



THE HEIDELBERG MAN

The Heidelberg Man, as modelled under the supervision of Prof. Rutot

Still more fascinatingly enigmatical are the remains of a creature found at Piltdown in Sussex in a deposit that may indicate an age between a hundred and a hundred and fifty thousand years ago, though some authorities would put these particular remains back in time to before the Heidelberg jaw-bone. Here there are the remains of a thick sub-human skull much larger than any existing ape's, and a chimpanzee-like jaw-bone which may or may not belong to it, and, in addition, a bat-shaped piece of elephant bone evidently carefully manufactured, through which a hole had apparently been bored. There is also the thigh-bone of a deer with cuts upon it like a tally. That is all.



THE PILTDOWN SKULL, AS RECONSTRUCTED FROM ORIGINAL FRAGMENT
Nat. Hist. Mus.

What sort of beast was this creature which sat and bored holes in bones?

Scientific men have named him Eoanthropus, the Dawn Man. He stands apart from his kindred; a very different being either from the Heidelberg creature or from any living ape. No other vestige like him is known. But the gravels and deposits of from one hundred thousand years onward are increasingly rich in implements of flint and similar stone. And these implements are no longer rude "Eoliths." The archæologists are presently able to distinguish scrapers, borers, knives, darts, throwing stones and hand axes

We are drawing very near to man. In our next section we shall have to describe the strangest of all these precursors of humanity, the Neanderthalers, the men who were almost, but not quite, true men.

But it may be well perhaps to state quite clearly here that no scientific man supposes either of these creatures, the Heidelberg Man or *Eoanthropus*, to be direct ancestors of the men of to-day. These are, at the closest, related forms.

X

THE NEANDERTHALER AND THE RHODESIAN MAN

About fifty or sixty thousand years ago, before the climax of the Fourth Glacial Age, there lived a creature on earth so like a man that until a few years ago its remains were considered to be altogether human. We have skulls and bones of it and a great accumulation of the large implements it made and used. It made fires. It sheltered in caves from the cold. It probably dressed skins roughly and wore them. It was right-handed as men are.

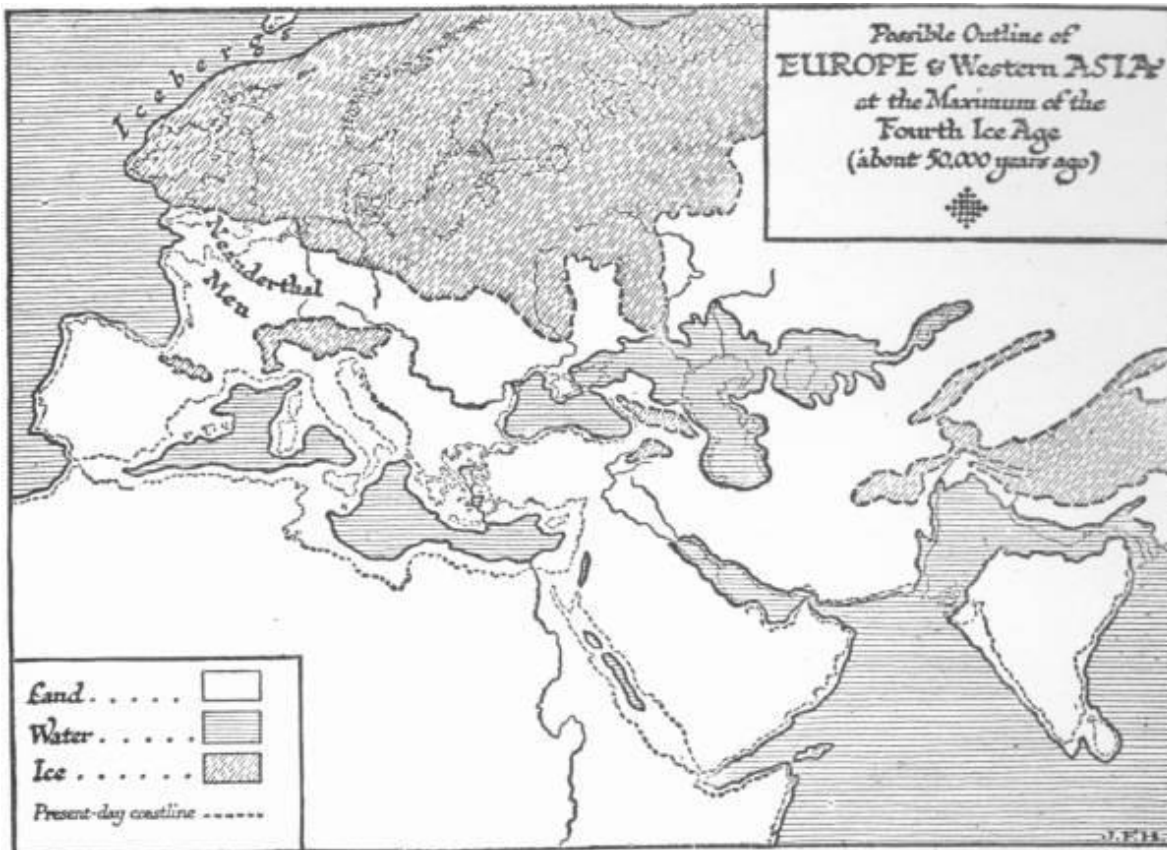
Yet now the ethnologists tell us these creatures were not true men. They were of a different species of the same genus. They had heavy protruding jaws and great brow ridges above the eyes and very low foreheads. Their thumbs were not opposable to the fingers as men's are; their necks were so poised that they could not turn back their heads and look up to the sky. They probably slouched along, head down and forward. Their chinless jaw-bones resemble the Heidelberg jaw-bone and are markedly unlike human jaw-bones. And there were great differences from the human pattern in their teeth. Their cheek teeth were more complicated in structure than ours, more complicated and not less so; they had not the long fangs of our cheek teeth; and also these quasi-men had not the marked canines (dog teeth) of an ordinary human being. The capacity of their skulls was quite human, but the brain was bigger behind and lower in front than the human brain. Their intellectual faculties were differently arranged. They were not ancestral to the human line. Mentally and physically they were upon a different line from the human line.

Skulls and bones of this extinct species of man were found at Neanderthal among other places, and from that place these strange proto-men have been christened Neanderthal Men, or Neanderthalers. They must have endured in Europe for many hundreds or even thousands of years.



THE NEANDERTHALER, ACCORDING TO PROF. RUTOT

At that time the climate and geography of our world was very different from what they are at the present time. Europe for example was covered with ice reaching as far south as the Thames and into Central Germany and Russia; there was no Channel separating Britain from France; the Mediterranean and the Red Sea were great valleys, with perhaps a chain of lakes in their deeper portions, and a great inland sea spread from the present Black Sea across South Russia and far into Central Asia. Spain and all of Europe not actually under ice consisted of bleak uplands under a harder climate than that of Labrador, and it was only when North Africa was reached that one would have found a temperate climate. Across the cold steppes of Southern Europe with its sparse arctic vegetation, drifted such hardy creatures as the woolly mammoth, and woolly rhinoceros, great oxen and reindeer, no doubt following the vegetation northward in spring and southward in autumn.



Such was the scene through which the Neanderthaler wandered, gathering such subsistence as he could from small game or fruits and berries and roots. Possibly he was mainly a vegetarian, chewing twigs and roots. His level elaborate teeth suggest a largely vegetarian dietary. But we also find the long marrow bones of great animals in his caves, cracked to extract the marrow. His weapons could not have been of much avail in open conflict with great beasts, but it is supposed that he attacked them with spears at difficult river crossings and even constructed pitfalls for them. Possibly he followed the herds and preyed upon any dead that were killed in fights, and perhaps he played the part of jackal to the sabre-toothed tiger which still survived in his day. Possibly in the bitter hardships of the Glacial Ages this creature had taken to attacking animals after long ages of vegetarian adaptation.

We cannot guess what this Neanderthal man looked like. He may have been very hairy and very unhuman-looking indeed. It is even doubtful if he went erect. He may have used his knuckles as well as his feet to hold himself up. Probably he went about alone or in small family groups. It is inferred from the structure of his jaw that he was incapable of speech as we understand it.

For thousands of years these Neanderthals were the highest animals that the European area had ever seen; and then some thirty or thirty-five thousand years ago as the climate grew warmer a race of kindred beings, more intelligent, knowing more, talking and co-operating together, came drifting into the Neanderthalers's world from the south. They ousted the Neanderthals from their caves and squatting places; they hunted the same food; they probably made war upon their grisly predecessors and killed them off. These newcomers from the south or the east—for at present we do not know their region of origin—who at last drove the Neanderthals out of existence altogether, were beings of our own blood and kin, the first True Men. Their brain-cases and thumbs and necks and teeth were anatomically the same as our own. In a cave at Cro-Magnon and in another at Grimaldi, a number of skeletons have been found, the earliest truly human remains that are so far known.

So it is our race comes into the Record of the Rocks, and the story of mankind begins.



COMPARISON OF (1) MODERN SKULL AND (2) RHODESIAN SKULL

Nat. Hist. Mus.

The world was growing liker our own in those days though the climate was still austere. The glaciers of the Ice Age were receding in Europe; the reindeer of France and Spain presently gave way to great herds of horses as grass increased upon the steppes, and the mammoth became more and more rare in southern Europe and finally receded northward altogether

We do not know where the True Men first originated. But in the summer of 1921, an extremely interesting skull was found together with pieces of a skeleton at Broken Hill in South Africa, which seems to be a relic of a third sort of man, intermediate in its

characteristics between the Neanderthaler and the human being. The brain-case indicates a brain bigger in front and smaller behind than the Neanderthaler's, and the skull was poised erect upon the backbone in a quite human way. The teeth also and the bones are quite human. But the face must have been ape-like with enormous brow ridges and a ridge along the middle of the skull. The creature was indeed a true man, so to speak, with an ape-like, Neanderthaler face. This Rhodesian Man is evidently still closer to real men than the Neanderthal Man.

This Rhodesian skull is probably only the second of what in the end may prove to be a long list of finds of sub-human species which lived on the earth in the vast interval of time between the beginnings of the Ice Age and the appearance of their common heir, and perhaps their common exterminator, the True Man. The Rhodesian skull itself may not be very ancient. Up to the time of publishing this book there has been no exact determination of its probable age. It may be that this sub-human creature survived in South Africa until quite recent times.

XI

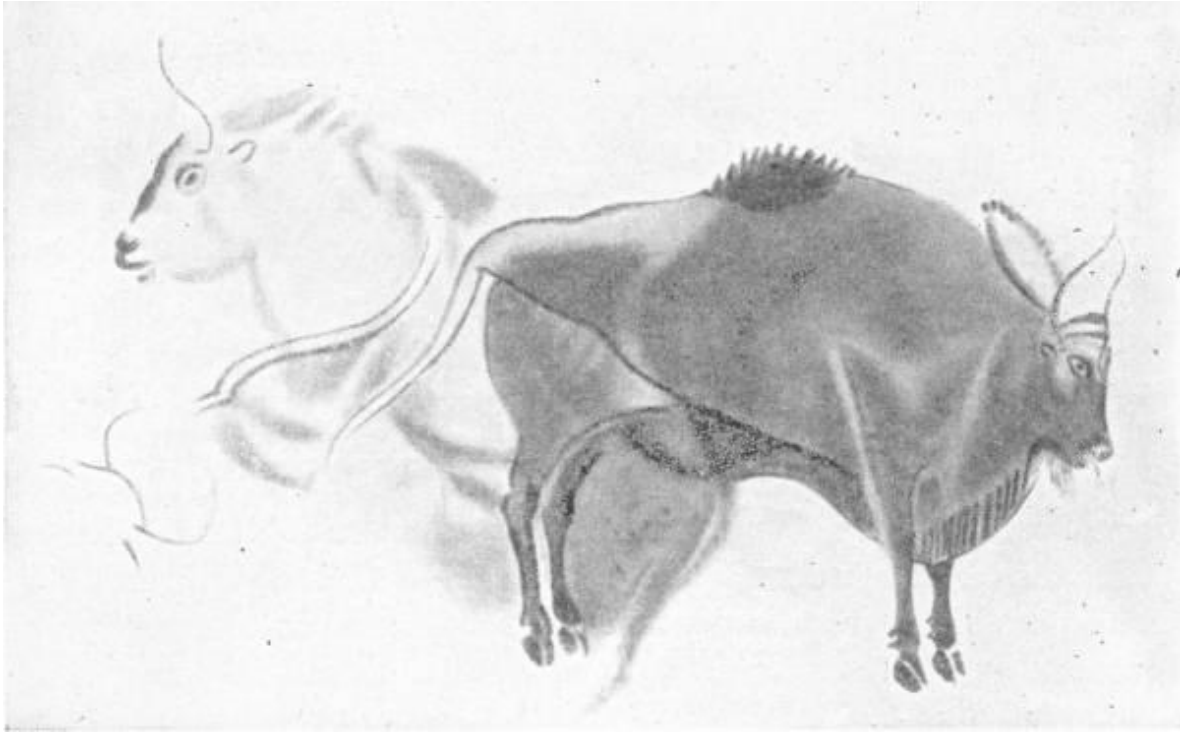
THE FIRST TRUE MEN

The earliest signs and traces at present known to science, of a humanity which is indisputably kindred with ourselves, have been found in western Europe and particularly in France and Spain. Bones, weapons, scratchings upon bone and rock, carved fragments of bone, and paintings in caves and upon rock surfaces dating, it is supposed, from 30,000 years ago or more, have been discovered in both these countries. Spain is at present the richest country in the world in these first relics of our real human ancestors.

Of course our present collections of these things are the merest beginnings of the accumulations we may hope for in the future, when there are searchers enough to make a thorough examination of all possible sources and when other countries in the world, now inaccessible to archæologists, have been explored in some detail. The greater part of Africa and Asia has never even been traversed yet by a trained observer interested in these matters and free to explore, and we must be very careful therefore not to conclude that the early true men were distinctively inhabitants of western Europe or that they first appeared in that region.

In Asia or Africa or submerged beneath the sea of to-day there may be richer and much earlier deposits of real human remains than anything that has yet come to light. I write in Asia or Africa, and I do not mention America because so far there have been no finds at all of any of the higher Primates, either of great apes, sub-men, Neanderthalers nor early true men. This development of life seems to have been an

exclusively old world development, and it was only apparently at the end of the Old Stone Age that human beings first made their way across the land connexion that is now cut by Behring Straits, into the American continent.

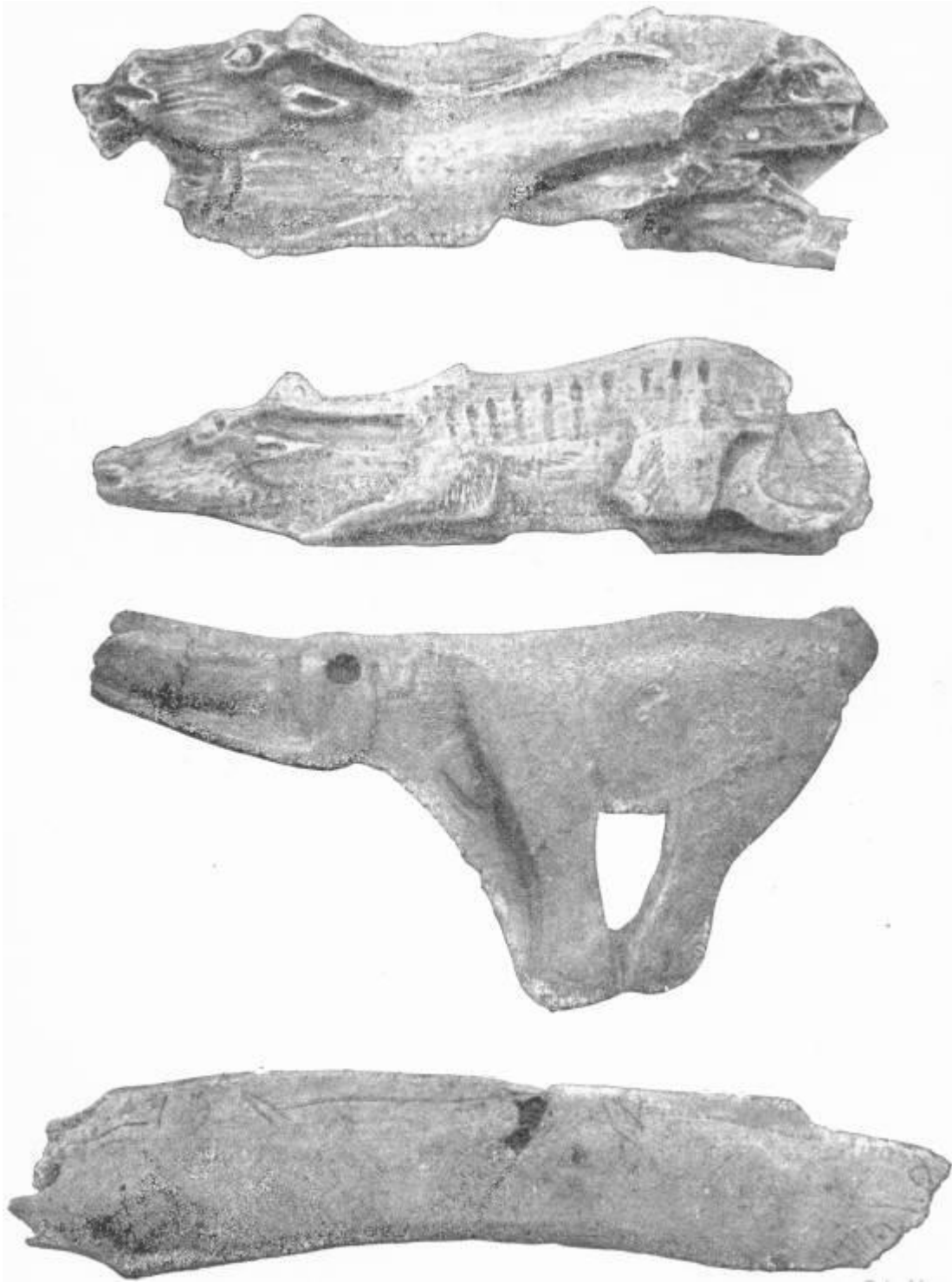


ONE OF THE MARVELLOUS CAVE PAINTINGS OF ALTAMIRA, NORTH SPAIN

The Walls of the Caves are covered in these representations of Bulls, etc., painted in the soft tones of red shaded to black. They may be fifteen or twenty thousand years old

These first real human beings we know of in Europe appear already to have belonged to one or other of at least two very distinct races. One of these races was of a very high type indeed; it was tall and big brained. One of the women's skulls found exceeds in capacity that of the average man of to-day. One of the men's skeletons is over six feet in height. The physical type resembled that of the North American Indian. From the Cro-Magnon cave in which the first skeletons were found these people have been called Cro-Magnards. They were savages, but savages of a high order. The second race, the race of the Grimaldi cave remains, was distinctly negroid in its characters. Its nearest living affinities are the Bushmen and Hottentots of South Africa. It is interesting to find at the very outset of the known human story, that mankind was already racially divided into at least two main varieties; and one is tempted to such unwarrantable guesses as that the former race was probably brownish rather than

black and that it came from the East or North, and that the latter was blackish rather than brown and came from the equatorial south.



BONE CARVINGS OF THE PALÆOLITHIC PERIOD

(1 and 2) Mammoth tusk carved to shape of Reindeer, (3) Dagger Handle

representing Mammoth, and (4) Bone engraved with Horses' Heads

Brit. Mus.

And these savages of perhaps forty thousand years ago were so human that they pierced shells to make necklaces, painted themselves, carved images of bone and stone, scratched figures on rocks and bones, and painted rude but often very able sketches of beasts and the like upon the smooth walls of caves and upon inviting rock surfaces. They made a great variety of implements, much smaller in scale and finer than those of the Neanderthal men. We have now in our museums great quantities of their implements, their statuettes, their rock drawings and the like.

The earliest of them were hunters. Their chief pursuit was the wild horse, the little bearded pony of that time. They followed it as it moved after pasture. And also they followed the bison. They knew the mammoth, because they have left us strikingly effective pictures of that creature. To judge by one rather ambiguous drawing they trapped and killed it.

They hunted with spears and throwing stones. They do not seem to have had the bow, and it is doubtful if they had yet learnt to tame any animals. They had no dogs. There is one carving of a horse's head and one or two drawings that suggest a bridled horse, with a twisted skin or tendon round it. But the little horses of that age and region could not have carried a man, and if the horse was domesticated it was used as a led horse. It is doubtful and improbable that they had yet learnt the rather unnatural use of animal's milk as food.

They do not seem to have erected any buildings though they may have had tents of skins, and though they made clay figures they never rose to the making of pottery. Since they had no cooking implements their cookery must have been rudimentary or nonexistent. They knew nothing of cultivation and nothing of any sort of basket work or woven cloth. Except for their robes of skin or fur they were naked painted savages.

These earliest known men hunted the open steppes of Europe for a hundred centuries perhaps, and then slowly drifted and changed before a change of climate. Europe, century by century, was growing milder and damper. Reindeer receded northward and eastward, and bison and horse followed. The steppes gave way to forests, and red deer took the place of horse and bison. There is a change in the character of the implements with this change in their application. River and lake fishing becomes of great importance to men, and fine implements of bone increased. "The bone needles of this age," says de Mortillet, "are much superior to those of later, even historical times, down to the Renaissance. The Romans, for example, never had needles comparable to those of this epoch."



THE RUTOT BUST OF A CRO-MAGNON MAN

Almost fifteen or twelve thousand years ago a fresh people drifted into the south of Spain, and left very remarkable drawings of themselves upon exposed rock faces there. These were the Azilians (named from the Mas d'Azil cave). They had the bow; they seem to have worn feather headdresses; they drew vividly; but also they had reduced their drawings to a sort of symbolism—a man for instance would be represented by a vertical dab with two or three horizontal dabs—that suggest the dawn of the writing idea. Against hunting sketches there are often marks like tallies. One drawing shows two men smoking out a bees' nest.



THE HONEY GATHERER AMONG THE BEES
He is on a rope-ladder



FIGHT OF BOWMEN

Among the most recent discoveries of Palæolithic Art are these specimens found in 1920 in Spain. They are probably ten or twelve thousand years old

These are the latest of the men that we call Palæolithic (Old Stone Age) because they had only chipped implements. By ten or twelve thousand years a new sort of life has

dawned in Europe, men have learnt not only to chip but to polish and grind stone implements, and they have begun cultivation. The Neolithic Age (New Stone Age) was beginning.

It is interesting to note that less than a century ago there still survived in a remote part of the world, in Tasmania, a race of human beings at a lower level of physical and intellectual development than any of these earliest races of mankind who have left traces in Europe. These people had long ago been cut off by geographical changes from the rest of the species, and from stimulation and improvement. They seem to have degenerated rather than developed. They lived a base life subsisting upon shellfish and small game. They had no habitations but only squatting places. They were real men of our species, but they had neither the manual dexterity nor the artistic powers of the first true men.

XII

PRIMITIVE THOUGHT

And now let us indulge in a very interesting speculation; how did it feel to be a man in those early days of the human adventure? How did men think and what did they think in those remote days of hunting and wandering four hundred centuries ago before seed time and harvest began. Those were days long before the written record of any human impressions, and we are left almost entirely to inference and guesswork in our answers to these questions.

The sources to which scientific men have gone in their attempts to reconstruct that primitive mentality are very various. Recently the science of psycho-analysis, which analyzes the way in which the egotistic and passionate impulses of the child are restrained, suppressed, modified or overlaid, to adapt them to the needs of social life, seems to have thrown a considerable amount of light upon the history of primitive society; and another fruitful source of suggestion has been the study of the ideas and customs of such contemporary savages as still survive. Again there is a sort of mental fossilization which we find in folk-lore and the deep-lying irrational superstitions and prejudices that still survive among modern civilized people. And finally we have in the increasingly numerous pictures, statues, carvings, symbols and the like, as we draw near to our own time, clearer and clearer indications of what man found interesting and worthy of record and representation.

Primitive man probably thought very much as a child thinks, that is to say in a series of imaginative pictures. He conjured up images or images presented themselves to his mind, and he acted in accordance with the emotions they aroused. So a child or an uneducated person does to-day. Systematic thinking is apparently a comparatively

late development in human experience; it has not played any great part in human life until within the last three thousand years. And even to-day those who really control and order their thoughts are but a small minority of mankind. Most of the world still lives by imagination and passion.

Probably the earliest human societies, in the opening stages of the true human story, were small family groups. Just as the flocks and herds of the earlier mammals arose out of families which remained together and multiplied, so probably did the earliest tribes. But before this could happen a certain restraint upon the primitive egotisms of the individual had to be established. The fear of the father and respect for the mother had to be extended into adult life, and the natural jealousy of the old man of the group for the younger males as they grew up had to be mitigated. The mother on the other hand was the natural adviser and protector of the young. Human social life grew up out of the reaction between the crude instinct of the young to go off and pair by themselves as they grew up, on the one hand, and the dangers and disadvantages of separation on the other. An anthropological writer of great genius, J. J. Atkinson, in his *Primal Law*, has shown how much of the customary law of savages, the *Tabus*, that are so remarkable a fact in tribal life, can be ascribed to such a mental adjustment of the needs of the primitive human animal to a developing social life, and the later work of the psycho- analysts has done much to confirm his interpretation of these possibilities.

Some speculative writers would have us believe that respect and fear of the Old Man and the emotional reaction of the primitive savage to older protective women, exaggerated in dreams and enriched by fanciful mental play, played a large part in the beginnings of primitive religion and in the conception of gods and goddesses. Associated with this respect for powerful or helpful personalities was a dread and exaltation of such personages after their deaths, due to their reappearance in dreams. It was easy to believe they were not truly dead but only fantastically transferred to a remoteness of greater power.

The dreams, imaginations and fears of a child are far more vivid and real than those of a modern adult, and primitive man was always something of a child. He was nearer to the animals also, and he could suppose them to have motives and reactions like his own. He could imagine animal helpers, animal enemies, animal gods. One needs to have been an imaginative child oneself to realize again how important, significant, portentous or friendly, strangely shaped rocks, lumps of wood, exceptional trees or the like may have appeared to the men of the Old Stone Age, and how dream and fancy would create stories and legends about such things that would become credible as they told them. Some of these stories would be good enough to remember and tell

again. The women would tell them to the children and so establish a tradition. To this day most imaginative children invent long stories in which some favourite doll or animal or some fantastic semi-human being figures as the hero, and primitive man probably did the same—with a much stronger disposition to believe his hero real.



RELICS OF THE STONE AGE

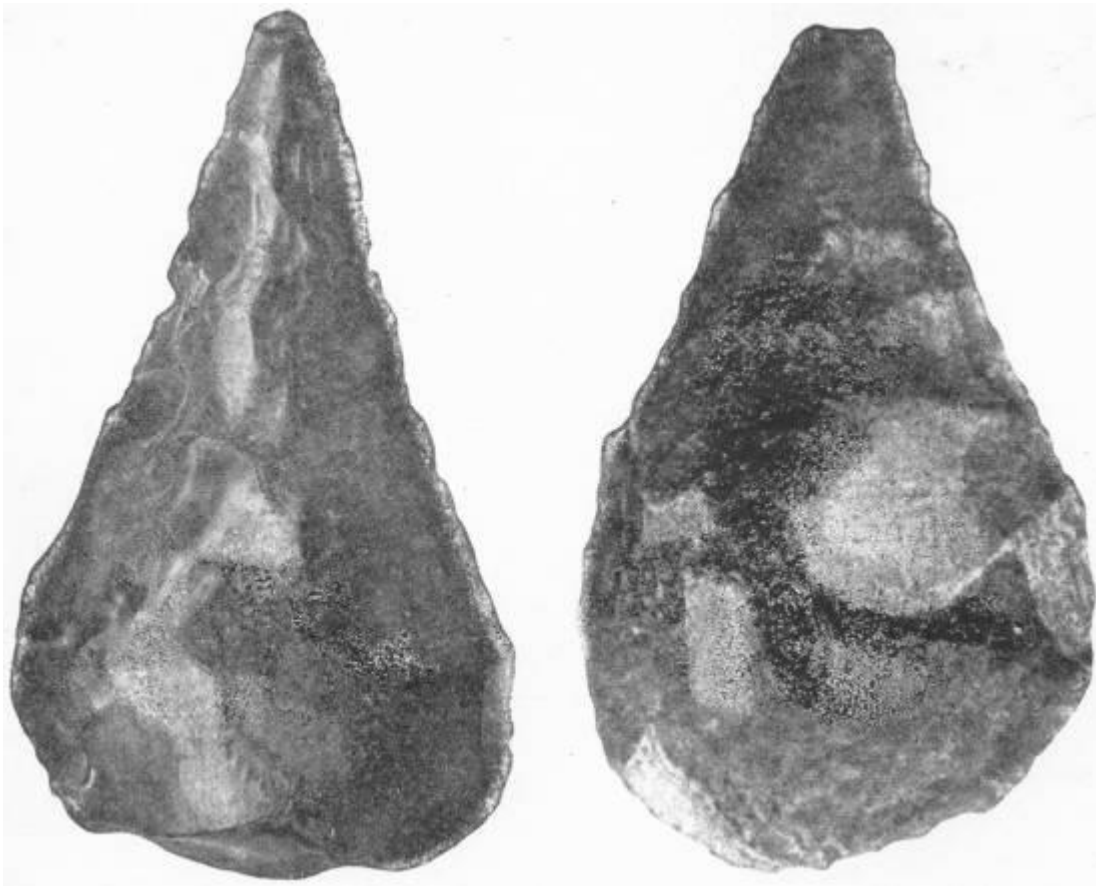
Chert implements from Somaliland. In general form they are similar to those found in Western and Northern Europe

Brit. Mus.

For the very earliest of the true men that we know of were probably quite talkative beings. In that way they have differed from the Neanderthalers and had an advantage over them. The Neanderthaler may have been a dumb animal. Of course the primitive human speech was probably a very scanty collection of names, and may have been eked out with gestures and signs.

There is no sort of savage so low as not to have a kind of science of cause and effect. But primitive man was not very critical in his associations of cause with effect; he very easily connected an effect with something quite wrong as its cause. "You do so and so," he said, "and so and so happens." You give a child a poisonous berry and it dies. You eat the heart of a valiant enemy and you become strong. There we have two bits of cause and effect association, one true one false. We call the system of cause and effect in the mind of a savage, Fetish; but Fetish is simply savage science. It differs

from modern science in that it is totally unsystematic and uncritical and so more frequently wrong.



WIDESPREAD SIMILARITY OF MEN OF THE STONE AGE

**On the left is a flint implement excavated in Gray's Inn Lane, London; on the right one of similar form chipped by primitive men of Somaliland
*Brit. Mus.***

In many cases it is not difficult to link cause and effect, in many others erroneous ideas were soon corrected by experience; but there was a large series of issues of very great importance to primitive man, where he sought persistently for causes and found explanations that were wrong but not sufficiently wrong nor so obviously wrong as to be detected. It was a matter of great importance to him that game should be abundant or fish plentiful and easily caught, and no doubt he tried and believed in a thousand charms, incantations and omens to determine these desirable results. Another great concern of his was illness and death. Occasionally infections crept through the land and men died of them. Occasionally men were stricken by illness and died or were enfeebled without any manifest cause. This too must have given the hasty, emotional mind of primitive man much feverish exercise. Dreams and fantastic

guesses made him blame this, or appeal for help to that man or beast or thing. He had the child's aptitude for fear and panic.

Quite early in the little human tribe, older, steadier minds sharing the fears, sharing the imaginations, but a little more forceful than the others, must have asserted themselves, to advise, to prescribe, to command. This they declared unpropitious and that imperative, this an omen of good and that an omen of evil. The expert in Fetish, the Medicine Man, was the first priest. He exhorted, he interpreted dreams, he warned, he performed the complicated hocus pocus that brought luck or averted calamity. Primitive religion was not so much what we now call religion as practice and observance, and the early priest dictated what was indeed an arbitrary primitive practical science.

XIII

THE BEGINNINGS OF CULTIVATION

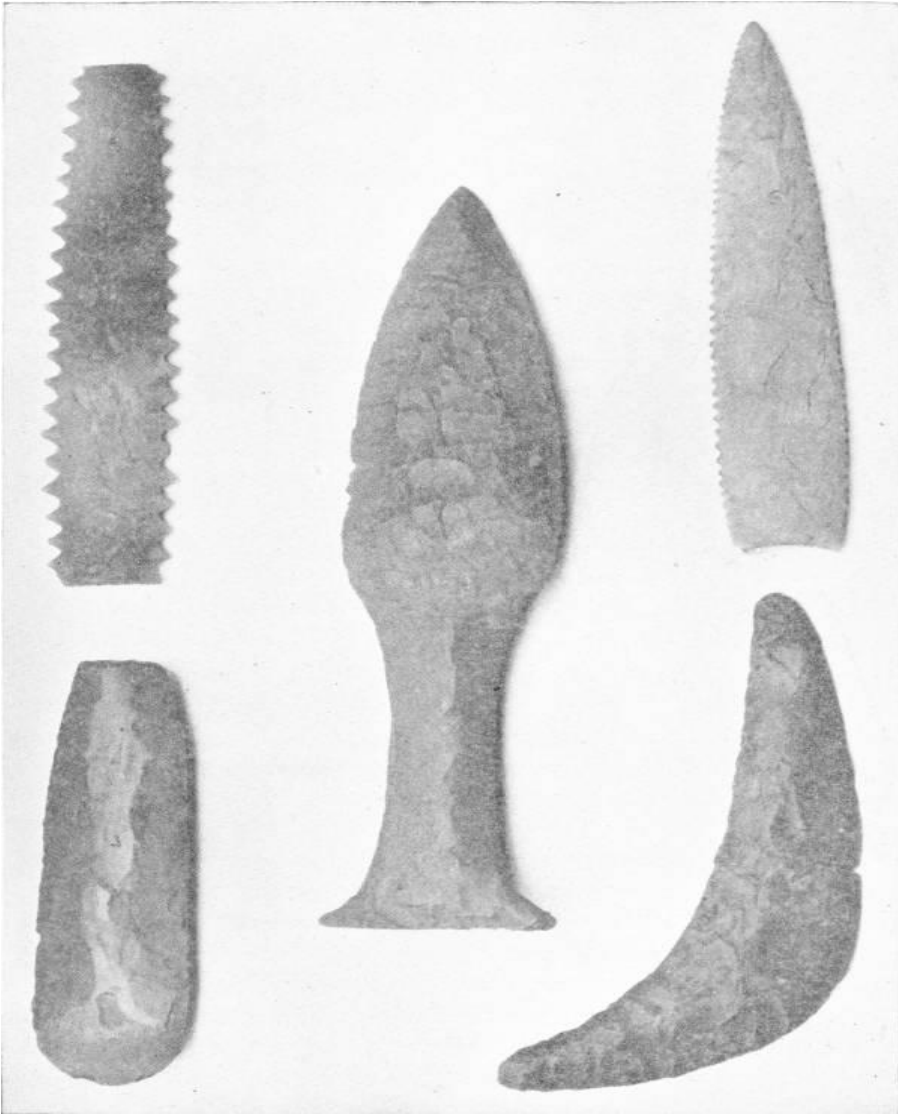
We are still very ignorant about the beginnings of cultivation and settlement in the world although a vast amount of research and speculation has been given to these matters in the last fifty years. All that we can say with any confidence at present is that somewhen about 15,000 and 12,000 B.C. while the Azilian people were in the south of Spain and while the remnants of the earlier hunters were drifting northward and eastward, somewhere in North Africa or Western Asia or in that great Mediterranean valley that is now submerged under the waters of the Mediterranean sea, there were people who, age by age, were working out two vitally important things; they were beginning cultivation and they were domesticating animals. They were also beginning to make, in addition to the chipped implements of their hunter forebears, implements of polished stone. They had discovered the possibility of basketwork and roughly woven textiles of plant fibre, and they were beginning to make a rudely modelled pottery.

They were entering upon a new phase in human culture, the Neolithic phase (New Stone Age) as distinguished from the Palæolithic (Old Stone) phase of the Cro-Magnards, the Grimaldi people, the Azilians and their like. [1] Slowly these Neolithic people spread over the warmer parts of the world; and the arts they had mastered, the plants and animals they had learnt to use, spread by imitation and acquisition even more widely than they did. By 10,000 B.C., most of mankind was at the Neolithic level.

Now the ploughing of land, the sowing of seed, the reaping of harvest, threshing and grinding, may seem the most obviously reasonable steps to a modern mind just as to a modern mind it is a commonplace that the world is round. What else could you do? people will ask. What else can it be? But to the primitive man of twenty thousand

years ago neither of the systems of action and reasoning that seem so sure and manifest to us to-day were at all obvious. He felt his way to effectual practice through a multitude of trials and misconceptions, with fantastic and unnecessary elaborations and false interpretations at every turn. Somewhere in the Mediterranean region, wheat grew wild; and man may have learnt to pound and then grind up its seeds for food long before he learnt to sow. He reaped before he sowed.

And it is a very remarkable thing that throughout the world wherever there is sowing and harvesting there is still traceable the vestiges of a strong primitive association of the idea of sowing with the idea of a blood sacrifice, and primarily of the sacrifice of a human being. The study of the original entanglement of these two things is a profoundly attractive one to the curious mind; the interested reader will find it very fully developed in that monumental work, Sir J. G. Frazer's *Golden Bough*. It was an entanglement, we must remember, in the childish, dreaming, myth-making primitive mind; no reasoned process will explain it. But in that world of 12,000 to 20,000 years ago, it would seem that whenever seed time came round to the Neolithic peoples there was a human sacrifice. And it was not the sacrifice of any mean or outcast person; it was the sacrifice usually of a chosen youth or maiden, a youth more often who was treated with profound deference and even worship up to the moment of his immolation. He was a sort of sacrificial god-king, and all the details of his killing had become a ritual directed by the old, knowing men and sanctioned by the accumulated usage of ages.



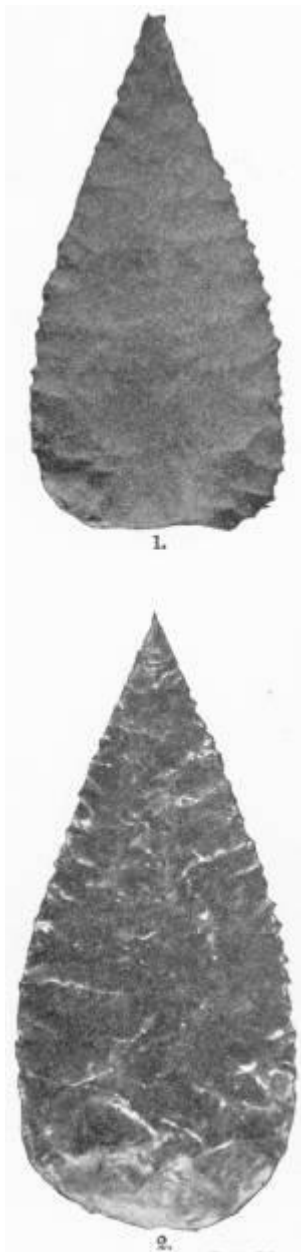
NEOLITHIC FLINT IMPLEMENTS

Brit. Mus.

At first primitive men, with only a very rough idea of the seasons, must have found great difficulty in determining when was the propitious moment for the seed-time sacrifice and the sowing. There is some reason for supposing that there was an early stage in human experience when men had no idea of a year. The first chronology was in lunar months; it is supposed that the years of the Biblical patriarchs are really moons, and the Babylonian calendar shows distinct traces of an attempt to reckon seed time by taking thirteen lunar months to see it round. This lunar influence upon the calendar reaches down to our own days. If usage did not dull our sense of its strangeness we should think it a very remarkable thing indeed that the Christian

Church does not commemorate the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ on the proper anniversaries but on dates that vary year by year with the phases of the moon.

It may be doubted whether the first agriculturalists made any observation of the stars. It is more likely that stars were first observed by migratory herdsmen, who found them a convenient mark of direction. But once their use in determining seasons was realized, their importance to agriculture became very great. The seed-time sacrifice was linked up with the southing or northing of some prominent star. A myth and worship of that star was for primitive man an almost inevitable consequence.



NEOLITHICISM OF TO-DAY

Spearheads, exactly as in the true Neolithic days, but made recently by Australian Natives,

(1) Made from a telegraph insulator;

(2) from a piece of broken bottle glass.

Brit. Mus.

It is easy to see how important the man of knowledge and experience, the man who knew about the blood sacrifice and the stars, became in this early Neolithic world.

The fear of uncleanness and pollution, and the methods of cleansing that were advisable, constituted another source of power for the knowledgeable men and women. For there have always been witches as well as wizards, and priestesses as well as priests. The early priest was really not so much a religious man as a man of applied science. His science was generally empirical and often bad; he kept it secret from the generality of men very jealously; but that does not alter the fact that his primary function was knowledge and that his primary use was a practical use.



SPECIMEN OF NEOLITHIC POTTERY

Dug up at Mortlake from the Thames Bed

Brit. Mus.

Twelve or fifteen thousand years ago, in all the warm and fairly well-watered parts of the Old World these Neolithic human communities, with their class and tradition of priests and priestesses and their cultivated fields and their development of villages and little walled cities, were spreading. Age by age a drift and exchange of ideas went on between these communities. Eliot Smith and Rivers have used the term “Heliolithic culture” for the culture of these first agricultural peoples. “Heliolithic” (Sun and Stone) is not perhaps the best possible word to use for this, but until scientific men give us a

better one we shall have to use it. Originating somewhere in the Mediterranean and western Asiatic area, it spread age by age eastward and from island to island across the Pacific until it may even have reached America and mingled with the more primitive ways of living of the Mongoloid immigrants coming down from the North.

Wherever the brownish people with the Heliolithic culture went they took with them all or most of a certain group of curious ideas and practices. Some of them are such queer ideas that they call for the explanation of the mental expert. They made pyramids and great mounds, and set up great circles of big stones, perhaps to facilitate the astronomical observation of the priests; they made mummies of some or all of their dead; they tattooed and circumcized; they had the old custom, known as the *couvade*, of sending the *father* to bed and rest when a child was born, and they had as a luck symbol the well-known Swastika.

If we were to make a map of the world with dots to show how far these group practices have left their traces, we should make a belt along the temperate and sub-tropical coasts of the world from Stonehenge and Spain across the world to Mexico and Peru. But Africa below the equator, north central Europe, and north Asia would show none of these dottings; there lived races who were developing along practically independent lines.

[1] The term Palæolithic we may note is also used to cover the Neanderthaler and even the Eolithic implements. The pre-human age is called the "Older Palæolithic;" the age of true men using unpolished stones in the "Newer Palæolithic."

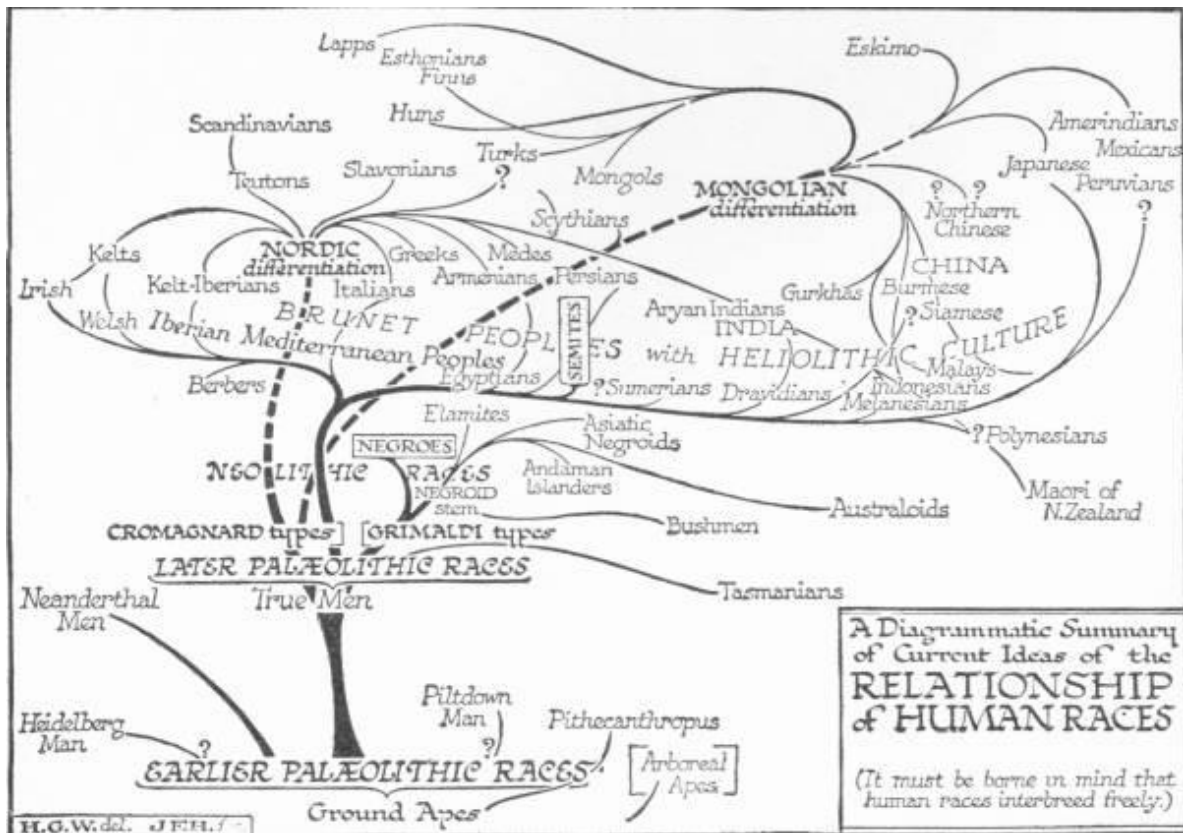
XIV

PRIMITIVE NEOLITHIC CIVILIZATIONS

About 10,000 B.C. the geography of the world was very similar in its general outline to that of the world to-day. It is probable that by that time the great barrier across the Straits of Gibraltar that had hitherto banked back the ocean waters from the Mediterranean valley had been eaten through, and that the Mediterranean was a sea following much the same coastlines as it does now. The Caspian Sea was probably still far more extensive than it is at present, and it may have been continuous with the Black Sea to the north of the Caucasus Mountains. About this great Central Asian sea lands that are now steppes and deserts were fertile and habitable. Generally it was a moister and more fertile world. European Russia was much more a land of swamp and lake than it is now, and there may still have been a land connexion between Asia and America at Behring Straits.

It would have been already possible at that time to have distinguished the main racial divisions of mankind as we know them to-day. Across the warm temperate regions of this rather warmer and better-wooded world, and along the coasts, stretched the brownish peoples of the Heliolithic culture, the ancestors of the bulk of the living inhabitants of the Mediterranean world, of the Berbers, the Egyptians and of much of the population of South and Eastern Asia. This great race had of course a number of varieties. The Iberian or Mediterranean or "dark-white" race of the Atlantic and Mediterranean coast, the "Hamitic" peoples which include the Berbers and Egyptians, the Dravidians; the darker people of India, a multitude of East Indian people, many Polynesian races and the Maoris are all divisions of various value of this great main mass of humanity. Its western varieties are whiter than its eastern.

In the forests of central and northern Europe a more blonde variety of men with blue eyes was becoming distinguishable, branching off from the main mass of brownish people, a variety which many people now speak of as the Nordic race. In the more open regions of northeastern Asia was another differentiation of this brownish humanity in the direction of a type with more oblique eyes, high cheek-bones, a yellowish skin, and very straight black hair, the Mongolian peoples. In South Africa, Australia, in many tropical islands in the south of Asia were remains of the early negroid peoples. The central parts of Africa were already a region of racial intermixture. Nearly all the coloured races of Africa to-day seem to be blends of the brownish peoples of the north with a negroid substratum.



We have to remember that human races can all interbreed freely and that they separate, mingle and reunite as clouds do. Human races do not branch out like trees with branches that never come together again. It is a thing we need to bear constantly in mind, this remingling of races at any opportunity. It will save us from many cruel delusions and prejudices if we do so. People will use such a word as race in the loosest manner, and base the most preposterous generalizations upon it. They will speak of a "British" race or of a "European" race. But nearly all the European nations are confused mixtures of brownish, dark-white, white and Mongolian elements.



A MAYA STELE

**Showing a worshipper and a Serpent God. Note the grotesque faces in the writing
*Brit. Mus.***

It was at the Neolithic phase of human development that peoples of the Mongolian breed first made their way into America. Apparently they came by way of Behring Straits and spread southward. They found caribou, the American reindeer, in the north and great herds of bison in the south. When they reached South America there were still living the Glyptodon, a gigantic armadillo, and the Megatherium, a monstrous

clumsy sloth as high as an elephant. They probably exterminated the latter beast, which was as helpless as it was big.

The greater portion of these American tribes never rose above a hunting nomadic Neolithic life. They never discovered the use of iron, and their chief metal possessions were native gold and copper. But in Mexico, Yucatan and Peru conditions existed favourable to settled cultivation, and here about 1000 B.C. or so arose very interesting civilizations of a parallel but different type from the old-world civilization. Like the much earlier primitive civilizations of the old world these communities displayed a great development of human sacrifice about the processes of seed time and harvest; but while in the old world, as we shall see, these primary ideas were ultimately mitigated, complicated and overlaid by others, in America they developed and were elaborated, to a very high degree of intensity. These American civilized countries were essentially priest-ruled countries; their war chiefs and rulers were under a rigorous rule of law and omen.

These priests carried astronomical science to a high level of accuracy. They knew their year better than the Babylonians of whom we shall presently tell. In Yucatan they had a kind of writing, the Maya writing, of the most curious and elaborate character. So far as we have been able to decipher it, it was used mainly for keeping the exact and complicated calendars upon which the priests expended their intelligence. The art of the Maya civilization came to a climax about 700 or 800 A.D. The sculptured work of these people amazes the modern observer by its great plastic power and its frequent beauty, and perplexes him by a grotesqueness and by a sort of insane conventionality and intricacy outside the circle of his ideas. There is nothing quite like it in the old world. The nearest approach, and that is a remote one, is found in archaic Indian carvings. Everywhere there are woven feathers and serpents twine in and out. Many Maya inscriptions resemble a certain sort of elaborate drawing made by lunatics in European asylums, more than any other old-world work. It is as if the Maya mind had developed upon a different line from the old-world mind, had a different twist to its ideas, was not, by old-world standards, a rational mind at all.

This linking of these aberrant American civilizations to the idea of a general mental aberration finds support in their extraordinary obsession by the shedding of human blood. The Mexican civilization in particular ran blood; it offered thousands of human victims yearly. The cutting open of living victims, the tearing out of the still beating heart, was an act that dominated the minds and lives of these strange priesthoods. The public life, the national festivities all turned on this fantastically horrible act.



NEOLITHIC WARRIOR

Modelled from drawing by Prof. Rutot

The ordinary existence of the common people in these communities was very like the ordinary existence of any other barbaric peasantry. Their pottery, weaving and dyeing was very good. The Maya writing was not only carven on stone but written and painted upon skins and the like. The European and American museums contain many enigmatical Maya manuscripts of which at present little has been deciphered except the dates. In Peru there were beginnings of a similar writing but they were superseded by a method of keeping records by knotting cords. A similar method of mnemonics was in use in China thousands of years ago.

In the old world before 4000 or 5000 B.C., that is to say three or four thousand years earlier, there were primitive civilizations not unlike these American civilizations; civilizations based upon a temple, having a vast quantity of blood sacrifices and with an intensely astronomical priesthood. But in the old world the primitive civilizations reacted upon one another and developed towards the conditions of our own world. In

America these primitive civilizations never progressed beyond this primitive stage. Each of them was in a little world of its own. Mexico it seems knew little or nothing of Peru, until the Europeans came to America. The potato, which was the principal food stuff in Peru, was unknown in Mexico.

Age by age these peoples lived and marvelled at their gods and made their sacrifices and died. Maya art rose to high levels of decorative beauty. Men made love and tribes made war. Drought and plenty, pestilence and health, followed one another. The priests elaborated their calendar and their sacrificial ritual through long centuries, but made little progress in other directions.

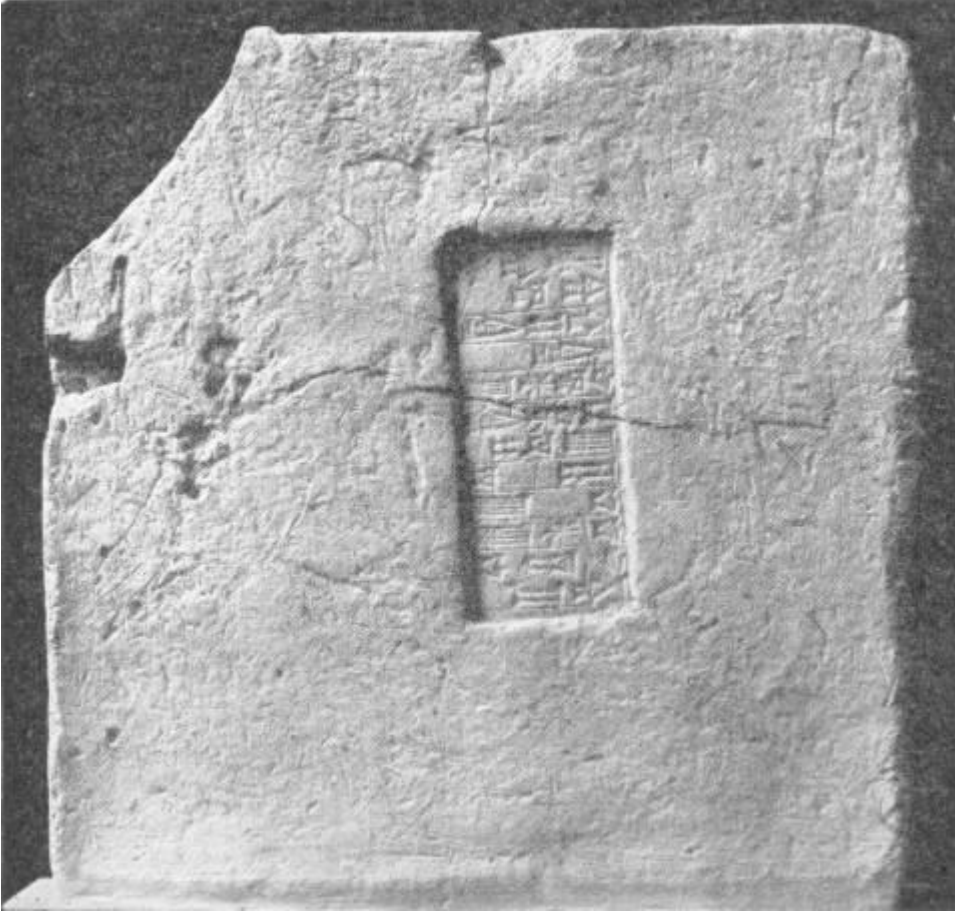
XV

SUMERIA, EARLY EGYPT AND WRITING

The old world is a wider, more varied stage than the new. By 6000 or 7000 B.C. there were already quasi-civilized communities almost at the Peruvian level, appearing in various fertile regions of Asia and in the Nile valley. At that time north Persia and western Turkestan and south Arabia were all more fertile than they are now, and there are traces of very early communities in these regions. It is in lower Mesopotamia however and in Egypt that there first appear cities, temples, systematic irrigation, and evidences of a social organization rising above the level of a mere barbaric village-town. In those days the Euphrates and Tigris flowed by separate mouths into the Persian Gulf, and it was in the country between them that the Sumerians built their first cities. About the same time, for chronology is still vague, the great history of Egypt was beginning.

These Sumerians appear to have been a brownish people with prominent noses. They employed a sort of writing that has been deciphered, and their language is now known. They had discovered the use of bronze and they built great tower-like temples of sun-dried brick. The clay of this country is very fine; they used it to write upon, and so it is that their inscriptions have been preserved to us. They had cattle, sheep, goats and asses, but no horses. They fought on foot, in close formation, carrying spears and shields of skin. Their clothing was of wool and they shaved their heads.

Each of the Sumerian cities seems generally to have been an independent state with a god of its own and priests of its own. But sometimes one city would establish an ascendancy over others and exact tribute from their population. A very ancient inscription at Nippur records the "empire," the first recorded empire, of the Sumerian city of Erech. Its god and its priest-king claimed an authority from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea.



BRICK OF HAMMURABI, KING OF BABYLON ABOUT 2200 B.C.

Note the cuneiform characters of the inscription, which records the building of a temple to a Sun God

At first writing was merely an abbreviated method of pictorial record. Even before Neolithic times men were beginning to write. The Azilian rock pictures to which we have already referred show the beginning of the process. Many of them record hunts and expeditions, and in most of these the human figures are plainly drawn. But in some the painter would not bother with head and limbs; he just indicated men by a vertical and one or two transverse strokes. From this to a conventional condensed picture writing was an easy transition. In Sumeria, where the writing was done on clay with a stick, the dabs of the characters soon became unrecognizably unlike the things they stood for, but in Egypt where men painted on walls and on strips of the papyrus reed (the first paper) the likeness to the thing imitated remained. From the fact that the wooden styles used in Sumeria made wedge-shaped marks, the Sumerian writing is called cuneiform (= wedge-shaped).



EBONY CYLINDER SEALS OF FIRST EGYPTIAN DYNASTY

Recovered from the Tombs at Abydos in 1921 by the British School of Archæology. They give evidence of early form of block printing

An important step towards writing was made when pictures were used to indicate not the thing represented but some similar thing. In the rebus dear to children of a suitable age, this is still done to-day. We draw a camp with tents and a bell, and the child is delighted to guess that this is the Scotch name Campbell. The Sumerian language was a language made up of accumulated syllables rather like some contemporary Amerindian languages, and it lent itself very readily to this syllabic method of writing words expressing ideas that could not be conveyed by pictures directly. Egyptian writing underwent parallel developments. Later on, when foreign peoples with less distinctly syllabled methods of speech were to learn and use these picture scripts they were to make those further modifications and simplifications that

developed at last into alphabetical writing. All the true alphabets of the later world derived from a mixture of the Sumerian cuneiform and the Egyptian hieroglyphic (priest writing). Later in China there was to develop a conventionalized picture writing, but in China it never got to the alphabetical stage.

The invention of writing was of very great importance in the development of human societies. It put agreements, laws, commandments on record. It made the growth of states larger than the old city states possible. It made a continuous historical consciousness possible. The command of the priest or king and his seal could go far beyond his sight and voice and could survive his death. It is interesting to note that in ancient Sumeria seals were greatly used. A king or a nobleman or a merchant would have his seal often very artistically carved, and would impress it on any clay document he wished to authorize. So close had civilization got to printing six thousand years ago. Then the clay was dried hard and became permanent. For the reader must remember that in the land of Mesopotamia for countless years, letters, records and accounts were all written on comparatively indestructible tiles. To that fact we owe a great wealth of recovered knowledge.

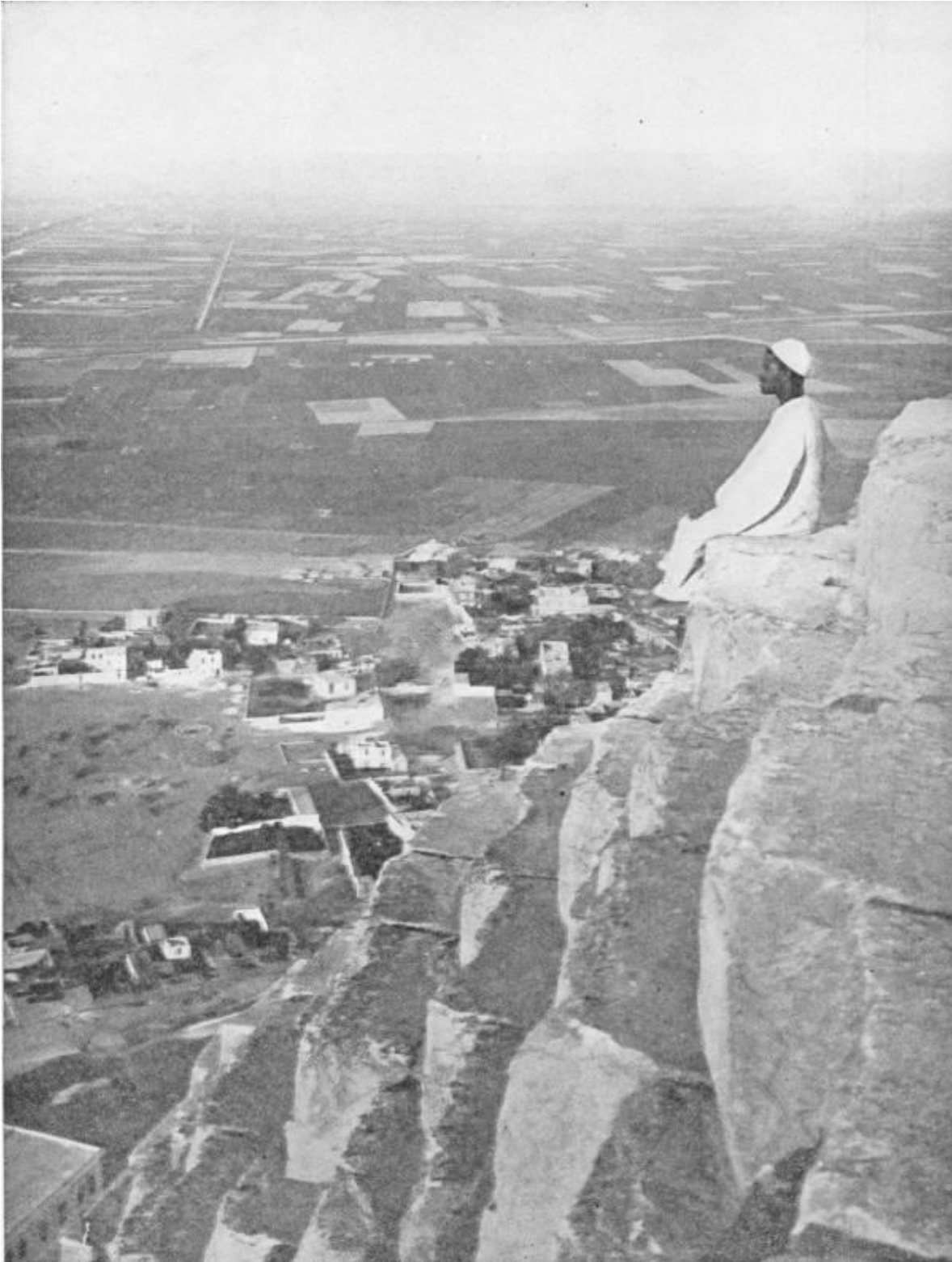


THE SAKHARA PYRAMIDS

The Pyramid to the right, the step Pyramid, is the oldest stone building in the world

Photo: F. Boyer

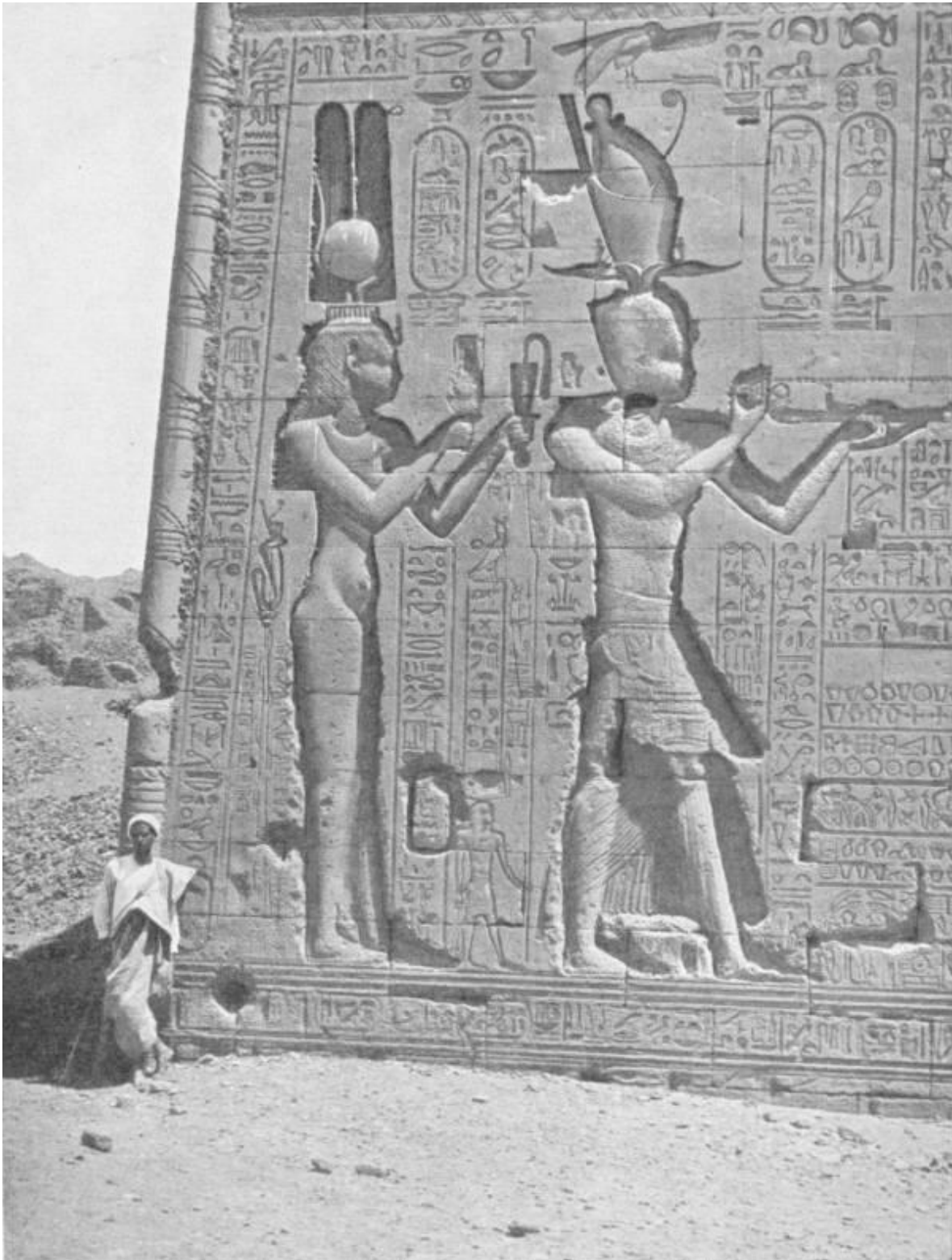
Bronze, copper, gold, silver and, as a precious rarity, meteoric iron were known in both Sumeria and Egypt at a very early stage.



VIEW FROM THE SUMMIT OF THE GREAT PYRAMID OF CHEOPS

Showing how these great monuments dominate the plain

Photo: D. McLeish



THE TEMPLE OF HATHOR AT DENDEREH

Photo: D. McLeish

Daily life in those first city lands of the old world must have been very similar in both Egypt and Sumeria. And except for the asses and cattle in the streets it must have been not unlike the life in the Maya cities of America three or four thousand years later. Most of the people in peace time were busy with irrigation and cultivation—except on days of religious festivity. They had no money and no need for it. They managed their small occasional trades by barter. The princes and rulers who alone had more than a few possessions used gold and silver bars and precious stones for any incidental act of trade. The temple dominated life; in Sumeria it was a great towering temple that went up to a roof from which the stars were observed; in Egypt it was a massive building with only a ground floor. In Sumeria the priest ruler was the greatest, most splendid of beings. In Egypt however there was one who was raised above the priests; he was the living incarnation of the chief god of the land, the Pharaoh, the god king.

There were few changes in the world in those days; men's days were sunny, toilsome and conventional. Few strangers came into the land and such as did fared uncomfortably. The priest directed life according to immemorial rules and watched the stars for seed time and marked the omens of the sacrifices and interpreted the warnings of dreams. Men worked and loved and died, not unhappily, forgetful of the savage past of their race and heedless of its future. Sometimes the ruler was benign. Such was Pepi II, who reigned in Egypt for ninety years. Sometimes he was ambitious and took men's sons to be soldiers and sent them against neighbouring city states to war and plunder, or he made them toil to build great buildings. Such were Cheops and Chephren and Mycerinus, who built those vast sepulchral piles, the pyramids at Gizeh. The largest of these is 450 feet high and the weight of stone in it is 4,883,000 tons. All this was brought down the Nile in boats and lugged into place chiefly by human muscle. Its erection must have exhausted Egypt more than a great war would have done.

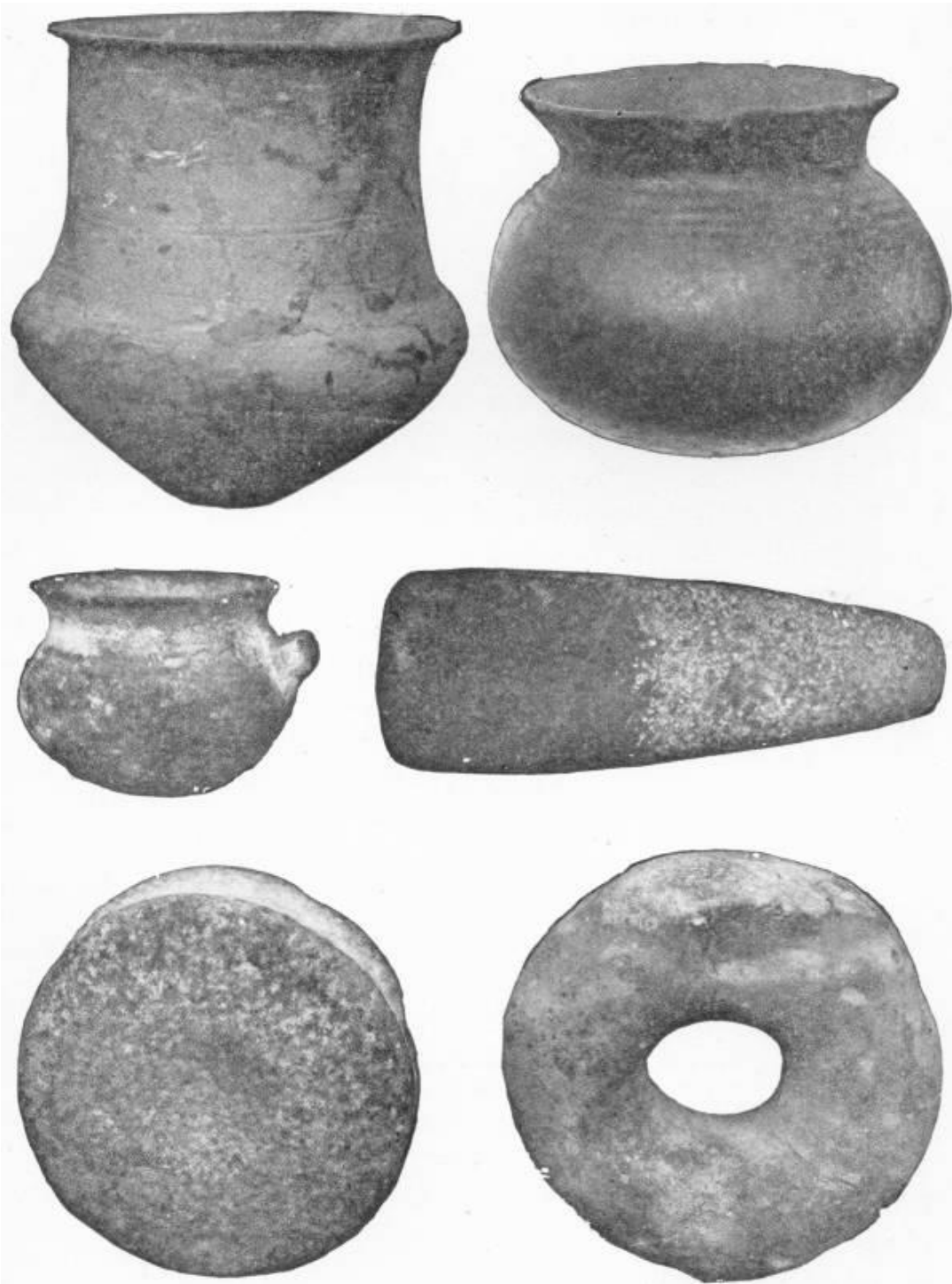
XVI

PRIMITIVE NOMADIC PEOPLES

It was not only in Mesopotamia and the Nile Valley that men were settling down to agriculture and the formation of city states in the centuries between 6000 and 8000 B.C. Wherever there were possibilities of irrigation and a steady all-the-year-round food supply men were exchanging the uncertainties and hardships of hunting and wandering for the routines of settlement. On the upper Tigris a people called the

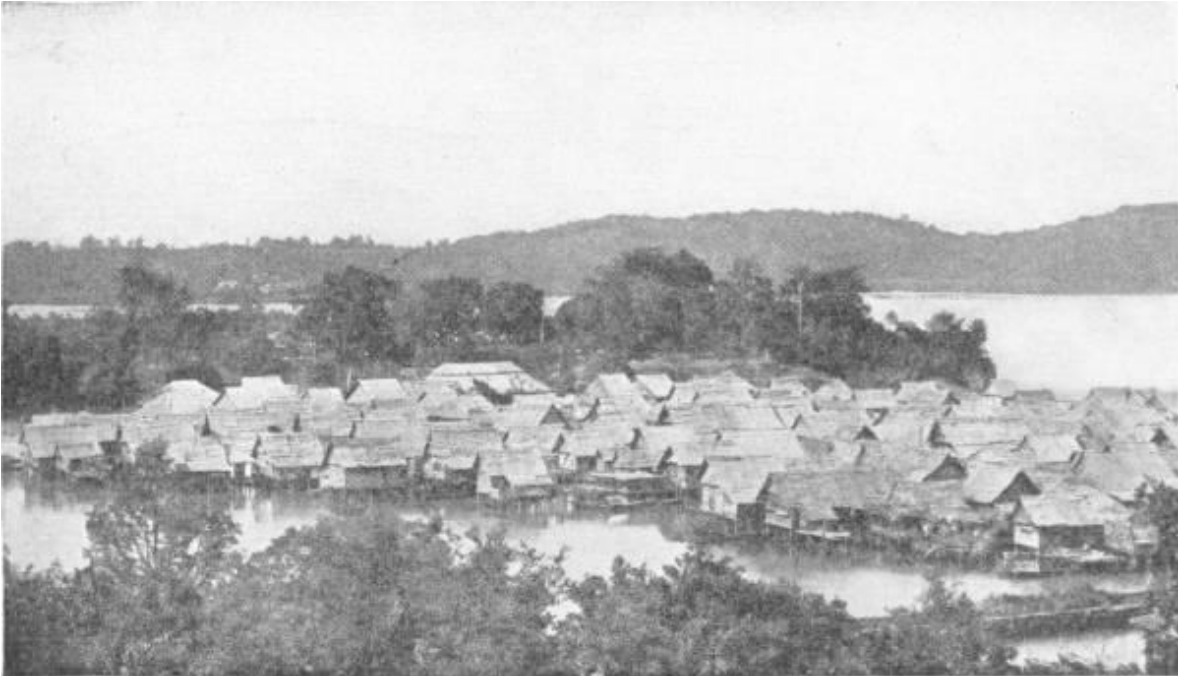
Assyrians were founding cities; in the valleys of Asia Minor and on the Mediterranean shores and islands, there were small communities growing up to civilization. Possibly parallel developments of human life were already going on in favourable regions of India, and China. In many parts of Europe where there were lakes well stocked with fish, little communities of men had long settled in dwellings built on piles over the water, and were eking out agriculture by fishing and hunting. But over much larger areas of the old world no such settlement was possible. The land was too harsh, too thickly wooded or too arid, or the seasons too uncertain for mankind, with only the implements and science of that age to take root.

For settlement under the conditions of the primitive civilizations men needed a constant water supply and warmth and sunshine. Where these needs were not satisfied, man could live as a transient, as a hunter following his game, as a herdsman following the seasonal grass, but he could not settle. The transition from the hunting to the herding life may have been very gradual. From following herds of wild cattle or (in Asia) wild horses, men may have come to an idea of property in them, have learnt to pen them into valleys, have fought for them against wolves, wild dogs and other predatory beasts.



POTTERY AND IMPLEMENTS OF THE LAKE DWELLERS

Brit. Mus.



A CONTEMPORARY LAKE VILLAGE

These Borneo dwellings are practically counterparts of the homes of European neolithic communities 6000 B.C.

So while the primitive civilizations of the cultivators were growing up chiefly in the great river valleys, a different way of living, the nomadic life, a life in constant movement to and fro from winter pasture to summer pasture, was also growing up. The nomadic peoples were on the whole harder than the agriculturalists; they were less prolific and numerous, they had no permanent temples and no highly organized priesthood; they had less gear; but the reader must not suppose that theirs was necessarily a less highly developed way of living on that account. In many ways this free life was a fuller life than that of the tillers of the soil. The individual was more self-reliant; less of a unit in a crowd. The leader was more important; the medicine man perhaps less so.

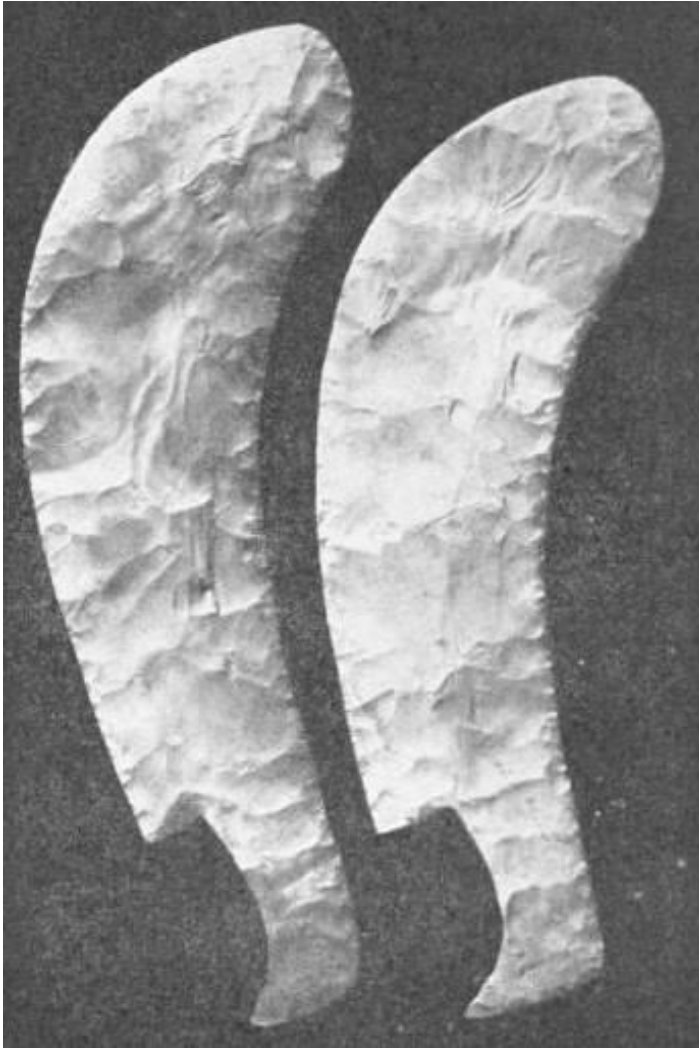




NOMADS IN EGYPT

Egyptian wall painting in a tomb near ancient Beni Hassan, middle Egypt. It depicts the arrival of a tribe of Semitic Nomads in Egypt about the year of 1895 B.C.

Moving over large stretches of country the nomad took a wider view of life. He touched on the confines of this settled land and that. He was used to the sight of strange faces. He had to scheme and treat for pasture with competing tribes. He knew more of minerals than the folk upon the plough lands because he went over mountain passes and into rocky places. He may have been a better metallurgist. Possibly bronze and much more probably iron smelting were nomadic discoveries. Some of the earliest implements of iron reduced from its ores have been found in Central Europe far away from the early civilizations.



FLINT KNIVES OF 4500 B.C.

Excavated 1922 by the British School of Archæology in Egypt from First Dynasty Tombs

On the other hand the settled folk had their textiles and their pottery and made many desirable things. It was inevitable that as the two sorts of life, the agricultural and the nomadic differentiated, a certain amount of looting and trading should develop between the two. In Sumeria particularly which had deserts and seasonal country on either hand it must have been usual to have the nomads camping close to the cultivated fields, trading and stealing and perhaps tinkering, as gipsies do to this day. (But hens they would not steal, because the domestic fowl—an Indian jungle fowl originally was not domesticated by man until about 1000 B.C.) They would bring precious stones and things of metal and leather. If they were hunters they would bring skins. They would get in exchange pottery and beads and glass, garments and suchlike manufactured things.



EGYPT PEASANTS GOING TO WORK

From an ancient and curiously painted model in the British Museum

Three main regions and three main kinds of wandering and imperfectly settled people there were in those remote days of the first civilizations in Sumeria and early Egypt. Away in the forests of Europe were the blonde Nordic peoples, hunters and herdsmen, a lowly race. The primitive civilizations saw very little of this race before 1500 B.C. Away on the steppes of eastern Asia various Mongolian tribes, the Hunnish peoples, were domesticating the horse and developing a very wide sweeping habit of seasonal movement between their summer and winter camping places. Possibly the Nordic and Hunnish peoples were still separated from one another by the swamps of Russia and the greater Caspian Sea of that time. For very much of Russia there was swamp and lake. In the deserts, which were growing more arid now, of Syria and Arabia, tribes of a dark white or brownish people, the Semitic tribes, were driving flocks of sheep and goats and asses from pasture to pasture. It was these Semitic shepherds and certain more negroid people from southern Persia, the Elamites, who were the first nomads to come into close contact with the early civilizations. They came as traders and as raiders. Finally there arose leaders among them with bolder imaginations, and they became conquerors.



STELE GLORIFYING KING NARAM SIN, OF AKKAD

This monarch, son of Sargon I, was a great architect as well as a famous conqueror. Discovered in 1898 among the ruins of Susa, Persia

About 2750 B.C. a great Semitic leader, Sargon, had conquered the whole Sumerian land and was master of all the world from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea. He was an illiterate barbarian and his people, the Akkadians, learnt the Sumerian

writing and adopted the Sumerian language as the speech of the officials and the learned. The empire he founded decayed after two centuries, and after one inundation of Elamites a fresh Semitic people, the Amorites, by degrees established their rule over Sumeria. They made their capital in what had hitherto been a small up-river town, Babylon, and their empire is called the first Babylonian Empire. It was consolidated by a great king called Hammurabi (circa 2100 B.C.) who made the earliest code of laws yet known to history.

The narrow valley of the Nile lies less open to nomadic invasion than Mesopotamia, but about the time of Hammurabi occurred a successful Semitic invasion of Egypt and a line of Pharaohs was set up, the Hyksos or “shepherd kings,” which lasted for several centuries. These Semitic conquerors never assimilated themselves with the Egyptians; they were always regarded with hostility as foreigners and barbarians; and they were at last expelled by a popular uprising about 1600 B.C.

But the Semites had come into Sumeria for good and all, the two races assimilated and the Babylonian Empire became Semitic in its language and character.

XVII

THE FIRST SEAGOING PEOPLES

The earliest boats and ships must have come into use some twenty-five or thirty thousand years ago. Man was probably paddling about on the water with a log of wood or an inflated skin to assist him, at latest in the beginnings of the Neolithic period. A basketwork boat covered with skin and caulked was used in Egypt and Sumeria from the beginnings of our knowledge. Such boats are still used there. They are used to this day in Ireland and Wales and in Alaska; sealskin boats still make the crossing of Behring Straits. The hollow log followed as tools improved. The building of boats and then ships came in a natural succession.

Perhaps the legend of Noah’s Ark preserves the memory of some early exploit in shipbuilding, just as the story of the Flood, so widely distributed among the peoples of the world, may be the tradition of the flooding of the Mediterranean basin.

There were ships upon the Red Sea long before the pyramids were built, and there were ships on the Mediterranean and Persian Gulf by 7000 B.C. Mostly these were the ships of fishermen, but some were already trading and pirate ships—for knowing what we do of mankind we may guess pretty safely that the first sailors plundered where they could and traded where they had to do so.

The seas on which these first ships adventured were inland seas on which the wind blew fitfully and which were often at a dead calm for days together, so that sailing did

not develop beyond an accessory use. It is only in the last four hundred years that the well-rigged, ocean-going, sailing ship has developed. The ships of the ancient world were essentially rowing ships which hugged the shore and went into harbour at the first sign of rough weather. As ships grew into big galleys they caused a demand for war captives as galley slaves.

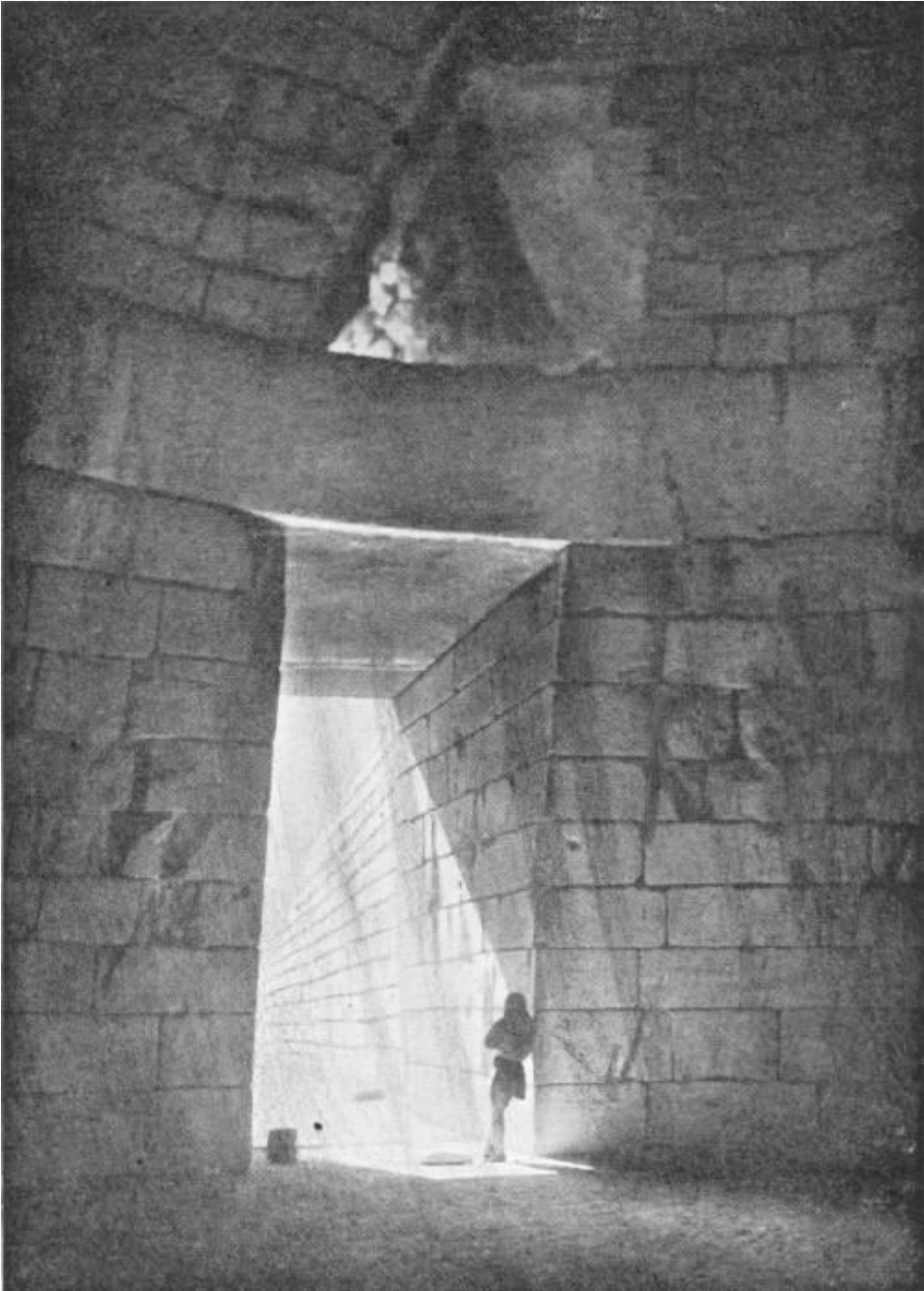
We have already noted the appearance of the Semitic people as wanderers and nomads in the region of Syria and Arabia, and how they conquered Sumeria and set up first the Akkadian and then the first Babylonian Empire. In the west these same Semitic peoples were taking to the sea. They set up a string of harbour towns along the Eastern coast of the Mediterranean, of which Tyre and Sidon were the chief; and by the time of Hammurabi in Babylon, they had spread as traders, wanderers and colonizers over the whole Mediterranean basin. These sea Semites were called the Phœnicians, They settled largely in Spain, pushing back the old Iberian Basque population and sending coasting expeditions through the straits of Gibraltar; and they set up colonies upon the north coast of Africa. Of Carthage, one of these Phœnician cities, we shall have much more to tell later.

But the Phœnicians were not the first people to have galleys in the Mediterranean waters. There was already a series of towns and cities among the islands and coasts of that sea belonging to a race or races apparently connected by blood and language with the Basques to the west and the Berbers and Egyptians to the south, the Ægean peoples. These peoples must not be confused with the Greeks, who come much later into our story; they were pre-Greek, but they had cities in Greece and Asia Minor; Mycenæ and Troy for example, and they had a great and prosperous establishment at Cnossos in Crete.

It is only in the last half century that the industry of excavating archæologists has brought the extent and civilization of the Ægean peoples to our knowledge. Cnossos has been most thoroughly explored; it was happily not succeeded by any city big enough to destroy its ruins, and so it is our chief source of information about this once almost forgotten civilization.

The history of Cnossos goes back as far as the history of Egypt; the two countries were trading actively across the sea by 4000 B.C. By 2500 B.C., that is between the time of Sargon I and Hammurabi, Cretan civilization was at its zenith.

Cnossos was not so much a town as a great palace for the Cretan monarch and his people. It was not even fortified. It was only fortified later as the Phœnicians grew strong, and as a new and more terrible breed of pirates, the Greeks, came upon the sea from the north.



THE TREASURE HOUSE AT MYCENÆ

Photo: Fred Boissonnas

The monarch was called Minos, as the Egyptian monarch was called Pharaoh; and he kept his state in a palace fitted with running water, with bathrooms and the like conveniences such as we know of in no other ancient remains. There he held great festivals and shows. There was bull-fighting, singularly like the bull-fighting that still

survives in Spain; there was resemblance even in the costumes of the bull-fighters; and there were gymnastic displays. The women's clothes were remarkably modern in spirit; they wore corsets and flounced dresses. The pottery, the textile manufactures, the sculpture, painting, jewellery, ivory, metal and inlay work of these Cretans was often astonishingly beautiful. And they had a system of writing, but that still remains to be deciphered.

This happy and sunny and civilized life lasted for some score of centuries. About 2000 B.C. Cnossos and Babylon abounded in comfortable and cultivated people who probably led very pleasant lives. They had shows and they had religious festivals, they had domestic slaves to look after them and industrial slaves to make a profit for them. Life must have seemed very secure in Cnossos for such people, sunlit and girdled by the blue sea. Egypt of course must have appeared rather a declining country in those days under the rule of her half-barbaric shepherd kings, and if one took an interest in politics one must have noticed how the Semitic people seemed to be getting everywhere, ruling Egypt, ruling distant Babylon, building Nineveh on the upper Tigris, sailing west to the Pillars of Hercules (the straits of Gibraltar) and setting up their colonies on those distant coasts.

There were some active and curious minds in Cnossos, because later on the Greeks told legends of a certain skilful Cretan artificer, Dædalus, who attempted to make some sort of flying machine, perhaps a glider, which collapsed and fell into the sea.

It is interesting to note some of the differences as well as the resemblances between the life of Cnossos and our own. To a Cretan gentleman of 2500 B.C. iron was a rare metal which fell out of the sky and was curious rather than useful—for as yet only meteoric iron was known, iron had not been obtained from its ores. Compare that with our modern state of affairs pervaded by iron everywhere. The horse again would be a quite legendary creature to our Cretan, a sort of super-ass which lived in the bleak northern lands far away beyond the Black Sea. Civilization for him dwelt chiefly in Ægean Greece and Asia Minor, where Lydians and Carians and Trojans lived a life and probably spoke languages like his own. There were Phœnicians and Ægeans settled in Spain and North Africa, but those were very remote regions to his imagination. Italy was still a desolate land covered with dense forests; the brown-skinned Etruscans had not yet gone there from Asia Minor. And one day perhaps this Cretan gentleman went down to the harbour and saw a captive who attracted his attention because he was very fair-complexioned and had blue eyes. Perhaps our Cretan tried to talk to him and was answered in an unintelligible gibberish. This creature came from somewhere beyond the Black Sea and seemed to be an altogether benighted savage. But indeed he was an Aryan tribesman, of a race and culture of which we shall soon have much to

tell, and the strange gibberish he spoke was to differentiate some day into Sanskrit, Persian, Greek, Latin, German, English and most of the chief languages of the world.



THE PALACE AT CNOSSOS

The painted walls of the Throne Room

Photo: Fred Boissonnas

Such was Cnossos at its zenith, intelligent, enterprising, bright and happy. But about 1400 B.C. disaster came perhaps very suddenly upon its prosperity. The palace of Minos was destroyed, and its ruins have never been rebuilt or inhabited from that day to this. We do not know how this disaster occurred. The excavators note what appears to be scattered plunder and the marks of the fire. But the traces of a very destructive earthquake have also been found. Nature alone may have destroyed Cnossos, or the Greeks may have finished what the earthquake began.

XVIII

EGYPT, BABYLON AND ASSYRIA

The Egyptians had never submitted very willingly to the rule of their Semitic shepherd kings and about 1600 A.D. a vigorous patriotic movement expelled these foreigners. Followed a new phase or revival for Egypt, a period known to Egyptologists as the New

Empire. Egypt, which had not been closely consolidated before the Hyksos invasion, was now a united country; and the phase of subjugation and insurrection left her full of military spirit. The Pharaohs became aggressive conquerors. They had now acquired the war horse and the war chariot, which the Hyksos had brought to them. Under Thothmes III and Amenophis III Egypt had extended her rule into Asia as far as the Euphrates.

We are entering now upon a thousand years of warfare between the once quite separated civilizations of Mesopotamia and the Nile. At first Egypt was ascendant. The great dynasties, the Seventeenth Dynasty, which included Thothmes III and Amenophis III and IV and a great queen Hatasu, and the Nineteenth, when Rameses II, supposed by some to have been the Pharaoh of Moses, reigned for sixty-seven years, raised Egypt to high levels of prosperity. In between there were phases of depression for Egypt, conquest by the Syrians and later conquest by the Ethiopians from the South. In Mesopotamia Babylon ruled, then the Hittites and the Syrians of Damascus rose to a transitory predominance; at one time the Syrians conquered Egypt; the fortunes of the Assyrians of Nineveh ebbed and flowed; sometimes the city was a conquered city; sometimes the Assyrians ruled in Babylon and assailed Egypt. Our space is too limited here to tell of the comings and goings of the armies of the Egyptians and of the various Semitic powers of Asia Minor, Syria and Mesopotamia. They were armies now provided with vast droves of war chariots, for the horse—still used only for war and glory—had spread by this time into the old civilizations from Central Asia.



TEMPLE AT ABU SIMBEL

Showing the statues of Rameses II at entrance

Great conquerors appear in the dim light of that distant time and pass, Tushratta, King of Mitanni, who captured Nineveh, Tiglath Pileser I of Assyria who conquered Babylon. At last the Assyrians became the greatest military power of the time. Tiglath Pileser III conquered Babylon in 745 B.C. and founded what historians call the New Assyrian Empire. Iron had also come now into civilization out of the north; the Hittites, the precursors of the Armenians, had it first and communicated its use to the Assyrians, and an Assyrian usurper, Sargon II, armed his troops with it. Assyria became the first power to expound the doctrine of blood and iron. Sargon's son Sennacherib led an army to the borders of Egypt, and was defeated not by military strength but by the plague. Sennacherib's grandson Assurbanipal (who is also known in history by his Greek name of Sardanapalus) did actually conquer Egypt in 670 B.C. But Egypt was already a conquered country then under an Ethiopian dynasty. Sardanapalus simply replaced one conqueror by another.



AVENUE OF SPHINXES

Leading from the Nile to the great Temple of Karnak

Photo: D. McLeish

If one had a series of political maps of this long period of history, this interval of ten centuries, we should have Egypt expanding and contracting like an amœba under a microscope, and we should see these various Semitic states of the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Hittites and the Syrians coming and going, eating each other up and disgorging each other again. To the west of Asia Minor there would be little Ægean states like Lydia, whose capital was Sardis, and Caria. But after about 1200 B.C. and perhaps earlier, a new set of names would come into the map of the ancient world from the north-east and from the north-west. These would be the names of certain barbaric tribes, armed with iron weapons and using horse-chariots, who were becoming a great affliction to the Ægean and Semitic civilizations on the northern borders. They all spoke variants of what once must have been the same language, Aryan.



THE GREAT HYPOSTYLE HALL AT KARNAK

Photo: D. McLeish

Round the north-east of the Black and Caspian Seas were coming the Medes and Persians. Confused with these in the records of the time were Scythians and Samatians. From north-east or north-west came the Armenians, from the north-west of the sea-barrier through the Balkan peninsula came Cimmerians, Phrygians and the Hellenic tribes whom now we call the Greeks. They were raiders and robbers and plunderers of cities, these Aryans, east and west alike. They were all kindred and similar peoples, hardy herdsmen who had taken to plunder. In the east they were still only borderers and raiders, but in the west they were taking cities and driving out the civilized Ægean populations. The Ægean peoples were so pressed that they were seeking new homes in lands beyond the Aryan range. Some were seeking a settlement in the delta of the Nile and being repulsed by the Egyptians; some, the Etruscans, seem to have sailed from Asia Minor to found a state in the forest wildernesses of middle Italy; some built themselves cities upon the south-east coasts of the Mediterranean and became later that people known in history as the Philistines.

Of these Aryans who came thus rudely upon the scene of the ancient civilizations we will tell more fully in a later section. Here we note simply all this stir and emigration amidst the area of the ancient civilizations, that was set up by the swirl of the gradual and continuous advance of these Aryan barbarians out of the northern forests and wildernesses between 1600 and 600 B.C.

And in a section to follow we must tell also of a little Semitic people, the Hebrews, in the hills behind the Phœnician and Philistine coasts, who began to be of significance in the world towards the end of this period. They produced a literature of very great importance in subsequent history, a collection of books, histories, poems, books of wisdom and prophetic works, the Hebrew Bible.

In Mesopotamia and Egypt the coming of the Aryans did not cause fundamental changes until after 600 B.C. The flight of the Ægeans before the Greeks and even the destruction of Cnossos must have seemed a very remote disturbance to both the citizens of Egypt and of Babylon. Dynasties came and went in these cradle states of civilization, but the main tenor of human life went on, with a slow increase in refinement and complexity age by age. In Egypt the accumulated monuments of more ancient times—the pyramids were already in their third thousand of years and a show for visitors just as they are to-day—were supplemented by fresh and splendid buildings, more particularly in the time of the seventeenth and nineteenth dynasties. The great temples at Karnak and Luxor date from this time. All the chief monuments of

Nineveh, the great temples, the winged bulls with human heads, the reliefs of kings and chariots and lion hunts, were done in these centuries between 1600 and 600 B.C., and this period also covers most of the splendours of Babylon.



FRIEZE SHOWING EGYPTIAN FEMALE SLAVES CARRYING LUXURIOUS FOODS

Photo: Jacques Boyer

Both from Mesopotamia and Egypt we now have abundant public records, business accounts, stories, poetry and private correspondence. We know that life, for prosperous and influential people in such cities as Babylon and the Egyptian Thebes, was already almost as refined and as luxurious as that of comfortable and prosperous people to-day. Such people lived an orderly and ceremonious life in beautiful and beautifully furnished and decorated houses, wore richly decorated clothing and lovely jewels; they had feasts and festivals, entertained one another with music and dancing, were waited upon by highly trained servants, were cared for by doctors and dentists. They did not travel very much or very far, but boating excursions were a common summer pleasure both on the Nile and on the Euphrates. The beast of burthen was the ass; the horse was still used only in chariots for war and upon occasions of state. The mule was still novel and the camel, though it was known in Mesopotamia, had not been brought into Egypt. And there were few utensils of iron; copper and bronze remained the prevailing metals. Fine linen and cotton fabrics were known as well as wool. But there was no silk yet. Glass was known and beautifully coloured, but glass things were usually small. There was no clear glass and no optical use of glass. People had gold stoppings in their teeth but no spectacles on their noses.

One odd contrast between the life of old Thebes or Babylon and modern life was the absence of coined money. Most trade was still done by barter. Babylon was financially far ahead of Egypt. Gold and silver were used for exchange and kept in ingots; and there were bankers, before coinage, who stamped their names and the weight on

these lumps of precious metal. A merchant or traveller would carry precious stones to sell to pay for his necessities. Most servants and workers were slaves who were paid not money but in kind. As money came in slavery declined.

A modern visitor to these crowning cities of the ancient world would have missed two very important articles of diet; there were no hens and no eggs. A French cook would have found small joy in Babylon. These things came from the East somewhere about the time of the last Assyrian empire.

Religion like everything else had undergone great refinement. Human sacrifice for instance had long since disappeared; animals or bread dummies had been substituted for the victim. (But the Phœnicians and especially the citizens of Carthage, their greatest settlement in Africa, were accused, later of immolating human beings.) When a great chief had died in the ancient days it had been customary to sacrifice his wives and slaves and break spear and bow at his tomb so that he should not go unattended and unarmed in the spirit world. In Egypt there survived of this dark tradition the pleasant custom of burying small models of house and shop and servants and cattle with the dead, models that give us to-day the liveliest realization of the safe and cultivated life of these ancient people, three thousand years and more ago.



THE TEMPLE OF HORUS AT EDFU

Such was the ancient world before the coming of the Aryans out of the northern forests and plains. In India and China there were parallel developments. In the great valleys of both these regions agricultural city states of brownish peoples were growing up, but in India they do not seem to have advanced or coalesced so rapidly as the city states of Mesopotamia or Egypt. They were nearer the level of the ancient Sumerians or of the Maya civilization of America. Chinese history has still to be modernized by Chinese scholars and cleared of much legendary matter. Probably China at this time was in advance of India. Contemporary with the seventeenth dynasty in Egypt, there was a dynasty of emperors in China, the Shang dynasty, priest emperors over a loose-knit empire of subordinate kings. The chief duty of these early emperors was to perform the seasonal sacrifices. Beautiful bronze vessels from the time of the Shang dynasty still exist, and their beauty and workmanship compel us to recognize that many centuries of civilization must have preceded their manufacture.

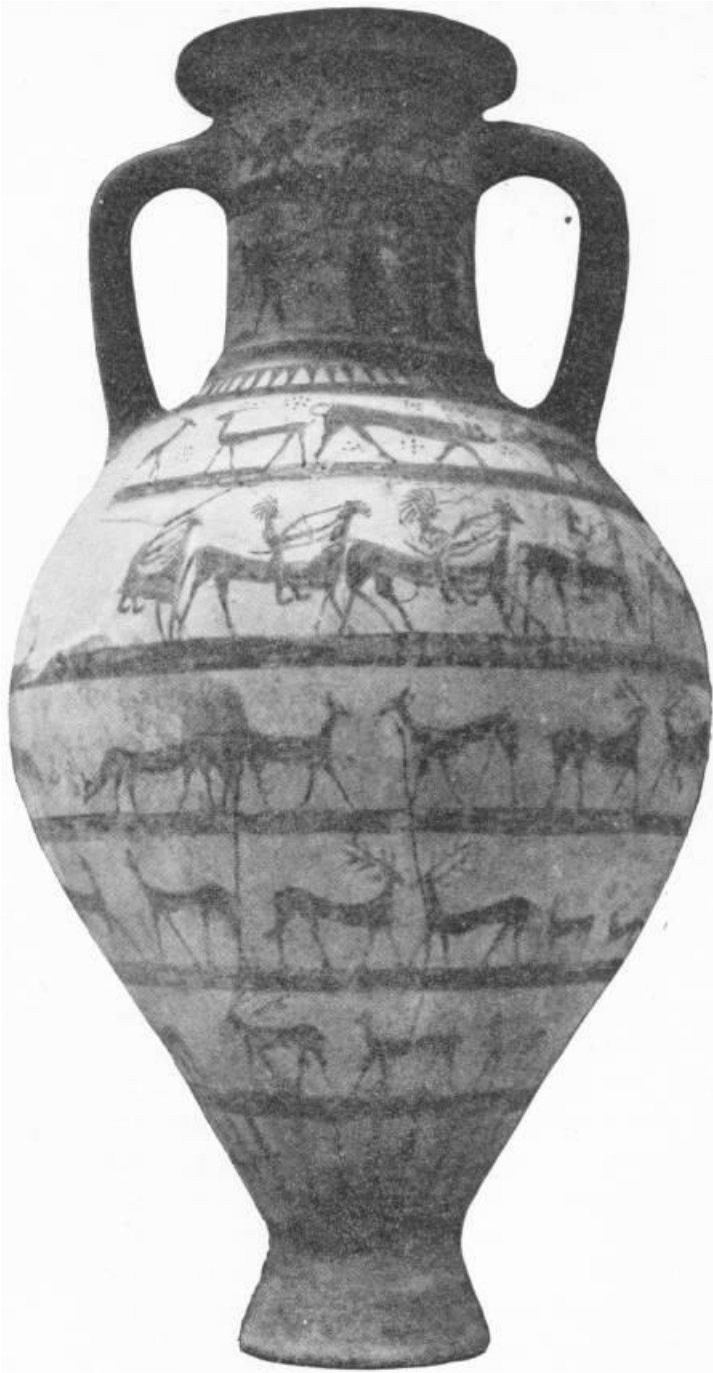
XIX

THE PRIMITIVE ARYANS

Four thousand years ago, that is to say about 2000 B.C., central and south-eastern Europe and central Asia were probably warmer, moister and better wooded than they are now. In these regions of the earth wandered a group of tribes mainly of the fair and blue-eyed Nordic race, sufficiently in touch with one another to speak merely variations of one common language from the Rhine to the Caspian Sea. At that time they may not have been a very numerous people, and their existence was unsuspected by the Babylonians to whom Hammurabi was giving laws, or by the already ancient and cultivated land of Egypt which was tasting in those days for the first time the bitterness of foreign conquest.

These Nordic people were destined to play a very important part indeed in the world's history. They were a people of the parklands and the forest clearings; they had no horses at first but they had cattle; when they wandered they put their tents and other gear on rough ox waggons; when they settled for a time they may have made huts of wattle and mud. They burnt their important dead; they did not bury them ceremoniously as the brunette peoples did. They put the ashes of their greater leaders in urns and then made a great circular mound about them. These mounds are the "round barrows" that occur all over north Europe. The brunette people, their predecessors, did not burn their dead but buried them in a sitting position in elongated mounds; the "long barrows."

The Aryans raised crops of wheat, ploughing with oxen, but they did not settle down by their crops; they would reap and move on. They had bronze, and somewhen about 1500 B.C. they acquired iron. They may have been the discoverers of iron smelting. And somewhen vaguely about that time they also got the horse—which to begin with they used only for draught purposes. Their social life did not centre upon a temple like that of the more settled people round the Mediterranean, and their chief men were leaders rather than priests. They had an aristocratic social order rather than a divine and regal order; from a very early stage they distinguished certain families as leaderly and noble.



A BEAUTIFUL ARCHAIC AMPHORA

Compare the horses and other animals with the Altamira drawing on p. 54, and also with the Greek frieze, p. 140

They were a very vocal people. They enlivened their wanderings by feasts, at which there was much drunkenness and at which a special sort of man, the bards, would sing and recite. They had no writing until they had come into contact with civilization,

and the memories of these bards were their living literature. This use of recited language as an entertainment did much to make it a fine and beautiful instrument of expression, and to that no doubt the subsequent predominance of the languages derived from Aryan is, in part, to be ascribed. Every Aryan people had its legendary history crystallized in bardic recitations, epics, sagas and vedas, as they were variously called.

The social life of these people centred about the households of their leading men. The hall of the chief where they settled for a time was often a very capacious timber building. There were no doubt huts for herds and outlying farm buildings; but with most of the Aryan peoples this hall was the general centre, everyone went there to feast and hear the bards and take part in games and discussions. Cowsheds and stabling surrounded it. The chief and his wife and so forth would sleep on a dais or in an upper gallery; the commoner sort slept about anywhere, as people still do in Indian households. Except for weapons, ornaments, tools and suchlike personal possessions there was a sort of patriarchal communism in the tribe. The chief owned the cattle and grazing lands in the common interest; forest and rivers were the wild.

This was the fashion of the people who were increasing and multiplying over the great spaces of central Europe and west central Asia during the growth of the great civilization of Mesopotamia and the Nile, and whom we find pressing upon the heliolithic peoples everywhere in the second millennium before Christ. They were coming into France and Britain and into Spain. They pushed westward in two waves. The first of these people who reached Britain and Ireland were armed with bronze weapons. They exterminated or subjugated the people who had made the great stone monuments of Carnac in Brittany and Stonehenge and Avebury in England. They reached Ireland. They are called the Goidelic Celts. The second wave of a closely kindred people, perhaps intermixed with other racial elements, brought iron with it into Great Britain, and is known as the wave of Brythonic Celts. From them the Welsh derive their language.



THE MOUND OF NIPPUR

The site of a city which recent excavations have proved to date from at least as early as 5000 B.C., and probably 1000 years earlier

Photo: Underwood & Underwood

Kindred Celtic peoples were pressing southward into Spain and coming into contact not only with the heliolithic Basque people who still occupied the country but with the Semitic Phœnician colonies of the sea coast. A closely allied series of tribes, the Italians, were making their way down the still wild and wooded Italian peninsula. They did not always conquer. In the eighth century B.C. Rome appears in history, a trading

town on the Tiber, inhabited by Aryan Latins but under the rule of Etruscan nobles and kings.

At the other extremity of the Aryan range there was a similar progress southward of similar tribes. Aryan peoples, speaking Sanskrit, had come down through the western passes into North India long before 1000 B.C. There they came into contact with a primordial brunette civilization, the Dravidian civilization, and learnt much from it. Other Aryan tribes seem to have spread over the mountain masses of Central Asia far to the east of the present range of such peoples. In Eastern Turkestan there are still fair, blue-eyed Nordic tribes, but now they speak Mongolian tongues.

Between the Black and Caspian Seas the ancient Hittites had been submerged and "Aryanized" by the Armenians before 1000 B.C., and the Assyrians and Babylonians were already aware of a new and formidable fighting barbarism on the north-eastern frontiers, a group of tribes amidst which the Scythians, the Medes and the Persians remain as outstanding names.

But it was through the Balkan peninsula that Aryan tribes made their first heavy thrust into the heart of the old-world civilization. They were already coming southward and crossing into Asia Minor many centuries before 1000 B.C. First came a group of tribes of whom the Phrygians were the most conspicuous, and then in succession the Æolic, the Ionic and the Dorian Greeks. By 1000 B.C. they had wiped out the ancient Ægean civilization both in the mainland of Greece and in most of the Greek islands; the cities of Mycenæ and Tiryns were obliterated and Cnossos was nearly forgotten. The Greeks had taken to the sea before 1000 A.D., they had settled in Crete and Rhodes, and they were founding colonies in Sicily and the south of Italy after the fashion of the Phœnician trading cities that were dotted along the Mediterranean coasts.

So it was, while Tiglath Pileser III and Sargon II and Sardanapalus were ruling in Assyria and fighting with Babylonia and Syria and Egypt, the Aryan peoples were learning the methods of civilization and making it over for their own purposes in Italy and Greece and north Persia. The theme of history from the ninth century B.C. A.D. onward for six centuries is the story of how these Aryan peoples grew to power and enterprise and how at last they subjugated the whole Ancient World, Semitic, Ægean and Egyptian alike. In form the Aryan peoples were altogether victorious; but the struggle of Aryan, Semitic and Egyptian ideas and methods was continued long after the sceptre was in Aryan hands. It is indeed a struggle that goes on through all the rest of history and still in a manner continues to this day.

XX

THE LAST BABYLONIAN EMPIRE AND THE EMPIRE OF DARIUS I

We have already mentioned how Assyria became a great military power under Tiglath Pileser III and under the usurper Sargon II. Sargon was not this man's original name; he adopted it to flatter the conquered Babylonians by reminding them of that ancient founder of the Akkadian Empire, Sargon I, two thousand years before his time. Babylon, for all that it was a conquered city, was of greater population and importance than Nineveh, and its great god Bel Marduk and its traders and priests had to be treated politely. In Mesopotamia in the eighth century B.C. A.D. we are already far beyond the barbaric days when the capture of a town meant loot and massacre. Conquerors sought to propitiate and win the conquered. For a century and a half after Sargon the new Assyrian empire endured and, as we have noted, Assurbanipal (Sardanapalus) held at least lower Egypt.

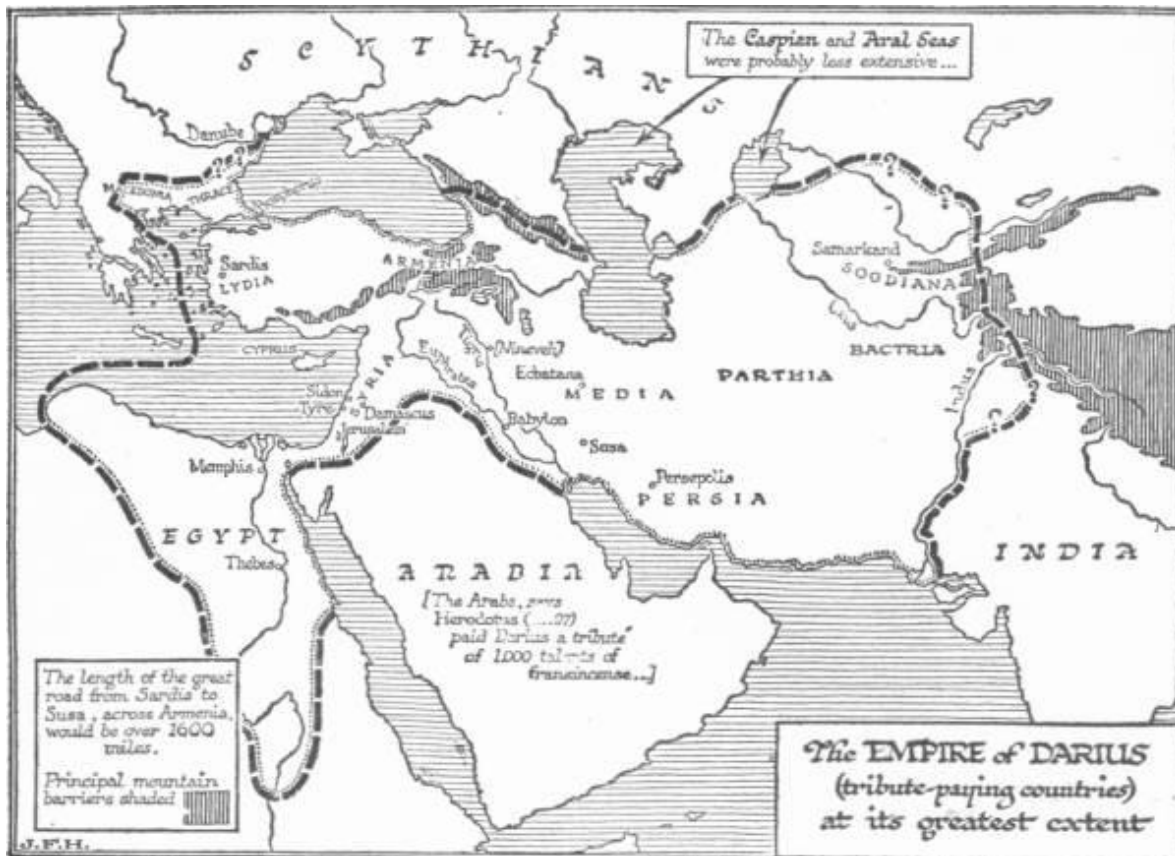
But the power and solidarity of Assyria waned rapidly. Egypt by an effort threw off the foreigner under a Pharaoh Psammetichus I, and under Necho II attempted a war of conquest in Syria. By that time Assyria was grappling with foes nearer at hand, and could make but a poor resistance. A Semitic people from south-east Mesopotamia, the Chaldeans, combined with Aryan Medes and Persians from the north-east against Nineveh, and in 606 B.C.—for now we are coming down to exact chronology—took that city.

There was a division of the spoils of Assyria. A Median Empire was set up in the north under Cyaxares. It included Nineveh, and its capital was Ecbatana. Eastward it reached to the borders of India. To the south of this in a great crescent was a new Chaldean Empire, the Second Babylonian Empire, which rose to a very great degree of wealth and power under the rule of Nebuchadnezzar the Great (the Nebuchadnezzar of the Bible). The last great days, the greatest days of all, for Babylon began. For a time the two Empires remained at peace, and the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar was married to Cyaxares.

Meanwhile Necho II was pursuing his easy conquests in Syria. He had defeated and slain King Josiah of Judah, a small country of which there is more to tell presently, at the battle of Megiddo in 608 B.C., and he pushed on to the Euphrates to encounter not a decadent Assyria but a nascent Babylonia. The Chaldeans dealt very vigorously with the Egyptians. Necho was routed and driven back to Egypt, and the Babylonian frontier pushed down to the ancient Egyptian boundaries.



From 606 until 589 B.C. the Second Babylonian Empire flourished insecurely. It flourished so long as it kept the peace with the stronger, hardier Median Empire to the north. And during these sixty-seven years not only life but learning flourished in the ancient city.



Even under the Assyrian monarchs and especially under Sardanapalus, Babylon had been a scene of great intellectual activity. Sardanapalus, though an Assyrian, had been quite Babylon-ized. He made a library, a library not of paper but of the clay tablets that were used for writing in Mesopotamia since early Sumerian days. His collection has been unearthed and is perhaps the most precious store of historical material in the world. The last of the Chaldean line of Babylonian monarchs, Nabonidus, had even keener literary tastes. He patronized antiquarian researches, and when a date was worked out by his investigators for the accession of Sargon I he commemorated the fact by inscriptions. But there were many signs of disunion in his empire, and he sought to centralize it by bringing a number of the various local gods to Babylon and setting up temples to them there. This device was to be practised quite successfully by the Romans in later times, but in Babylon it roused the jealousy of the powerful priesthood of Bel Marduk, the dominant god of the Babylonians. They cast about for a possible alternative to Nabonidus and found it in Cyrus the Persian, the ruler of the adjacent Median Empire. Cyrus had already distinguished himself by conquering Croesus, the rich king of Lydia in Eastern Asia Minor. He came up against Babylon, there was a battle outside the walls, and the gates of the city were opened to him (538 B.C.). His soldiers entered the city without fighting. The crown prince

Belshazzar, the son of Nabonidus, was feasting, the Bible relates, when a hand appeared and wrote in letters of fire upon the wall these mystical words: "*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin,*" which was interpreted by the prophet Daniel, whom he summoned to read the riddle, as "God has numbered thy kingdom and finished it; thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting and thy kingdom is given to the Medes and Persians." Possibly the priests of Bel Marduk knew something about that writing on the wall. Belshazzar was killed that night, says the Bible. Nabonidus was taken prisoner, and the occupation of the city was so peaceful that the services of Bel Marduk continued without intermission.