a source of wealth and, in the centuries which followed, the trade centre shifted from the continent to the sea.

A similar phenomenon took place in Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. Italy had been, throughout the period of continental economy,

the centre of European trade, because it was the gateway of Europe to Asia. It was by her ports that Europe received the riches of India and China.

In the 16th century the seaway from India to Europe, by diverting trade from Venice to Lisbon, shifted the gateway of Europe from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic. More than that, the economic importance of the outside world was doubled by the mineral wealth of America. The sea became the great provider of gold and silver and the mines of central Europe, far less rich than those of Peru, were soon deserted. The disappearance of this centre of attraction, in the very heart of the continent, caused the Danube to lose its economic importance.

The character of sea-borne trade was completely changed. The Atlantic Ocean and the northern seas, which up till then had served only for circum-continental navigation, became open paths to the wealth of America and Asia. Trade shifted to the western coasts, the inner continental routes were abandoned by international trade and capital deserted them and became concentrated in the ports and in the countries which controlled the seas and had overseas colonies.

The concentration of capital which took place in the West under the stimulus of international trade meant that central Europe was denuded of capital. Capitalism disappeared from the Danubian cities, and the Hansa ports, too far away and without an industrial hinterland, lost their international role to Dutch shipping. Germany, instead of participating in the economic evolution of the West, withdrew into itself and reverted to the strictly urban, that is to say mediaeval, type of economy. At the time when the modern world was being created in the West, Germany turned away from it to return to the Middle Ages, but a Middle Ages deprived of the Christian universalism which had been their grandeur and had inspired their civilization.

Concentration of capital and of power in the West were parallel phenomena. An equivalent parallelism took place in Germany between the local fractioning of economic life and political organization. The extension of the economic framework of the West led to the formation of centralized monarchies. The decadence of German trade meant, in the Holy Empire, the triumph of feudalism over the monarchical policy.

The area of Germany in which urban civilization had developed, that is to say the Baltic coast and the Rhine and Danube regions, did not, therefore, pass through the economic and political concentration which marked the advent of the modern world. Germany ceased to participate in the evolution of the Western civilization of which it had till then

been a part and its intellectual and artistic activity died away at the same time as its trade. For a century Germany was to live in isolation, though still influenced by the West. The Rhine remained influenced by the economic attraction of the United Provinces and the Palatinate, and Baden and Württemberg by that of France, but this influence reached them only as a reflection and not as a creative force. Up to the end of the 17th century Germany was excluded from the great expansion which was to take place in Europe.

2. THE AUTHORITARIAN EVOLUTION OF THE SEIGNIORIAL RÉGIME IN CENTRAL GERMANY

Urban civilization, limited to the Hansa cities, had not penetrated into northern and central Germany. The influence of the Hansa cities had none the less made itself felt on the agrarian economy by providing a great export market in the West for its grain. It will be recalled that in the 13th century the Baltic lands seized from the Slavs by the German knights had been exploited as huge agrarian domains on the basis of free peasant labour. But the development of the grain trade in the 14th century had led the great landowners, who held the political power, to increase the productivity of their lands by imposing forced labour on the peasants, which soon reduced them to serfdom.

Though the mines of central Europe had ceased to attract international trade in the 16th century, the grain trade on the other hand, under the control of Dutch capitalists, still linked the Baltic agrarian lands with the economic life of the West. Whereas international trade declined in the urban areas of Germany, it greatly increased, under the influence of Western capitalism, in the producing areas, in the Baltic principalities, Prussia, Pomerania, Mecklenburg, Brandenburg and Holstein, all of them exclusively land areas where no financial resources existed. To compensate for this, the manorial régime grouped the land, and consequently the peasants, under the rule of the landowning seigneurs. The expansion of markets opened great possibilities for them and they increased the productivity of their lands by concentrating their labour force, that is to say by extending the forced labour régime. Thus, whereas in the West international trade developed large-scale capitalism, in the seigniorial domains of northern and central Germany, by pushing to its utmost extent the mobilization of labour for the benefit of the landowners, it made social restrictions universal and reduced the people to a state bordering on slavery. In fact in the manorial economy of northern Germany

it produced an effect analogous to that which led to the formation of huge slave-cultivated estates in the Spanish American colonies; but whereas the Spanish colonists bought black slaves, the seigneurs in the Baltic lands and Brandenburg obtained their workers by reducing to slavery the whole population under their rule.

In Denmark the maritime policy begun by the capitalist companies organized by the Dutch led the king, Christian IV, to free his serfs (1620). But the great landowners, who had no capital at their disposal, refused to follow his example, and the Diet of the Nobles formally rejected the suppression of manorial serfdom (1634).

Thus, while commerce freed the people in the West, since the capital there made it possible to pay workers, in the East, where there was a shortage of capital, the peasants, forced to serve their seigneurs without pay, were reduced to the harshest serfdom.

Forced labour, therefore, in central Germany played a similar economic role to capitalism in the West.

The social and political consequences were very different. In the West capitalism was accompanied by centralization of royal power and, after a century of conflict between state control and liberalism, led to the triumph of liberalism and parliamentarianism in England and the United Provinces.

In Germany forced labour, by increasing the power of the landowning nobility, hampered the formation of a centralized royal power and by reducing the people to slavery firmly established the idea of a class system and authoritarianism.

In the West political leadership had belonged successively to those states which had the greatest resources at their disposal. Spain had dominated Europe as long as state control concentrated in the king's hands the financial means necessary for his policy. When these means were exhausted, leadership passed to France, whose industry had become a great source of wealth, and to Holland, whose companies were the greatest capitalist force in the world.

In Germany the ruin of Danubian capitalism, the exhaustion of the mines of Saxony and Bohemia and the decadence of the Hansa cities shifted the centre of economic life to the grain producing areas. It was they which by their concentration of force made possible the formation of a German state which relied not on the capitalist middle class as in the West but on the landowning nobility.

As in France the monarchy had made common cause with capitalism, so in Brandenburg the elector based his power on the seigniorial nobles. Capitalism permitted the French monarchy to undertake a policy of

colonial expansion; the landholding nobility permitted Prussia to undertake a policy of territorial conquest. French power was based on the mercantilist policy; that of Prussia had to be based on its army. The elector of Brandenburg did not have the capital needed to enlist mercenaries. He obtained the military co-operation of the *junkers* by confirming their social privileges whenever they did not conflict with his absolutist powers. They gave his army its officer corps and also its soldiers who were levied from among the serfs of their domains.

Thus, in contrast to the Western states formed by capitalist and monarchical concentration and reliant on the middle classes, a new type of centralized state appeared in Germany, Brandenburg, founded on a landowning concentration placed at the service of an absolute ruler and reliant on a military nobility. The seeds of the great conflicts of the 20th century had been sown.

3. AUTHORITARIAN STATE EVOLUTION IN RUSSIA

The concentration of power which had taken place in the West based on capitalism and in Brandenburg on the landowning nobility took in the Muscovite Empire the form of a landowning state control.

The Russian Empire was not, like the Germanic Holy Empire, a feudal aggregate. It had been formed by the union around the princes of Moscow of land principalities peopled by large landowners and free peasants. But instead of taking the form of a feudal federation the Muscovite state, reverting to the Byzantine tradition, was built up on the monarchical principle and on the idea of universal empire, closely linked to the Orthodox church. The tsar did not seek, like the Hapsburgs, to create a dynastic hegemony; his policy aimed at the restoration of imperial unity and Christian unity. To achieve this, he had two methods at his disposal; his territories and his religious authority. His policy was messianic and imperialist. It drew from its twofold mission the justification of its absolutism.

The monarchical policy of the Moscow tsars necessitated the formation of a central government and of an army. But they were without capital resources. Wealth in Russia meant the ownership of land. The tsar had therefore no other way of creating the resources which he needed for the centralization of his power than to extend his authority over land ownership. He formed his army of hereditary soldiers who were granted fiefs in land; but since land is of no worth unless cultivated, he forced the peasants on these fiefs to work for the holders.

In central Europe forced labour, which resulted in the enslavement of the population, originated from the desire of the seigneurs to increase the yield of their lands; the wealth and the authority which the landowning nobles incidentally acquired enabled the elector of Brandenburg to make them the foundation of his army. In Russia forced labour was introduced by the tsar in order to create a military nobility. Social restraint instead of being, as in Germany, for the benefit of the landed nobility was the base upon which imperial state control was founded.

It was not enough for the tsar to have an army; to carry out his policy he also needed liquid capital, and this he quite naturally demanded from land revenues. Up to the 16th century the Russian peasants had formed village communities which, following the normal evolution towards private property, had begun to fall into the hands of the great landed proprietors. This evolution was quickened by the state-control policy of the tsar. In fact he resuscitated the principles put into force by the Ptolemies in the IInd century BC and by the Roman emperors at the beginning of the 4th century and compelled the peasants to pay land tax, making the village communities collectively responsible for its payment. The landed proprietors were entrusted with the task of acting as intermediaries between the tsar and the peasants and thus became a sort of fiscal nobility.[1] The peasants, to escape taxation, emigrated to Siberia or towards the south and west of Russia. The tsar countered by forbidding them to leave their villages or the domain on which they lived (1597).

Once begun, the tendency towards social restraint could only grow stronger. As the peasants, despite the prohibition, continued to leave their villages, the tsar increased the powers of the seigneurs and granted them a right of pursuit which allowed them to claim fugitives up to a period of ten years (1615).

Thanks to these measures the state was strengthened and as it became stronger it became more liable to exert its authority. It is a constant rule that concentration of power leads to standardization of law, which is no more than the rules put into force by the state. In 1649 the tsar promulgated a code which fixed, for the whole of his territories, the status of the population; it confirmed the subjection of the peasants to the landowner as a principle of public law. The landowner became an agent of the state, responsible to the tsar for the yield of the taxes and was granted the means of collecting them. It was therefore the state and not the seigneur who, in Russia, enslaved the peasant; it was to ensure the taxation yield

[1] This was a similar system to that in force in India at the same period under the sultans of Delhi.

that the peasant was made subject to the jurisdiction of the landowner and forbidden to leave the domain, while the Church was forbidden to give sanctuary to runaway serfs, for whom the penalty of the knout was introduced.

From the end of the 16th century the influence of English and Dutch sea-borne trade began to revive the activity of the Russian cities and led to the formation of capital. Precious metals were hoarded, like unproductive treasures, in the monasteries. The tsar had mobilized the land and those who dwelt on it to form his army and to pay land tax; so too he mobilized the wealth of the middle classes by forming them into obligatory guilds and that of the monasteries by forcing them to put it into circulation to give the country's trade the monetary resources indispensable to his centralizing policy. State control of land was complemented by a policy of controlled economy.

In fact, in Russia as in Spain, concentration of power was effected by state control, that is to say by the mobilization in the hands of the state of all the resources of the empire. In Spain, where the evolution was maritime, state control involved the expropriation for the benefit of the state of the capital of the Jews and Moors; in Russia, where the evolution was continental and consequently based on land, state control essentially consisted in mobilizing land and labour, that is to say enslaving it.

The centralization of power by increasing the power of the state allowed it to accentuate its imperialist policy; imperialist policy, as it developed, required ever greater resources. To procure them it could rely on the labour of the people. A cycle began involving the whole of society from which it could not escape. The more power became concentrated, the harsher was the mobilization of landed property and of the population. It was to result, at the end of the 17th century, in the state-control reforms of Peter the Great.

4. THE THREE ZONES OF EUROPE

In the middle of the 17th century, therefore, Europe was divided into three zones. The West, in command of the seas, of the New World and of sea traffic in all the oceans, represented the great force of European expansion, founded on the centralized state, the urban middle classes dominated by the capitalists, a free peasantry and intellectual ability. Liberalism was its growing force.

In 1648 the West comprised the monarchies of France and Spain, the republics of England, the United Provinces, Catalonia, Venice and Genoa

and the Italian principalities. The kingdoms of Scotland and Ireland, still archaic in their social structure, lived isolated on the outskirts. The areas of the Rhine and upper Danube were a region under its influence, but unproductive and inert. All the Western countries were Catholic or Calvinist. Alone among the Lutheran countries Denmark and Sweden, for long isolated in their landowning organization, began to feel the call of the sea and to turn to Western civilization.

Central Europe was a political, social and religious chaos. Instead of the maritime and individualist civilization of the West, it had a continental organization and a class system imposed upon it by the land.

The Germanic Holy Empire, split between Catholics in the south and Lutherans in the north, was a feudal-seigniorial amalgam from which two states emerged; one, formed of Germans, Slavs and Hungarians united by the dynastic bond of the Hapsburgs, whose policy of monarchical centralization was to collapse during the Thirty Years War; and the other, the electorate of Brandenburg, to which the House of Hohenzollern gave a strong military structure based on the landowning nobility and a rigid class system.

East of the Holy Empire, Poland was an immense seigniorial mosaic without cohesion, to which the Catholic church gave a moral unity. Hungary, almost entirely conquered by the Turks, lived under a similar manorial régime. All this central European area had an exclusively landowning economy, where society was made up of the landowning nobles and the enslaved peasants; save for the Jews there was, except in Bohemia, no urban middle class. Contact with the outside world was almost non-existent; individual liberty was, to all intents and purposes, unknown. Intellectual life was limited to the orders of the Catholic church which still represented the Romano-Christian tradition and Western influence in Poland and Austria. In the Lutheran lands culture, out of touch with classical civilization, was directly derived from German tradition, still strongly imbued with ideas of close tribal solidarity.

The dominant force was the landowning and military nobility of northern Germany.

Finally, in the east a vast empire was being formed on a basis of state control of land, which was unified under the rule of the tsar of Moscow and the Orthodox church. It kept in touch with western Europe through the White Sea. Even as the West was the great force of European expansion on the oceans, so the Russian Empire was the great expansive force in the vast spaces of northern Asia. Its culture, scarcely existent in the 17th

century, was none the less linked, through the Orthodox church, to Byzantine civilization.

It was a territorial mass whose imperial power, oecumenical and messianic, was founded on the conception of state control which mobilized all social forces around the state, the inheritor of the traditional mission of the Roman Empire, of which Russia considered itself the heir.

The structure of modern Europe was thus in being. It showed three zones with three essentially different forms of civilization. Each was organized around a dominant force, liberal and mercantile in the west, military and landowning in the centre, imperial and state-controlled in the east. All European history was to develop according to the traditions and the great contrary currents which kept them apart.

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