

read and inquire. They appear side by side with the development of social security and private property.

The methods of reckoning developed. The operations of the Arameans and such-like Semitic trading people led to the organization of credit and monetary security. In the earlier days almost the only property, except a few movables, consisted of rights in land and in houses; later, one could deposit and lend securities, could go away and return to find one's property faithfully held and secure. Towards the middle of the period of the Persian Empire there lived one free individual, Herodotus, who has a great interest for us because he was among the first writers of critical and intelligent history, as distinguished from a mere priestly or court chronicle. It is worth while to glance here very briefly at the circumstances of his life. Later on we shall quote from the history he wrote.

We have already noted the conquest of Babylonia by the Aryan Persians under Cyrus in 539 B.C. We have noted, further, that the Persian Empire spread into Egypt, where its hold was precarious; and it extended also over Asia Minor. Herodotus was born about 484 B.C. in a Greek city of Asia Minor, Halicarnassus, which was under the overlordship of the Persians, and directly under the rule of a political boss or tyrant. There is no sign that he was obliged either to work for a living or spend very much time in the administration of his property. We do not know the particulars of his affairs, but it is clear that in this minor Greek city, under foreign rule, he was able to obtain and read and study manuscripts of nearly everything that had been written in the Greek language before his time.

He travelled, so far as one can gather, with freedom and comfort about the Greek archipelagos; he stayed wherever he wanted to stay, and he seems to have found tolerable accommodation; he went to Babylon and to Susa, the new capital the Persians had set up in Babylonia to the east of the Tigris; he toured along the coast of the Black Sea, and accumulated a considerable amount of knowledge about the Scythians, the Aryan people who were then distributed over South Russia; he went to the south of Italy, explored the antiquities of Tyre, coasted Palestine, landed at Gaza, and made a long stay in Egypt. He went about Egypt looking at temples and monuments and gathering information. We know not only from him, but from other evidence, that in those days the older temples and the pyramids (which were already nearly three thousand years old) were visited by strings of tourists, a special sort of priests acting as guides. The inscriptions the sightseers

scribed upon the walls remain to this day, and many of them have been deciphered and published.

As his knowledge accumulated, he conceived the idea of writing a great history of the attempts of Persia to subdue Greece. But in order to introduce that history he composed an account of the past of Greece, Persia, Assyria, Babylonia, Egypt, Scythia, and of the geography and peoples of those countries. He then set himself, it is said, to make his history known among his friends in Halicarnassus by reciting it to them, but they failed to appreciate it; and he then betook himself to Athens, the most flourishing of all Greek cities at that time. There his work was received with applause. We find him in the centre of a brilliant circle of intelligent and active-minded people, and the city authorities voted him a reward of ten talents (a sum of money equivalent to £7,000) in recognition of his literary achievement.

But we will not complete the biography of this most interesting man, nor will we enter into any criticism of his garrulous, marvel-telling, and most entertaining history. It is a book to which all intelligent readers come sooner or later, abounding as it does in illuminating errors and Boswellian charm. We give these particulars here simply to show that in the fifth century B.C. a new factor was becoming evident in human affairs. Reading and writing had already escaped from the temple precincts and the ranks of the court scribes. Record was no longer confined to court and temple. A new sort of people, these people of leisure and independent means, were asking questions, exchanging knowledge and views, and developing ideas. So beneath the march of armies and the policies of monarchs, and above the common lives of illiterate and incurious men, we note the beginnings of what is becoming at last nowadays a dominant power in human affairs, the *free intelligence of mankind*.

Of that free intelligence we shall have more to say when, in a subsequent chapter, we tell of the Greeks in the city states of the Archipelago and Asia Minor.

#### § 4

#### *Social Classes Three Thousand Years Ago.*

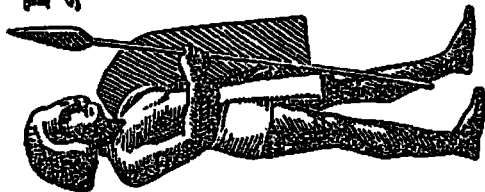
We may summarize the discussion of the last two chapters here by making a list of the chief elements in this complicated accumulation of human beings which made up the later Babylonian and Egyptian civilization of from two thousand five

hundred to three thousand years ago. These elements grew up and became distinct from one another in the great river valleys of the world in the course of five or six thousand years. They developed mental dispositions and traditions and attitudes of thought one to another. The civilization in which we live to-day is simply carrying on and still further developing and working out and rearranging these relationships. This is the world from which we inherit. It is only by the attentive study of their origins that we can detach ourselves from the prejudices and immediate ideas of the particular class to which we may belong, and begin to understand the social and political questions of our own time.

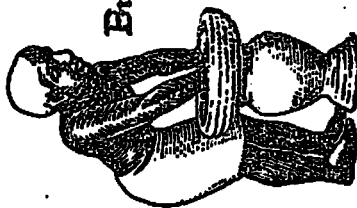
(1) First, then, came the priesthood, *the temple system*, which was the nucleus and the guiding intelligence about which the primitive civilizations grew. It was still in these later days a great power in the world, the chief repository of knowledge and tradition, an influence over the lives of everyone, and a binding force to hold the community together. But it was no longer all-powerful, because its nature made it conservative and inadapted. It no longer monopolized knowledge nor initiated fresh ideas. Learning had already leaked out to other less pledged and controlled people, who thought for themselves. About the temple system were grouped its priests and priestesses, its scribes, its physicians, its magicians, its lay brethren, treasurers, managers, directors and the like. It owned great properties and often hoarded huge treasures.

(2) Over against the priesthood, and originally arising out of it, was the *court system*, headed by a king or a "king of kings," who was in later Assyria and Babylonia a sort of captain and lay controller of affairs, and in Egypt a god-man who had released himself from the control of his priests. About the monarch were accumulated his scribes, counsellors, record keepers, agents, captains, and guards. Many of his officials, particularly his provincial officials, had great subordinate establishments, and were constantly tending to become independent. The nobility of the old river valley civilization arose out of the court system. It was, therefore, a different thing in its origins from the nobility of the early Aryans, which was a republican nobility of elders and leading men.

(3) At the base of the social pyramid was the large and most necessary class in the community, *the tillers of the soil*. Their status varied from age to age and in different lands; they were free peasants paying taxes, or serfs of the god, or serfs or tenants of king or noble, or of a private owner, paying him a rent;



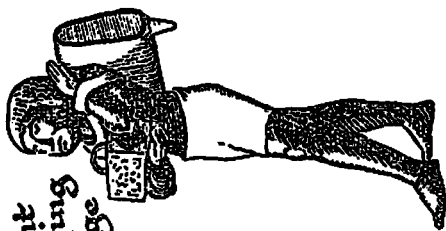
Foot  
soldier



Brewer



Musician



Servant  
carrying  
baggage

STATUETTES FROM MIDDLE-CLASS EGYPTIAN TOMBS SHOWING LOW-CLASS SOCIAL TYPES  
IN THE ANCIENT COMMUNITIES

in most cases tax or rent was paid in produce. In the states of the river valleys they were high cultivators, cultivating comparatively small holdings; they lived together for safety in villages, and had a common interest in maintaining their irrigation channels and a sense of community in their village life. The cultivation of the soil is an exacting occupation; the seasons and the harvest sunsets will not wait for men; children can be utilized at an early age, and so the cultivator class is generally a poorly educated, close-toiling class, superstitious by reason of ignorance and the uncertainty of the seasons, ill-informed and easily put upon. It is capable at times of great passive resistance, but it has no purpose in its round but crops and crops, to keep out of debt and hoard against bad times. So it has remained to our own days over the greater part of Europe and Asia.

(4) Differing widely in origin and quality from the tillers of the soil was the *artisan class*. At first, this was probably in part a town-slave class, in part it consisted of peasants who had specialized upon a craft. But in developing an art and mystery of its own, a technique that had to be learnt before it could be practised, each sort of craft probably developed a certain independence and a certain sense of community of its own. The artisans were able to get together and discuss their affairs more readily than the toilers on the land, and they were able to form guilds to restrict output, maintain rates of pay, and protect their common interest.

(5) As the power of the Babylonian rulers spread out beyond the original areas of good husbandry into grazing regions and less fertile districts, a class of *herdsmen* came into existence. In the case of Babylonia these were nomadic Semites, the Bedouin, like the Bedouin of to-day. They probably grazed their flocks over great areas much as the sheep ranchers of California do. They were paid and esteemed much more highly than the husbandmen.

(6) The first *merchants* in the world were shipowners, like the people of Tyre and Cnossos, or nomads who carried and traded goods as they wandered between one area of primitive civilization and another. In the Babylonian and Assyrian world the traders were predominantly the Semitic Arameans, the ancestors of the modern Syrians. They became a distinct factor in the life of the community; they formed great households of their own. Usury developed largely in the last thousand years B.C. It had been practised even in Sumerian times. Traders needed accommodation: cultivators wished to anticipate

their crops. Sayce gives an account of the Babylonian banking-house of Egibi, which lasted through several generations and outlived the Chaldean Empire.

(7) A class of *small retailers*, one must suppose, came into existence with the complication of society during the later days of the first empires, but it was not probably of any great importance.

(8) A growing class of *independent property owners*.

(9) As the amenities of life increased, there grew up in the court, temples, and prosperous private houses a class of *domestic servants*, slaves or freed slaves, or young peasants taken into the household.

(10) *Gang workers*.—These were prisoners of war or debt slaves, or impressed or deported men.

(11) *Mercenary soldiers*.—These also were often captives or impressed men. Sometimes they were enlisted from friendly foreign populations in which the military spirit still prevailed.

(12) *Seamen*.

In modern political and economic discussions we are apt to talk rather glibly of "labour." Much has been made of the *solidarity of labour* and its sense of community. It is well to note that in these first civilizations, what we speak of as "labour" is represented by five distinct classes dissimilar in origin, traditions, and outlook—namely, classes 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, and the oar-tugging part of 12. The "solidarity of labour" is, we shall find when we come to study the mechanical revolution of the nineteenth century A.D., a new idea and a new possibility in human affairs.

## § 5

### *Classes Hardening into Castes.*

Let us, before leaving this discussion of the social classes that were developing in these first civilizations, devote a little attention to their fixity. How far did they stand aloof from each other, and how far did they intermingle? So far as the classes we have counted as 9, 10, 11 and 12 go, the servants, the gang labourers and slaves, the gang soldiers, and, to a lesser extent, the sailors, or at any rate the galley rowers among the sailors, they were largely recruited classes, they did not readily and easily form homes, they were not distinctively breeding classes; they were probably replenished generation after generation by captives, by the failures of other classes, and especially from the failures of the class of small retailers, and by persuasion

and impressment from among the cultivators. But so far as the sailors go, we have to distinguish between the mere rower and the navigating and shipowning seamen of such ports as Tyre and Sidon. The shipowners pass, no doubt, by insensible gradations into the mercantile class, but the navigators must have made a peculiar community in the great seaports, having homes there and handing on the secrets of seacraft to their sons.

The eighth class we have distinguished was certainly a precarious class, continually increased by the accession of the heirs and dependents, the widows and retired members of the wealthy and powerful, and continually diminished by the deaths or speculative losses of these people and the dispersal of their properties. The priests and priestesses too, so far as all this world west of India went, were not a very reproductive class; many priesthoods were celibate, and that class, too, may also be counted as a recruited class. Nor are servants, as a rule, reproductive. They live in the households of other people; they do not have households and rear large families of their own. This leaves us as the really vital classes of the ancient civilized community:

- (a) The royal and aristocratic class, officials, military officers, and the like;
- (b) The mercantile class;
- (c) The town artisans;
- (d) The cultivators of the soil; and
- (e) The herdsmen.

Each of these classes reared its own children in its own fashion, and so naturally kept itself more or less continuously distinct from the others. General education was not organized in those ancient states, education was mainly a household matter (as it is still in many parts of India to-day), and so it was natural and necessary for the sons to follow in the footsteps of their father and to marry women accustomed to their own sort of household. Except during times of great political disturbance, therefore, there would be a natural and continuous separation of classes; which would not, however, prevent exceptional individuals from intermarrying or passing from one class to another. Poor aristocrats would marry rich members of the mercantile class; ambitious herdsmen, artisans, or sailors would become rich merchants. So far as one can gather, that was the general state of affairs in both Egypt and Babylonia. The idea was formerly entertained that in Egypt there was a fixity of classes, but this appears to be a misconception due

to a misreading of Herodotus. The only exclusive class in Egypt which did not intermarry was the semi-divine royal family.

At various points in the social system there were probably developments of exclusiveness, an actual barring out of interlopers. Artisans of particular crafts possessing secrets, for example, have among all races and in all ages tended to develop guild organizations restricting the practice of their craft and the marriage of members outside their guild. Conquering people have also, and especially when there were marked physical differences of race, been disposed to keep themselves aloof from the conquered peoples, and have developed an aristocratic exclusiveness. Such organizations of restriction upon free intercourse have come and gone in great variety in the history of all long-standing civilizations. The natural boundaries of function were always there, but sometimes they have been drawn sharply and laid stress upon, and sometimes they have been made little of. There has been a general tendency among the Aryan peoples to distinguish noble (patrician) from common (plebeian) families; the traces of it are evident throughout the literature and life of Europe to-day, and it has received a picturesque enforcement in the "science" of heraldry. This tradition is still active even in democratic America. Germany, the most methodical of European countries, had in the Middle Ages a very clear conception of the fixity of such distinctions. Below the princes (who themselves constituted an exclusive class which did not marry beneath itself) there were the:

(a) Knights—the military and official caste, with heraldic coats-of-arms;

(b and c) The Bürgerstand—the merchants, shipping people, and artisans; and

(d) The Bauernstand—the cultivating serfs or peasants.

Mediæval Germany went as far as any of the Western heirs of the first great civilizations towards a fixation of classes. The idea is far less congenial both to the English-speaking people and to the French and Italians, who, by a sort of instinct, favour a free movement from class to class. Such exclusive ideas began at first among, and were promoted chiefly by, the upper classes, but it is a natural response and a natural Nemesis to such ideas that the mass of the excluded should presently range themselves in antagonism to their superiors. It was in Germany, as we shall see in the concluding chapters of this story, that the conception of a natural and necessary conflict, "the class war," between the miscellaneous multitudes of the disinherited ("the



class-conscious proletariat" of the Marxist) and the rulers and merchants first arose. It was an idea more acceptable to the German mind than to the British or French.

But before we come to that conflict, we must traverse a long history of many centuries.

## § 6

### *Caste in India.*

If now we turn eastward from this main development of civilization in the world between Central Asia and the Atlantic to the social development of India in the 2,000 years next before the Christian era, we find certain broad and very interesting differences. The first of these is that we find such a fixity of classes in process of establishment as no other part of the world can present. This fixity of classes is known to Europeans as the institution of *caste* (from *casta*, a word of Portuguese origin; the Indian word is *varna*, colour). Its origins are still in complete obscurity, but it was certainly well rooted in the Ganges valley before the days of Alexander the Great. It is a complicated horizontal division of the social structure into classes or castes, the members of which may neither eat nor intermarry with persons of a lower caste under penalty of becoming outcasts, and who may also "lose caste" for various ceremonial negligences and defilements. By losing caste a man does not sink to a lower caste; he becomes outcast.

The various subdivisions of caste are very complex; many are practically trade organizations. Each caste has its local organization which maintains discipline, distributes various charities, looks after its own poor, protects the common interests of its members, and examines the credentials of newcomers from other districts. (There is little to check the pretensions of a travelling Hindu to be of a higher caste than is legitimately his.) Originally, the four main castes seem to have been:

The Brahmins—the priests and teachers;

The Kshatriyas—the warriors;

The Vaisyas—herdsmen, money-lenders, merchants, and land-owners;

The Sudras;

And, outside the castes, the Pariahs.

But these primary divisions have long been complicated by subdivision into a multitude of minor castes, all exclusive, each holding its members to one definite way of living and one group of associates. In Bengal the Kshatriyas and Vaisyas have

largely disappeared. . . . But this is too intricate a question for us to deal with here in any detail.

Next to this extraordinary fission and complication of the social body we have to note that the Brahmins, the priests and teachers of the Indian world, unlike so many Western priest-hoods, are a marrying, reproductive and exclusive class, taking no recruits from any other social stratum.

Whatever may have been the original incentive to this extensive fixation of class in India, there can be little doubt of the rôle played by the Brahmins as the custodians of tradition and the only teachers of the people in sustaining it. By some it is supposed that the first three of the four original castes, known also as the "twice-born," were the descendants of the Vedic Aryan conquerors of India, who established these hard-and-fast separations to prevent racial mixing with the conquered Sudras and Pariahs. The Sudras are represented as a previous wave of northern conquerors, and the Pariahs are the original Dravidian inhabitants of India. But these speculations are not universally accepted, and it is, perhaps, rather the case that the uniform conditions of life in the Ganges valley throughout long centuries served to stereotype a difference of classes that have never had the same steadfastness of definition under the more various and variable conditions of the greater world to the West.

However caste arose, there can be no doubt of its extraordinary hold upon the Indian mind. In the sixth century B.C. arose Gautama, the great teacher of Buddhism, proclaiming, "As the four streams that flow into the Ganges lose their names as soon as they mingle their waters in the holy river, so all who believe in Buddha cease to be Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras." His teaching prevailed in India for some centuries; it spread over China, Tibet, Japan, Burma, Ceylon, Turkestan, Manchuria; it is to-day the religion of a large fraction of the human race, but it was finally defeated and driven out of Indian life by the vitality and persistence of the Brahmins and of their caste ideas.

## § 7

### *The System of the Mandarins.*

In China we find a social system travelling along yet another, and only a very roughly parallel line to that followed by the Indian and Western civilizations. The Chinese civilization even more than the Hindu was organized for peace, and the warrior

played a small part in its social scheme. As in the Indian civilization, the leading class was an intellectual one; less priestly than the Brahmin and more official. But unlike the Brahmins, the mandarins, who were the literate men of China, were not a caste: one was not a mandarin by birth, but by education; mandarins were drawn by education and examination from all classes of the community, and the son of a mandarin had no prescriptive right to succeed his father. As a consequence of these differences, while the Brahmins of India are, as a class, ignorant even of their own sacred books, mentally slack, and full of a pretentious assurance, the Chinese mandarin had the energy that comes from hard mental work. But since his education so far had been almost entirely a scholarly study of the classical Chinese literature, his influence was entirely conservative. Before the days of Alexander the Great, China had already formed itself and set its feet in the way in which it was still walking in the year A.D. 1900. Invaders and dynasties had come and gone, but the routine of life of the yellow civilization remained almost unchanged.

The traditional Chinese social system recognized four main classes below the priest-emperor.

(a) The literary class, which was equivalent partly to the officials of the Western world and partly to its teachers and clerics. In the time of Confucius its education included archery and horsemanship. Rites and music, history and mathematics, completed the "Six Accomplishments."

(b) The cultivators of the land.

(c) The artisans.

(d) The mercantile class.

But since from the earliest times it has been the Chinese way to divide the landed possessions of a man among all his sons, there has never been in Chinese history any class of great land-owners renting their land to tenants, such as most other countries have displayed. The Chinese land had always been cut up into small holdings, which were chiefly freeholds and cultivated intensively. There were landlords in China who owned one or a few farms and rented them to tenants, but there were no great, permanent estates. When a patch of land, by repeated division, was too small to sustain a man, it was sold to some prospering neighbour; and the former owner drifted to one of the great towns of China to join the mass of wage-earning workers there. In China, for many centuries, there have been these masses of town population with scarcely any property at all, men neither serfs nor slaves, but held to their daily work by

their utter impecuniousness. From such masses it is that the soldiers needed by the Chinese Government were recruited, and also such gang labour as has been needed for the making of canals, the building of walls and the like has been drawn. The war captive and the slave class play a smaller part in Chinese history than in any more westerly record of these ages before the Christian era.

One fact, we may note, is common to all these three stories of developing social structure, and that is the immense power exercised by the educated class in the early stages before the crown or the commonalty began to read and, consequently, to think for itself. In India, by reason of their exclusiveness, the Brahmins, the educated class, retain their influence to this day; over the masses of China, along entirely different lines and because of the complexities of the written language, the mandarin has prevailed. The diversity of race and tradition in the more various and eventful world of the West has delayed, and perhaps arrested for ever, any parallel organization of the specially intellectual elements of society into a class ascendancy. In the Western world, as we have already noted, education early "slopped over," and soaked away out of the control of any special class: it escaped from the limitation of castes and priest-hoods and traditions into the general life of the community. Writing and reading had been simplified down to a point when it was no longer possible to make a cult and mystery of them. It may be due to the peculiar elaboration and difficulty of the Chinese characters, rather than to any racial difference, that the same thing did not happen to a like extent in China.

### § 8

#### *A Summary of Ten Thousand Years.*

In these last six chapters we have traced in outline the whole process by which, in the course of 10,000 or 12,000 years—that is to say, in something between 300 and 400 generations—man ceased to be a rare, hungry, prowling, rather unsocial animal, thinly distributed about the warmer parts of the earth, and became an abundant social creature swarming densely over the more favourable regions of the old world. Toil began, enslavement—and security. In that period mankind passed from the stage of early Neolithic husbandry, in which the primitive skin-clad family tribe reaped and stored in their rude mud huts the wild-growing fodder and grain-bearing grasses with sickles of stone, to the days of the fourth century B.C.,

when all round the shores of the Mediterranean and up the Nile, and across Asia to India, and again over the great alluvial areas of China, spread the fields of human cultivation and busy cities, great temples, and the coming and going of human commerce. Galleys and lateen-sailed ships entered and left crowded harbours, and made their careful way from headland to headland and from headland to island, keeping always close to the land. Phœnician shipping under Egyptian owners was penetrating to the East Indies and perhaps even further into the Pacific. We have Bushmen rock paintings in South Africa showing white men with headdresses of a type worn for a time in Assyria and known also in North Europe, but unknown as indigenous in Africa. Across the deserts of Africa and Arabia and through Turkestan toiled the caravans with their remote trade; silk was already coming from China, ivory from Central Africa, and tin from Britain to the centres of this new life in the world. Damascus was already making Damask, and "Damascening" steel. Men had learnt to weave fine linen and delicate fabrics of coloured wool; they could bleach and dye; they had iron as well as copper, bronze, silver, and gold; they had made the most beautiful pottery and porcelain; there was hardly a variety of precious stone in the world that they had not found and cut and polished; they could read and write; divert the courses of rivers, pile pyramids, and make walls a thousand miles long. The hundred centuries or so in which all this had been achieved may seem a long time in comparison with the threescore and ten years of a single human life, but it is utterly inconsiderable in comparison with the stretches of geological time. Measuring backward from these Alexandrian cities to the days of the first stone implements, the *rostrato-carinate* implements of the Pliocene Age, gives us an extent of time fully a hundred times as long.

We have tried in this account, and with the help of maps and figures and time charts, to give a just idea of the order and shape of these eventful centuries of man's development. Our business is with that outline. We have named but a few names of individuals; though henceforth the personal names must increase in number. But the content of this Outline that we have drawn here in a few diagrams and charts cannot but touch the imagination. If only we could look closer, we should see through all these sixty centuries a procession of lives more and more akin in their fashion to our own. We have shown how the painted Palæolithic savage gave place to the Neolithic cultivator, a type of man still to be found in the backward

places of the world. We have given an illustration of Sumerian soldiers copied from a carved stone that was set up long before the days when the Semitic Sargon I conquered the land. Day by day some busy brownish man carved those figures, and, no doubt, whistled as he carved. In those days the plain of the Egyptian delta was crowded with gangs of swarthy workmen unloading the stone that had come down the Nile to add a fresh course to the current pyramid. One might paint a thousand scenes from those ages: of some hawker merchant in Egypt spreading his stock of Babylonish garments before the eyes of some pretty, rich lady; of a miscellaneous crowd swarming between the pylons to some temple festival at Thebes; of an excited, dark-eyed audience of Cretans, like the Spaniards of to-day, watching a bull-fight, with the bull-fighters in trousers and tightly girded, exactly like any contemporary bull-fighter; of children learning their cuneiform signs (at Nippur the clay exercise tiles of a school have been found); of a woman with a sick husband at home slipping into some great temple in Carthage to make a vow for his recovery.

Or perhaps it is a wild Greek, skin-clad and armed with a bronze axe, standing motionless on some Illyrian mountain-crest, struck with amazement at his first vision of a many-oared Cretan galley crawling like a great insect across the amethystine mirror of the Adriatic Sea. He went home to tell his folk a strange story of a monster. Briareus with his hundred arms. Of millions of such stitches in each of these 200 generations is the fabric of this history woven. But unless they mark the presence of a primary seam or join, we cannot pause now to examine any of these stitches.

### § 9

#### *Plastic and Pictorial Art in the Ancient World.*

Let us, however, before we go on to the thousand-year struggle and interaction of Aryan and Semite in the Western world that constitutes the main substance of the next three books of this Outline, give two brief sections to record the appearance of a conscious search for beauty in men's lives. In two books we have told how man arose from the condition of a wandering rare animal to the multitudinous, toilsome, but secured and more abundant life of civilization. For a fortunate minority civilization meant great releases of energy; for all it meant a certain freedom from urgent feat and necessity. And the released energy flowed into a prolongation of "play" into

the adult life and into a conscious search for delights. Man ceased to be wholly occupied in the search for food and shelter. He lifted his eyes to beauty. Even the Neanderthaler animal was not wholly a beast. It collected shells and curious stones and such-like odd things and wore them, it would seem, for pleasure and adornment.

In the later Palæolithic time there was, as we have noted already, a considerable outbreak of drawing and carving. These things were done for pleasure. No doubt they also had a magic significance; that was inevitable. There is an incurable tendency in the human mind to overload things with personal significance. To this day people feel that jewels or ornaments are lucky or unlucky, and no doubt Palæolithic man thought that his drawings of animals had a propitious effect on the game. But some of his statuettes were manifestly burlesque. Much stress has been laid on the fact that a great proportion of the Palæolithic paintings and drawings that have survived are in dark caves and obscure corners. But these may be only a small remnant of the decoration with which early man covered the trees and rocks of his time. The exposed would have been destroyed naturally in a few years.

Later Palæolithic man drew and carved; he danced, as his drawings testify, and dancing seems to imply rhythmic shoutings and beatings. Here are the first factors of fine art and music. The shelter that he built and the huts and holes of early Neolithic man were, however, sternly utilitarian; it was only as civilization dawned and a considerable accumulation of population was achieved, that the shrine and the head-man's hut began to be something more than mere shelters, and conscious architecture began. Insensibly men came to feel that a building might have dignity and mystery, might impress by its grace and beauty.

Perhaps the most considerable building efforts Stone Age man ever made were the barrows in which great men were interred. Always there was a central chamber of big piled stones and then earth or mud brick. The great pyramids of Egypt, those vast graceless bulks, are essentially huge barrows of stone. "Silbury Hill in England is an earth pyramid. These accumulations were oriented with great care; the Egyptian pyramids indicate considerable mechanical skill as well as a stupendous mass effort; but one can scarcely speak of architecture in connection with these piles.

The architects of the Mesopotamian region and those of the Nile valley began with very little knowledge of each other's

activities and had little or no influence upon each other. Their first forms were in each case determined by the peculiarities of sun-dried mud bricks and timber. The Sumerian, however, had little stone available; the Egyptian, on the other hand, had abundant and various stone close at hand, easily quarried and easily got to the Nile. Sun-dried bricks are compressible; they necessitate a broadening-out of the walls at the base, and both the Sumerian-Babylonian and the Egyptian buildings have that sloping of the outer wall that gives them their distinctive air of dignified permanence. The inner passages were narrow because of the yet unmastered difficulties of carrying a roof. In Sumeria, the important buildings developed into the "ziggurat" form, which continued to be characteristic of this region. A ziggurat is a staged, many-storied building; each story is narrower than the one below and has a terrace about it with staircases. The softer brick is faced with tiles and harder burnt brick. The remains we now excavate in these regions are only the stumps of the original buildings, which often towered to seven or eight stories. Pillars were rarely or never used in the earlier Mesopotamian architecture—there was no suitable material—and the chambers seem generally to have been vaulted not with arches but with each course of bricks on the massive wall coming in a little more than the one below. There are, however, massive brick pillars in Sumerian buildings at Ur and at Kish. Decorative effects were got with buttresses and brick panels. Stucco and terracotta play a large part in the ornamental work. Stone appears in carved slabs and for such like special uses. It is only when we reach Assyrian architecture that we come into a stone region and the buildings begin to be faced with stone masonry and freely adorned with stone. It is only when communications have developed with Egypt, in the second millennium B.C., that the stone pillar appears in the Euphrates-Tigris region.

The Egyptian architecture never produced many-storied piles of the ziggurat type. Except the pyramids, obelisks and pylons, Egyptian architecture kept broad and low. The stone appears first as a substitute for wood, stone lintels and beams replace wooden ones and imitate their shapes. Wooden supports give place to rounded pillars of stone. Upon which pillars the forms of men and animals are presently painted or carved in relief. One early temple, the temple of the Sphinx, near to and contemporary with the pyramids, is largely carved out of the living rock. It has no columns. Columns and colonnades appear about the time of the XIIth Dynasty.



The great days of the Egyptian style were in the time of the XVIIIth Dynasty. To that period we owe the huge assembly of temple buildings at Thebes. The XIXth Dynasty was also a great dynasty of builders.

Sculpture and painting were at first entirely accessory to the master art of architecture in both centres of civilization. Sculpture began as relief and as the carved pylon; painting filled the panel and covered the blank wall. To the dry Egyptian climate we owe the preservation of great spaces of wonderfully painted surface, representing a thousand aspects of everyday Egyptian life and revealing much of the thought and imagination of these people. The records of Assyria and Babylon are sparing in comparison.

The Ægean architecture has a distinctive quality of its own, but on the whole it is closer to the Egyptian than to the Babylonian in spirit. Pillars are used early, and the buildings have a labyrinthine arrangement quite different from either Egyptian or Babylonian ground plans. Fresco painting and mosaic were carried to a very high level.

While these three great arts developed there was also in all these civilizations an enormous output of cut and engraved gems, goldsmith's work and other metal work, small statuettes, models and such-like toys and ornaments, seats, beds, thrones, and graceful furnishings. Wood and ivory carving were beautifully done. Crete was particularly productive of beautiful gold work and of pottery. The Cretan vases were traded all over the ancient Orient.

## § 10

### *Literature, Drama and Music in the Ancient World.*

Imaginative literature and music do not seem to have been so highly developed in the ancient civilizations as the arts that appeal to the eye. Tale-telling has been an important living thing in human life since speech began, and the most important elements of prose literature, a sense of phrase, invention, character study, are to be found wherever two or three women of any race gossip together. Dreams, very often monstrous and embodying the reactions against the necessary suppressions of primitive society, supplied a fantastic element in the early tale. Tales have always eked themselves out by dramatic gestures and interludes except among the very coldest and most restrained people, and from an early age the memory of

great events, the procedure of great occasions, was sustained by periodic narrative dances, in which speech and chant, imitation, rhythmic movement and instrumental sound were inextricably interwoven.

These things were in human life before civilization; and the familiar forms of story and sketch and homely dance went on no doubt among the common folk of the ancient civilizations, when the periodic commemorations were exalted to become the ceremonial of the temples. But though the priests took up various systems of legends, the Creation story for example, and expanded many of the primitive fables into a complex mythology, they do not seem to have cast them into moulds of beautiful language. The spectacle was the thing. Neither in Egypt nor in Babylonia was there any serious development of the drama as such. The peasants had their show perhaps, but no one else heeded it. The possible dramatic developments of the Ægean peoples we do not yet understand sufficiently to discuss. Perhaps they had no drama. They had exhibitions of a crueller, intenser interest. The bull-fight was their common entertainment. The probably kindred Etruscans, like the pre-European American civilizations, entertained themselves by butchering slaves and making captives fight for life before them.

The writer is unable to discover any record at all of professional story-tellers, or story-chanters in the life of these old civilizations, even in the village life. If there were no professional memorizers, then until the art of writing had developed there could be little expansion of literary art. People would have flashes of happy expression, but they would not be preserved to grow into a literary method and tradition. The earliest Egyptian writings seem to be charms and other recipes, moral aphorisms, bare records. The people of both Egypt and Sumer probably took themselves for granted to an amazing extent, and after childhood indulged very rarely in wonder or dreams of adventure. They were simple, practical peoples. Even about death the Egyptians were astoundingly practical. They furnished forth the dead with care and comfort. The greatest Egyptian tale was the story, told with a hundred variations, of the journey of the departed soul to Osiris; it was a simple, moral, unmetaphysical Baedeker of the other world, the Book of the Dead.

The Jews were yet to develop their book, the first book of power in the world, the Bible, which, as I shall tell, effected a synthesis of many of the shattered elements of the old Semitic world. The Aryans were reciting in their woodlands, but they