CHAPTER VI

The Middle Ages: The Formative Period in Modern Civilization

I. THE MIDDLE AGES DEFINED

The Time Element. The expression *Middle Ages* is commonly employed to designate the period from the breakdown of the Roman Empire in the West to the beginning of the Renaissance and the Reformation. Material, however, will be included that does not apply to the actual time between the dates 476 and 1500, but that does, in a general way, contribute to the transition from classical civilization to modern times. This is true not only of western Europe but also of the civilization centers in other parts of the world. It is not advisable to adhere strictly to chronology, because changes have occurred in different sections at different times. In reality, some of the more backward peoples of the world are just emerging from conditions similar to those which the Europeans experienced over 500 years ago.

The "Dark Ages." The term *Dark Ages* has been used frequently to designate the early part of the Middle Ages. This is to a very great degree a misnomer. The period was called "dark" primarily because there was so little known about it and because of a general disregard for what actually happened at that time. The Humanists of the 15th century probably coined the phrase because of their enthusiasm over the importance of the revived classics and their abhorrence for the time in which the classics were so generally neglected. It is true that the Germans, when they first invaded the southern part of Europe, had little respect for Roman

and Greek culture. However, they were typical pioneers, struggling to establish themselves in a new country and having very little time to devote to culture.

The Germanic invasions did retard temporarily the cultural developments in southern Europe, but the Germans contributed the necessary elements which enabled the building of a new and greater culture upon the old order. The eastern part of Europe escaped the Germanic invasions, and it would be incorrect to class the cultural developments of the Byzantine Empire and of the Arabs as belonging to a dark age.

• *The Age of Transition.* By the time of the fall of Rome, classical civilization in western Europe had reached a standstill. It had either run its course or it lacked inherent qualities to go further. There were constant efforts to keep alive the Roman tradition of unity and the classical ideal of culture, but the old order was passing. There was an obvious clash between the old and the new, and the Germans threw the balance in favor of the new. They were impressed with Roman institutions, arts, and letters, and in the course of time accepted them in part. The fusion of Hellenistic and barbarian customs, temperaments, and blood produced the germ of Western civilization. Naturally, it took a long time for these backwoodsmen to become acclimated to their new enviroment. Through their ignorance, much that was of cultural value was destroyed and much more was allowed to disappear. It should be remembered, however, that deterioration in Roman culture had begun before the barbarians arrived. Consequently, they cannot be held responsible for starting the decline.

II. THE MIDDLE AGES INTRODUCED

1. THE GERMANS

The Germans before the Invasions. The German language, like the Celtic, Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit, constituted a subdivision of a wider category called *Indo-European.* According to Tacitus, the Germans had "fierce blue eyes and reddish hair; great bodies, especially powerful for attack, but not equally potent for hard work; little able to withstand heat and thirst, though by climate and soil they have been inured to cold and hunger." They chose the northern part of Europe for their home

instead of the more favorable lands in the Mediterranean basin. They had neither the cultural contacts that the Italians and the Greeks had in the southern part of Europe, not the favorable geographical environment. Their culture, before they came into contact with Rome, was similar to that of the American Indians when the white man landed in North America. They were semi-nomadic, practicing a crude form of agriculture, together with grazing, hunting, and fishing. The men did the hunting and the fighting while the women performed the more menial domestic tasks.

Their political and social relationship rested primarily upon blood ties. The Germans did not have the Roman conception of a state. They bound themselves to some brave leader with an oath of allegiance, instead of considering themselves citizens of a state. The Germans were good fighters and ultimately proved themselves superior to the Romans in this respect. There was a tendency to form confederations among the tribes; by the 5th century there were six of these which held sway in the territory immediately north of the Roman frontier. They were insistent on family purity. "Almost alone among the barbarians they were content with one wife," wrote Tacitus. They were opposed to immorality and corruption but they were not free from vices. They drank to excess and were so fond of gambling that they would sometimes stake their own personal liberty.

There was considerable nature worship in their religion; forests, swamps, ocean mists, and lightning were deified. Before they entered the Roman Empire, many Germans were converted to Christianity, largely through the efforts of Ulfilas, a West Goth, who translated the Bible into a language understandable to many of the natives.[1] Unfortunately for the peace of Europe, many of the converts were Arians and when they entered the empire they were considered as heretics by the Roman Catholics.

Causes for Invasions. The Germans threatened to break the Roman frontier for centuries before they were finally successful. As early as 113 B.C., an invasion of the Germans threatened to overrun Italy. They were attracted by the evidences of material wealth in Rome, a place where their desires for plunder could be

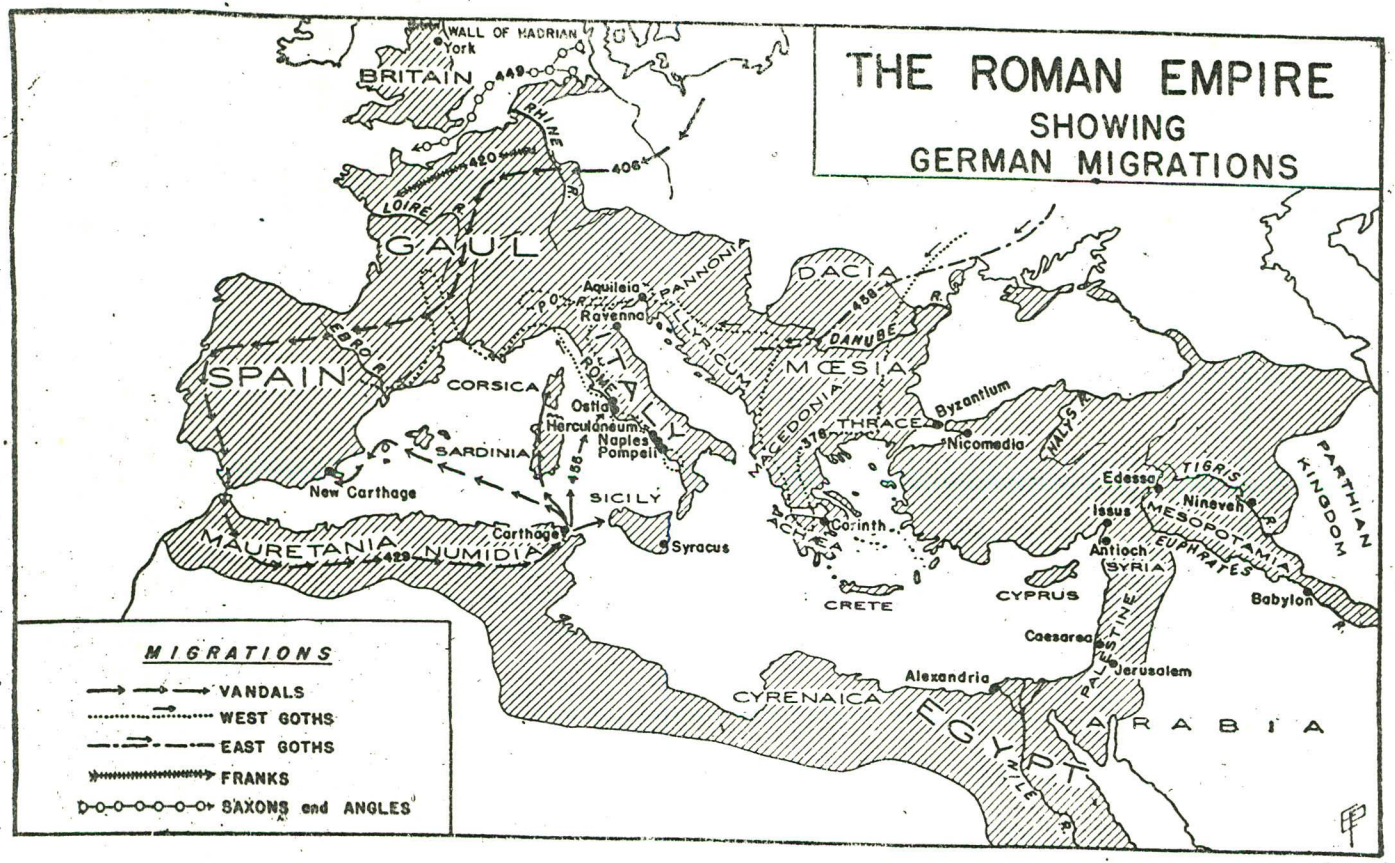
[1] A part of this Bible, written on scarlet parchment, is in the library of the University of Uppsala in Sweden.

satisfied. The climate of Germany was uncomfortable and the population had increased to the point where it was difficult to gain a comfortable living. Finally, they were literally pushed out of their own lands by the Slavs and the Huns.

The Germanic Invasions. The West Goths, attempting to escape the fury of the Huns, applied for and received permission from the Romans to settle in the Roman Empire in 375. These Goths, soon becoming dissatisfied under Roman rule, rebelled, and defeated the Roman army at the battle of Adrianople in 378, one of the decisive battles of world history. The respect that the Germans had held for the fighting ability of the Romans was gone, and the frontier barrier that had held for centuries was broken. Under Alaric, the West Goths marched from one end of the empire to the other—through Greece, across Italy—sacking Rome in 410, and finally settling in Spain.

Many other German tribes, following the precedent set by the West Goths, crossed over into Roman territory. The Vandals settled near the site of the ancient city of Carthage, from which they sent expeditions to Italy and, in 455, sacked Rome. The Burgundians inhabited the Rhone Valley; the East Goths, under Theodoric, established a kingdom in the central part of Italy; and the Lombards found a favorable location in the fertile valley of the Po River in the northern part of Italy. The Franks, under Clovis, crossed the Rhine and settled in Gaul. They were destined to become one of the most powerful and influential of all the German tribes. By the middle of the 6th century, the Germans had occupied most of the western division of the Roman Empire. The glory that was once Rome's had faded, and barbarians, upon whom the proud Romans had frowned as vulgar and insignificant, were in undisputed possession of the land.

What the Germans Added. The Germans made valuable contributions of qualities that decadent Rome was unable to produce. A young, vigorous, and healthy race, they added a much-needed element to the rather degenerate Romans. They brought the love of individual liberty and the idea of the people's participating in the affairs of the government—concepts that had disappeared among the Romans long before the fall of the empire. The idea that the sovereign obtains his right to rule from the consent of the people is a German contribution. Their local courts controlled


THE ROMAN EMPIRE
SHOWING
GERMAN MIGRATIONS
WALL OF HADRIAN
York
BRITAIN
449
RHINE R.
406
420
LOIRE R.
GAUL
Aquileia
PANNONIA
DACIA
PO R.
Ravenna
ILLYRICUM
458
DANUBE R.
SPAIN
EBRO R.
ITALY
ROME
MŒSIA
CORSICA
Ostia
Herculaneum
Naples
Pompeii
Byzantium
MACEDONIA
376
THRACE
Nicomedia
HALYS R.
SARDINIA
455
New Carthage
SICILY
Edessa
TIGRIS R.
Nineveh
Issus
MESOPOTAMIA
PARTHIAN KINGDOM
Corinth
ACHAEA
Carthage
Syracus
MAURETANIA
429
NUMIDIA
Antioch
SYRIA
EUPHRATES R.
CRETE
CYPRUS
Babylon
Caesarea
PALESTINE
Jerusalem
Alexandria
CYRENAICA
EGYPT
NILE R.
ARABIA
MIGRATIONS
VANDALS
WEST GOTHS
EAST GOTHS
FRANKS
SAXONS and ANGLES

purely local matters and furnished a model for what later became legislative assemblies.

The German idea of law is important in the development of legal ideas in Western civilization. In contrast to the Roman, it was personal. Legal rights were inherited; law was a part of the individual, which he took with him wherever he went. A criminal charge was regarded as an attack on honor and the accused had to reinstate himself in society. In order to do this, he had to declare himself innocent under oath and get enough people to swear that they believed he was telling the truth. This procedure was called *compurgation*. Religion was an underlying principle of German law; man would rather confess a crime than to incur the hatred of the gods for broken faith. The ordeal was utilized extensively in determining guilt. God was supposed to interfere on the side of the innocent and see that no harm should come to him, while the guilty was supposed to suffer from the effects of the ordeal in accordance with his guilt.

German and Roman Fusion. Many of these practices seem crude and barbarous when compared with the standards of later developments. They seem even a step backward when compared with the established Roman customs of the time. The real contribution of the Germans was, however, insistence upon the rights of the individual to participate in the government. In establishing this principle, they laid one of the important foundation stones of democracy. Very few German institutions developed without taking on Roman characteristics, and the Romans continued to hold important positions in the political and cultural organizations. They became teachers of the more backward Germans, just as, centuries earlier, the conquered Greeks had taught the Romans. The blending of German and Roman into an organic whole continued throughout the Middle Ages and ultimately formed the groundwork for modern European civilization.

The Northmen. The invasions of the Northmen in the 8th and 9th centuries were more destructive than those of the Germans had been. From Ireland to the Black Sea, the new invaders spread havoc with pillage and wholesale murder. After having pillaged a country, the Northmen frequently became permanent settlers. In navigation, they exceeded all other people of the time. Their boats were small and were propelled with oars and an occasional sail,

but these seamen possessed a native talent for seafaring life. They were the first to cross the Atlantic Ocean, reaching North America 500 years before Columbus set sail from Spain. They were well trained in military technique. They introduced the coat of mail, used the battle ax and bows and arrows, and were skilled horsemen.

The Northmen settled in England in the 9th century. Alfred the Great (871–899) granted them the right to settle north of a line drawn from the mouth of the Thames to Chester, in the territory known as the Danelaw. The Northmen, who were brought under the control of Wessex in 954, were readily assimilated with the Anglo-Saxons. The power of the Northmen was revived in the early part of the 11th century, when most of England under Canute (1017–1035) was united with Norway and Denmark to form a great northern empire. The Northmen explored and made settlements in Iceland and Greenland, which were steppingstones to America. Others went eastward into Russia, up the Volkhov to Novgorod, down the Volga, and along the Dnieper. Other significant settlements were made in France, Spain, and Italy. When once they were settled, the Northmen became active in trade and industry. They opened a trade route across Russia from Novgorod to Constantinople and established important trading posts in London, Lübeck, Danzig, and Hamburg. They made some important contributions in political administration and were pioneers in exploration, colonization, and the development of trade.

2. CHRISTIANITY

Transition. The origin of Christianity has been described in a previous chapter (see page 184*ff.*), and mention has been made of the fact that Christianity did not conform with the basic ideals of the Roman Empire. Christians, who were political nonconformists, helped to undermine the authority of the emperor. They also advocated a new philosophy, that was opposed to established social and economic principles. Clearly, Christianity aided in the general transition from the classical period to that of the Middle Ages. In the interval of chaos that followed the fall of Rome, the church emerged as the most powerful single institution, and it held that position throughout the Middle Ages. The Roman Catholic Church was the successor to the Roman Empire and the pope became the overlord of western Europe in the place of the emperor.

The disillusioned people turned to the church, and it provided practical aid as well as consolation. Even scholars found refuge in religious institutions, and the barbarian invaders were induced to leniency through their being taught the ideals of Christian civilization.

Origin of the Church. The Apostles considered themselves the successors of Jesus, from whom they had received divine appointment and inspiration. Congregations, when they were once established, selected elders or presbyters from their group to carry on the business and to perform the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Deacons also were appointed, to supervise congregations and to administer charitable work. These early officials, it seems, were chosen with the consent of the congregations.

Bishops, who later became the chief functionaries and dignitaries of the congregation, served originally as presiding officers of the presbyters. Their authority and prestige was enhanced with divine authority. They were accepted as interpreters of doctrine, they performed the sacred rituals, and they judged the moral life of the faithful. In short, they assumed the role of God's agents to supervise the worldly lives of men. Bishops within a province, when they met as a group, became a *synod*, and a meeting of all the bishops of the church was called an *ecumenical council*. These officials were expected to withdraw from the ordinary pursuits of life in order properly to perform their functions. Their power increased so rapidly that by the beginning of the 5th century their authority was supreme over Christian congregations and they enjoyed political, economic, and intellectual privileges from lay authority. The bishop was the most important figure in the early Christian church and, throughout its entire history, his office has remained the cornerstone of the ecclesiastical system.

As the power of the bishops advanced, there developed a struggle for primacy. Theoretically, in the early period all bishops were equal, but some, because of personal prestige or the location of their dioceses (the territory under the bishops' control), became more outstanding. Gradually, the bishop of Rome became the most powerful. Rome was the most important city in the empire and the church organization was modeled closely after that of the Roman Empire. The church organization and system of administration were Roman in practice, if not in origin. It should be kept

in mind that there is a clear distinction between the church and Christianity. The church is the governmental organization and Christianity is the faith upon which the church is built. After the seat of the empire was transferred to Constantinople, and after the centralized authority of the emperor decreased, much of his authority was assumed by the bishop of Rome. Roman control over many of the eastern bishops was never supreme, but in the time of Pope Innocent I (402–417), the principle "Rome has spoken, the matter is closed" was accepted generally.

Great confusion and difference of opinion exists about the actual origin of the church. The importance of the city of Rome gives a practical reason for its becoming the head. However, there were theological reasons, which were accepted by followers of Christianity. St. Peter's Church, recognized as the mother church, was located in Rome, and both Peter and Paul suffered martyrdom in that city. The idea that Jesus founded the church is based upon this charge to Peter (Matt. 16:18): "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." That provided the basis for the Petrine doctrine. Pope Leo I (440–461) secured general acceptance of this principle and further added: "Whatever Christ gave to the other Apostles, he gave only through Peter; the firmness which was given to Peter by Christ was conferred upon the other Apostles by St. Peter; Peter is the prince of Apostles, and ruled personally those whom Christ rules supremely." This doctrine of the apostolic succession made the Roman bishop the direct successor of Peter. Leo I was active as a church leader in other ways besides being a great interpreter of doctrine. He intervened in the ecclesiastical affairs of the East, in Gaul, Spain, and Africa, where he was accepted as sovereign. In 451, he induced Attila the Hun to withdraw from Italy, and four years later he saved part of Rome from the Vandals. He replaced the ancient Roman municipal administration with an ecclesiastical system. Truthfully, it can be said that Rome lost the emperor and gained the pope.

The Sacramental System. Christianity, unlike most of the

other religions, concerned itself mainly with proper mediation of the individual with the spiritual powers concerning immortality. The church represented God on earth in the conflict with evil and provided the ultimate assurance of eternal salvation. In human existence, there are crises in which the individual needs special sustenance: for instance, in birth, adolescence, marriage, sin, and imminent death. The Christian church provided practices to secure God's aid in such crises. This is known as the "sacramental system." St. Augustine, as early as the 5th century, defined a sacrament as "an outward sign of an inward grace." The spiritual power of the medieval church rested on the seven sacraments. These were essential in the conquest of man's higher nature over his lower, and prevented complete extinction by death.

Baptism, confirmation, the Holy Eucharist, penance, extreme unction, ordination, and matrimony were the seven sacraments that had been accepted by the 12th century. Baptism erased the effects of the original sin. Confirmation was a public declaration of a child, at about twelve years of age, of his baptism. The Holy Eucharist, or the Lord's Supper, was the miraculous transformation of the bread and wine into the flesh and blood of Christ (transubstantiation). It was designed to strengthen man in the crises of life and to provide spiritual regeneration. Penance provided a means of escape for the backslider, forgiveness of sin for which the individual was responsible. Extreme unction was the anointing of one about to die, in order to wipe away the last of earth's stain from the soul. Ordination was conferred by the bishop on a candidate for priesthood and carried with it the power to bestow divine grace through the sacraments. Marriage, as a sacrament, sanctified the union of man and wife and legitimized the begetting of children. The administration of the sacraments was the primary business of the church.

The Development of Church Doctrine. The fundamental basis for the doctrine of the Christian church is the Bible, the teachings of Christ and of his immediate associates. Nevertheless, Christian doctrine has changed from time to time, owing to new conditions that have given rise to innumerable questions and problems. Changes were made by the so-called "church fathers"; some were made by outstanding popes; still others were suggested by monks and by lay philosophers.

Early Church Fathers. It was largely through the efforts of the church fathers, not only as organizers of the ecclesiastical system, but also as religious interpreters, that Christianity emerged as the prevailing religion in the West. Many of these were scholars trained in classical philosophy, which was frequently reflected in their work. Origen (185–254) drew heavily from Greek philosophy in his interpretations. Athanasius (*ca.* 298–373), Bishop of Alexandria, was one of the most prominent among the Fathers of the Greek Church and is best known for his defense of the doctrine of the Trinity against the heresy of Arius. He succeeded at the Council of Nicaea (325) in discrediting Arius. This was one of the most bitter controversies in early church history. John Chrysostom (*ca.* 347–407) was the greatest preacher of his time, exerting influence among all classes.

The Fathers of the Latin Church also were active in sponsoring Christianity and in interpreting its doctrine. Ambrose (340–397), Bishop of Milan, trained for an administrative career in law, advocated orthodoxy in theology and ecclesiastical supremacy over secularism. Jerome (*ca.* 340–420), the great scholar among the early church fathers, made a translation of the Bible, known as the Vulgate, which became the accepted rendering of the scriptures in the Roman Church. Furthermore, his writings on the history of the early church are the most authoritative that were produced up to his time.

Augustine (*ca.* 354–430), Bishop of Hippo in North Africa, was the most famous of a distinguished group of Latin theologians. Aside from being a great organizer and preacher, he wrote two famous books, *The City of God*, and the *Confessions*. He believed that salvation was possible "only by God of His own free will," and he advocated the doctrine of original sin. He opposed the idea that evil is co-eternal with good, which comes from God (Manichaean theory), and stated that "in Adam's fall we sinned all," Augustine believed that God had bestowed a divine grace upon those predestined to salvation and that God was the author of all good deeds. The church, according to Augustine, through the administration of the sacraments, was the only means of grace and salvation. It had five qualities: unity, holiness, salvation, catholicity, and apostolicity.

In his *City of God*, Augustine sponsored idealism and spiritual-

ism. Generally, Rome had come to be regarded as the eternal city described in the Bible. When Rome fell into the hands of barbarians, many questioned the real strength of the Christian God for permitting such a thing to happen. Augustine pleaded that Rome was not the celestial city, but that such a city did exist outside the reach of mortal man. "Citizens are begotten to the earthly city by nature vitiated by sin, but to the heavenly city by graces freeing nature from sin." Augustine helped in this way to renew idealism in Christianity and encouraged the development of faith in something beyond a material life. To him, the church was the final undisputed authority in all things. In spite of all the good influence that Augustine exerted, it should be noted that his dictum claiming knowledge of God and the human soul to be the only intellectual activity worthy of man had a narrowing cultural influence. In his view, history was the epic of the saints, and the physical universe merely a divine poem.

The Great Theological Disputes. Many of the basic principles of the Christian church were established only after bitter theological controversies. In a sense, this is still true; and some think that such experiences provide Christianity with dynamics that are necessary in a great religion. The Arian controversy arose over the Trinity. Arius (*ca.* 310–336) asserted the unity of God and denied the divinity of Christ. "God is One, Eternal, and unbegotten, and all other beings are His Creatures." Athanasius, as has been previously noted, rose in defense of the Trinity. The whole question was discussed during the First Ecumenical Council at Nicaea in 325. The doctrinal issue was: Is God *one* or *three* persons? The council decided on the concept "of one substance," each of the three persons of the Trinity was considered as an essential principle of the substance. "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father . . . , and in the Holy Ghost."

The victory over Arius at Nicaea did not end the controversy concerning the Trinity. Arius and a number of his followers went into northern Europe, where many of the Germans were converted to Arianism. When the Roman Empire was invaded, these converts carried the heresy back into Christian lands. The Nestorian controversy represented another dispute over the godhead in the

question of the nature of Christ. What was the relation of His human to His divine nature? There was a traditional belief that He was one person with two natures, while another contended that Christ was not of the same substance as man. The ecumenical council held at Ephesus in 431 decided upon a compromise, but insisted on the divinity of Christ. Many of the followers of Nestorius fled into Persia and continued to preach the heresy. The same dispute was later revived in the Monophysitic controversy, without any convincing decision except the furtherance of the breach between Rome and Constantinople, which finally resulted in a complete break.

Christian Dogma. Christian theories concerning dogma had become defined rather distinctly by the beginning of the 7th century. The following creeds were considered orthodox:

1. The Trinity: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost were considered to be God in one substance and three persons.

2. The Incarnation: God became man, in the person of Christ.

3. The Fall: Adam's sin doomed mortal man to the loss of fellowship with God.

4. The Virgin Birth: The miraculous birth of Christ.

5. The Dual Nature of Christ: He was God and also completely man.

6. The Atonement: God, as Christ, died as man to redeem the whole human race.

7. Grace: Man is given by God spiritual assistance to escape sin.

8. The Resurrection: Christ, having risen from the grave, gave promise of immortality to believers.

9. The Divine Foundation of the Church: The Church was founded by God, through Christ, to restore fellowship between God and man.

10. The Second Coming: The promise of the return of Christ to judge the quick and the dead.

Christian Theology. Closely associated with the dogma of the church was the system of theology. God, as a purely spiritual being, is immense, omniscient, almighty, and immortal. As a personal being, He is holy, just, merciful, truthful, and faithful. As the Father, He created the world and distinguished between good and evil. As Christ the Son, He reestablished the fellowship

with man; and as the Holy Spirit, He became the teacher of truth. God created all things: the universe, plants, animals, men, and angels. Out of His mercy, He promised to restore men to divine fellowship, even after Adam's sin. Finally, in promising the Second Coming there would be a Last Judgment, wherein the saved would enjoy immortal blessedness, and the damned would suffer without alleviation.

Relationship between Monasticism and the Church. Monasticism, a development in medieval Christianity outside the organization of the Roman Catholic Church, exerted a broad influence. Most of the monastic orders were originated, apart from the influence of the secular clergy, by some group, to fulfill a function that they thought the church failed to perform. The growing worldliness of the church and the clergy led the more pious to segregate themselves away from their fellow men and retire to the wilderness. Some interpreted as a command for renunciation these words of Jesus: "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. 10:38–40). The more important monastic orders were recognized, ultimately, by the church; but others were branded as heretic. The regular clergy[1] (a name designating monks, because they lived according to a stated rule) formed organizations apart from the hierachy of the Roman Catholic Church; but they were intended to supplement and to support the church in its work, rather than to form a separate religious organization.

Origin of Monasticism. Asceticism—as expressed in the monastic orders—like Christianity, had its origin in the East, where it was a prevalent idea in most of the Oriental religions. Gautama, Zoroaster, the Gnostics, and the patriarchs of Judaism taught that it was the duty of man to withdraw from the world in order to protect his soul. Early Christian teachers emphasized the dangers of promiscuous association with the evils of the world. St. Paul and St. Augustine looked upon sex as an evil ... upon women as potentially dangerous. St. Jerome warned his followers of the dangers of earthly joys. The earliest Christians who practiced isolation for spiritual purposes were in Asia Minor and Egypt.

[1] Priests, bishops, archbishops, and the pope, forming the ecclesiastical hierarchy, are referred to as the *secular clergy*.

Monasticism has had its greatest appeal in time of social and economic disturbances, when disillusioned people attempted to seek refuge from the evils of the world.

Organized monastic life offered inducements to people for other than spiritual reasons. Monks were excused from military service, debts, family obligations, personal bondage, and punishment for crime. The monastery offered protection against invaders; even the barbarians hesitated to enter the sanctuary. It also ensured for the inhabitants food and shelter, which, although meager, was better than many outside could afford. Just how many people entered the various orders for material reasons is impossible to determine. Many did, but taken as a whole, they represented a small percentage of the total number.

The Monastic Ideal. The monastic ideal was based upon the belief that life was intended merely as a preparation for eternity. The soul was imprisoned in the body and was thereby prevented from rising to God because it demanded worldly pleasures that come from the devil. Consequently, the more punishment inflicted on the body, the greater the favor to the soul. The teachings of Christ were interpreted as recommending a separation of the individual from society. St. Nilus contended that "it is a trap of Satan to be too much attached to one's family." The monks took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Poverty would protect them from the dangers of riches; chastity would separate them from the degenerating influence of sex; and obedience would prevent pride and vanity, among the worst of all sins.

Some of the monks went to great extremes in punishing themselves. St. Pachomius slept only in an erect position. Macarius lived in a swamp, so that mosquitos could feed on his blood. St. Simeon Stylites lived on top of a column in the desert of Arabia for forty years. St. Anthony, one of the most renowned of the solitaries, sold all his property, gave the money for charity, and went to live in the desert of Egypt. He lived on bread, which was brought to him at intervals of six months; he wore a hair shirt because it was uncomfortable, and spent the days and nights in prayer. "Oh sun," he protested, "why hast thou risen and prevented my contemplating the true light?" The monks of the West were not so selfish in their work. One of their motives was service to the church and to mankind, which to them was a means of

preparing themselves for the next world. Many spent their lives preaching and caring for the afflicted. Taken as a whole, monasticism stood for the material betterment and the spiritual uplifting of mankind.

Monasticism in the West. The monastic practices in the East were primarily individualistic, while in the West they followed the Roman idea of forming organizations with elaborate constitutions and centralized governments. St. Benedict (born about 480) established the famous monastery of Monte Cassino in Italy. He also formed the Benedictine Rule, which was adopted by numerous monasteries all over Europe. It provided for a period of probation (novitiate) for a person who had expressed his intention to become a member of the order. A candidate, after he had served his apprenticeship, might either enter the monastery as a member in good standing or give up the idea altogether. This eliminated much of the riffraff that previously had entered the monastery on false pretenses. The rule provided for the election of an abbot, who had almost absolute power; it stipulated rules for fasting, the type of clothing to be worn, and the property that a member might possess. It provided a carefully worked-out program of work, six or seven hours of manual labor per day for those who were physically fit. Work was considered a great virtue—"Idleness is the enemy of the soul."

The Cistercian Order, founded near Dijon in France in 1098, and the Carthusians, launched in Grenoble in France in 1084, were leaders in the reform movement of the church. The Friars, appearing early in the 13th century, contributed a new expression of the monastic ideal. They lived and worked among the people and begged for their sustenance, instead of segregating themselves from society as other monks had done. They strove to do what the secular clergy could not always do, to defend the church against the heretics and awaken the people to the realities of the Christian religion.

St. Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscan Order, was one of the most unusual characters in the history of the church. "He struck men's imaginations, not their minds; he was the very incarnation of the gospel idea." His idealistic life, his self-sacrificing attitude, and his intelligent interpretation of the Christian doctrine give him a select place among church leaders. His order

grew rapidly, and in 1210 was recognized by Pope Innocent III. The Franciscans worked among the poor in the large cities and went as missionaries to Germany, Hungary, France, Spain, and the Near East. St. Francis, fearful that the favors bestowed upon them might result in too much worldliness, charged his followers "to follow the life and poverty of Jesus Christ, persevering therein until the end . . . and take good care never to depart from it upon the advice and teachings of anyone whomsoever." St. Dominic established a similar organization called the Dominican Order, or the Preaching Friars. They were especially renowned for their preaching against heretics and were considered very learned men.

Importance of Monasticism. Monasticism was important in an age that was harassed by barbarian invasions, corrupt and tyrannical rulers, immorality, and social and economic disorders. The simple and idealistic life led by the monks was a striking contrast to the materialistic, artificial, and miserable existence of the vast majority of the people. Their fervid religious practices, although extreme is many cases, came much nearer to preserving the religious ideas of Christianity than did the practices of the secular clergy. When the church was at a low ebb in corruption and worldliness, the monks carried the standard of idealism and instituted reform movements. The Cluniac monks (10th century) advocated the abolition of simony, the enforcement of celibacy, the establishment of the absolute authority of the pope, and the separation of the papal office from laymen. The establishment of the College of Cardinals, in 1059, put the selection of popes in the hand of churchmen, instead of laymen. Marriage of the clergy was declared illegal in the same year; in 1075, simony was condemned and lay investiture was prohibited.

Much of the missionary work of the Middle Ages was carried on by the monks. The establishment of Christianity in England, in Germany, and among the Slavs of central Europe was largely their work. They were efficient workmen and craftsmen. Some of the monasteries had model farms. The monks drained swamps; cleared land; and experimented in seed selection, animal breeding, and crop rotation—which was far ahead of the practices of the time. The monastery was about the only bright spot of cultural activity in the Middle Ages. The monks copied and preserved

manuscripts and kept records, which furnish a valuable source of information of the period. In the monasteries, scholars found refuge and a quiet place in which to pursue their work. Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, two of the most famous teachers and theologians of the 13th century, were monks. With all the blessings that monasticism furnished to people in a harassed world, there were also dangers. Monks lived an abnormal existence, which often led to mutilation and torment. Many leaders segregated themselves from society in monasteries when they could have rendered valuable service living among their fellow men.

The Work of the Popes. In analyzing the development of the power of the church, the influence of the more outstanding popes should not be overlooked. Pope Leo I is discussed in another connection (see page 266); but mention must be made of Gregory I (590–604), Gregory VII (1073–1085), and Innocent III (1198–1216). Gregory I, one of the most influential of the early church leaders, was a monk; and much of the rigid training that he had received affected his conduct as pope. Church doctrine was strengthened through his conservatism and orthodoxy in various disputes. His writings served for centuries as a source of authority in the settlement of theological questions. His *Pastoral Care*, a book of guidance for priests, is still highly regarded. His *Morals*, or *Commentary on the Book of Job*, is one of the most popular books in the Catholic Church. The *Dialogues*, containing a list of miracles and popular legends, is widely read.

Gregory VII is best known for his controversy with Henry IV of Germany (see page 323), but he accomplished much in the establishment of the spiritual authority of the church. In the *Dictatus* he outlined what he believed to be the authority of the pope. The bishop of Rome—he contended—through his unique position, is a universal bishop who controls other bishops and even church councils. Innocent III primarily was an administrator. During his reign the affairs of the church were put in order and its influence was accepted and respected throughout Christendom. "To the princes, power is given on earth, but to the priests, power is also attributed in Heaven; to the former, only over our bodies, to the latter, also over our souls," he declared. At the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), he succeeded in promulgating a confession of faith including the dogma of transubstantiation; he

established the Inquisition for the systematic suppression of heresy, and he provided that every believer should make confession to a priest at least once a year.

Transition from the classical to the medieval period was made possible largely through the influence of the Germans and the establishment of the Christian church. The assimilation of these forces and their general effects on human progress will be traced in subsequent chapters.

III. THE ROMAN EMPIRE IN THE EAST (BYZANTIUM)

1. GOVERNMENT

Although the city of Byzantium was renamed Constantinople when, in 330, Constantine made it the capital of the Roman Empire, the terms *Byzantium* and *Byzantine* are still used to designate the Eastern culture, which did not succumb to the Roman conquerors but, instead, dominated them. Peoples of the Occident are inclined to neglect the cultural advances of the Eastern Roman, or Byzantine, Empire. Traditionally, the Roman Empire fell into the hands of the barbarians in the 5th century, but in reality the eastern half remained essentially intact until the middle of the 15th century. The civilization of the Eastern Roman Empire was the most outstanding in Europe, if not in the world, for several hundred years. Byzantine culture represented a fusion of late classical and Oriental civilizations and furnished many important elements for the development of later cultures. According to Professor Thorndike,[1] again and again the invaders tried to break down the walls, but without success. "Thus it [Constantinople] rendered a double service to civilization, first by keeping invaders in the Balkans out of Asiatic provinces, then by keeping invaders of Asia Minor out of Europe."

Division of the Empire. The separation of the Roman Empire into eastern and western divisions was due primarily to the fact that the two parts were never completely united. From the day when the Roman legions conquered the Hellenized territories until the fall of Rome in the West, the East remained basically Greek in its cultural characteristics. The two sections drew further apart

[1] *History of Civilization* (Crofts), 277.

as the political domination of Rome waned, until not only two types of culture, but also two types of government, existed. The tendency on the part of the Roman emperors in the later stages of the empire to seek an Oriental setting for their court led to the abandonment of Rome for Constantinople. The religious schism, which ultimately resulted in the establishment of the Greek Orthodox Church, contributed to the complete separation of the East from the West. In culture, religion, philosophy, politics, and geographical setting the two territories differed. Except for brief periods of unity, the separation was complete by the middle of the 4th century.

Political Evolution. The Emperor Justinian (527–565) was the greatest of the Byzantine rulers. He reunited the East and the West under a government that was essentially an Oriental despotism. The emperor was absolute and maintained great pomp in his court. He was supported by a large fleet and a standing army. The Greek Orthodox Church, in contrast with the Roman Catholic, was regarded as a servant of the state and was not allowed to interfere in politics. The emperor dominated the church councils, ruled on doctrinal disputes, and appointed church officers. The Byzantine Empire was harassed by many attacks of barbarians, but it succeeded in warding them off until the middle of the 15th century. Shortly after Justinian's death, the Slavs invaded the Balkan peninsula as far south as Illyria and Thrace. The Moslems began their attacks in Asia Minor in the last quarter of the 7th century.

The government of Byzantium was not very well managed. Internal conflicts were almost as threatening to the state as were the attacks of the Arabs and other Moslems. The Byzantine Empire was at its height under the Macedonian dynasty (867–1059). Crete and Cyprus were conquered, the boundary on the east was pushed to the Euphrates, and plans were made to reconquer Palestine and Jerusalem. Southern Italy was occupied. The Kingdom of the Bulgars in the Balkans was overthrown and the territory annexed.

Decline and Fall of the Byzantine Empire. A group of incapable rulers who succeeded the Macedonian dynasty gave up the territories in the West. The Seljuk Turks began their ravages of the eastern frontiers of the empire in 1059. They conquered Syria, Palestine, and most of the Near East in short order. The

crusaders captured Constantinople in 1204 and for a time dominated the Peloponnesus, southern Thessaly, and Constantinople. The Byzantine Empire broke up gradually into a number of small states, which were reunited in 1261; but the revived empire was a mere shadow of the old. Trade had been ruined, and Constantinople lost much of its former prestige. Attacked by the Latins from the west and by the Ottoman Turks from the east, Constantinople fell into the hands of the latter in 1453. The proud city, which was given a new name, Istanbul, then became the capital of the Turkish Empire.

Trade and Industry. The great wealth of the Byzantine Empire was the result of commerce, industry, and agriculture. Byzantine commerce, which flourished from the 5th to the end of the 13th century, was one of the dominant forces in disseminating civilization throughout the Mediterranean world during the Middle Ages. Spices, drugs, perfumes, precious stones, and valuable woods from the Orient passed through Byzantine cities to markets farther west. Many cities prospered, including Constantinople, Antioch, Damascus, Beirut, Salonika, and Corinth; and industry ranked second in importance as a source of wealth. Textile mills were numerous in Constantinople. When the silkworm was imported from China, silk became a major article of commerce. Jewelry, religious ornaments, metalware, ivory carvings, and weapons were produced and sold in quantity. The agricultural output was sufficient to provide adequate food supply. As a result, the Byzantine Empire enjoyed great wealth, with a yearly revenue, during prosperous times, that is estimated to have been the equivalent of $600,000,000.

Society. Byzantine society was essentially urban, similar to the earlier Hellenistic type. On the other hand, the Byzantine metropolis constituted an industrialized community, a forerunner of the medieval commercial cities in northern Italy and in the Low Countries. The nobility, wealthy officials, and large landholders lived among elegant surroundings in an atmosphere of laxity; yet many of them were cultivated and talented individuals. The middle class, merchants and manufacturers, lived well but more conservatively. The lot of the peasant was not one to be envied and, toward the end of Byzantine rule, many were reduced to serfdom.

2. THE ARTS

Architecture. The hybrid nature of Byzantine culture is demonstrated in its art. The architecture is a combination of Roman, Greek, and Oriental influence. The extensive use of ornament, symbolism, the vault, and the dome was of Oriental inspiration; the basilica and the ornamental motifs are Roman in origin. The church of St. Sophia, built in Constantinople in the time of Justinian, is

FIG. 32.—St. Sophia, Constantinople. (*Courtesy, H. S. Lucas, A Short History of Civilization.*)

the best example of Byzantine architecture. Originally a Christian church, it became a Mohammedan mosque after the Turkish conquest in 1453. The central dome, the most prominent feature of the building, is 107 feet in diameter. It rests on four arches supported by four piers. At the east and west ends, two main arches open into half domes and these in turn open into smaller half domes. The interior of the building, decorated with marble incrustations, intricate carvings, and brilliant mosaics of rich colors and gold, is more impressive than the exterior. The spaciousness, the splendor of the decorations, the glowing and harmonious

color, and the suspended effect of the dome set apart this great building as a unique object of admiration. Professor Schevill[1] says: "There are higher cupolas in the world than this, which rises to a height of 180 feet from the stone pavement, but there is none which crowns so naturally and nobly a living framework of related parts." Much of the stonework is covered with

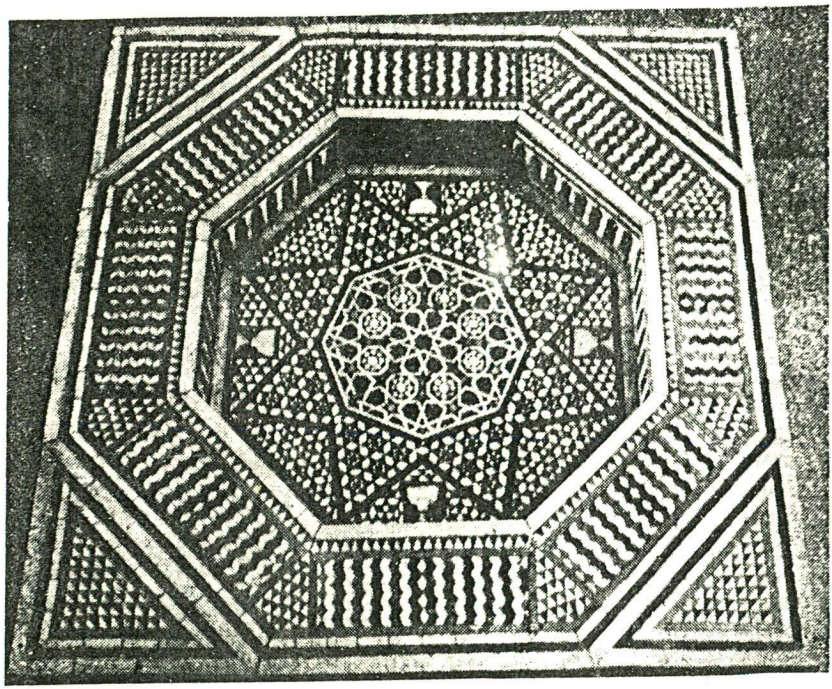


FIG. 33.—Small mosaic fountain from a house in Cairo (15th century). (*Courtesy, University of Pennsylvania Museum.*)

lacelike patterns using the design of the acanthus leaf. The capitals of the columns are of the double or basket type with the upper part plain, except for a cross or a monogram, while the lower part is carved in delicate traceries. The splendid mosaics used in profusion here, as in other Byzantine buildings, are among the finest in the world. The influence of Byzantine architecture was strongly felt in Italy, southern France, and Spain; domes and mosaics

[1] *Balkan Peninsula* (Harcourt Brace), 56.

similar to those of the Byzantine buildings can be found even in northern Europe.

Other Forms of Art. The iconoclastic controversy, a dispute over the use of images in the churches, resulted in the destruction of many of the finest specimens of Byzantine art, but enough remain to give a good impression of what it was at its best. The church controlled the subject matter and gave specific directions for the guidance of the painters. The artists not only made decorations for their own churches but also sold much of their work in the West for the decoration of Roman Catholic churches. The sarcophagus, which represents the chief work in sculpture, is elaborately decorated with sacred monograms, peacocks, and fruited vines. Jeweled ornaments, fine silks, and chalices were produced in great abundance. Byzantine art, taken collectively, lacked naturalness, imagination, and spontaneity—defects due primarily to religious restrictions.

3. RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

Establishment of the Greek Church. While Christianity arose in the eastern part of the Roman Empire, the Roman Catholic interpretation of the religion was never generally accepted there. There was a fundamental difference between the Greek and the Roman point of view in religion. In the early period of the history of the Roman Church, most of the disputes over doctrine originated in the East. The Arians disputed the doctrine of the Trinity; the Jacobites contended that Christ had two characteristics: the divine Word and the man Jesus. These contentions were condemned as heresies by the Roman Catholic Church, but they persisted in the East. As early as the 7th century, neither the emperor nor the patriarch in Constantinople recognized the supremacy of the Pope in Rome. The iconoclastic controversy resulted in a final break. In 1054 the Pope excommunicated the Patriarch of Constantinople and no reconciliation was ever effected.

Doctrine. The Greek Church, the Holy Oriental Orthodox Apostolic Church, holds that the Holy Ghost proceeds only from the Father. Members believed in threefold immersion, marriage of the clergy, and anointing with holy oil for the restoration of health and forgiveness of sin rather than as a spiritual blessing for the dying. They reject the idea of purgatory and indulgences, but

advocate prayers for the dead, whose fate, they contend, is not fully determined until the final judgment. They recognize no visible vicars of Christ on earth, but they give spiritual authority to the patriarch. Fasts recommended for penance are to be observed on Wednesdays and Fridays and on days of the great annual feasts: forty days before Easter, the feast of the Virgin Mary, the Apostle Philip's feast, and the anniversary of the beheading of John the Baptist. Preaching and catechizing are minimized, and instrumental music is excluded from the services. Mass is emphasized as of great importance.

The members of the upper clergy—bishops, archbishops, metropolitans, and patriarchs—are chosen from monastic orders. It is impossible for members of the lower clergy—readers, singers, deacons, priests, and archpriests—to rise to membership in the upper clergy. The clergy play a comparatively insignificant part in the Greek Orthodox Church. By comparison with the Roman Catholic Church, there is less emphasis put upon centralization of authority. There is a general tendency for churches in different countries to follow their own interpretation of doctrine. The Melchites of Syria and Egypt, the Ruthenians in central Europe, the United Greeks in Italy, the Graeco-Romaic Church in Hungary, and the United Church in Bulgaria—all branches of the Orthodox church—differ in matters of detail.

4. IMPORTANCE OF BYZANTINE CIVILIZATION

Preservation of Greek Culture. Byzantine civilization differed in many respects from the Roman. While western Europe was divided into a number of local feudal provinces the East was ruled by an absolute, centralized power. The industrial, commercial, and municipal life of the East contrasts strangely with the predominately agricultural life of the West. The religious organizations were quite different and the people spoke a different language. In spite of all these differences, there was an important cultural interrelationship. Byzantine influence on Western art was truly important. Both architecture and painting, even in the Renaissance period, owed much to Byzantine inspiration.

A great part of Byzantine intellectual activity was devoted to the preservation and continuation of Greek culture. Aëtius and Paul of Aegina (late 6th and 7th centuries) continued the medical

work that Hippocrates and Galen had started. The preservation of Hellenic civilization was important, but Byzantine civilization did not go much further than that. It was stereotyped and lacked vitality. Nevertheless, while the Germanic barbarians were being assimilated in the West, the Byzantines kept alive classical culture, and, by the time that they were overrun by the Ottoman Turks, the West was well on its way to cultural recovery.

End of the Byzantine Rule. The Byzantine Empire came to an inglorious end in the conquest of the territory by the Turks. In 1453, when Constantinople fell, the Turks pushed on into Europe. They conquered the whole Balkan peninsula and most of the southeastern part of Europe to the very gates of Vienna, where they were finally checked. Byzantine civilization suffered greatly at the hands of the Turks. Much of the art was destroyed and the religion was suppressed. Some of the glories of Byzantine civilization are just now coming to light as the Turks lose their grip on the territory.

IV. THE CIVILIZATIONS OF THE NEAR EAST

1. PERSIA

The Persian State. A revived Persian empire arose in the territory to the east of the Byzantine Empire in the 3d century of the Christian Era. Recent discoveries have led some scholars to believe that Persia under the Sassanids (226–641) reached one of the greatest civilizations before the advent of modern times. Unfortunately, the Persians spent much of their time and energy in fighting. In the last century of Sassanid rule, there was such constant warfare with Byzantium that it led to the ultimate downfall of the kingdom.

Persian civilization of this period is comparatively unknown. Not much of the culture passed into the Byzantine Empire because the two countries were constantly at war and because the land was almost completely enveloped by the Turks.

Persian Civilization. Persian religion was a form of Zoroastrianism. Most of the followers of the faith were driven out by the Turks. The Parsees of India—the sole survivors of Zoroastrianism—are among the wealthiest and best educated people in that territory. In the ancient Persian capital, Ctesiphon, there are remains

of some of the buildings that belonged to the Sassanid monarchy. The most famous (built about 550) is a high hall 163 feet long, 86 feet wide, and 95 feet high. It has an elliptical vault and side walls, slanting inward, without windows. The Persians, who were much more skilled in decorating than they were in building, produced exquisite embroidery and earthenware. Their silversmiths wrought some of the most beautiful work in silver in the world. The designs on the cups they made show grace and facility in line. For subjects they used the Assyrian type of fierce animal, with sharp claws and open mouth. In spite of a great variety of design and detail, there is seldom an impression of overcrowding. Evidences of the effects of Persian art can be found in India and China and as far west as Italy, Spain, and France. The textile designs of the Persian weavers and rugmakers have reached out into the four corners of the world.

2. ARABIC AND OTHER MOSLEM CIVILIZATION

The Land. Arabia is a peninsula connected with both Africa and Asia, but geographically somewhat isolated. Although the great empires of antiquity surrounded it, there were few penetrations into the interior. Much of the territory, which is approximately one-third the size of the United States, is high, rocky, and barren, with only a few fertile regions dotted here and there in the valleys of small streams or around oases. In search of water and grass for their cattle, herdsmen travel from one oasis to another, taking their belongings with them. There are a number of small cities along the coast line, but most of the population is migratory.

The People. The Arabs, who were Semitic in their cultural background, loved warfare and were sought by the Persian and Byzantine states to serve in their armies. Armed conflict among the different tribes was common; plundering the borderland cities and robbing caravans were accepted as legitimate practices. The people were mystics, inclined to worship nature gods. In the typical Arab there was a prevailing individualism and much self-reliance. He was not inclined to submit to centralized organizations—political, economic, or social. In spite of the unsettled state of their existence and their wild nomadic life, these people were progressive in many ways.

Religion, the Common Bond. The Arabs lacked the centralized

political organization that is characteristic of civilized society. When mention is made of this Arabian or Mohammedan empire, this does not imply the existence of a state with a well-defined boundary, but applies, instead, to many groups of people of varying culture spread over broad territories and bound together by a common devotion to a religious faith. At certain seasons of the year, the tribes endeavored to make pilgrimages to such favored spots as Mecca, where the Kaaba, a sanctuary for the famous Black Stone, was a center of veneration. Fighting stopped for four months in each year, in order that the faithful might congregate at Mecca. The people took advantage of this meeting to exchange wares and bits of learning that they had gathered in their travels. Poets recited their verses and a general celebration was held, after which each group went its own way.

Political Institutions. The central authority, insofar as there was any central authority, was in the hands of the caliph, the successor of Mohammed, and the Vicar of God on earth. He was both a temporal ruler and a religious potentate. To question his authority was considered a revolt against Allah. He was the supreme power acting in the common interest. The Ommiad dynasty (661–750) made Damascus the capital; but the succeeding dynasty (the Abbasids) chose Bagdad, where they built a beautiful palace, called the Golden Gate, and ruled in Oriental splendor and despotism. The city became a thriving commercial and intellectual center. The tendency after the 8th century was to establish partly independent caliphs, with very little centralized control. Caliphates were established at Cordova in Spain, at Cairo in Egypt, and at Bagdad in Asia Minor. The caliph ruled without a constitution and in the most high-handed and dictatorial fashion. He was supposed to protect the faith, to advance the power of Islam, and to promote the welfare of his people. The people had very little part in the government, but many of the tribes were far enough away to be practically independent.

Economic Life. The Arabs were a commercial people, almost by instinct. The prophet Mohammed was a merchant, and the Koran showed a marked partiality to tradesmen. Three continents —Africa, Asia, and Europe—were connected through the efforts of Arabian merchants; and the Arabic language was the language of commerce. Connections between trade centers were established

through couriers; some of the messengers traveled on horseback as far as 750 miles in three days. The leading agriculturists of their time were the Arabs, who practiced crop rotation, used fertilizers, and established irrigation projects. They introduced into Europe spinach, asparagus, strawberries, lemons, dates, cotton, rice, sugar cane, and pomegranates. Their manufactured products were armor, steel weapons, glassware, rose water, leather goods, textiles, and porcelain.[1]

Art. The Moslems failed to develop a first-class art, at least until they came into contact with other peoples whose art they borrowed as a stock upon which to graft some of their own ideas. For that reason, their art was not uniform. Besides, the Koran imposed a limitation by prohibiting the representation of human figures. Moslem decorations consisted mainly in intricate designs carved in wood and metals. The people admired color, and the wealthy attired themselves richly and decorated their homes with fine silks, costly hangings, and beautiful rugs.

Architecture. Mosques and palaces were the chief architectural works of the Mohammedans. The mosque required a fountain for the ablution of the worshiper before prayer, a roof to protect him from the hot sun, a pulpit from which the sermon was preached on the Mohammedan holy day, and a raised platform from which the Koran was recited and the prayers were chanted. The sanctuary and the portal were elaborately decorated with plaster, wood carvings, marble inlay, and colored glass. Frequently, wood was inlaid with ivory and ebony. Geometric patterns made up of small polygons, carved in floral designs and finished with a beading, were the decorative motifs most extensively followed. The artists obtained color and brilliance by painting the wood carvings and by using stained-glass windows and colored marbles. The Alhambra in Granada stands as a monument to the richness of Oriental color and design. It is built around an open court, overlooking which are rooms and balconies. The interior walls of the rooms are covered with bright-colored designs in blue, red, yellow, and gold.

The Minor Arts. The Mohammedans excelled in the minor arts. Their artistic tastes found expression in metalwork, decorations for lamps, and the illumination of manuscripts of the

[1] Sword blades made in Damascus were in great demand. Cordovan and Moroccan leathers are still considered the finest in the world.

Koran. An inscription in large letters intertwined with rosettes was a motif frequently used in metalwork. Glass mosque lamps were decorated with blue, white, yellow, green, red, and gilt enamel. The decoration of manuscripts of the Koran represents one of the finest and most delicate works of these artists. Frequently, the text was written in gold, supported by a vivid blue, with a little red, white, black, or green to set it off. Cottons, silks, damasks, and satins were woven with utmost care in patterns of carefully designed birds, animals, and geometric forms. All these productions found a ready market in the West.

Religious Cults. The Arabian desert was the mother of religions. The cult of Ishtar, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and countless others of lesser importance, sprang up here. Belief in the mystical powers of a black rock enshrined in the Kaaba, in the city of Mecca, was about the only religious unity that existed among the various Arabian tribes. Most of them were represented at an annual convention in Mecca to worship at the Kaaba, although they were separated and isolated during the remainder of the time. There were four months in the year during which they forgot their warfare and, while they were on their way to Mecca, they were as safe from molestation as they would have been in any country in the world. One writer[1] contends, "So faithful were they to the ordinances of their religion that if a man met his father's murderer unarmed in one of the sacred months he would not harm him."

Foundations of Islam. Mohammed, the founder of Islam, was born in Mecca, *ca.* 571. He had no unusual talents, and some of his critics believe that he was subject to epileptic fits, in which condition he is reputed by his followers to have made his contacts with God. He married a rich widow, named Khadijah, whose wealth and personal influence in Mecca were great assets. Many of his teachings were not new, but were adopted from Arabic folklore. His conception of God was that of the Old Testament, and he accepted Jesus as a prophet, along with Abraham and Moses; but he himself, so his followers declared, was the latest and greatest of the prophets. He assumed the title of Praised One, much the same as Gautama acquired the name Enlightened One, and as Jesus came to be called the Anointed One.

[1] Margoliouth, D. S., *Mohammed*, 5.

The student of religion may not be impressed by the personality of Mohammed, but it should be remembered that the quality of Islam and the personality of Mohammed are quite different things. A great part of the Koran, the Mohammedan Bible, is not made up of the actual teachings and sayings of Mohammed, but is a revelation of what other people have attributed to him. While the Koran may not be of divine origin, it is, nevertheless, a remarkable book, which should be read in its entirety to be appreciated fully. The faithful are charged to serve but one god, to honor their fellow men (especially their parents, the poor, and orphans), to be honest, to be frugal ("the wasteful were ever the devil's brothers"), and to be temperate.

Character of Islam. The form of worship is much simpler than that practiced in most Christian churches. There is no priesthood, in the Christian sense of the word, and the mosque is a place for prayer and for reading the Koran, rather than for a formal service. It is a personal and individualistic religion; the faithful Mohammedan needs no intermediary between himself and his god. The form of worship is to recite the creed ("There is but one God, and Mohammed is his prophet"), to pray five times a day, to fast, to give alms to the poor, and to make at least one pilgrimage to Mecca. The next world is graphically described in the Koran. Hell is depicted as a dismal place. "The companions of the left-hand shall dwell amidst burning winds, and scalding water, under the shade of a black smoke neither cool nor agreeable." Heaven is described as a superoasis. "Youths shall continue in their bloom forever . . . and there shall accompany them fair damsels having large black eyes; they resembling pearls hidden in their shells . . . They shall have their abode among trees free from thorns and trees of Mauz loaded regularly with their produce from top to bottom; under an extended shade, near a flowing water and amidst fruits in abundance."

Spread of Mohammedanism. Mohammed was driven from Mecca by his enemies in 622. His flight to Medina, called the Hegira, was the turning point in the development of Mohammedanism, since from that time it began to spread. The enthusiastic bearers of the faith crossed North Africa, spread into Spain, and went as far north as Tours in France, where they were defeated in battle in 732, just a century after the death of Mohammed.

They maintained their hold in Spain until the close of the 15th century, and they are still predominant in northern Africa. In the middle of the 15th century, the Ottoman Turks, having accepted Islam, conquered Constantinople and pushed northward through the Balkan peninsula to the very gates of Vienna, where they were stopped in a bloody battle in 1529. Twice, the Mohammedans made a serious threat to overrun Europe; twice, Christendom had a narrow escape. Islam met with less opposition in its spread eastward into India, China, and Japan.

Later Development. Mohammedanism has had its ups and downs, its periods of purity and retrogression, the same as any other religion. Owing to the lack of a central authority, many variations developed. In the more remote region, the idolatrous practices of the native tribes persisted, and in India some of the characteristics of Hinduism were added. A sect in Persia, called the Shiites, worshiped Mohammed's son-in-law, Ali, as a prophet. There were, in all, some 72 different sects, but most of them were of minor importance. The greatest discredit to the religion came when the Ottoman Turks adopted Mohammedanism and enthusiastically, but selfishly, sponsored its cause. Most Occidentals are inclined to think of Turks and Mohammedans as synonymous, but such is obviously not the case. In recent years, great changes for the better are evident in Turkey; the time may come when its people will no longer be a discredit to Islam.

Estimate. It is very difficult for an Occidental to appreciate and evaluate Mohammedanism. Judged by Western standards, it contains many undesirable characteristics. Polygamy was sanctioned and justified in the Koran. A man was permitted to have four wives and as many concubines as he could afford. Polygamy, it may be remembered, was quite generally accepted in these countries before Mohammedanism was introduced—in fact, the adoption of Mohammedanism improved somewhat the status of women among the desert tribes. Under its tenets, infanticide for girls was condemned and the number of wives a man might have was limited. Mohammedanism is frequently condemned as a warlike religion. There is no need of denying that many bloody deeds were committed in the name of the prophet. However, Mohammedans make the same charges against the Christians and refer to the Book of Kings in the Bible and to the bloody acts of the

Inquisition as proofs of their contentions. There are many passages in the Koran, just as there are in the Bible, that indicate an opposite point of view. "Paradise is prepared for those who expend in alms, who repress their rage, and pardon men. For Allah loves the kind. Let no man treat his neighbor as he himself would dislike to be treated."

Mohammed was a religious teacher and a social reformer, and the Koran is both a book of religion and a book of law. The conduct of life and details of etiquette are carefully regulated. Wines and other intoxicating liquors are prohibited, as is gambling. Infanticide and murder are condemned, and kindlier treatment of slaves is recommended. In contrast with Christianity, the Mohammedan form of worship is extremely simple. There is a conspicuous lack of sacraments, sacerdotal priesthood, and ecclesiastical hierarchy. Religion, to the faithful Mohammedan, is an everyday affair, not a concentration of religious practices into one holy day in the week. Islam, a dynamic religion, today is winning converts with ease at the expense of other religions.

Literature. Much of the literature of the Arabs was not written until after it had passed from mouth to mouth for many generations. They took great pride in reciting their poems and had no trouble in finding enthusiastic listeners. Two very necessary qualities for the production of good literature were theirs—a clear and concise way of expressing themselves and vivid imagination. Much of their literature idealized the people as fierce, bold, hospitable, and truthful. Their histories and biographies were numerous. A *Biographical Dictionary*, published in the 13th century, contains accounts of 865 important Mohammedans. World history, as written by the Arabs, laid strong emphasis upon the Moslem point of view. One of the most famous of these works is the *Annals of the Apostles and Kings*, written by Al-Tabari.

Poetry was a favorite form of literary expression. Omar Khayyám (12th century) was the author of the *Rubáiyát*, the best known of the Moslem poems. *Gulistan* and *Bustan*, mythical and philosophical odes, were written by Saadi (late 13th century). In prose literature, *The Arabian Nights* is the most famous work. Almost everyone has read at least parts of this great tale and has been entertained by it. Within it is included a great variety of material: proverbs, adventures, and fables, covering territory all

the way from China to western Europe. The Arabs, deeply interested in the scientific development of their language, worked out dictionaries, grammars, and books on philology. A language beautiful in expression and scientific in organization was perfected by the 13th century.

Science. One of the first things that the Moslems did when they conquered a territory was to build a mosque. To this building they frequently attached a school, the main purpose of which was to teach the people to read the Koran. Science, literature, and art were ultimately added to the list of subjects taught. Free from the influence of Christian theology, the scientific contributions of the Greek scholars were preserved and expanded. In this way, the scientific works of Aristotle, Galen, and Euclid were passed on to Western civilization. Moslems built universities and libraries in Spain. The University of Salerno, in Italy, was one of the first to teach scientific medicine. Major operations were performed and the insane were treated scientifically. Moslem scientists discovered alcohol, potash, nitrate of silver, nitric and sulphuric acids. They had learned the secrets of dyeing and discovered a new process for making paper. They knew, also, how to graft trees and plants so as to produce new varieties.

The prestige of the Moslem scholars in the field of mathematics is indicated by the mathematical terms that we borrowed from them: *zero*, *cipher*, and *algebra*. They developed algebra to second-degree equations. They invented the tangent and the cotangent in trigonometry. In physics, they discovered the principle of the pendulum. Geographers, with the use of physics and mathematics, made accurate measurements of latitude and longitude. They wrote descriptive geography and deduced principles of geographical science.

Evaluation. Moslem civilization was composite. It gathered ideas from the waning civilizations of India, Byzantium, Persia, and Egypt. The Moslems continued the work begun in these earlier cultures and passed it on to Western peoples to serve as a part of the foundation of the Renaissance. Medicine, astronomy, mathematics, physics, chemistry, and art of the West depended much upon Arabic knowledge. Thomas Aquinas, whose work served as a bridge between the medieval and modern ages, was influenced greatly by the Arabs. *The Dark Ages* is really only a convenient

term used to pass over the period in which Byzantine and Arabic civilization outshone that of the West.

V. THE FAR EAST: DOMINATION OF THE MONGOLS

The Mongolian people have been considered only insofar as they disturbed the peoples of the West. While their effect on Occidental culture was not pronounced, they should not be passed over as of no consequence. They were a nomadic and destructive people, who were inclined to conquer, destroy, and then move on to other lands. At intervals they were united under one man, but only for short periods. In some cases, they mingled with other people and imposed their government upon them, as, for instance, in India, in China, and in the Near East.

The Great Mongol Empire. Near the end of the 12th century, the Mongols began the establishment of a rather loosely organized empire in the northern part of what is now China, under the leadership of Genghis Khan (1162?–1227). He was one of the most remarkable men of his time, a military genius who developed a well-trained army and an elaborate spy system that kept him in touch with even the remote regions of his empire, which, at the time of his death, reached from the Pacific Ocean to the Dneiper River. At no time since has that territory been so efficiently ruled.

The successors of this powerful leader continued the conquests, but neglected the administration of the territory. In 1238, they took Moscow; in 1241, they overran Hungary and entered the Balkan peninsula. Kublai Khan (1216?–1294), grandson of Genghis Khan, assumed the governorship of China and was elected Great Khan (1259). He built a marvelous capital in Peking, constructed canals, and carried out irrigation projects. Marco Polo, after visiting his court, carried back to Europe stories of the grandeur of the Oriental empire. The united empire did not last longer than the Great Khan. Several divisions arose: the Ottoman Turks in the Near East, another group in southwestern Asia, another in eastern Europe, and still another in China. Much of their time was spent in pillage and warfare. One of the most warlike of the rulers was Tamerlane (1336?–1405), who overran Asia Minor, Persia, and Mesopotamia. Some of the territory has never recovered from those ravages.

China and India. China was slow in its recovery from the Mongol invasions. In 1368, the Ming dynasty was established and the Mongols were driven out. The Ming dynasty held sway until 1644, when it was conquered by the Manchus, a group descended from the Mongols. They ruled China until the recently established republic began. The recent ruler of Manchukuo claimed to be a descendant from the Manchu line. Chinese civilization did no more than hold its own during that period. In 1526, an empire was established in India, with a capital at Delhi. It soon decayed and a number of small states took its place. When the British intervened, in the 18th century, they allowed many of the petty rulers to hold nominal power.

Indian Art. Occidentals should keep in mind that Oriental artists did not emphasize the literal portrayal of man and nature, but represented both as symbolic of the spiritual forces that dominate them. The artist attempted to express the passions that animate the subject rather than to reproduce a complete external likeness. Without this understanding, Oriental art seems fantastic. The people of India erected beautiful tombs and palaces. The exquisite Taj Mahal at Agra, built in the 17th century by Shah Jahan as a mausoleum for his favorite wife, is one of the most famous and exquisite of their buildings. Constructed of white marble, it is crowned by a lofty bulb-shaped dome, surrounded by four lesser domes. It is set on a high square platform of marble in the midst of a rich tropical garden, richly decorated with mosaics and arabesques. The exterior has a most pleasing effect because of its rare beauty of proportion and sweep of majestic curves. Some parts of the exterior are ornamented with delicate floral designs, inlaid with agate, bloodstone, and jasper. The Taj Mahal ranks with such architectual works as the temple of Karnak, the Parthenon, St. Sophia, and the Gothic cathedrals.

Statues of Buddha dominate the sculpture of India. He is portrayed seated, with his legs crossed, his hands folded in his lap, and his eyes downcast as if in sleep. Such examples of painting as are still in existence consist mostly of frescoes on the walls of temples. Beginning in the middle of the 16th century, the paintings fall into two classes: the Rajput and the Mughal. The Rajput tends to be more worldly than the earlier type. Everyday life and stories from history, as well as incidents from the lives of gods, are

portrayed. The Mughal group shows a decidedly Mongol influence. Painting was used mainly for the decoration of the palaces of the rulers; and court scenes, hunts, animals, and flowers are the usual themes.

Japan. The Ainu, who were the earliest known inhabitants of Japan, remained in possession of the islands for many centuries. Finally, about the beginning of the 10th century, they were pushed

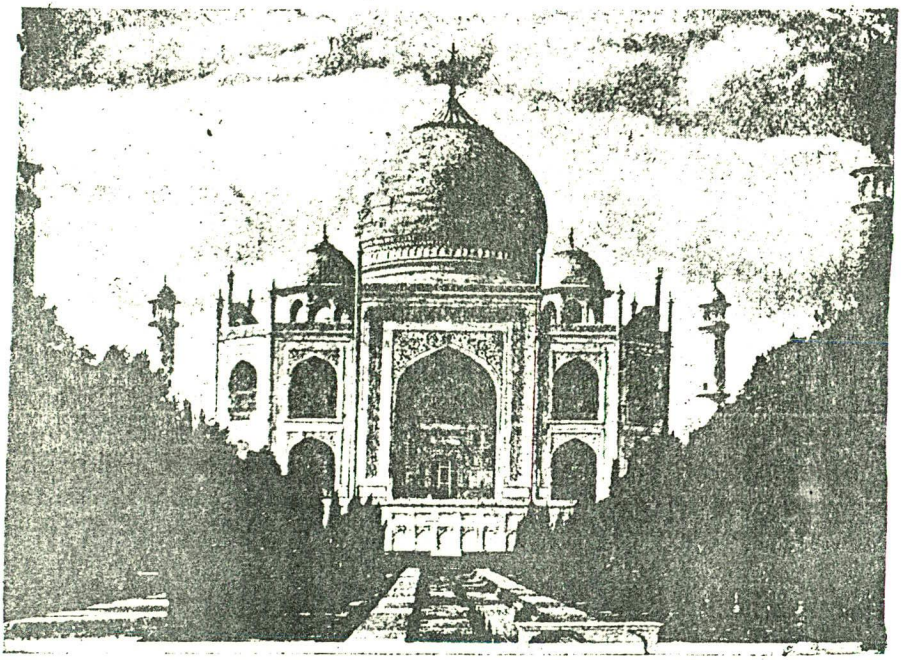


FIG. 34.—Taj Mahal (17th century), thought by many to be the most beautiful building in the world. (*Photograph by Ewing Galloway, New York.*)

into the northeastern part of the country by a Mongoloid race from Korea. The modern Japanese developed principally from the Mongolian invaders. However, they have an independent language, which is related neither to the Ural-Altaic group nor to the Chinese. The civilization of Japan, on the other hand, is derived mainly from Mongoloid or Chinese sources. With the introduction of Buddhism, many ideas and practices were introduced, including writing. Buddist priests, ascetics, sculptors, and architects were accepted in Japan at about the same time (588). Furthermore, the Japanese imitated the Chinese government, and,

by the 8th century, plans for cities were copied from those in China. Aside from these innovations, Japan remained backward and secluded until the middle of the 19th century.

VI. THE MIDDLE AGES IN EUROPE

1. THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

The Land. The geographical characteristics of southern Europe have been described in earlier chapters, but a word should be said concerning the northern European lowlands, that were destined to become the center of intellectual and industrial activity in Europe. This vast area is separated from the Mediterranean region by an irregular and broken mountain range, including the Pyrenees, the Jura, the Vosges, the Alps, and the Carpathian mountains. The modern states of Germany, Poland, Denmark, the Baltic states, the Netherlands, Belgium, England, and most of France lie wholly or in part within this region. The climate is temperate, there is plenty of rainfall, the soil is fertile, and the growing season is long enough for staple crops to mature. Valuable natural resources make industrial development possible, while the coast line affords many excellent harbors on which are located cities of outstanding commercial importance. The value of the land, the density of population, and the lack of natural boundaries between the different states unfortunately have made strife and warfare common.

The People. The peoples who led in the cultural development of this region were neither pure Germans nor pure Latins, but a mixture of the two. In spite of the civilizing influence of the Romans, they lived in a semibarbaric state for a long time. Not until the 12th century had most of them reached a point at which they could appreciate the cultural progress of the Greeks and the Romans. For convenience sake, most of the people can be divided into two groups: the Nordic and the Alpine, although there were many other racial elements that helped to make up the total population.

The Nordics, who lived around the Baltic Sea, were distinguished by their fair skin, gray eyes, and light hair. They had well-developed bodies, impulsive natures, and indomitable courage. The Alpines, living in the highlands of the central part of Europe,

were of stocky build and dark-skinned, with straight, coarse hair. There were many groups living on the plains of northeastern Europe who possessed Mongoloid characteristics—remnants of numerous Mongolian invasions. The heterogeneous population of Europe has never been cosmopolitanized. Those in the northern part have retained a great many of the Nordic characteristics, while those in the southern part lean more toward the Alpine type. Taken as a whole, they are active and progressive, forming one of the most dynamic peoples in the world. They have colonized a great part of the world, and their culture has penetrated the most distant lands.

2. GOVERNMENT

Effects of the Fall of Rome. The breakup of the Roman Empire in the West deprived the people of an effective system of political administration. There were attempts to keep alive the Roman tradition of unity but, except for brief periods when the barbarians were able to construct a tottering imitation of the Roman government, and when the Byzantine Empire held sway, general confusion reigned. Foreign invaders roamed to and fro where once the Roman legions had held dominion. The Lombards in northern Italy and the Ostrogoths in the central part, the Visigoths in Spain, and the Franks in Gaul slowly evolved their own form of government. The founders of these new political systems borrowed many ideas from Rome, and several of them attempted to construct empires on the model of Rome in her glory.

Foundation of the Frankish Kingdom. The most outstanding of the attempts to form a government, immediately after the fall of Rome, was that of the Franks. Under the leadership of Clovis from 481 to 511, they crossed the Rhine River and were converted to Christianity. This was destined to have a great influence on both the Franks and the Roman Catholic Church. Clovis was the only German ruler of importance in the West who was a Catholic at the close of the 5th century. He conquered most of Gaul and made headway in organizing a government. His immediate successors lacked his ability, but the vitality of the government was kept alive by the Mayors of the Palace, who finally established a new line of kings.

Charles Martel (714–741), the most famous of the "mayors,"

organized a powerful military state and led an army that defeated the Saracens at the battle of Tours in 732, thus saving Europe from being overrun by the Mohammedans. Pepin, son of Charles Martel, was crowned king of the Franks (751) by the Pope. Thus "A German chieftain was transformed into the Lord's anointed." He saved the church from being conquered by the Lombards and gave the papacy the territory of the Exarchate of Ravenna, from which the Papal States were formed. The possession of this land made the Pope a temporal as well as a spiritual ruler. The Papal States were held by the church until they were annexed by the kingdom of Italy in 1870.

Charlemagne. Charlemagne (768–814), the son of Pepin, was the greatest of the kings of the Franks. If the conclusions of his biographer Einhard are dependable, he was a very striking individual—powerful in body, pleasing in personality, and possessing a brilliant mind. Few personages in history have had greater influence than Charlemagne. Professor Emerton[1] says, "He stands at the end of one age, and at the beginning of another, and what he did was the foundation of all the future history of Europe."

Charlemagne's Conquests. Charlemagne was, first of all, a great soldier. He suppressed rebellions within his territory and conquered the most threatening of his neighbors. He drove the Saracens farther south in Spain and, after a long struggle, he subdued the warlike Saxons. This was a big undertaking, for the Saxons were a powerful tribe. Only through dogged persistence were they finally conquered and then converted to Christianity. Charlemagne next proceeded to conquer Bavaria, the Avars, and Aquitaine. This made him supreme in western Europe. His task then was to devise a government that would hold his people together.

Political Organization. Charlemagne inaugurated a number of plans, unique in those days, in order to cement into one unit the numerous provinces—inhabited by seminomadic people—that he controlled. He sent messengers ("missi dominici") to observe the work of the provincial governors. Two of these envoys were sent out together, one being a layman of rank and one, a high officer in the church. They held assemblies in the various provinces four times a year. They heard appeals from dissatisfied subjects; they

[1] *Introduction to the Middle Ages* (Harvard Press), 180.

corrected abuses, punished offenders, and then sent to Charlemagne elaborate reports of the conditions that they found in the provinces. The messenger served a valuable purpose. The work of these men probably furnished a precedent for the establishment of the itinerant justices in England. Each of the more remote provinces (marks) was governed by a marquis (Markgraf), who had more extensive powers than the ordinary count. Charlemagne traveled extensively over his kingdom and personally supervised many of the routine duties of the government. His rule was a long step in the direction of a fusion of the Roman and German elements.

The Holy Roman Empire. One of the most extraordinary experiments of this period was the establishment of the Holy Roman Empire. As one historian remarked, it was neither holy, Roman, nor an empire, but it lasted, in name at least, for over a thousand years. It grew out of the close relationship between the church and the Franks. They were dependent upon each other to a great degree. Charlemagne hoped that the formation of an empire would aid in the unification of his kingdom and possibly revive the glories of ancient Rome. The Pope was by no means secure in his position, and he hoped to strengthen it with the support of the Franks. The church was at the mercy of the Lombards, and Pope Leo had made bitter enemies. Charlemagne's coronation on Christmas Day in the year 800 made him the temporal head of Roman Christendom. Almost from the beginning, there was a dispute between the Emperor and the Pope as to which was the supreme head. Charlemagne believed himself to be the servant of the church, but thought that he could best serve it by being supreme in authority. The Pope, on the other hand, showed no inclination to surrender his exalted position. The issue, which was never decided, served as the basis of many bitter quarrels.

The State after Charlemagne. Since the Frankish empire did not last long after Charlemagne's death, one is led to conclude that much of its success depended on the personality of Charlemagne. With the death of Louis, the son of Charlemagne, the partitioning of the empire began. The Treaty of Verdun in 843 divided the territory into three parts. Lothair received that part bounded by the Scheldt, Meuse, Saône, and Rhone, on the west, by the Rhine and the Alps on the east, and Frankish Italy. Louis received the land lying between the Rhine and the Elbe, including

Bavaria, Thuringia, Franconia, and Saxony. Charles was given the western part of the Frankish lands. Louis's dominion included the German elements, while Charles ruled the Romanic elements of the old kingdom.

The theoretical title *Emperor* went to Lothair, the eldest of the three brothers. The position of Lothair as emperor was less impressive than that of his grandfather. His brothers did not recognize the "missi" whom he sent. In fact, these messengers became little more than the leading churchmen of each province. With the death of Charles the Fat, in 887, the empire lost all semblance of unity. The practice of dividing a kingdom equally among the sons of the former ruler led to the creation of a number of small independent states. Two important political developments arose on the ruins of the Frankish state. One was feudalism, the natural consequence of political degeneration, and the second was nationalism, which became the dominating characteristic of modern political history.

Origin of Feudalism. Feudalism was one of the most complicated developments of the Middle Ages. The great variety of different types (most of the units having their own characteristics) makes it difficult to generalize about the system as a whole. The people in the western part of Europe were without the protection of a state and were harassed by barbarians. Year after year, the Norsemen appeared and terrorized the populace. The castle seemed to be the only refuge, which the nobleman was willing to offer in return for possession of land and other obligations from the vassal. This resulted in the development of small political, economic, and social units in which each group lived a more or less secluded life. The feudal idea was not new. A feudal society developed in Egypt when the Old Kingdom was destroyed (2500 B.C., see page 51). During the Homeric Age in Greece (see page 121), a form of feudalism existed in the city-states; and Japanese society was predominately feudal until the middle of the 19th century. Medieval feudalism was but another manifestation of the same general condition.

The Land Element. There are many conflicting opinions as to the origin of the elements that appear in feudal institutions. However, it is safe to assume that most of them were either German or Roman in origin. Land played an important part in

the development of the relationship between vassal and lord. In many cases, all that the vassal had to offer in return for protection was land. Land tenure was the basis of the political organization, in which the vassal gave his overlord the services that are expected of a citizen of a state. It was practically impossible for a small landholder to protect himself and his property; consequently, he was willing to give it over to a lord and receive it back to cultivate as a tenant-at-will. This gave him some security from invaders and made him a member of a society that offered stability. Ownership of property by the individual was unknown to the German. Land to him was the common property of the tribe. Consequently, the very important land element in the feudal system was certainly Roman in origin. Furthermore, there is a decided resemblance between the feudal land system and the old Roman villa. Each was a great estate, managed from a common center and existing more or less as an independent unit.

Personal Element. The foundations of the feudal system included more than a formal transfer of land. There were personal bonds, in which was given an oath of allegiance binding vassal and lord. This seems to have come from a practice of the Germans in their *comitatus*, in which protection, service, and support were included in a contract between freeman and chief. The formal ceremony was performed with the vassal on both knees before the lord and with the statement, "Sir, I enter your homage and faith and become your man by mouth and hands, and I swear and promise to keep faith with you against all others and to guard your rights with all my strength." Certain specific demands were understood: In return for protection the vassal was expected to give military service, attend the lord's court when summoned, and to give money grants or their equivalent on the occasion of the marriage of the lord's eldest daughter and the knighting of the eldest son, and as ransom for the lord in case of capture. On the other hand, the feudal lord (suzerain) had certain obligations which he had to perform. Justice in the feudal court and protection against intruders were prime considerations. The vassal's honor as husband or as father was inviolable.

Chivalry. Feudalism in practice presented many phases and contrasts. Chivalry, the romantic side of feudalism, has been preserved in song and story. The knight was pictured as "friend of

God and woman," and as a person who spent his life combating infidels or fighting "just" wars. He was the exponent of justice and fair play. There were cases in which this was true, but there were many exceptions. Life in the medieval castle was pictured as gay and festive. Tournaments, feasts, and elaborate ceremonies in which brave and daring knights appeared clad in shining armor and ladies dressed in the gayest of fashions presented only one side of the picture. The other was not so alluring. Warfare was the general rule rather than the exception. Castles were sometimes besieged for months, with the attendant misery and starvation. Scarcity of food, cold winters, tyranny of many of the unscrupulous lords, and the very restricted life that most people had to live darken the more romantic side. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that chivalry promoted in medieval society a higher standard of honor, greater generosity, and an attitude of reverence.

The Fief. Land and almost everything else that provided revenue was given to a vassal. The land fief, which was the most important, was really the central core of the feudal structure; it was the vassal's chief source of income. The fief also became the principal unit of justice and administration in medieval Europe, in which the feudal lord enjoyed a high degree of sovereignty. Kings were not strong enough to control local communities, and the responsibility for maintaining order and dispensing justice was assumed by local feudal lords. Large landlords frequently "subinfeudated" their holdings by granting portions to lesser nobles, who became their vassals. This practice further complicated the whole feudal structure.

Law and Justice. The feudal lord held two courts of justice, one for the noble vassals and another for the tenants. In the former, feudal obligations and contracts were considered; while in the latter, matters of fines, taxes, and fees were decided. This provided a substantial source of income and was frequently conducted in a questionable manner. From these courts, a new type of legal system evolved. Although feudal law, which was based essentially on the customary and the personal, differed widely among the various feudal states, by the 12th century there was a degree of uniformity.

Feudalism and the State. Theoretically the king was the ultimate suzerain in the feudal system, but in reality his power

rested on the fact that he was a feudal lord and on the number of his vassals and fiefs. There were cases, in France especially, where vassals were more powerful than the king. The well-established practice of "immunity" often exempted an estate from control by the king and virtually established an independent political unit within the domain of the ruler. It was only the rise of the middle class, which sided with the king against the feudal lords, that gave the king control over the state.

Feudalism and the Church. The complexity of feudalism was increased through the influence of the church, which was the largest landholder and possessed many privileges that had been granted by the later Roman emperors and the Franks. Insofar as most of the wealth of the church was derived from land, a feudal structure was developed. Bishops and abbots performed the duties of the feudal lords, in addition to their religious activities. Church land was held in mortmain (dead hand). This meant perpetual ownership—as the church never dies—and an escape from feudal inheritance tax. The clergy, however, did serve as a moderating influence in the chaotic feudal period. Through the Peace of God (*ca.* 1000) an appeal was made against constant warfare. The Truce of God (1027) asked all men to refrain from warfare "from the setting of the sun the fourth day of the week until the rising of the sun on Monday."

Estimate. Inherently, the feudal period represented a disorganized society in which confusion and conflict were the general rule in all activities. This was a transitional stage between the breakdown of the Roman Empire and the establishment of the national state. Not all feudal practices were detrimental. In the words of Stubbs, the English historian,

> It would have been an excellent device if it had been administered by archangels. . . . The essence of the system was mutual fidelity, and its proper consequence the *creation* of a corporate unity, and the recognition of it by every member, from the king to the villein. The bond was a voluntary one, to be taken up and put aside at pleasure; the principle of cohesion was uniform throughout the mass.

Nationalism. Both the Roman idea of an all-inclusive state and the feudal idea of decentralization proved unsatisfactory systems for political administration. There appeared in the later part of the Middle Ages a system that has been named the na-

tional state. The settlement of the various German tribes in the old Roman Empire and their mixing, physically and culturally, with the peoples already there formed the nuclei about which several European states grew. A state is a definite territorial unit with an independent government, and a nation is a group of people having a common racial origin, culture, and religion. In actual fact, one does not exist without the other, but seldom do they combine and retain all their individual characteristics. A state does not have all the elements of a nation, but it must possess some of them. This combination, which contains modified characteristics of both, will be referred to as a national state.

Factors in Political Unity. There must be a considerable amount of sentiment to hold the people together in a political unit. The feeling of solidarity in a group is based on several factors. There is the utilitarian aspect; the feeling that material gain can be had through forming such a combination is necessarily very important. The merchant class gave the state support for this reason, and property owners favored a system that would guarantee their rights. The support of a wealthy middle class was given to the trend toward a national state. The Medici in Italy, the Fuggers in Germany, and the Rolins in France financed rulers in various enterprises. The financial backing that the Fuggers gave to the Hapsburgs in Austria enabled them to acquire a dominant place in 16th-century Europe.

The natural desire for order and stability is one of the important factors back of patriotism, without which a state cannot long endure. A common culture helps to bring people closer together. The development of national languages was very important; a common medium of expression is a powerful cementing influence and it enables the preservation of traditions in the form of literature. No national state is a reality without traditions. Traditional stories that appeared in literary form gave support to national unity. The legend of William Tell in Switzerland, Blind Harry's *Sir William Wallace* in Scotland, and the poems of Robert Blondel in France exalted the nationalistic spirit in these various countries. These forces developed very slowly and the national state emerged very gradually. Not until a comparatively recent period did nationalism come into its own.

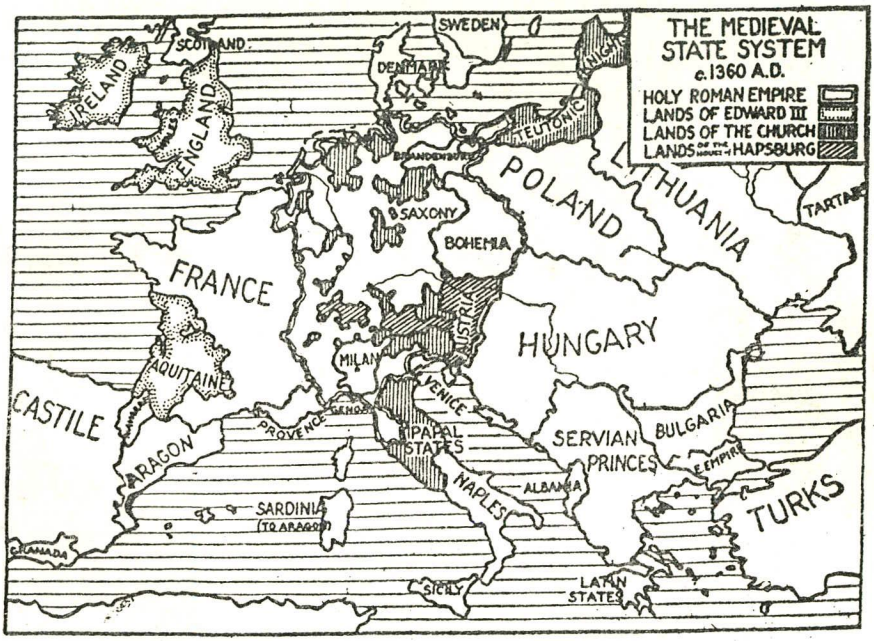
Feudalism and Nationalism. The feudal kingdom has been

called the ancestor of the national state. Many of the early states were first organized on the basis of feudalism. Most of the national states of Europe grew out of the activities of feudal lords. France was unified by the efforts of the lords of the Ile de France; Spain came out of the unity of the feudal provinces of Aragon and Castile; and the feudal house of Hapsburg ultimately unified Austria. Feudal practices were used in the government of the national state and some of them were carried over into the modern period. Not until the French Revolution (1789) were feudal practices officially abolished in France. William the Conqueror in England used a feudal oath (The Salisbury Oath, 1086) to bind his subjects together. Feudal practices were common in England until the close of the 15th century. Feudalism was evident in the governments of Russia, Austria, and in the German states much longer than in the western part of Europe. It was still evident in Russia at the time of the Revolution in 1917.

National Government in the Middle Ages: Germany. The modern national state had its beginning in the Middle Ages. Out of the confusion that followed the barbarian invasions and feudalism, the national state slowly emerged. The treaty of Verdun (843) divided the Frankish kingdom into three parts, two of which developed into Germany and France. The last descendant of the Frankish kings in Germany died in 911, and Henry of Saxony was elected king of the Germans (919). The empire was extended to include Brandenburg, Meissen, and Lorraine in a rudimentary national state. In 962, Otto I was rewarded with the crown of the Holy Roman Empire, which meant nominal political rule over Christendom. Trouble developed with the church, the investiture struggle (1075, see page 323), and civil war broke out in Germany, from which it did not recover for many centuries. The modern German national state did not emerge until 1871.

England. The English national state was made possible through the fusion of various invaders, including Anglo-Saxons, Danes, and Normans. William of Normandy, with the blessings of the Pope, landed in England in 1066. He defeated King Harold at Hastings, and completed the conquest of England in 1075. William ruled England leniently and intelligently. The country was organized on a feudal basis using some of the Anglo-Saxon institutions—the sheriff, for example—which seemed advisable.

The new ruler succeeded in forming a strong central government. Civil strife was suppressed and machinery of lawmaking and enforcement was created. Although leniency was shown toward feudal practices, precaution was taken always to make feudal lords responsible to the king. As a result, the king could rely upon his vassals for troops and armed support. The Domesday survey (1085–1086) further illustrates how William organized his government. This survey provided an accurate census of the economic



(Courtesy F. L. Schuman, International Politics.)

resources and the wealth held by his subjects, to be used as a basis for taxation.

Henry II and the Development of English Law. Henry II (1154–1189), after some intermission, continued the work of William the Conqueror. General confusion reigned in the English judicial system. Through a series of decrees, called *assizes*, Henry forged the foundation for the court system of England. Two judicial agencies, itinerant justices and the jury system, were introduced and firmly established. Circuit judges have remained a permanent element in the English legal system. The jury system

thus established is the basic characteristic of all judicial systems in English-speaking countries. The direct ancestor of the modern grand jury can be found also in Henry's famous Assize of Clarendon. Men were selected to report all crimes that they thought should be tried before regularly established juries.

Common law was another of the important germs of English law that emanated from the efforts of Henry II. Unlike Roman law, English law was not codified. Custom, not legislation, became the basis for common law. Beginning in the region of Edward I (1272), Year Books of important decisions and opinions of royal justices, which became the basis for future decisions, were collected and preserved. They became law, "common" to all English people, and superseded the confusing and contradictory local rules and customs.

France. Royal authority in France began to take definite form in the 12th century. Philip Augustus (1180–1229) was the first ruler of united France. He abolished many feudal customs, established a royal currency, and organized a national army. Royal courts were organized and officials were appointed and paid by the king. During the Hundred Years' War, France was able to get possession of most of the territory that England had held in Europe, thereby gaining mastery of her own land.

Other States. At the same time, other national states began to appear. Poland became a great power in the 10th century. Internal strife and wars with Germany led to a division of the kingdom in 1138. There was a revival in the 14th century, when her prestige was reestablished. Moscow became the center of a great Russian state in the 12th century. Two centuries later, Russia was a great, united country. Spain and Austria were also consolidating their lands into national states before the close of the Middle Ages. Feudalism was on the decline and a new order was emerging.

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Manor. The manorial system dominated the economic and social as well as the political activities of the early Middle Ages. The manor had the appearance of a small village. The proprietor, or the lord, lived in the largest house, located in the most favorable position. It was surrounded, at a respectable distance, by the houses of the tillers of the soil. In some cases, the

whole group lived in a common house, cultivated the fields in common, ate at the same table, and slept under the same roof. Agriculture was the chief occupation. and each manor was practically self-sufficient economically. The agricultural methods were very crude. A yield of 8 bushels of wheat per acre was considered good. Selective breeding of livestock was not practiced, and the animals were allowed to suffer during the winter months from lack of food and shelter. There was little incentive to produce more than was actually consumed in the manor; consequently, there was no urge to improve production.

Manorial Land System. The open-field system was generally practiced. The individual holdings of the peasants were separated from each other by throwing up a ridge of dirt or by omitting a furrow. Approximately one-third of the land was left fallow each year, as it was believed that this would increase the fertility. The cultivated land was divided into three fields. One was used for fall planting, another for spring planting, and a third was left fallow. Certain sections of the manor were set aside for hay lands, from which each peasant was allowed to gather hay for his animals during the winter months. Woodland was furnished for fuel and the *common* was reserved for pasturage for the peasants' cattle. Rotation of crops, careful selection of seeds, and the use of leguminous plants were not practiced. The lord of the manor acted in the capacity of owner. The *demesne*, or his share of the land, was cultivated by serfs. Furthermore, they were expected to pay the lord a portion of their crops and to make additional payments for the use of such things as the wine press, the flour mill, and the blacksmith's shop. Trade and the rise of the national state helped to break down the manor, but in the more remote parts of Europe there still exist villages that outwardly resemble the medieval manor.

Barriers to Trade and Travel. Trade developed very slowly in the Middle Ages. There was little money, and no regulated system of coinage existed. Travel and communication were dangerous and difficult. Of the few roads, most were impassable during a great part of the year. Thieves infested the whole countryside. Tolls were numerous and excessive. Barriers were erected on roads and bridges, and the merchant had to pay a fee before he was allowed to pass. As late as the 14th century, there were 74 tolls levied on

the Loire River, 60 on the Rhone, and 70 on the Garonne. Strand laws, which allowed the owner of coast land to confiscate the cargo of a ship wrecked on his shore, proved disastrous. At times, false beacons were erected to mislead sailors and cause wrecks. To add to the difficulties resulting from scarcity of money and the perils of travel, there was no demand for commodities. Most of the people lived a secluded and self-sufficient existence. Each manor was a unit having little contact with the outside world.

One of the very important restrictions on medieval economic activity was the influence of Christianity. Many Christians did not recognize the social functions of property and the social problems of wealth and poverty. The earth was the Lord's by divine law, and by natural law it belonged to all men. Many of the church fathers believed that wealth was the root of evil, because it weakened the soul's desire for virtue. Work was recommended, not for individual material gain, but for moral and disciplinary values. Merchants were frowned upon, speculation was regarded as a sin, and money lending was bitterly denounced. Almsgiving was recommended to dispose of wealth, and poverty was idealized. "Give ear, ye poor, for your life is precious, and if your flesh is mortal, your soul shall never die," declared Ambrose. These points of view were extreme, but their influence was strongly felt throughout most of the Middle Ages.

Revival of Trade. The crusades helped to break down the isolationism that was prevalent in the Middle Ages. Crusaders brought goods from the Holy Land, thus arousing a demand for such commodities and giving some people a desire to see what was going on in other parts of the world. The church needed ornaments and vestments that it could not obtain in the West, and noblemen desired some of the luxuries that were found in abundance in the East. While the crusades did not originate commerce, they gave it a powerful impulse. The Norman conquest of southern Italy and Sicily helped to break Moslem supremacy in the Mediterranean. Norse stimulation to trade was felt from the Baltic to the eastern Mediterranean: fish were obtained in the Baltic, furs from Russia, resin from Scandinavia, grain from northern Europe, and Oriental goods from Constantinople. By the end of the 11th century, overland routes across Europe were being used by traders.

Rise of Towns. Conspicuous evidence of the influence of trade

and commerce can be found in the rise and development of cities. Many cities had decayed and disappeared in the years following the fall of Rome. The population of Rome had decreased from more than 1,000,000 to not more than 50,000, and other cities that were once prosperous—Nîmes in France and Bath in England, for example—had almost disappeared, leaving only ruins to recall their ancient glory. Lack of trade was the prime reason for this decline. In Charlemagne's time, trade between western Europe and the Near East was not more than one-tenth of what it had been in the 1st century. In the 10th century, new cities began to appear because of the commercial activities of the Vikings and the Venetians. The great increase in the population of Europe—the number had doubled between the 5th and the 13th century—also led to the growth of cities. Rural life, which had been general, gave way to urban life.

Locations of Cities. Some cities grew where towns had existed in classical times, and some where Roman garrisons had been located; but general accessibility and geographical conditions were the main factors in determining the location of the new centers of population. In northern Italy, Venice, Genoa, Pisa, Cremona, Bologna, Milan, and Florence developed into flourishing centers. In southern France, Toulouse, Marseille and Narbonne; in the Rhine Valley, Cologne, Mainz, and Strasbourg; along the North and Baltic seas, Hamburg, Bremen, and Lübeck; and in England, London—all these became cities of considerable size between the 11th and the 14th century. Venice and Genoa, the leaders in the development of trade between the Mediterranean and the Orient, controlled ports in the Near East, where goods brought from the Orient were purchased. Venetian and Genoese merchants sent linen and woolen cloth in payment for Oriental goods. Knowledge of technical processes was acquired from the East—glass, paper, confectionery, and sirup were made from formulas that merchants brought to the West.

City Government. The development of government in these cities provided a important laboratory for experiment in political administration. The cities needed their own organizations to protect them from their enemies and to promote their economic interests. Pirates and bandits were too numerous to make it possible for a single merchant to protect his cargo, so he relied on

the city to do this. The merchant class often dominated the government; the old aristocracy had very little influence in this new type of political administration. The councils of the newly established towns constitute one of the first successful experiments in representative polity and, in many cases, served as precedents for the formation of national organizations. Regulation of commerce, defense, charity, enactment of laws, taxation, and judicial procedure were all included in governmental jurisdiction.

This civic institution was similar in many respects to a state. It sought colonies, collected customs duties, and made treaties. Sometimes a group of towns formed a confederation for the promotion of a common interest. The Lombard League (1167), including the important cities in northern Italy, was organized, with the support of the Pope, for defense against German aggression. The Hanseatic League was a mutual compact between Hamburg and Lubeck in 1241, to aid each other in protecting their citizens. By 1300, the Hanseatic League included 70 cities, from Holland to Livonia. They had a merchant fleet and a navy; they waged war against pirates and protected shipwrecked sailors; they established trading posts in London, Novgorod, and Bruges; they practically monopolized Baltic trade.

City Life. The towns—picturesque with their walls, turrets, and cathedrals—were, nevertheless, miserable places in which to live. The streets were narrow, poorly lighted, and dirty. The houses, crowded close together, lacked windows, were crudely furnished, and were without drainage facilities. Yet, in spite of the absence of luxurious surroundings, the people were not without means of enjoyment. Feasts, processions, pageants, cockfighting, bearbaiting, and theatrical productions furnished means of entertainment. The people mingled in the market places, not only to buy merchandise but also to visit and to hear the news of the world, brought there by traders from distant lands.

Medieval Fairs. The distribution of goods was one of the obvious difficulties that confronted the medieval merchant. The modern system of importers, wholesalers, and means of communication was lacking. The medieval fair aided in the solution of this problem. Merchants, under the protection of city, feudal, or state authorities, held these markets at stated times in the most important cities of western Europe. Traders from distant lands dis-

played their goods for the benefit of local merchants. The fairs were well regulated by the authorities of the city or province or by the free-will organization of the merchants. Traders were guaranteed protection, ensured free competition, and prevented from cornering a market. Special courts were held for trying offenders. For serious negligence, a merchant was barred from further participation in trade. The fairs helped to end the stagnating period of isolation by enabling people to have some contact with the outside world. The promise of reward from trade stimulated the more industrious to cast aside their old ideas and occupations and enter the whirl of commercial activity.

Merchant Guilds. The fair was only one of the numerous organizations for the promotion of trade that appeared in the Middle Ages. The merchant had a struggle in establishing himself in society as a respectable professional man. The nobility, the clergy, and men of other professions looked down upon him, but he was too resourceful to be curbed by such trifles. Guilds were formed to protect members and add dignity to the work. The merchant guild was the oldest and most inclusive. Anyone engaged in the production or merchandising of a commodity was eligible for membership. Members bound themselves together by a common oath in which they obligated themselves to sell at stipulated times, to help protect each other in time of danger or need, to regulate prices, to exclude nonproducing middlemen, to guarantee a "just price," and to keep up the standard of the commodities produced.

Craft Guilds. The craft guild was frequently an outgrowth of the merchant guild and was composed of individuals engaged in the production of a specific article. No one could enter any craft guild as a master craftsman without having served as apprentice and journeyman. Boys in their teens were put in the charge of a master —ordinarily for seven years. A contract was signed in which the apprentice bound himself to the master and promised to be diligent and obedient. Frequently, the apprentice lived with the master and was treated as a ward. If he misbehaved, he was corrected with the rod. He received no pay, but was given food, clothing, and a place to sleep The master was responsible for teaching his apprentice to read and write, and for advancing his social, moral, and technical learning.

When the apprenticeship was finished, the candidate became a journeyman. In this capacity he received wages. The journeyman's wage ranged from 5 to 20 cents a day and sometimes, although not always, he was given lodging in the home of the master craftsman. His lot was not a pleasant one; wages were low and working hours were long. However, the ambitious journeyman contented himself with the hope that he would soon become a master craftsman. In order to acquire this promotion, the candidate had to submit to an examination to prove his knowledge of the craft. He had to produce a "masterpiece" that would satisfy the guild members, and he had to meet certain pecuniary obligations.

Activities of Craft Guilds. The craft guilds were well organized. The assembly of masters elected two or four wardens to serve as executives. These supervised the work of the guild, enforced the statutes, settled disputes between masters and workmen, passed upon the admission of new candidates, and imposed fines upon the negligent. The wardens examined finished articles before they were put on the market. Imperfect articles were seized and either burned or given away. Town officials cooperated with guild authorities in enforcing regulations. Prices were fixed and noisy trades—blacksmithing, for example—were denied the privilege of night operation. The craft guild possessed the right to sue in a law court, issue regulations, and hold property. Much of the guild's activity was social. It provided entertainments, cared for the sick and needy, established schools and hospitals; it undertook public projects, such as hospital buildings, sewage systems, and street improvements.

Guilds and Trade Unions. The medieval guild should not be confused with a modern trade union. The guild was neither an employers' not an employees' organization but a combination of both. It aimed not only at the furtherance of the interests of its members but also at the maintenance of the quality of the articles produced. The nearest approach to a modern trade union came in the late Middle Ages. It was the Association of Journeymen, which was organized for the purpose of securing higher wages from the master craftsmen. Journeymen instituted the idea of strikes. The use of the term probably originated from the *Place de Greve* (*greve* is the French word for strike), where the journeymen congregated in Paris to await hire.

Decay of the Guild. The guilds, important as they were, did not enjoy a long period of supremacy. As they became wealthy, they were less democratic; a few masters with wealth dominated the less fortunate. Wage earners had little, if any, chance to became master workmen. Production and the sale of completed articles gradually came under the control of a few. As the power of the state increased, it saw fit to deprive the guilds of much of their power. The Industrial Revolution swept away the last vestiges of the guild system.

Money and Banking. The substitution of a money economy for a natural economy was an important step in the development of trade. The church opposed moneylending as a matter of principle, which meant that this lucrative business was monopolized by the Jews and non-Christians. The lack of facilities for credit and for the handling of money, the lack of an accepted system of coinage, and the almost universal practice of debasing coins were difficult obstacles to surmount. The cities of northern Italy were among the first to standardize coinage. The Florentine florin and the Venetian ducat were accepted by merchants of all countries at their face value. Banks of deposit with current accounts were first established by the Knights Templars of France, but similar institutions were soon organized in Florence and Siena. The papacy was the largest and wealthiest institution of the Middle Ages. Its revenues were handled principally by the bankers of Siena and Florence; this gained for them great prestige and the title of "the popes' money changers." Improved letters of credit and bills of exchange were introduced by the North Italian cities before the 15th century.

Influence of Medieval Economy. The medieval economic system affected society as a whole and introduced principles that are fundamental in the present commercial age. Money aided in the rise of the national state at the expense of feudalism; it furnished the very essence of capitalism, as opposed to the medieval economic system; and it instilled the desire for people to venture into foreign lands in search of wealth. The church had a great influence over wealth. It attempted to minimize the materialistic "economic machine," and to emphasize the importance of salvation and a spiritual life. It endeavored to moralize economic pursuits, to oppose profit seeking as selfish and devoid of the social

spirit, and to establish the principle of a "just price." Business, however, proved to be stronger than the medieval conception of religion. The church has lost its control over the economic system and has become somewhat victimized by it. In general, it can be concluded that the beginning of modern coinage, letters of credit, and banking occurred in the Middle Ages. The modern concepts of capitalism and industrialization developed from economic tendencies, which also found expression in the Middle Ages.

4. SOCIETY

Nobility. People in the Middle Ages were divided into well-defined social strata. The upper class, or the nobility, became hereditary and class conscious by the end of the 12th century. One of the things that distinguished a member of the nobility from the other classes was the possession of a fief; or a complete fighting equipment, including a horse, armor, and weapons; or both. At the top of the list were the hereditary rulers, who were surrounded by a selected group of lesser nobility. The title of knight was much sought and was the means of gaining honor and prestige. The upper class enjoyed most of the privileges and possessed most of the wealth. Their homes presented displays of formality and ostentation. Their dress was lavish and their entire surroundings were as elaborate as their wealth allowed. Such exhibition often determined a nobleman's position on the social ladder.

Clergy. The upper clergy shared the prestige of the nobility and were closely associated with them. Their interests were so nearly identical that they cooperated in political, economic, and social affairs at the expense of the lower orders. Bishops in wealthy dioceses lived a sumptuous and worldly life, comparable to that enjoyed by the wealthy noblemen. With their massive palaces and luxurious habits and costumes, they presented a striking contrast to the lower clergy, who lived with the people and suffered hardships with them. The Vicar of Morolles in Normandy described the condition of the lower clergy as follows:

> We unfortunate vicars living upon the congruous portions, we usually entrusted with the larger parishes, we whose lot cries out to the stones and rafters of our miserable vicarages, we must tolerate prelates who would prosecute through their guards a poor vicar cutting a cane in their forests for support on his long

journeys over the highways. . . . When they pass, the vicar is obliged to fall to the ground, and lie supinely upon the hillside, to protect himself against the hoofs and the mud-splashing of their horses, and also against the wheels, or perhaps the whip of the insolent driver. And then, all dirty, with his wretched cane in the hand, and his old hat in the other, he must greet, humbly and speedily, through the curtain of the closed and gilded carriage, the puffed-up prelate who is snoring upon the wool of the herd that the poor vicar pastures and of which he may keep only the dung and the grease.

The gulf which existed between the upper and lower clergy in many respects was comparable to that between the nobility and the peasants.

Lower Class. The lower class, including all groups other than nobles and the upper clergy, lived a modest life, and many suffered numerous privations. Most of them were agricultural workers and were looked down upon by the nobility because they had to work. They were forced to do the menial tasks of the nobility, frequently without pay, and were taxed to the limit of their endurance. The lower class was divided into two groups—freemen and those forced to live under some kind of bondage, such as serfs and villeins. The latter were not slaves in the common sense of the word. A serf could not be sold except with the land which he occupied; he was "bound to the soil." Serfdom began to disappear toward the close of the Middle Ages, but the lot of the freed man did not improve immediately. He was forced from his home, which he had enjoyed while serving the nobleman, and frequently he was unable to find employment.

The home of the peasant was very modest; a single building often sheltered the livestock as well as the family. Their clothing was coarse and their food was scanty. They had to work hard and their compensation was small. They had little opportunity for travel, education, and amusement. They were punished severely for slight offenses and were deprived of medical aid and, in some cases, of spiritual comfort. It would be incorrect, however, to conclude that the peasants were altogether discontented with their lot. Their social affairs lacked the brilliance and formality of those of the nobility, but they had their fun and frolics. They danced in the streets of the village, played games, and when circumstances permitted, they drank and feasted. Many were quite content with their life—largely, of course, because they were not conscious of their limitations and accepted their fate as inescapable.

Beginning of a Change. The development of trade and industry revolutionized social life. The change was slow: it was scarcely noticeable for a long time, but ultimately it destroyed the medieval conception of society and developed a new social order. The wealthy merchant, without the heritage of the aristocracy from which to claim social prestige, climbed the social ladder through the influence of his money. He could equal the sumptuous surroundings of the nobility and was able to exert influence in political matters. The same forces affected the lower social orders. The commercial class needed laborers. Workmen left the land and congregated in cities, where they depended upon wages rather than upon the fruits of agriculture and were subject to the mercies of the industrialist rather than of the nobility. The day laborer was an innovation, destined to make up one of the largest groups in society.

5. THE ARTS

Birth of Medieval Artistic Expression. The Middle Ages was a period of correlation of artistic ideas and expressions. Roman, Byzantine, barbarian, and Christian artistic conceptions were merged, and out of their combination ultimately developed Renaissance art. Medieval art was one manifestation of a general intellectual development, expressed also in literature, science, and politics, and indicating a rebirth of man's emotions and faculties to a realization of the possibilities of investigating the secrets of nature, rather than of merely taking them for granted. Art, from necessity, is a luxury and is produced in a society in which at least a few have sufficient surplus of wealth to patronize it. In the Middle Ages, the church and a few wealthy noblemen—the Medici of Florence, for example—gave material reward to the struggling artist. The church sponsored art as a means of proclaiming the glory of God. The noblemen used it for the enhancement of their surroundings and for the satisfaction of their taste for luxury.

Medieval Architecture. The cathedral was the greatest artistic expression of the Middle Ages. It was a masterpiece in masonry and the embodiment of medieval culture. It stood as a symbol of the age and dominated the intellectual life of the people, just as it dominated the landscape of the countryside. It was an object of civic pride, a religious inspiration, and an art museum, all com-

bined in one. Towns vied with one another to have the finest cathedral, and the people worked in its construction as a matter of piety and civic pride. When completed, it was a civic center where rich and poor mingled and where the the finest art objects

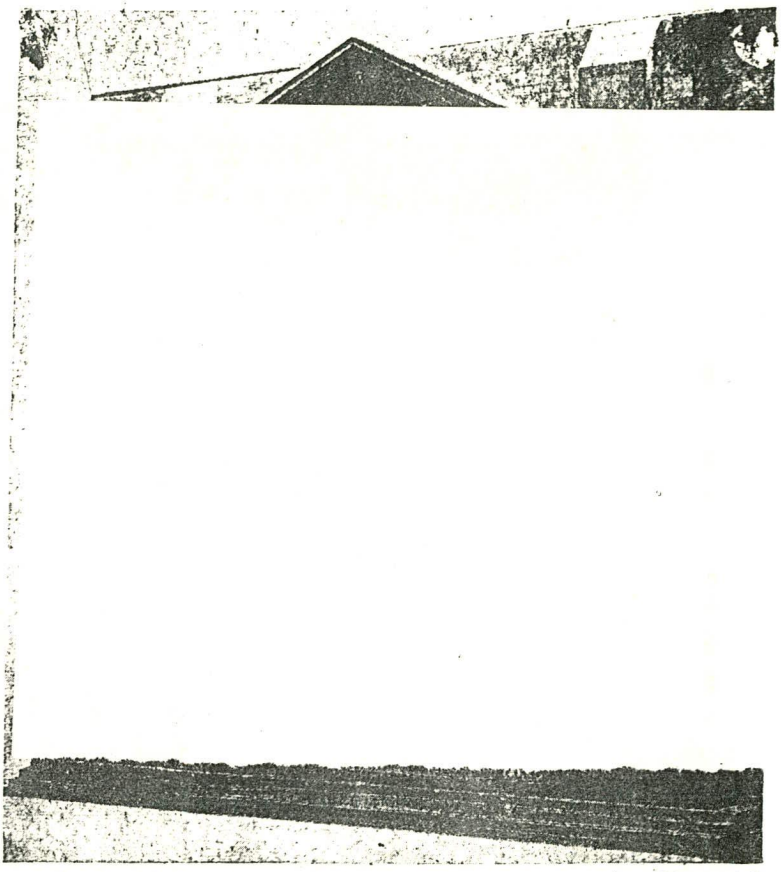


FIG. 35.—Church of St. Trophime, model of porch. (*Courtesy, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.*)

and tapestries that the town possessed were placed. Sometimes trophies of war embellished the structure and the most eminent citizens were given niches in the interior for their final resting places.

The Romanesque Church. Romanesque architecture, so called because of the free use of the Roman arch in construction, was a combination of Roman, Byzantine, and early Christian influences.

It followed the plan of the Roman basilica and had thick outer walls with small windows. The Byzantine idea of a richly decorated interior helped to enliven and lighten the otherwise drab appearance. The ground plan was a long, unbroken hall, with a circular apse sheltering the high altar at the end opposite the entrance. The

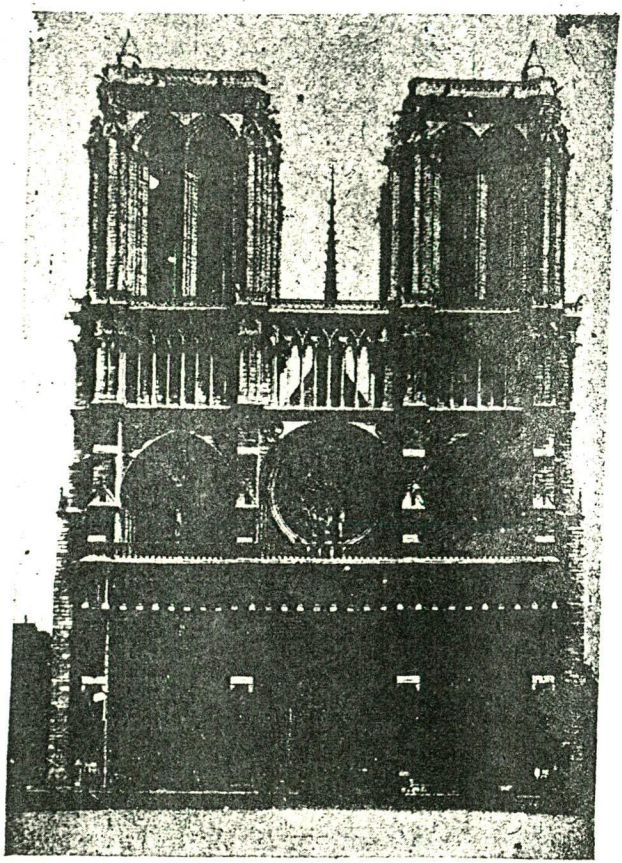


FIG. 36.—Notre Dame, Paris.

church of San Ambrogio in Milan, built in the early part of the 12th century, is one of the purest of the existing examples of Romanesque architecture. The building is severely plain, with an unbroken sloping roof. The façade has a two-storied arcade, with a square tower on each side. The ceiling, of a barrel-vaulted type, is divided into two sections by transverse arches. Other examples of Romanesque architecture are the cathedral at Pisa, the church of

San Miniato in Florence, and the church of St. Trophime and the Abbaye-aux-Hommes in France.

Gothic Architecture. Romanesque architecture did not attain the artistic perfection demanded by the idealistic spirit of the Middle Ages. The people's desire for a fitting monument to God on earth found expression in the Gothic cathedral. In this type of architecture, the ground plan of the Romanesque cathedral was used, but the decorative effects were much more elaborate. In the words of Professor Ault,[1] "The Romanesque church was designed from the base upward, the Gothic church from the vault downward." The pointed arch, the flying buttress, and the rose window were outstanding features of the Gothic cathedral. The pointed arch eliminated much of the massive effect of the walls in earlier types, adding slenderness and lightness. The flying buttress supported the walls, making it possible to increase the height[2] and to add windows, the glorifying feature of Gothic architecture. Each flying buttress supported the wall where two diagonal ribs met from two adjoining sections of the vault. The rose windows were constructed in intricate geometric patterns of stone, with the intervening spaces filled with richly colored glass. The use of many colors, blue and red predominating, produces a symphony of colors that eludes description.

Decorations. Architecture, sculpture, and painting all combined for the glorification of the Gothic cathedral. While decorations add much to the appearance of the building, they were not intended to conceal, but rather to embellish, the main structure. The effect is not that of a conglomerate and promiscuous collection, but a carefully planned arrangement, where each detail, although it may be miniature, was made to fit a definite place and add a bit to the general appearance. Sculptured saints, pinnacles, gargoyles, medallions, pulpits, baptismal fonts, candlesticks, wrought-iron gates, and panels are features of the adornment and the furnishing in all Gothic cathedrals. There are more than 4,000 statues on the exterior of Chartres Cathedral.

Sculpture. Medieval sculptors were concerned chiefly with the beautification of the cathedral; consequently, they used prima-

[1] *Medieval Europe* (Heath), 451.

[2] The height of Reims cathedral, interior, is 125 feet; of Amiens, 139 feet; and of Beauvais, 158 feet.

rily religious subjects, treated in a reverent manner. The gargoyles offer the most striking exception. They may have had a religious significance, or, as had been suggested, in them medieval sculptors may have given free play to the sense of humor, for many of these waterspouts are fantastic and grotesque in conception. It is difficult to imagine a spiritual association of such gargoyles with saints, but in the architectural setting they mingle agreeably. Medieval sculpture was graceful and impressive. Sluter's "Well of Moses" (15th century), near Dijon, France, shows realism, energy, and individuality in the portrayal of the human figure. Donatello (1382–1466), of Florence, Italy, marks the beginning of the transition from medieval to Renaissance sculpture. His themes represent the spirit of chivalry and saintliness that is characteristically medieval, but his works, such as the "St. George," the "Young Angels" on the singing gallery of the cathedral, and a nude statue of the boy David, in their realism tempered by regard for classic form, indicate the spirit of a new age.

Painting. Except for the mural paintings in the later Gothic cathedrals, medieval painting was further divorced from architecture and religion than was sculpture. Secular subjects, such as landscapes, hunting scenes, and tournaments, seem to have been most favored. Religious subjects, however, were not neglected. Cimabue (1240–1302), Duccio (1255–1319) of Siena, and Giotto (1266–1337) of Florence, whose paintings were without a rival for almost a century, originated the type of painting that found its greatest expression later in the works of Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael. Giotto introduced nature into the subject matter of his paintings. His famous picture of Saint Francis' sermon to the birds was pioneer in this respect. Fra Angelico (1387–1455) of Fiesole, sometimes called the first of the Renaissance painters, was influenced greatly by the works of Giotto.

Decoration by means of colored glass is considered one of the greatest artistic accomplishments of the Middle Ages. The glass, which had been colored while in a molten state, was cut into small pieces and these were arranged in a mosaic design, the pieces being held together by strips of lead. Besides geometrical and floral patterns, scenes that depicted Biblical episodes were wrought in rich colorings of blues, reds, violets, and other hues. The stained-glass rose window of Chartres Cathedral is one of the most beau-

tiful of many rare examples of this art that added splendor to the church interiors, where the windows served as adornment and as a means of instruction in Bibical lore.

Music. Modern music can be traced to the Middle Ages. In church services extensive use was made of music, at first through the intoning of the service by the priest and responses chanted in unison by a choir. Musical notation was introduced late in the 10th century by a monk, Guido of Arezzo, who utilized the staff of five parallel lines, upon or between which notes were placed to indicate pitch. Different types of notes were used to indicate difference in time. Soon choral music could be rendered, instead of plain song, in which all voices were singing in unison. For a time, the church frowned upon these musical innovations. An 11th-century writer described the singers as drunken men "who indeed find the way home, but do not know how they get there." In spite of the restrictions, church music began to be influenced by the new ideas. Musical instruments were revolutionized in the Middle Ages. By the 13th century, organs with keyboards and stops were common in churches. The guitar, the guitar fiddle—the precursor of the violin—and the clavichord—the ancestor of the piano—were in use before the close of the Middle Ages.

6. THE CHURCH AND THE STATE

The Power of the Church. Henry C. Lea, America's foremost authority on medieval history, wrote concerning the Roman Catholic Church, "The history of mankind may be vainly searched for another institution . . . which has exercised so vast an influence on human destinies." It is difficult for us to imagine the extent of the influence of the church in the Middle Ages. In Christendom, its power over religion was all-embracing. Everyone belonged to it and anyone who questioned its principles was branded a traitor against God and man. In European civil law in the 12th century, heresy was made a crime punishable by death. The church did not have to depend upon voluntary contributions for its financial support, but reaped a vast revenue from land that it owned and from the "tithe," a regular tax levied on subjects in all Christian nations.

The church had no army to crush rebellions, no police force to coerce offenders, but it did have power that was more effective.

The clergy had the power of salvation and could dispense it at will. The Pope, through the interdict, could forbid all forms of public worship in a state. This was effective in forcing rulers to obey his commands, because the people took their religion seriously. Excommunication deprived the individual of all the privileges of the church and forbade anyone to associate with the condemned. Through the Holy Inquisition, suspects were brought before a secret ecclesiastical court and condemned to torture.

The church was more than a religious organization; it performed many of the functions of a state government. The Pope was at the head of the organization and through his subordinates exerted absolute authority. The church had its own law (canon law) and its own courts, before which all cases involving clergymen, widows, and orphans and all questions of marriage, wills, and heresy were tried. The Pope had his own ambassadors (papal legates) who were sent to the various states and made elaborate reports to Rome. The church, at its height, even claimed supremacy over the state. Rulers were considered as subjects of the Pope and was responsible to him. Bishops ruled their dioceses like political princes, and high officials in the church were given positions of importance in state governments. Voltaire fittingly referred to the 9th century as "the age of bishops."

Conflicting Authority of Church and State. The overlapping authority of the church and the state resulted in a conflict of jurisdiction that was certain to cause trouble. So long as the church was strong and the state was weak, there was very little resistance, but the ruler of a powerful state naturally was opposed to having an outside power interfere in his government. The popes looked with distaste on the growth of the power of the state and also the gradual control that the temporal ruler was gaining over the officials of the church. In some instances, the emblems of spiritual authority, the ring and the crosier, were conferred by a temporal power without much consideration for the church. Men of noble birth often sought church offices because of the revenue and the prestige that accompanied them. Pope Gregory VII (1073–1085) tried to remedy this practice. In his *Dictatus*, he defined the authority of the church. The Pope, he declared, is the only universal bishop and might at will appoint and transfer other bishops. Futhermore, "the Pope is the only person whose feet are

kissed by all the princes"; he could depose emperors and absolve subjects from allegiance to their king; no one could condemn a person who appealed to the Pope; no decrees of the Pope could be annulled, and no one could pass judgment upon his acts. These decisions were sent to kings and princes, including those of England, France, and Germany.

The Investiture Struggle. Henry IV (1056–1106), the youthful king of Germany, boldy challenged the power of the Pope. Gregory VII condemned the German king for his actions in no uncertain terms:

> Incline thine ear to us, O Peter, chief of the Apostles. As thy representative and by thy favor has the power been granted especially to me by God of binding and loosing in heaven and earth. On the strength of this, for the honor and the glory of thy Church, in the name of the Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I withdraw, through thy power and authority, from Henry the King, son of Henry the Emperor, who has arisen against thy church with unheard-of-insolence, the rule over the whole kingdom of the Germans and over Italy. I absolve all Christians from the bonds of the oath which they have sworn, or may swear, to him, and forbid anyone to serve him as king.

Henry felt the weight of the Pope's authority. His subjects rebelled and he hastened to make amends. He met the Pope at Canossa, where for three days he had to stand before a closed door, barefoot and in ragged clothes, before Pope Gregory would receive him. Henry's power was ultimately broken, but not before Gregory was driven from the papal throne. Gregory, although deprived of his power, held to his convictions. As he breathed his last, he is reputed to have said, "I have loved justice and hated iniquity; therefore I am left to die in exile."

Later Phases of the Conflict. The investiture struggle did not end with the removal of these two indomitable rulers. After a long controversy, a compromise was made in the Concordat of Worms (1122). The Emperor was to allow the church to appoint the bishops and abbots and renounce his claim to confer the crosier and the ring, but in a separate ceremony he granted secular prerogatives to the newly appointed churchmen. The spiritual rights were thus conferred by the church and the state granted the coveted temporal privileges. The Concordat of Worms did not bring to an end the struggle between the church and the state. Frederick I (1152–1190), king of Germany, challenged the power

of the papacy. He informed the Pope that the headship of the empire had been "bestowed upon him by God" and that he felt no necessity of obtaining the Pope's permission for his actions. Frederick tried to extend his influence in Italy as well as Germany, but met the determined opposition of the church and the Lombard League. In 1176, they defeated Frederick and practically won their independence.

Age of Innocent III. Innocent III (1198–1216) was successful in stopping the inroads of the state in the affairs of the church. He was virtually the arbiter of Europe during the period he was in power. He intervened in Germany over the election of a king; he forced John of England to submit to his authority; and at the Lateran Council (1215) he called together the principal rulers, bishops, and abbots to discuss religious and political problems. In spite of Innocent's undisputed success, the church fought a losing battle with the state. The prestige held by Innocent III was of short duration and never, after his time, did the church succeed in acquiring such power. In the long struggle, the papacy made great inroads on the power of the emperor. German unity was destroyed and the authority of the church was increased.

Decline of the Medieval Church. The church, both temporally and spiritually, reached its greatest height under Innocent III. Thi pinnacle of power was of short duration. Six months after the Fourth Lateran Council, Innocent III died. Signs of decay began to be noticeable, as corruption and worldliness became increasingly evident among the clergy. Pope Alexander VI (1492–1503) displayed his vices without any attempt at concealment. Bishops often were appointed from a group of noblemen whose interests were political rather than religious; as a consequence, sees were neglected and the church suffered. Even the monasteries showed marked signs of deterioration from their lofty ideals. The wealth that they had accumulated permitted the abbots and monks to enjoy luxurious living, residing in fine homes and entertaining on the scale of wealthy noblemen.

The growth of nationalism and individualism, which had become apparent by the close of the Middle Ages, was detrimental to the power of the church. Doctrine, however, continued to live, and insofar as the Roman Catholic Church was concerned, did not change materially. It should not be concluded that the church lost

all its prestige. Most of the people were deeply religious, and many reformers tried to remedy the defects. A Dutch reformer, Groot (1340–1384), founded a society called the Brethren of the Common Life, which emphasized education. Groot condemned many of the practices in the church and declared, "To love God and worship Him is religion; not the taking of special vows."

7. PHILOSOPHY

Christianity and Philosophy. The early Christians condemned Greek philosophy because they thought it obscured morals and encouraged heresy. However, in a later period, theologians—St. Augustine, for example—began to accept both the conclusions and the methods of the philosophers. As a result, philosophy, like other forms of learning, was used as a handmaiden of theology. Theologians contended that Christianity, through divine revelation, answered most of the questions that philosophy had raised and for which they had found no solution. John Scotus Erigena (810–875) suggested that reason should have a place beside faith in attempting to reach ultimate truth. "God," he said, "is the essence of all things because He alone exists."

The Background for Scholasticism. Controversy developed over this question: Did reality exist in the universal church or in the individual members with the church? One group, the realists, believed that it was present only in general class or type of objects. Another, the nominatists, contended that reality existed only in the concrete. The principal issue was in the determination of the power and doctrines of the church. The practice utilized led eventually to the basic principles of scholasticism.

Scholasticism. Scholastic philosophy was the most important cultural adventure of the period. It was a combination of Augustinian theology and Aristotelian logic—an attempted union of revelation and reason in one philosophy. The revival of Aristotle's philosophy and its application to medieval thought as expressed in the theology of Augustine was brought about by the importance attributed to logic by Abélard (1079–1142) and the justification of pagan logic by Thomas Aquinas (1224–1274). Abélard was one of the greatest and most original thinkers in the Middle Ages. He was one of the first great theologians who used the powers of reason to defend and to explain the faith of the church. He contended:

"It is through reason, and not through compulsion, that men can be brought to accept the Christian faith." However, he believed that there were mysteries in Christianity that reason could not fathom; yet, in spite of that, they were not necessarily irrational. His greatest work was *Sic et Non* (*Yes and No*), in which contradictory statements in the Bible and in the teachings of the church fathers were enumerated. His motive was not destructive but was intended to provoke thinking. "By inquiring," he wrote, "we discover truth." Enlightenment was an intellectual blessing and more important, in his estimation, than trying to appease God. He believed that the incarnation of Christ was for the purpose of illuminating the world through divine wisdom, rather than for appeasing God.

Thomas Aquinas introduced Aristotelian logic and combined it with medieval theology. His *Summa Theologica* provided the church with a well-reasoned dogma and gave a new interpretation of the world and of man. Aquinas justified faith acquired through reason and constructed a defense of a world outlook, already revealed and determined. Through deductive reasoning, Aquinas endeavored to distinguish between knowledge acquired by man and the revealed truth, to separate the divine and the natural elements in man. The incarnation, the redemptive work of Christ, and salvation through grace made by the sacraments were basic concepts in Aquinas's reasoning. The effort of the scholastics was to combine the complete system of knowledge, scientific and theological, into a single unit.

Estimate of Scholasticism. Scholasticism satisfied many of the thinkers of the Middle Ages. Its inclusiveness appealed to the intellectually curious and represented a step in the direction of scientific thought. Scholasticism was not scientific, but it attempted to reduce facts to general principles. The scholastics contributed to progress in science and learning by insisting that one might examine, without fear of damnation, the nature of God and the cosmos. Credit must be given them, in spite of their shortcomings, for much of the intellectual activity that existed in the later part of the Middle Ages. It did not, however, satisfy the skeptical mind and it could not withstand the more penetrative inductive method of thinking.

Duns Scotus (1270?–1308), himself a scholastic, pointed out

some of the fallacies of scholasticism. He showed the limitations of the logical method and exposed errors in the deductions of some of his most eminent colleagues. He insisted that the general acceptance of Aristotle's observations was dangerous, as many of them were untrue, and suggested the reexamination of all problems through observational and experimental, rather than merely logical, methods. Sir Francis Bacon (1561–1626) criticized the scholastics in bitter terms:

> Having short and strong wits and abundance of leisure, and small variety of reading, but their wits being shut up in the cells of a few authors, chiefly Aristotle their dictator, as their persons were shut up in the cells of monasteries and colleges, and knowing little history, either of nature or time, they did out of no great quantity of matter and infinite agitation of wit spin out unto us those laborious webs of learning which are extant in their books.

Scholasticism did not satisfy the immediate interest in the complexity of growing materialism. It taught little that was not already known. The new age clamored for new truths, not merely for proof of what was already known.

8. EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Early Medieval Education. Enough has already been stated to prove that the Middle Ages was not barren of intellectual activity. Imperial Rome had a system of grammar schools in the cities and towns that was continued in the later period in spite of many adversities. The barbarian invasions temporarily submerged what was left of the Roman educational system but in time the new element revived it, adding a zest and freshness that the Romans had lacked. There were evidences of this revival in the time of Charlemagne. He established a palace school at Aachen for the training of men for public service. He attracted such teachers and scholars as Alcuin of York and Peter of Pisa to teach in his schools. He encouraged parish priests to conduct free elementary schools. He brought about a revived interest in Latin and Greek and insisted that members of the clergy become better acquainted with the Latin used in church services.

Charlemagne, although he himself never learned to write, was interested in such cultural pursuits as the writing of textbooks, the collection of Frankish folklore, and the translation of the Greek

New Testament into Latin. The successors of Charlemagne neglected his schools, but the church accepted the responsibility of carrying on the work. The church, however, refused to admit pagan teaching, and that meant the exclusion of much classical learning. Church fathers believed that the main function of education was to train leaders for the church and included in the curriculum the study of the psalms, church singing, writing, grammar, and arithmetic. For some years, the educational ideas of Charlemagne were suppressed by the church.

Christian Theory of Education. During the 4th and 5th centuries, when converts to Christianity became numerous, there was a recognized need for instruction in the faith. Churchmen resorted to oral instruction by the catechetical method, which emphasized selected Bible stories and prayers. Conversion of some of the pagan educated classes broadened the scope and content of Christian instruction. Philosophical schools at Alexandria and Antioch really became Christian colleges, teaching pagan learning as well as Christian doctrine. This type of school did not progress very far because of the limitations of the religious outlook. Critical approaches were condemned and pagan literary, historical, and philosophical learning was utilized for the service of the faith. John Chrysostom, a great Christian educator, believed that the faithful should be content to extract the honey from pagan poetry and philosophy and should disregard the rest.

The monastery provided a limited outlet for cultural activity. Pagan, as well as Christian, materials were used. Manuscripts were copied and many valuable works thereby were preserved. Many of the abbots substituted mental for physical labor, which nurtured intellectual growth. However, the limitations of such pursuits are obvious. Monks did not seek the advancement of knowledge, but only the promotion of spiritual growth. The belief that faith revealed knowledge certainly handicapped the pursuit of worldly learning.

Nonecclesiastical Education. Mention should be made of two sources of instruction, in addition to the schools under ecclesiastical control. They were not schools in the formal sense of the word, although they provided important training for laymen. The industrial guilds afforded training in practical craftsmanship through the apprenticeship system; many young men became adept in the pro-

fessions through their experience in working for master craftsmen. Also, a young man had to go through rigid training to become a knight. This dicipline was mainly in court etiquette, riding, and the art of warfare. A boy aspiring to become a knight was taken into the home of a nobleman other than his father, to serve as a page and to learn court manners. He gave service as a squire from the time he was fourteen until he was twenty-one years of age, at which time he was eligible for knighthood.

Origin of Universities. A new spirit in education gradually developed, in spite of the limited encouragement that it received. From the ruins of classical civilization, a new epoch emerged in the Middle Ages. The main reason for this was the increased demand for trained persons. Education was looked upon as a means of obtaining a better position in the church and in the state. The great increase in the number of students led to a demand for more teachers; hence, this profession came to be regarded with the highest esteem. Trained physicians, lawyers, and theologians were much in demand. Ambitious young men crowded to the University of Bologna to study law, to the University of Salerno to study medicine, and to the University of Paris to study theology. Famous teachers like Abélard at Paris and Irnerius at Bologna attracted thousands of students from all parts of Europe. The idea of university education had been introduced. There were at least 19 universities in the 13th century, and by the time of the Renaissance there were more than 70 in western Europe.

Organization of the University. The medieval university was not much like our modern institutions of learning. There were no formal organizations, no class attendance records, no units of credit, few buildings, and no athletic stadiums. Students and teachers gathered in the humblest of quarters, frequently in rooms without any furniture. The students sat on the floor and listened to the lectures. The medieval university was a guild of teachers and students (*Universitas*). The students were apprentices under the direction of their teachers, the master craftsmen. Upon the completion of study for the master's or the doctor's degree, a man was recognized as capable of teaching a particular branch of learning.

The University of Paris in the 13th century had four faculties: arts, canon law, medicine, and theology. A dean presided over

each group. The students in the arts division were divided into four nations: French, Norman, Picard, and English. Each had as a governing official a proctor elected by the students. The students organized themselves into nations for better social relationship and for mutual protection. They worked together in order to obtain fair prices on the necessities that they had to purchase, to avenge insults, and to care for the sick and needy. The university soon gained a high degree of prestige in the community and received concessions from both the church and the state.

Student Life. Students attended the colleges and universities mainly to prepare for a career, rather than merely to acquire culture. Their purpose was serious, and they were forced to live under great hardships. It would, however, be a mistake to conclude that student life was all work and no play. Poor living quarters and scarcity of food did not dampen all the ardor of youth. Songs and stories of student life that have been preserved show that it had its frivolous moments. Love affairs, brawls, pranks, and irreverence, even in theological schools, were common. Many of the students did, however, come from the lower class and lived a life of stark privation. They shared stables with horses and depended upon the generosity of housekeepers for their food. Classes were sometimes held in the open street, where the students sat on straw, hence the name Straw Street in the Latin Quarter of Paris. Hardships and luxury, hard work and a rollicking good time were contrasts characteristic of medieval, as well as modern, student life.

Curriculum. The curriculum was based essentially on the liberal arts. Students expecting to go into law, medicine, or theology were asked to complete the liberal arts course. However, preparation for entrance into the university varied greatly. Sons of nobles were trained by private tutors, the middle-class boys attended the village schools, and those of the lower orders were forced to gain what they could as altar boys in the churches. Some arrived at the institution of higher learning well prepared; others had only a meager amount of learning. The baccalaureate was intended to serve as a means of determining the candidate's fitness for more advanced study. Two additional years, six in all, were required for the master's degree. The liberal arts included what was popularly known as the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*. The *trivium*, by far the more popular of the two, included grammar,

rhetoric, and logic. The *quadrivium* was made up of music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy.

Aristotle's works, introduced into Europe by the Arabs, were beginning to be accepted in the 13th century. Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, Dominican theologians, were responsible for overcoming much of the opposition of the church to these pagan beliefs. Petrarch (1304–1374) encouraged the study of Latin literature, which, along with the study of Greek, became an important part of the liberal arts course. Students of civil law studied Justinian's Code, together with commentaries written by the teachers. Gratian's *Decretum* was the most popular book on canon law. The works of Galen and Hippocrates were the foundations for the study of medicine. Theological students read the Scriptures and Peter Lombard's *Sentences*.

Importance of Universities. The university played an important part not only in establishing the culture of the Middle Ages but also in paving the way for the cultural developments of the later periods. The number of students and teachers was only a small percentage of the total population, but their influence was beyond question. Literary study and experimental science were both sadly neglected in the universities, but pioneer work in the study of law and theology was basically important. Students of civil and canon law aided in the development of political and judicial thought as the basis of the national state, which was just emerging. The universities were not, however, the only centers of cultural activity in the Middle Ages. Monastic and cathedral schools continued to exist. Many of the greatest thinkers in philosophy and theology received their training in these institutions.

Beginning of Medieval Science. Science commonly is believed to be a child of the modern age. Literally, this is true but, like so many other things that we regard as entirely modern, even science had its origin in more remote periods. Compared with other studies, pure science made little headway in the Middle Ages. The church was opposed to science, which, in fact, had had little encouragement in the time of the Roman Empire. The opposition of the church was due to the conviction that salvation was the most important thing and that, in order to acquire this, one must divorce himself from materialism. "For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" The

Arabs of the Near East had advanced further in the realm of pure science than had the people of western Europe. They had preserved the learning of the Greeks and had added to it improvements, both of their own and of the Hindus from Asia.

The crusaders came into contact with these ideas and, later, Arabian teachers carried them to the universities of western Europe. They introduced Arabic numerals, the zero, the decimal system, algebra as far as quadratics, Euclid's geometry, and plane and spherical trigonometry. Latitude and longitude for making maps and the sextant for the mariner's use were also added. To medicine, they brought the works of Galen and Hippocrates and their own knowledge of medical herbs and drugs. The debt of the Western world to the Arabs has not been fully recognized.

Medieval Science. Pure science was greatly hindered by scholasticism, but out of scholasticism the modern scientific spirit developed. Desire to understand, systemize, and elaborate served as a foundation stone of pure science, as a prerequisite to the work of Galileo, Descartes, and Newton. A strong impetus to general intellectual progress came from the popular demand for intelligent explanations of commonplace things. Thomas Aquinas, a scholastic, contended that "The prime author and mover of the universe is intelligence." He was not concerned about predicting the future and controlling nature but about understanding and contemplation rather than description and control. Roger Bacon (d. 1294) attacked what he considered to be the basic weakness of scholasticism. He insisted that firsthand knowledge was the sole authority. He deplored the hold that Aristotle had over the cultural world. "If I had my way," he declared, "I should burn all the books of Aristotle for the study of them can only lead to loss of time, produce error, and increase ignorance." He reversed the scholastic's order of procedure and advocated "knowledge of the creator through knowledge of the created world." In theory, he urgently suggested the use of laboratory investigation in place of complete dependence upon the works of Aristotle.

Modern scientific methods had their first enthusiast in Dr. Vesalius of Padua, who in 1543 declared, "It is necessary to challenge every past authority and be grounded only by facts." Medieval science was primitive when compared with later periods. Scientific procedure was in its infancy and laboratory equipment

was lacking almost entirely. Even Roger Bacon had no laboratory equipment of any note. Scientists generally believed the earth to be round. Astrology and alchemy occupied the attention of many of the thinkers. Alchemy, although basically wrong in theory, served as the foundation for chemistry. Some knowledge of metallurgy, pottery making, and glassmaking was gained through alchemists' experiments. The study of medicine was revived and transmitted into western Europe by the Arabs. Gynecology, obstetrics, and ophthalmology were introduced at the University of Salerno.

Inventions. The most impressive evidence of the extent of scientific progress in the Middle Ages is found in the inventions. The inventive spirit of the time can be traced to Roger Bacon, who predicted airplanes, horseless carriages, and oarless boats. These were dreams to him, but things just as revolutionary were produced in his time. It would be difficult to find anything with a more lasting importance than the discovery of gunpowder, the compass, the lens, and the printing press. The printing press did more than any of the others in aiding the development and the perpetuation of learning.

In our day, with the profusion of printed matter, it is difficult to imagine a time when a small library was worth a fortune. Cosimo de Medici employed 45 copyists for nearly two years, in order to produce 200 volumes for his library. John Gutenberg probably invented the movable type about 1455. Frederic Harrison gives the following estimate of Gutenberg: "We place Gutenberg amongst the small list of the unique and special benefactors of mankind, in the sacred choir of those whose work transformed the conditions of life, whose work, once done, could never be repeated." Paper was used extensively in Europe by the 15th century. This provided the printing press with a cheap material, and books were reduced in price from what they had been when they were produced on parchment or vellum. It has been estimated[1] that, by 1500, about 9,000,000 books were in circulation in Europe.

9. LITERATURE

Decline of Latin as the Medium of Expression. Latin was ecognized generally as the language of learning during the Middle

[1] Preserved Smith, *Age of the Reformation*, 9.

Ages. Writers imitated the Roman classics in the style of Ovid, Horace, Vergil, and Cicero. Outstanding writers, such as Guibert of Nogent, Matthew Paris, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, and Roger Bacon wrote in Latin, which was the official language of the church and was preferred in the royal courts. Vernacular languages gradually replaced Latin as the most important medium of expression. Medieval Latin had degenerated from its classical form. More than a thousand years of usage had naturally brought about many changes. Classical Latin was not adaptable as a common means of expression, although it was still used by scholars in medieval universities. The language of the scholar was not the language of the people, and for general literature a medium of expression that could be understood had to be developed.

Origin of Modern Languages. Local traditions and stories were written in some other language than Latin, because they were written for general consumption. There are extant poems of nearly 400 troubadours of the 12th and 13th centuries. This literature is indicative of the development of language groups that were combinations of local dialects and the existing remnants of Latin. The Romance group includes what we now refer to as French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Rumanian. Each of these was made up of a number of different dialects, which were only gradually amalgamated. There was a general acceptance, in most countries, of one dialect. Modern French developed from a dialect in northern France, *langue d'oïl;* and Spanish came from the dialect used in Castile. The Germanic, or Teutonic, classification includes German, Dutch, English, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, and Flemish. While these are freer from Latin influence than are the Romance languages, it was still discernible in them. Modern English can be traced to Low-German dialects, the best known today being written in so-called Anglo-Saxon. It did not appear until the time of Chaucer at the close of the 14th century. Slavic, the third important group of languages in Europe, is more closely related to Greek than to Latin and includes Russian, Polish, Bulgarian, and Czech. In addition to the language groups mentioned, there are many others, which are difficult to classify. Europe of today has a score of nations, among whose inhabitants some 60 different languages are spoken.

Troubadours and Minnesingers. Much of medieval literature

existed in song and story long before it appeared in written form. Professional wanderers and singers, the troubadours in France and the minnesingers in Germany, traveled from place to place, reciting stories to the accompaniment of a musical instrument. The *Chanson de Roland* describes an incident, at the time of Charlemagne, in which Roland lost his life fighting the Basques in the Pyrenees Mountains. The so-called Arthurian cycle contains a great variety of legends centering about King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. These stories of bravery, love affairs, and folklore are among the most famous of their kind. They were sung by wandering minstrels for generations. Sir Thomas Malory preserved them in his *Morte d'Arthur*, and Tennyson retold them in his *Idylls of the King*. Walter von der Vogelweide and Wolfram von Eschenbach (early 13th century) were two of the great minnesingers who are given credit for *Unter den Linden* and *Parzifal*, respectively. *Tristan*, by Gottfried von Strassburg, is a classic in epic romances.

Medieval Literature. Medieval authors and their works make an impressive list. *Nibelungenlied*, by an unknown German poet, relates the story of Siegfried and Kriemhild, a demigod hero and a queen goddess, whose adventures are connected with the invasion of the Huns in the 5th century. Two outstanding Anglo-Saxon works have come to our attention—*Beowulf*, of the 7th century, and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. *Beowulf* was written in England, but the hero and the scene of action were taken from Denmark. Beowulf slew Grendel, a monster, half demon and half bear, who threatened to destroy the whole army of Hrothgar, the King of Denmark. It is a gripping story of dragons, monsters, and supernatural powers. The spirit and content are pagan, although it was later given a Christian veneer. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* covers more than 300 years of history following the reign of King Alfred. It was the first important work in medieval vernacular historical writing.

Modern English begins with Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (14th century), which is followed by Langland's *The Vision of Piers Plowman*. These are both plain stories about plain people. *The Canterbury Tales* gives an excellent picture of life in 14th-century England. The story concerns a group of pilgrims of every sort and description, who undertook a pilgrimage to the shrine of

Thomas a Becket at Canterbury. Langland's work is a protest against the abuses of the feudal lords. Spain contributed its national epic in *Poema del Cid*, the story of the deeds of a Spanish soldier in the wars against the Moors (12th century).

Ruskin referred to Dante (1265–1321) as "representing in perfect balance the imaginative, the moral, and the intellectual faculties, all at their highest." His *Divina Commedia*, or *Divine Comedy*, defies comparison with other works of its kind, standing alone and supreme in beauty of expression and in depth of feeling. It describes a dream journey through hell, purgatory, and paradise, with the purpose of opening to its readers a vision to direct one from wretchedness to blessedness. The *Divine Comedy*, both as a literal narrative and as an allegory, demands profound study.

"Brother, the quality of love constrains our will,
And lets us only wish for what we have,
And thirst for nothing more.
If we should wish to be up higher than
We are, our wills would be at discord
With his will, who put us here,
And that within these circles cannot be,
Since to live to Love is here necessity,
If you consider well Love's nature.
Rather it is the law of this life beatific
To keep ourselves within the Will Divine,
So that our several wills shall make but one.
And so, being as we are, from sphere to sphere
Throughout this realm, gives joy to all the realm
And to our King, who makes our wills like His,
And His will is our peace."

Dante wrote in his native tongue, Italian, which to this day remains essentially the language which he perfected.

Historical Works. Some notable historical works were produced in the Middle Ages. Although most of them are not very accurate, they are important in the development of historiography. Greogory of Tours (538–594) wrote *Ten Books of Frankish History*, covering a period of the Merovingian dynasty. Einhard (770–840), in his *Life of Charlemagne*, and Joinville (1224–1319), in his

Life of St. Louis, head the list of biographers; they were pioneers in this type of work. Geoffroi de Villehardouin (1160–1213?), the first historian to use the vernacular tongue of northern France, wrote *The Conquest of Constantinople*, one of the most important historical works of the Middle Ages. Bede's (672–735) *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, written in Latin, was the most outstanding historical work produced between the 7th and the 12th century. Bede was careful and thorough, giving long quotations and stating the sources of most of his information. When he wrote from hearsay, he frankly said so.

Importance of Vernacular Language. The importance of Latin in the development of culture is beyond question. An integral part of learning in the Middle Ages, it became an essential basis for many modern languages. Although it has lost importance as a medium of expression, it is still used in designating legal and scientific terms. Nevertheless, the rise of vernacular languages is a significant step in the emergence of modern civilization. Classical Latin was never a language for the masses, and to a degree it outlived its usefulness. It belonged to the Middle Ages. Vernacular literature was a significant psychological factor in destroying medieval culture. It aided materially in the development of national consciousness through undermining the feudal order and the universal church. Vernacular languages provided an important element for political unity in the national state. The rise of the national state is one of the most significant developments in modern history

10. THE END OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Aim of Medieval Civilization. The predominant aim of the Middle Ages was to establish harmony between the individual and society. Society was a hierarchy of orders, ranging from servitude at the bottom to the aristocracy at the top. Man was a member of one of the groups, not by choice, but by divine interference from which he had no appeal. Unity in all things—social, religious, political, and economic—was considered to be the ultimate goal. Reverence for authority and centralization account for much of the tyranny so evident in all the organizations. There was no room for difference of opinion; the fundamental truth was established by a force beyond human power. The chief function of the

officers in the church was to weed out heretics and punish them. To doubt the teachings of the church, for example, was treason against God. Murder, by comparison, was a minor offense. In spite of this aim, medieval civilization was marked with complexity and confusion, as all transition periods are. The gradual discarding of classical civilization and the setting of the stage for the drama of modern civilization is evident in the Middle Ages.

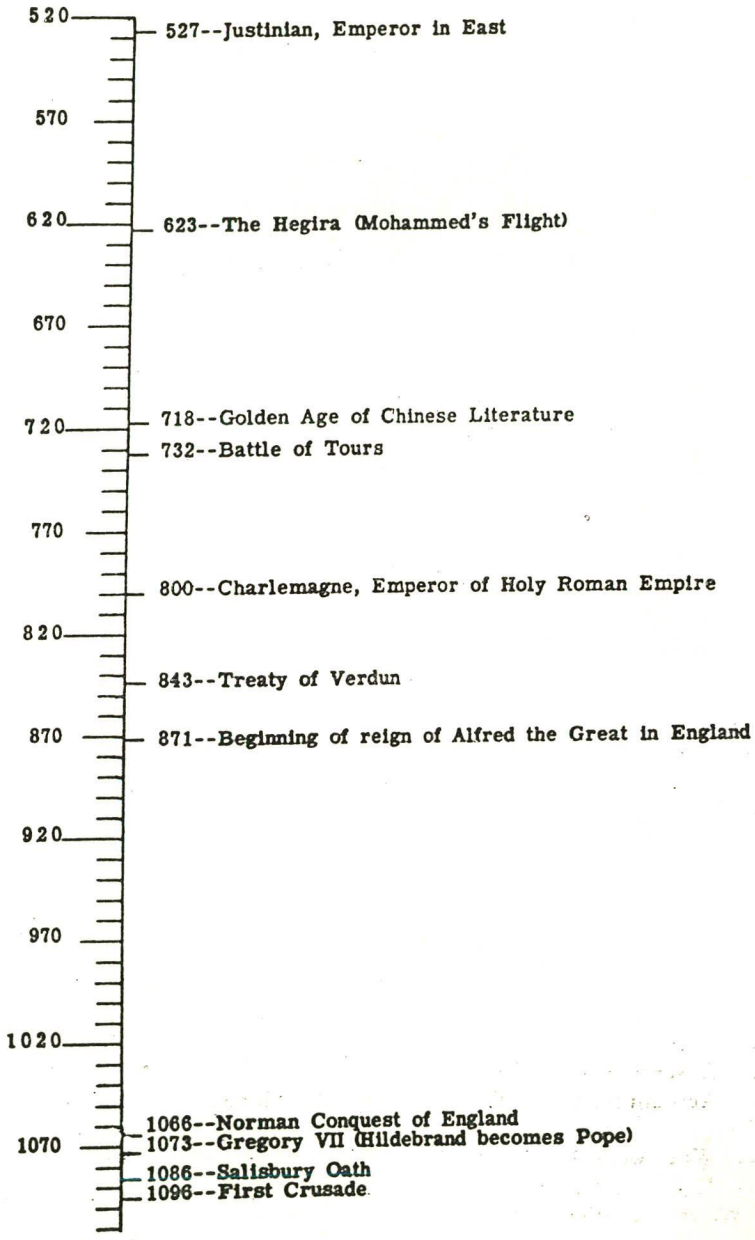
The Middle Ages can be called truthfully the formative period of modern history. Many of the things that we accept as modern had their origin then. It was the period in which Byzantine civilization flourished and in which much of the culture of the East was passed on to the West, where it took on a new vitality and blossomed in the Renaissance. Upon the ruins of the Roman Empire, political institutions developed that bear a close resemblance to the modern state. The centralization of government in the hands of monarchs and the rise of nationalism and of patriotism formed the basis of present-day political institutions. No single organization in the present age is more prominent than the national state.

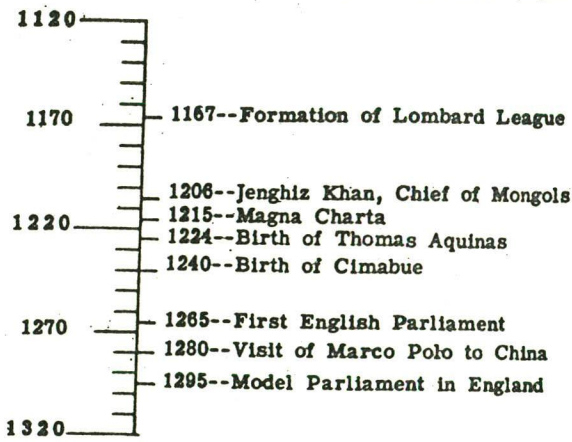
No force in our time is more far-reaching than patriotism. Nationalism, as much as any single cause, aided in ending the medieval and introducing the modern. The appearance of the domestic system in manufacturing, the rise of capitalism and the middle class, the decay of the guilds and of the manor, and the decline of serfdom presaged a new economic and social order. The decline of the monopolistic power of the medieval church enabled the progress of more liberal ideas in thought and in action.

The invention of printing provided a means for the spread and preservation of cultural pursuits. The university was another institution that the Middle Ages bequeathed to the modern world. Modern science was first championed and its foundation was first laid in this period. Voyages of discovery opened a new world for adventure and exploration. The beginnings of colonial and commercial expansion, which is so much a part of our daily program, were in evidence. Our religion, philosophy, education, science, languages, art, and government grew out of the Middle Ages through a long process of development. Although born in that period, they were not typical of it. Their appearance marked the beginning of modern times.

LINE OF TIME

THE MIDDLE AGES





Review Questions

1. "The Middle Ages was the formative period for modern history." Explain
2. Define the "Dark Ages." Why has it been misinterpreted?
3. Describe German government, law, and society.
4. What outstanding contributions did the Germans make?
5. How did the Catholic Church continue the traditions of the Roman Empire?
6. Describe the origin of the Roman Catholic Church. Discriminate between Christianity as a religious culture and the church as an institution.
7. Why did Rome become the center of the church?
8. How did the church decline in the 15th century?
9. Define and show the influence of scholasticism.
10. Describe a medieval university. Contrast with the modern university.
11. Characterize medieval literature.
12. Is there any connection between literature in the vernacular and the rise of nationalism? Explain.
13. Why was Charlemagne called the first modern man?
14. Why did the Frankish government fail?
15. Define the personal and land elements in fedualism.
16. What was the importance of chivalry?
17. Define nationalism and show how it originated.
18. Account for the rise of towns in the Middle Ages.
19. Characterize medieval trade.
20. Describe Romanesque and Gothic art.
21. Account for the conflict between the church and the state. What were the results?
22. What were the causes and results of the crusades?
23. Define and show the importance of monasticism. Contrast the eastern and western varieties.

24. What were the important features of the Orthodox religion? Compare and contrast with Rome.

25. Account for the survival of the Roman Empire in the East.

26. What contributions did the Arabs make?

27. Give the main characteristics of Mohammedanism. Contrast with Roman Catholicism.

28. Define: penance, transubstantiation, secular clergy, regular clergy, sacraments, allegory, vernacular, excommunication, flying buttress, schism, terra cotta, and humanism.

29. Identify: Edit of Milan, Council of Nicaea, Holy Roman Empire, Hugh Capet, Gregory the Great, Gregory of Tours, Koran, Islam, Saracen, iconoclastic controversy, Strasbourg oath, Holy Inquisition, Gratian, St. Francis of Assisi, Francis Bacon, Abélard, Marco Polo, Albigenses, Wycliffe, Roger Bacon, Hanseatic League, Babylonian captivity, Gutenberg, compurgation, Attila, Danelaw, Domitian, Petrine doctrine, doctrine of apostolic succession, Adrianople, St. Sophi Hegira, Kaaba, Omar Khayyám, Genghis Khan, Taj Mahal, Mayors of the Palace, fief, chivalry, merchant and craft guilds, Donatello, Urban II, Benedictine Rule, Cluny, Ambrose, *City of God*, Groot, Thomas Aquinas, Petrarch, *Chanson de Roland*, and Dante.

Problems

1. Find out all you can about money and banking in the Middle Ages. Indicate the trends that developed into modern methods. Can you see any present-day monetary theories that might be called a reversion to the medieval?

2. Draw a plan of a medieval manor, putting in as many details as possible.

3. How did the Roman Catholic Church function as a political institution? What effect did this have on the national state? on the church?

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