

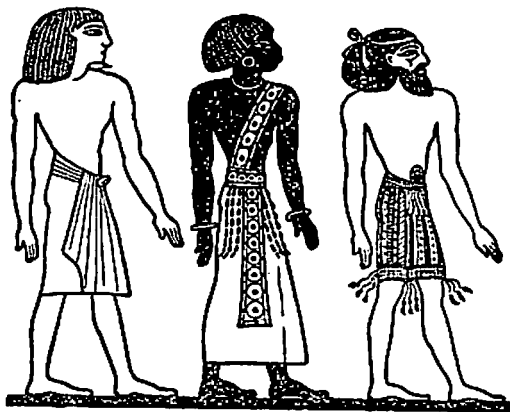
The story of Egypt from the IVth to the XVth Dynasty is a story of conflicts between alternative capitals and competing religions, of separations into several kingdoms and reunions. It is, so to speak, an internal history. This is often called the Feudal Period. Here we can name only one of that long series of Pharaohs, Pepi II, who reigned ninety years, the longest reign in history, and left a great abundance of inscriptions and buildings. At last there happened to Egypt what happened so frequently to the civilizations of Mesopotamia. Egypt was conquered by nomadic Semites, who founded a "shepherd" dynasty, the Hyksos (XVIth), which was finally expelled by native Egyptians. This invasion probably happened while that first Babylonian Empire which Hammurabi founded was flourishing, but the exact correspondences of dates between early Egypt and Babylonia are still very doubtful. Only after a long period of servitude did a popular uprising expel these foreigners again. Hatred of the foreigners had unified the spirit of Egypt.

After this war of liberation (*circa* 1,600 B.C.) there followed a period of great prosperity in Egypt, the New Empire. Egypt became a great and united military state, and pushed her expeditions at last as far as the Euphrates, and so the age-long struggle between the Egyptian and Babylonian-Assyrian power began. Hitherto these two great systems had seemed too remote for war, but now man's powers of communication had reached a point when armies could march from one great river system to the other.

For a time Egypt was the ascendant power in this conflict. Thothmes III and Amenophis III (XVIIIth Dynasty) ruled from Ethiopia to the Euphrates in the fifteenth century B.C. For various reasons these two kings stand out with unusual distinctness in the Egyptian record. They were great builders, and left many monuments and inscriptions. Amenophis III founded Luxor, and added greatly to Karnak. At Tell-el-Amarna a mass of letters has been found, the royal correspondence with Babylonian and Hittite and other monarchs, including that Tushratta who took Nineveh, throwing a flood of light upon the political and social affairs of this particular age. Of Amenophis IV we shall have more to tell later, but of one, the most extraordinary and able of Egyptian monarchs, Queen Hatasu, we have no space to tell. She is represented upon her monuments in masculine garb, and with a long beard as a symbol of wisdom.

Thereafter there was a brief Syrian conquest of Egypt, a series of changing dynasties, among which we may note the

XIXth, which included Rameses II, a great builder of temples, who reigned sixty-seven years (about 1,317 to 1,250 B.C.), and who is supposed by some to have been the Pharaoh of Moses,



RACIAL TYPES. . . . FROM EGYPTIAN TOMB-PAINTINGS.  
(AFTER CHAMPOLLION.)

and the XXIInd, which included Shishak, who plundered Solomon's temple (*circa* 930 B.C.). An Ethiopian conqueror from the Upper Nile founded the XXVth Dynasty, a foreign dynasty, which went down (670 B.C.) before the new Assyrian Empire created by Tiglath Pileser III, Sargon II, and Sennacherib, of which we have already made mention. For the first time Babylonia lorded it over the Nile.

The days of any Egyptian predominance over foreign nations

were drawing to an end. For a time under Psammetichus I of the XXVIth Dynasty (664-600 B.C.) native rule was restored, and Necho II recovered for a time the old Egyptian possessions in Syria up to the Euphrates while the Medes and Chaldeans were attacking Nineveh. From those gains Necho II, after the fall of Nineveh and the Assyrians, was routed out again by Nebuchadrezzar II, the great Chaldean king, the Nebuchadrezzar of the Bible. The Jews, as we shall note later, who had been the allies of Necho II, were taken into captivity by Nebuchadrezzar to Babylon.

When, in the sixth century B.C., Chaldea fell to the Persians, Egypt followed suit. A rebellion later made Egypt independent once more for sixty years. In 332 B.C. she welcomed Alexander the Great as her conqueror, to be ruled thereafter by foreigners, first by Greeks, then by Romans, then in succession by Arabs, Turks, and British, until the independence of the present day. Such briefly is the history of Egypt from its beginnings; a history first of isolation and then of increasing entanglement with the affairs of other nations, as increasing facilities of communication drew the peoples of the world into closer and closer interaction.

#### § 4

#### *The Early Civilization of India.*

Before 2000 B.C., a third Bronze Age civilization had grown up on the flood-plains of the Indus and its tributaries (the Punjab). Only recently have excavations begun to reveal its greatness. Each of the walled, brick-built cities, Mokenjo-daro and Harappa, covered an area of at least a square mile, and there were many other towns and villages. Their builders had wheeled carts and glazed pottery. A system of writing, still to be deciphered, was in use and there were weights and measures, different from the Sumerian and Egyptian ones. This civilization was destroyed by an invasion of illiterate barbarians.

Somewhere about the time of Hammurabi or later, a branch of the nomadic Aryan-speaking people, who then occupied North Persia and Afghanistan, pushed down the north-west passes into India. They were closely related to the ancestors of the Medes and Persians. They conquered their way until they prevailed over all the darker populations of North India, and spread their rule or influence over the whole peninsula. They never achieved any unity in India; their history is a history of warring kings and republics.

The Persian Empire, in the days of its expansion after the capture of Babylon, pushed its boundaries beyond the Indus, and later Alexander the Great marched as far as the border of the desert that separates the Punjab from the Ganges valley. But with this bare statement we will for a time leave the history of India.

## § 5

*The Early History of China.*

Meanwhile, as this triple system of White Man civilizations developed in India and in the lands about the meeting-places of Asia, Africa, and Europe, another and quite distinct civilization was developing and spreading out from the then fertile but now dry and desolate valley of the Tarim and from the slopes of the Kuen-lun mountains in two directions down the course of the Hwang-ho, and later into the valley of the Yangtse-kiang. We know little as yet of the archæology of China. Stone implements have been found in various parts of the country, and we know something of the culture of the Stone Age in this part of the world from excavations in Honan and Manchuria. The people appear to have been not unlike the present inhabitants of Northern China. They lived in villages and had domesticated the pig. They used axes and rectangular knives of stone, and arrowheads of slate, bone, and mussel-shell; they were acquainted with spinning and made pottery, some of it of much the same type as is made to-day. Apart from this scanty evidence, our ideas at present of this early civilization are derived from the still very imperfectly explored Chinese literature. It has evidently been from the first and throughout a Mongolian civilization. Until after the time of Alexander the Great there are few traces of any Aryan or Semitic, much less of Hamitic influence. All such influences were still in another world, separated by mountains, deserts, and wild nomadic tribes until that time. The Chinese seem to have made their civilization spontaneously and unassisted. Some recent writers suppose, indeed, a connection with ancient Sumer, and the occurrence of a peculiar type of painted pottery in the excavations in Honan, similar to pottery found on a few early sites in Central and Western Asia and in Eastern Europe, suggests the possibility of a remote cultural contact. Of course both China and Sumer arose on the basis of the almost world-wide early Neolithic culture, but the Tarim valley and the lower Euphrates are separated by such vast obstacles of

mountain and desert as to forbid the idea of any migration or interchange of peoples who had once settled down.

Perhaps the movement from the north met another movement of culture coming from the south. Though the civilization of China is wholly Mongolian, it does not follow that its northern roots are its only ones. If it grew first in the Tarim valley, then, unlike all other civilizations (including the Mexican and Peruvian), it did not grow out of the heliolithic culture. We Europeans know very little as yet of the ethnology and pre-history of Southern China. There the Chinese mingle with such kindred peoples as the Siamese and Burmese, and seem to bridge over towards the darker Dravidian peoples and towards the Malays.

It is quite clear from the Chinese records that there were southern as well as northern beginnings of a civilization, and that the Chinese civilization that comes into history 2,000 years B.C. is the result of a long process of conflicts, minglings, and interchanges between a southern and a northern culture, of which the southern may have been the earlier and more highly developed. The southern Chinese perhaps played the rôle towards the northern Chinese that the Hamites or Sumerians played to the Aryan and Semitic peoples in the west, or that the settled Dravidians played towards the Aryans in India. They may have been the first agriculturists and the first temple-builders. But so little is known as yet of this attractive chapter in pre-history that we cannot dwell upon it further here.

The chief foreigners mentioned in the early annals of China were a Ural-Altaiic people on the north-east frontier, the Huns, against whom certain of the earlier emperors made war.

Chinese history is still very little known to European students, and our accounts of the early records are particularly unsatisfactory. About 2,700 to 2,400 B.C. reigned five emperors, who seem to have been almost incredibly exemplary beings.

There followed upon these first five emperors a series of dynasties, of which the accounts become more and more exact and convincing as they become more recent. China has to tell a long history of border warfare and of graver struggles between the settled and nomad peoples. To begin with, China, like Sumer and like Egypt, was a land of city states. The government was at first a government of numerous kings; they became loosely feudal under an emperor, as the Egyptians did; and then later, as with the Egyptians, came a centralizing empire. Shang (1,750 to 1,125 B.C.) and Chow (1,125 to 250 B.C.) are named as being the two great dynasties of the feudal period. Bronze

vessels of these earlier dynasties, beautiful, splendid, and with a distinctive style of their own, still exist, and there can be no doubt of the existence of a high state of culture even before the days of Shang.

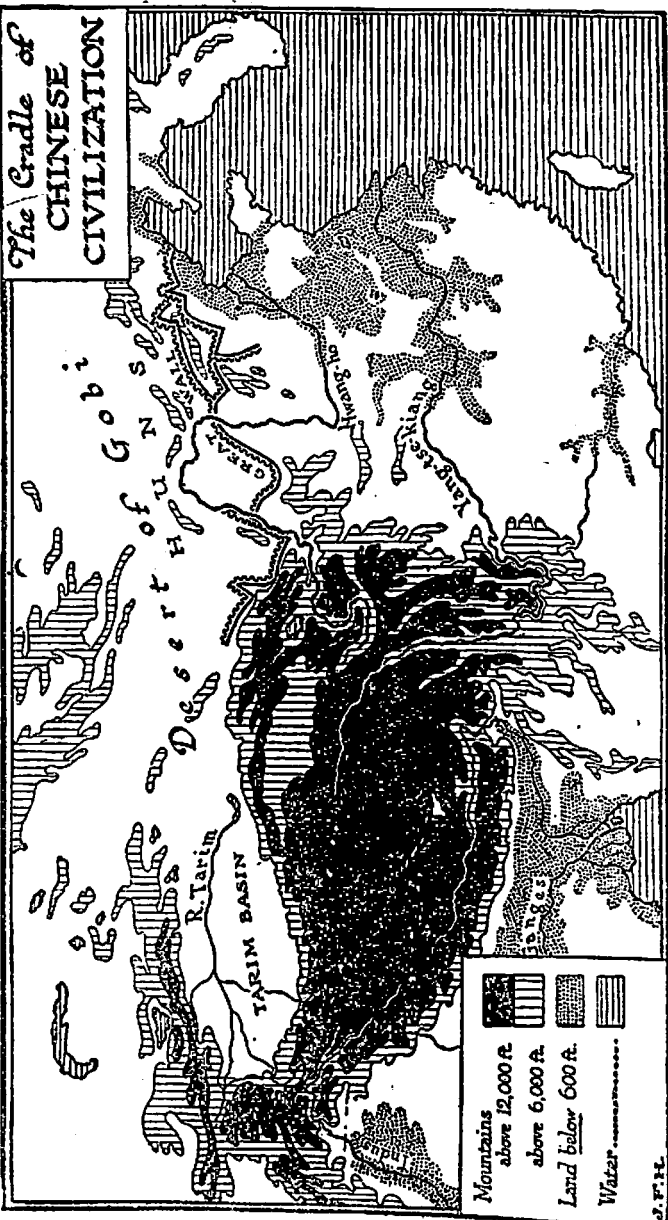
It is perhaps a sense of symmetry that made the later historians of Egypt and China talk of the earlier phases of their national history as being under dynasties comparable to the dynasties of the later empires, and of such early "Emperors" as Menes (in Egypt) or the First Five Emperors (in China). The early dynasties exercised far less centralized powers than the later ones. Such unity as China possessed under the Shang Dynasty was a religious rather than an effective political union. The "Son of Heaven" offered sacrifices for all the Chinese. There was a common script, a common civilization, and a common enemy in the Huns of the north-western borders.

The last of the Shang Dynasty was a cruel and foolish monarch who burnt himself alive (1,125 B.C.) in his palace after a decisive defeat by Wu Wang, the founder of the Chow Dynasty. Wu Wang seems to have been helped by the south-western tribes as well as by a popular revolt.

For a time China remained loosely united under the Chow emperors, as loosely united as was Christendom under the popes in the Middle Ages; the Chow emperors had become the traditional high priests of the land in the place of the Shang Dynasty and claimed a sort of overlordship in Chinese affairs, but gradually the loose ties of usage and sentiment that held the empire together lost their hold upon men's minds. Hunnish peoples to the north and west took on the Chinese civilization without acquiring a sense of its unity. Feudal princes began to regard themselves as independent.

In *China and the League of Nations*, Mr. Liang Chi-Chao, one of the Chinese representatives at the Paris Conference of 1919, states that between the eighth and fourth centuries B.C. "there were in the Hwang-ho and Yang-tse valleys no less than five or six thousand small states with about a dozen states dominating over them." The land was subjected to perpetual warfare ("Age of Confusion"). In the sixth century B.C. the great powers in conflict were Ts'i and Ts'in, which were northern Hwang-ho states, and Ch'u, which was a vigorous power in the Yang-tse valley. A confederation against Ch'u laid the foundation for a league that kept the peace for a hundred years; the league subdued and incorporated Ch'u and made a general treaty of disarmament. It became the foundation of a new pacific empire.

*The Cradle of  
CHINESE  
CIVILIZATION*



Mountains  
above 12,000 ft.  
above 6,000 ft.  
Land below 6,000 ft.  
Water .....

J. F. H.

The knowledge of iron entered China at some unknown date, but iron weapons began to be commonly used only about 500 B.C.—that is to say, two or three hundred years or more after their use had become customary in Assyria, Egypt, and Europe. Iron was probably introduced from the north into China by the Huns.

The last rulers of the Chow Dynasty were ousted by the kings of Ts'in; the latter seized upon the sacred sacrificial bronze tripods, and so were able to take over the imperial duty of offering sacrifices to Heaven. In this manner was the Ts'in Dynasty established. It ruled with far more vigour and effect than any previous family.

The reign of Shi-Hwang-ti (meaning "first universal emperor.") of this dynasty is usually taken to mark the end of feudal and divided China. He seems to have played the unifying rôle in the east that Alexander the Great might have played in the west, but he lived longer, and the unity he made (or restored) was comparatively permanent, while the empire of Alexander the Great fell to pieces, as we shall tell, at his death. Shi-Hwang-ti, among other feats in the direction of common effort, organized the building of the Great Wall of China against the Huns. A civil war followed close upon his reign, and ended in the establishment of the Han Dynasty.

Under this Han Dynasty the empire grew greatly beyond its original two river valleys, the Huns were effectively restrained, and the Chinese penetrated westward until they began to learn at last of civilized races and civilizations other than their own.

By 100 B.C. the Chinese power had spread across Tibet and into Western Turkestan, and the Chinese were trading by camel caravans with Persia and the western world. So much for the present must suffice for our account of China. We shall return to the distinctive characters of its civilization later.

## § 6

### *While the Civilizations were Growing.*

And in these thousands of years during which man was making his way step by step from the barbarism of the heliolithic culture to civilization at these old-world centres, what was happening in the rest of the world? To the north of these centres, from the Rhine to the Pacific, the Nordic and Mongolian



peoples, as we have told, were also learning the use of metals; but while the civilizations were settling down these men of the great plains were becoming migratory and developing from a slow wandering life towards a complete seasonal nomadism.

To the south of the civilized zone, in central and southern Africa, the negro was making a slower progress, and that, it would seem, under the stimulus of invasion by whiter tribes from the Mediterranean regions, bringing with them in succession cultivation and the use of metals. These tribes came to the black by two routes: across the Sahara to the west as Berbers and Tuaregs and the like, to mix with the negro and create such quasi-white races as the Fulas; and also by way of the Nile, where the Baganda (= Gandafolk) of Uganda, for example, may possibly include some element of a remote white origin. The African forests were denser then, and spread eastward and northward from the Upper Nile.

The islands of the East Indies, three thousand years ago, were probably still only inhabited here and there by stranded patches of Palæolithic Australoids, who had wandered thither in those immemorial ages when there was a nearly complete land bridge by way of the East Indies to Australia. The islands of Oceania were uninhabited. The spreading of the heliolithic peoples by sea-going canoes into the islands of the Pacific came much later in the history of man, at earliest a thousand years B.C. Still later did they reach Madagascar. The beauty of New Zealand also was as yet wasted so far as mankind was concerned; its highest living creatures were a great ostrich-like bird, the moa, now extinct, and the little kiwi, which has feathers like coarse hair and the merest rudiment of wings.

In North America a group of Mongoloid tribes were now cut off altogether from the old world. They were spreading slowly southward, hunting the innumerable bison of the plains. They had still to learn for themselves the secrets of a separate agriculture based on maize, and in South America to tame the llama to their service, and to build up in Mexico and Yucatan and Peru three separate civilizations of a very curious and distinctive type.

When men reached the southern extremity of America, the *Megatherium*, the giant sloth, and the *Glyptodon*, the giant armadillo, were still living. . . .

These American primitive civilizations may ultimately prove of very great help to our understanding of human development, because they seem to have preserved, right up to the time of

their extinction by the European discoverers at the end of the fifteenth century A.D., ideas and methods that passed out of old-world experience five or six thousand years B.C. They never got to the use of iron; their metallurgy was of the simplest kind, and their chief metals, copper and gold, they found native. Their stonework, pottery, and weaving, however, were at a very high level, and they were extremely skilful dyers. Like the long superseded primitive civilizations of the old world, these communities displayed a close association of human sacrifice with the processes of seed-time and harvest, but while in the old world these primary social ideas were mitigated and overlaid by many others, in America they were developed to an extraordinary degree of intensity. The serpent was the predominant symbol in religious decoration. These American civilizations seem to have been essentially priest-ridden countries; their war chiefs and peace leaders were under a rigorous rule of law and interpreted omen.

~ Their priests carried astronomical science to a high level of accuracy. They knew their year far better than did the Babylonians. The Yucatan civilization developed a kind of writing, the Maya writing, of the most elaborate character. So far as we have been able to decipher it, it was used for keeping the exact and complicated calendars upon which the priests expended their intellectual energy. The art of the Maya civilization was particularly well developed. Some of the simpler sculpture of Peru is suggestive of Sumerian work, but the Maya stuff is like nothing the old world has ever produced, and it rises to very great executive beauty. The nearest resemblances, and they are not very near, are to be found in some South Indian carvings. It astonishes by its great plastic power and its perfection of design, but it perplexes by a grotesqueness, a sort of insane intricacy and conventionality. Many Maya inscriptions resemble a certain sort of elaborate drawing made by lunatics in European asylums more than they do any other old-world production. It is as if the Maya mind had developed along a different line from that followed by the old-world mind, had acquired a different twist to its ideas, was not, indeed, by old-world standards a strictly rational mind at all.

This linking of these aberrant American civilizations to the idea of a general mental aberration finds support in their obsession by the thought of shedding human blood. The Aztec (Mexican) civilization ran blood; it offered thousands of human victims yearly. The cutting open of living victims,

the tearing out of the still beating heart, was an act that dominated the minds and lives of these strange priesthoods. The public life, the seasonal festivities, all turned on this fantastically horrible fixed idea.

The Maya writing was not only carven on stone but painted and written upon skins. These manuscripts are painted brightly, and have an odd resemblance to the cheap coloured papers which are sold to children in America and Europe to-day. There is the same repetition of figures with variations, as if a story was being told. In Peru the beginnings of writing were superseded by a curious and complicated method of keeping records by means of knots tied upon strings of various colours and shapes. It is said that even laws and orders could be conveyed by this code. These string bundles were called *quipus*; but though *quipus* are still to be found in collections, the art of reading them is altogether lost. The Chinese histories, Mr. L. Y. Chen informs us, state that a similar method of record by knots was used in China before the invention of writing there. The Peruvians also got to making maps and the use of counting-frames.

When the Spaniards came to America, the Mexicans knew nothing of the Peruvians nor the Peruvians of the Mexicans. Whatever links had ever existed were lost and forgotten. The Mexicans had never heard of the potato, which was a principal article of Peruvian diet. In 5,000 B.C. the Sumerians and Egyptians probably knew as little of one another. America had in fact lagged 6,000 years behind the old world.

## § 7

### *The Legend of Atlantis.*

Here, perhaps, is the place to notice the unsubstantial legend of the Lost Atlantis. Quite a large number of people are persuaded that there is evidence of a great civilized state that existed three thousand years ago or so in the Atlantic beyond the Straits of Gibraltar. It was a large country, a "continent." There was the garden of the Hesperides. Their belief is sustained by numerous allusions in Greek and later literature to such a vanished land. The story is of the quality that makes things acceptable to cinematograph producers and audiences. It has no support at all in geographical, geological, or archaeological fact.

At a remote period in geological time there is good reason for supposing that there was land where now the Atlantic waters roll, but there is no evidence for and much against any westward extension of Europe or Asia since the Miocene period. But civilization is a matter of at most the last twenty thousand years and probably only of the last ten, and man has been man only since the Pleistocene. The human remains we find in Spain and North Africa give no indication of any higher state of culture to the west, and in the earlier Greek literature, in Homer and Hesiod, there is a total ignorance of the existence even of Spain, much less of the Atlantic Ocean.

Mr. Reginald Fessenden has made a very careful study of these Atlantis stories, and he has come to the conclusion that they refer not to a lost land in the Atlantic but to what is an altogether more probable thing, a once much more important civilization in the region of the Caucasus. We do know that waters have spread and receded over the south of Russia and over Central Asia within the human period so that what are deserts were once seas, and where now there is hardly herbage enough to sustain life there were once dense forests. We have every reason for believing that considerable finds of early civilizations may be made in that part of the world. The coast of the Black Sea may have been flooded out in some catastrophic manner at some date before the southward movement of the Aryan peoples. There may have been sudden submergences. A rise of only fifty feet in the sea-level would join the Black Sea to the Caspian now. A cycle of wet cold years which would check surface evaporation from these waters might almost achieve that. At the present time we are all so well equipped with maps, and have such definite geographical ideas, that it is difficult for us to imagine the geographic vagueness of even the best-informed people in the second millennium B.C. Wonder stories about a lost country to which one once went by sea through the Dardanelles, might easily get changed, as the Greek and Phœnician traders opened up the western end of the Mediterranean, into wonder stories about the same legendary land transplanted now to beyond the new-found straits. Georgia is undoubtedly a country of great archæological possibilities, and if anything of primary value in the relationships of the early civilizations remains to be discovered it will possibly be found in the region between the Black Sea and Western Turkestan. A remarkable number of Greek fables and legends concentrate on Georgia; it was the land of the Golden Fleece, the goal of the Argonauts, and there Prometheus was chained with the vulture

gnawing at his vitals. No less an authority than Sir Flinders Petrie gives countenance to the idea that there was some very early connection between Colchis (the country to the south of the Caucasus) and prehistoric Egypt. Herodotus remarked upon a series of resemblances between the Colchians and the Egyptians.

## SEA PEOPLES AND TRADING PEOPLES

§ 1. *The Earliest Ships and Sailors.*

§ 2. *The Ægean Cities before History.*

§ 3. *The First Voyages of Exploration.*

§ 4. *Early Traders.*

§ 5. *Early Travellers.*

## § 1

THE first boats were made very early indeed in the Neolithic stage of culture by riverside and lakeside peoples. They were no more than trees and floating wood, used to assist the imperfect natural swimming powers of men. Then came the hollowing out of the trees, and then, with the development of tools and a primitive carpentry, the building of boats. Men in Egypt and Mesopotamia also, developed a primitive type of basketwork boat caulked with bitumen. Such was the "ark of bulrushes" in which Moses was hidden by his mother.

A kindred sort of vessel grew up by the use of skins and hides expanded upon a wicker framework. To this day cow-hide wicker boats (coracles) are used upon the west coast of Ireland, where there are plenty of cattle and a poverty of big trees. They are also still used on the Euphrates, and on the Towy in South Wales. In Alaska, also, boats of this ancient type are found, and men will cross in them from America to Siberia. Inflated skins may have preceded the coracle, and are still used on the Euphrates and Upper Ganges. In the valleys of the great rivers boats must early have become an important means of communication; and it seems natural to suppose that it was from the mouths of the great rivers that man, already in a reasonably seaworthy vessel, first ventured out upon what must have seemed to him then the trackless and homeless sea.

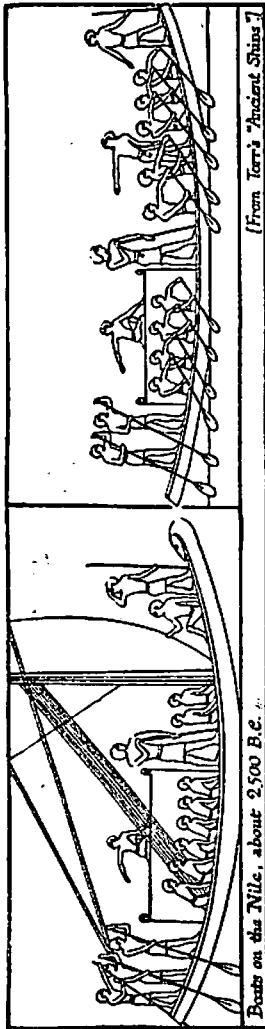
No doubt he ventured at first as a fisherman, having learnt the elements of seacraft in creeks and lagoons. Men may have navigated boats upon the Levantine lake before the refilling of the Mediterranean by the Atlantic waters. The canoe was an integral part of the heliolithic culture, it drifted with that.

culture upon the warm waters of the earth from the Mediterranean to (at last) America. There were not only canoes, but Sumerian boats and ships, upon the Euphrates and Tigris, when these rivers in 7,000 B.C. fell by separate mouths into the Persian Gulf.

The Sumerian city Eridu, which stood at the head of the Persian Gulf (from which it is now separated by a hundred and thirty miles of alluvium), had ships upon the sea then. We also find evidence of a fully developed sea life six thousand years ago at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, and possibly at that time there were already canoes on the seas among the islands of the nearer East Indies. There are pre-dynastic Neolithic Egyptian representations of Nile ships of a fair size, capable of carrying elephants.

Very soon the seafaring men must have realized the peculiar freedom and opportunities the ship gave them. They could get away to islands; no chief nor king could pursue a boat or ship with any certainty; every captain was a king. The seamen would find it easy to make nests upon islands and in strong positions on the mainland. There they could harbour, there they could carry on a certain agriculture and fishery; but their speciality and their main business was, of course, the expedition across the sea. That was not usually a trading expedition; it was much more frequently a piratical raid. From what we know of mankind, we are bound to conclude that the first sailors plundered when they could, and traded when they had to.

Because it developed in the comparatively warm and tranquil waters of the eastern Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the western horn of the Indian Ocean, the shipping of the ancient world retained throughout certain characteristics

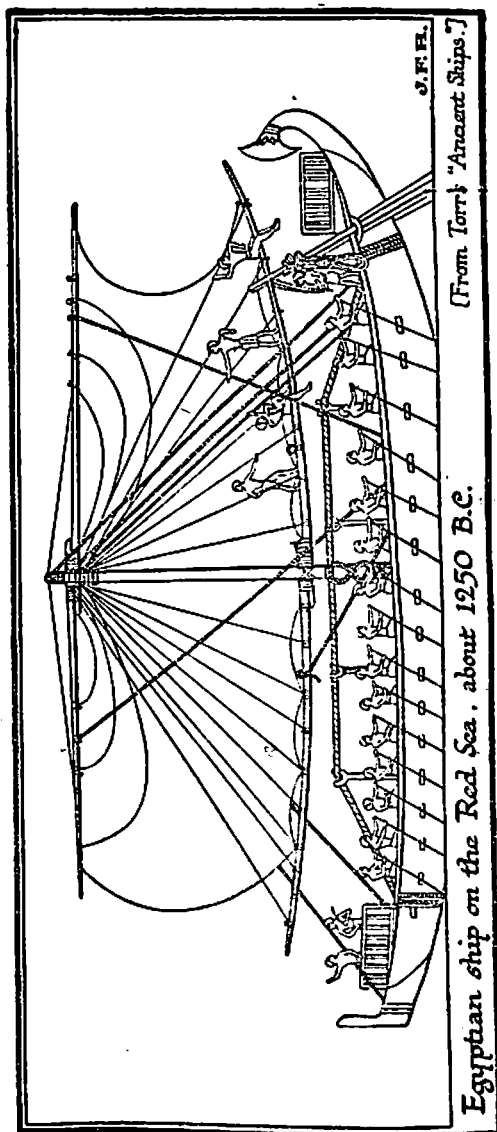


(From Terra's "Ancient Ships")

Boats on the Nile, about 2500 B.C.

that make it differ very widely from the ocean-going sailing shipping, with its vast spread of canvas, of the last four hundred years. "The Mediterranean," says Mr. Torr, "is a sea where a vessel with sails may lay becalmed for days together, while a vessel with oars would easily be traversing the smooth waters, with coasts and islands everywhere at hand to give her shelter in case of storm. In that sea, therefore, oars became the characteristic instruments of navigation, and the arrangement of oars the chief problem in shipbuilding. And while Mediterranean nations dominated Western Europe, vessels of the southern type were built upon the northern coasts, though there was wind enough for sails and too much for oars. . . .

"The art of rowing can first be discerned upon the Nile. Boats with oars are represented in the earliest pictorial monuments of Egypt; and although some crews are paddling with their faces towards the bow, others are rowing with their faces towards the stern. The paddling is certainly the older practice,



*Egyptian ship on the Red Sea. about 1250 B.C.*

Mr. Langton Cole calls attention to the rope truss in this illustration, stiffening the beam of the ship. No other such use of the truss is known until the days of modern engineering.



for the hieroglyph *chen* depicts two arms grasping an oar in the attitude of paddling, and the hieroglyphs were invented in the earliest ages. And that practice may really have ceased before 2,500 B.C., despite the testimony of monuments of that date; for in monuments dating from about 1,250 B.C. crews are represented unmistakably rowing with their faces towards the stern and yet grasping their oars in the attitude of paddling, so that even then Egyptian artists mechanically followed the turn of the hieroglyph to which their hands were accustomed. In these reliefs there are twenty rowers on the boats on the Nile, and thirty on the ships on the Red Sea; but in the earliest reliefs the number varies considerably, and seems dependent on the amount of space at the sculptor's disposal."

The Aryan-speaking peoples came late to the sea. The earliest ships on the sea were either Sumerian or Hamitic; the Semitic peoples followed close upon these pioneers. Along the eastern end of the Mediterranean, the Phœnicians, a Semitic people, set up a string of independent harbour towns, of which Acre, Tyre, and Sidon were the chief; and later they pushed their voyages westward and founded Carthage and Utica in North Africa. Possibly Phœnician keels were already in the Mediterranean by 2,000 B.C. Both Tyre and Sidon were originally on islands, and so easily defensible against a land raid.

But before we go on to the marine exploits of this great sea-going race, we must note a very remarkable and curious nest of early sea people whose remains have been discovered in Crete.

## § 2

### *The Ægean Cities before History.*

These early Cretans were of a race akin to the Iberians of Spain and Western Europe and the dark whites of Asia Minor and North Africa, and their language is uncertain. This race lived not only in Crete, but in Cyprus, Greece, Asia Minor, Sicily, and South Italy. It was a civilized people for long ages before the fair Nordic Greeks spread southward through Macedonia. At Cnossos, in Crete, there have been found the most astonishing ruins and remains, and Cnossos, therefore, is apt to overshadow the rest of these settlements in people's imaginations, but it is well to bear in mind that though Cnossos was no doubt a chief city of this Ægean civilization, these

"Ægeans" had in the fullness of their sway many cities and a wide range.

At Cnossos there are Neolithic remains as old or older than any of the pre-dynastic remains of Egypt. The Bronze Age began in Crete as soon as it did in Egypt, and there have been vases found by Sir Flinders Petrie in Egypt and referred by him to the Ist Dynasty, which he declares to be importations from Crete. Stone vases, amulets, and impressions of seals found in Crete point to relations with the Nile valley even before the historic dynasties. Stone vessels have been found of forms characteristic of the IVth (pyramid-building) Dynasty, and there can be no doubt that there was a vigorous trade between Crete and Egypt in the time of the XIIth Dynasty. This continued until about 1,000 B.C. It is clear that this island civilization arising upon the soil of Crete is at least as old as the Egyptian, and that it was already launched upon the sea as early as 4,000 B.C., before either Semite or Aryan had made a figure upon the stage of history.

The great days of Crete were not so early as this. It was only about 2,500 B.C. that the island appears to have been unified under one ruler. Then began an age of peace and prosperity unexampled in the history of the ancient world. Secure from invasion, living in a delightful climate, trading with every civilized community in the world, the Cretans were free to develop all the arts and amenities of life.

This Cnossos was not so much a town as the vast palace of the king and his people. It was not even fortified. The kings, it would seem, were called Minos always, as the kings of Egypt were all called Pharaoh; the king of Cnossos figures in the early legends of the Greeks as King Minos, who lived in the Labyrinth and kept there a horrible monster, half man, half bull, the Minotaur, to feed which he levied a tribute of youths and maidens from the Athenians. These stories are a part of Greek literature, and have always been known, but it is only in the last few decades that the excavations at Cnossos have revealed how close these legends were to the reality. The Cretan Labyrinth was a building as stately, complex, and luxurious as any in the ancient world. We find waterpipes, bathrooms, and the like conveniences, such as have hitherto been regarded as the latest refinements of modern life.

The pottery, the textile manufactures, the sculpture and painting of these people, their gem and ivory work, their metal and inlaid work, are as admirable as any that mankind has produced. They were much given to festivals and shows

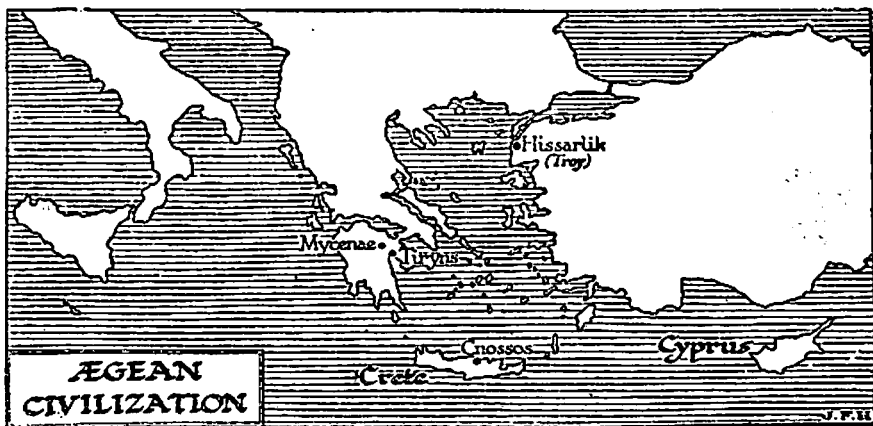
and, in particular, they were addicted to bull-fights and gymnastic entertainments. Their female costume became astonishingly "Victorian" in style; their women wore corsets and flounced dresses. They had a system of writing which was deciphered in 1954, and then only in part.

It is the custom nowadays to make a sort of wonder of these achievements of the Cretans, as though they were a people of incredible artistic ability living in the dawn of civilization. But their great time was long past that dawn; as late as 2,000 B.C. It took them many centuries to reach their best in art and skill, and their art and luxury are by no means so great a wonder if we reflect that for 3,000 years they were immune from invasion, that for a thousand years they were at peace. Century after century their artisans could perfect their skill, and their men and women refine upon refinement. Whenever men of almost any race have been comparatively safe in this fashion for such a length of time, they have developed much artistic beauty. Given the opportunity, all races are artistic. Greek legend has it that it was in Crete that Dædalus attempted to make the first flying machine. Dædalus (= cunning artificer) was a sort of personified summary of mechanical skill. It is curious to speculate what germ of fact lies behind him and those waxen wings that, according to the legend, melted and plunged his son Icarus into the sea.

There came at last a change in the condition of the lives of these Cretans, for other peoples, the Greeks and the Phoenicians, were also coming out with powerful fleets upon the seas. We do not know what led to the disaster nor who inflicted it; but somewhere about 1,400 B.C. Cnossos was sacked and burnt, and, though the Cretan life struggled on there rather lamely for another four centuries, there came at last a final blow about 1,000 B.C. (that is to say, in the days of the Assyrian ascendancy in the East). The palace at Cnossos was destroyed, and never rebuilt nor reinhabited. Possibly this was done by the ships of those newcomers into the Mediterranean, the barbaric Greeks, a group of Aryan-speaking tribes from the north, who may have wiped out Cnossos as they wiped out the city of Troy. The legend of Theseus tells of such a raid. He entered the labyrinth (which may have been the Cnossos Palace) by the aid of Ariadne, the daughter of Minos, and slew the Minotaur.

The *Iliad* makes it clear that destruction came upon Troy because the Trojans stole Greek women. Modern writers, with modern ideas in their heads, have tried to make out that the Greeks assailed Troy in order to secure a trade-route to

Colchis or some such fine-spun commercial advantage. If so, the authors of the *Iliad* hid the motives of their characters very skilfully. It would be about as reasonable to say that the Homeric Greeks went to war with the Trojans in order to be well ahead with a station on the Berlin to Bagdad railway. The Homeric Greeks were a healthy barbaric Aryan people, with very poor ideas about trade and "trade-routes"; they went to war with the Trojans because they were thoroughly annoyed about this stealing of women. It is fairly clear from the Minos legend and from the evidence of the Cnossos remains, that the Cretans kidnapped or stole youths and maidens to be slaves, bull-fighters, athletes, and perhaps sacrifices. They traded



fairly with the Egyptians, but it may be they did not realize the gathering strength of the Greek barbarians; they "traded" violently with them, and so brought sword and flame upon themselves.

Another people earlier upon the sea than the Greeks were the Phœnicians. They were great seamen because they were great traders. Their colony of Carthage (founded before 800 B.C. by Tyre) became at last greater than any of the older Phœnician cities, but already before 1,500 B.C. both Sidon and Tyre had settlements upon the African coast.

Carthage was comparatively inaccessible to the Assyrian and Babylonian hosts, and, profiting greatly by the long siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar II, became the greatest maritime power the world had hitherto seen. She claimed the Western Mediterranean as her own, and seized every ship she could catch west of Sardinia. Roman writers accuse her of great