

EUROPEAN BACKGROUND OF AMERICAN HISTORY

EDWARD POTTS CHEYNEY*

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THE AMERICAN NATION: A HISTORY

VOLUME 1

EUROPEAN BACKGROUND OF AMERICAN HISTORY

1300-1600

BY EDWARD POTTS CHEYNEY, A M.

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WITH MAPS

TO MY FATHER

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MEDIAEVAL TRADE-ROUTES ACROSS ASIA (in colors)

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THE LAURENTIAN PORTOLANO OF 1351

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

That a new history of the United States is needed, extending from the discovery down to the present time, hardly needs statement. No such comprehensive work by a competent writer is now in existence. Individual writers have treated only limited chronological fields. Meantime there, is a rapid increase of published sources and of serviceable monographs based on material hitherto unused. On the one side there is a necessity for an intelligent summarizing of the present knowledge of American history by trained specialists; on the other hand there is need of a complete work, written in untechnical style, which shall serve for the instruction and the entertainment of the general reader.

To accomplish this double task within a time short enough to serve its purpose, there is but one possible method, the co-operative. Such a division of labor has been employed in several German, French, and English enterprises; but this is the first attempt, to carry out that system on a large scale for the whole of the United States.

The title of the work succinctly suggests the character of the series, The American Nation. A History. From Original Materials by Associated Scholars. The subject is the "American Nation," the people combined into a mighty political organization, with a national tradition, a national purpose, and a national character. But the nation, as it is, is built upon its own past and can be understood only in the light of its origin and development. Hence this series is a "history," and a consecutive history, in which events shall be shown not only in their succession, but in their relation to one another; in which cause shall

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be connected with effect and the effect become a second cause. It is a history "from original materials," because such materials, combined with the recollections of living men, are the only source of our knowledge of the past. No accurate history can be written which does not spring from the sources, and it is safer to use them at first hand than to accept them as quoted or expounded by other people. It is a history written by "scholars"; the editor expects that each writer

shall have had previous experience in investigation and in statement. It is a history by "associated scholars," because each can thus bring to bear his special knowledge and his special aptitude.

Previous efforts to fuse together into one work short chapters by many hands have not been altogether happy; the results have usually been encyclopaedic, uneven, and abounding in gaps. Hence in this series the whole work is divided into twenty-six volumes, in each of which the writer is free to develop a period for himself. It is the editor's function to see that the links of the chain are adjusted to each other, end to end, and that no considerable subjects are omitted.

The point of view of *The American Nation* is that the purpose of the historian is to tell what has been done, and, quite as much, what has been purposed, by the thinking, working, and producing people who make public opinion. Hence the work is intended to select and characterize the personalities who have stood forth as leaders and as seers; not simply the founders of commonwealths or the statesmen of the republic, but also the great divines, the inspiring writers, and the captains of industry. For this is not intended to be simply a political or constitutional history: it must include the social life of the people, their religion, their literature, and their schools. It must include their economic life, occupations, labor systems, and organizations of capital. It must include their wars and their diplomacy, the relations of community with community, and of the nation with other nations.

The true history, nevertheless, must include the happenings which mark the progress of discovery and colonization and national life. Striking events, dramatic episodes, like the discovery of America, Drake's voyage around the world, the capture of New Amsterdam by the English, George Rogers Clark's taking of Vincennes, and the bombardment of Fort Sumter, inspired the imagination of contemporaries, and stir the blood of their descendants. A few words should be said as to the make-up of the volumes. Each contains a portrait of some man especially eminent within the field of that volume. Each volume also contains a series of colored and black-and-white maps, which add details better presented in graphic form than in print. There being no general atlas of American history in existence, the series of maps taken together will show the territorial progress of the country and will illustrate explorations and many military movements. Some of the maps will be reproductions of contemporary maps or sketches, but most of them have been made for the series by the collaboration of authors and editor. Each volume has foot-notes, with the triple purpose of backing up the author's

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statements by the weight of his authorities, of leading the reader to further excursions into wider fields, and of furnishing the investigator with the means of further study. The citations are condensed as far as is possible while leaving them unmistakable, and the full titles of most of the works cited will be found in the critical essay on bibliography at the end of each volume. This constant reference to authorities, a salutary check on the writer and a safeguard to the reader, is one of the features of the work; and the bibliographical chapters carefully select from the immense mass of literature on American history the titles of the most authentic and the most useful secondary works and sources. The principle of the whole series is that every book shall be written by an expert for laymen; and every volume must

therefore stand the double test of accuracy and of readableness.

American history loses nothing in dramatic climax because it is true or

because it is truly told. As editor of the series I must at least express my debt to the publishers, who have warmly adopted the idea that truth and popular interest are inseparable; to the authors, with whom I have discussed so often the problems of their own volumes and of the series in general; especially to the members of the committees of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Virginia Historical Society, Texas Historical Society, and Wisconsin State Historical Society, whose generous interest and suggestions in the meetings that I have held with them were of such assistance in the laying out of the work; to the public, who now have the opportunity of acting as judges of this performance and whose good-will alone can prove that the series justifies itself.

ALBERT BUSHNELL HART.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION This first volume of the series supplies a needed

link between the history of Europe and the history of early America; for whether it came through a Spanish, French, English, Dutch, or Swedish medium, or through the later immigrants from Germany, from Italy, and from the Slavic countries, the American conception of society and of government was originally derived from the European. Hence the importance at the outset of knowing what that civilization was at the time of colonization. Professor Cheyney (chapters i. and ii.) fitly begins with an account of mediaeval commerce, especially between Europe and Asia, and the effect of the interposition of the Turks into the Mediterranean, and how, by their disturbance of the established course of Asiatic trade, they turned men's minds towards other routes to Asia by sea. Thence he proceeds to show (chapter iii.) how the Italians in navigation and in map-making exhibited the same pre-eminence as in commerce and the arts, and why Italy furnished so many of the explorers of the western seas in the period of discovery. It is an easy transition in chapter iv. to the dramatic story of the efforts of the Portuguese to reach India round Africa. The next step is

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to describe in some detail (chapters v. and vi.) the system of government and of commerce which existed in Spain, France, and Holland in the sixteenth century; and the book will surprise the reader in its account of the effective and far-reaching administration of the Spanish kingdom, the mother of so many later colonies. This discussion is very closely connected with the account of Spanish institutions in the New World as described by Bourne in his *Spain in America* (volume III. of the series), and we find the same terms, such as "audiencia," "corregidor," and "Council of the Indies" reappearing in colonial history. A much-neglected subject in American history is the development of great commercial companies, which, in the hands of the English, planted their first permanent colonies. To this subject Professor Cheyney devotes two illuminating chapters (vii. and viii.), in which he prints a list of more than sixty such companies chartered by various nations, and then selects as typical the English Virginia Company, the Dutch West India Company, and the French Company of New France, which he analyzes and compares with one another. It is significant that not one of these companies was Spanish, for that country retained in its own hands complete control both of its colonies and of their commerce.

Since English colonization was almost wholly Protestant and added a new centre of Protestant influence, Professor Cheyney has, in two chapters (ix. and x.), given some account of the Reformation and of the

religious wars of the sixteenth century. He brings out not only the differences in doctrine but in spirit, and shows how, by the Thirty Years' War, Germany was excluded from the possibility of establishing American colonies, a lack which that country has found it impossible to repair in our day.

The mother-country for the American nation was in greater part England; even Scotland and Ireland contributed their numbers and their characteristics only in the third and fourth generations of the colonies. A considerable part of this volume, therefore (chapters xi. to xvi.), is given up to a description of the conditions of England at the time of the departure of the first colonists. Everybody knows, and nobody knows clearly, the religious questions in England from Elizabeth to James II. Here will be found a distinct and vivid account of the struggle between churchmen, Catholics, Puritans, and Independents for influence on the Church of England or for supremacy in the state. Why did the Catholics in general remain loyal? Why were the Puritans punished? Why were the Independents at odds with everybody else? Why did not Presbyterianism take root in England? These are all questions of great moment, and their adjustment by Professor Cheyney prepares the way for the account of the Pilgrims who founded Plymouth colony in Tyler's *England in America* (volume IV. of the series). An absolute essential for an understanding of colonial history before the Revolution is a clear idea of the political system of England, both in its larger national form and in its local government. Hence the importance of Professor Cheyney's chapters on English government. The

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kings' courts, council, and Parliament all had their effect upon the governors' courts, councils, and assemblies of the various colonies. From the English practice came the superb, fundamental notion of a right of representation and of the effectiveness of a delegated assembly. In local government the likeness was in some respects even closer; and Professor Cheyney's account of the English county court, and especially of the township or parish, will solve many difficulties in the later colonial history. In some ways Professor Cheyney's conclusions make more striking and original the development of the astonishing New England town-meetings. As the volume begins with the rise of the exploring spirit, it is fitting that Prince Henry the Navigator should furnish the frontispiece. The bibliography deals more than those of later volumes with a literature which has been a tangled thicket, and will shorten the road for many teachers and students of these subjects. The significance of Professor Cheyney's volume is that, without describing America or narrating American events, it furnishes the necessary point of departure for a knowledge of American history. The first question to be asked by the reader is, why did people look westward? And the answer is, because of their desire to reach the Orient. The second question is, what was the impulse to new habits of life and what the desire for settlements in distant lands? The answer is, the effect of the Reformation in arousing men's minds and in bringing about wars which led to emigration. The third question is, what manner of people were they who furnished the explorers and the colonists? The answer is found in these pages, which describe the Spaniard, the French, the Dutch, and especially the English, and show us the national and local institutions which were ready to be transplanted, and which readily took root across the sea.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE The history of America is a branch of that of Eu-

rope.

The discovery, exploration, and settlement of the New World were results of European movements, and sprang from economic and political needs, development of enterprise, and increase of knowledge, in the Old World. The fifteenth century was a period of extension of geographical knowledge, of which the discovery of America was a part; the sixteenth century was a time of preparation, during which European events were taking place which were of the first importance to America, even though none of the colonies which were to make up the United States were yet in existence. From the time of the settlement forward, the only population of America that has counted in history has been of European origin. The institutions that characterize the New World are fundamentally those of Europe. People and institutions have been modified by the material conditions of America; and the process of emigration gave a new direction to the development of American history from the very beginning; but the origin of the people, of their institutions, and of their history was none the less a European one. The beginnings of American history are therefore to be found in European conditions at the time of the foundation of the colonies. Similar forces continued to exercise an influence in later times. The

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power and policy of home governments, successive waves of emigration, and numberless events in Europe had effects which were deeply felt in America. This influence of Europe upon America, however, became less and less as time passed on; and the development of the American nation has made its history constantly more independent. It is, therefore, only with some of the most important and earliest of these European occurrences and conditions that this book is occupied. The general relation of America to Europe is a subject that would require a vastly fuller treatment, and it is a subject which doubtless will increasingly receive the attention of scholars as our appreciation of the proper perspective of history becomes more clear. In so wide a field as that of this volume, it has been necessary to use secondary materials for many statements; their aid is acknowledged in the footnotes and in the bibliography. Other parts, so far as space limits allowed, I have been able to work out from original sources. For much valuable information, suggestion, and advice also, I am indebted to friends and fellow-workers, and here gladly make acknowledgment for such assistance.

EDWARD POTTS CHEYNEY.

EUROPEAN BACKGROUND OF AMERICAN HISTORY

CHAPTER I THE EAST AND THE WEST

(1200-1500)

To set forth the conditions in Europe which favored the work of discovering America and of exploring, colonizing, and establishing human institutions there, is the subject and task of this book. Its period extends from the beginning of those marked commercial, political, and intellectual changes of the fifteenth century which initiated a great series of geographical discoveries, to the close, in the later years of the seventeenth century, of the religious wars and persecutions which did so much to make that century an age of emigration from Europe. During those three hundred years few events in European history failed to exercise some influence upon the fortunes of America. The relations of the Old World to the New were then constructive and fundamental to a degree not true of earlier or of later times. Before the fifteenth century events were only distantly

preparing the way; after the seventeenth the centre of gravity of American history was transferred to America itself.

The crowding events, the prominent men, the creative thoughts, and the rapidly changing institutions which fill the history of western Europe during these three centuries cannot all be described in this single volume. It merely attempts to point out the leading motives for

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exploration and colonization, to show what was the equipment for discovery, and to describe the most significant of those political institutions of Europe which exercised an influence on forms of government in the colonies, thus sketching the main outlines of the European background of American history. Many political, economic, intellectual, and personal factors combined to make the opening of our modern era an age of geographical discovery. Yet among these many causes there was one which was so influential and persistent that it deserves to be singled out as the predominant incentive to exploration for almost two hundred years. This enduring motive was the desire to find new routes, from Europe to the far East.

Columbus sailed on his great voyage in 1492, "his object being to reach the Indies." [Footnote: Columbus's Journal, October 3, 21, 23, 24, etc Cf. Bourne, Spain in America, chap, 11] When he discovered the first land beyond the Atlantic, he came to the immediate conclusion that he had reached the coast of Asia, and identified first Cuba and then Hayti with Japan. A week after his first sight of land he Reports, "It is certain that this is the main-land and that I am in front of Zayton and Guinsay" [Footnote: Columbus's Journal, November 1] Even on his third voyage, in 1498, he is still of the opinion that South America is the main-land of Asia. [Footnote: Columbus's will] It was reported all through Europe that the Genoese captain had "discovered the coast of the Indies," and "found that way never before known to the East."

[Footnote: Ramusio, Raccolta de Navigazioni, I, 414] The name West Indies still remains as a testimony to the belief of the early explorers that they had found the Indies by sailing westward.

When John Cabot, in 1496, obtained permission from Henry VII. to equip an expedition for westward exploration, he hooped to reach "the island of Cipango" (Japan) and the lands from which Oriental caravans brought their goods to Alexandria. [Footnote: Letter of Soncino, 1497, in Hart, Contemporaries, I., 70.] It is true that he landed on the barren shore of Labrador, and that what he descried from his vessel as he sailed southward was only the wooded coast of North America; but it was reported, and for a while believed, that the king of England had in this manner "acquired a part of Asia without drawing his sword."

[Footnote: Ibid. Cf. Bourne. Spain in America, chap v.] In 1501 Caspar Cortereal, in the service of the king of Portugal, pressed farther into the ice-bound arctic waters on the same quest, and with his companions became the first in the dreary list of victims sacrificed to the long search for a northwest passage. [Footnote: HARRISSE, Les Cortereal]

When the second generation of explorers learned that the land that had been discovered beyond the sea was not Asia, their first feeling was not exultation that a new world had been discovered, but chagrin that a great barrier, stretching far to the north and the south, should thus interpose itself between Europe and the eastern goal on which their eyes were fixed. Every navigator who sailed along the coast of North or South America looked eagerly for some strait by which he might make his way through, and thus complete the journey to the Spice Islands, to

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China, Japan, India, and the other lands of the ancient East. [Footnote: Bourne, Spain in America, chap viii.] Verrazzano, in 1521, and Jacques Cartier, in 1534, 1535, and 1541, both in the service of the king of France, and Gomez, in the Spanish service, in 1521, were engaged in seeking this elusive passage. [Footnote: Pigeonneau, Histoire du Commerce de la France, II, 142-148.] For more than a hundred years the French traders and explorers along the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes were led farther and farther into the wilderness by hopes of finding some western outlet which would make it possible for them to reach Cathay and India. Englishmen, with greater persistence than Spaniards, Portuguese, or French, pursued the search for this northwestern route to India. To find such a passage became a dream and a constantly renewed effort of the navigators and merchants of the days of Queen Elizabeth; the search for it continued into the next century, even after colonies had been established in America itself; and a continuance of the quest was constantly impressed by the government and by popular opinion upon the merchants of the Hudson Bay Company, till the eighteenth century.

A tradition grew up that there was a passage through the continent somewhere near the fortieth parallel. It was in the search for this passage that Hudson was engaged, when, in the service of the Dutch government, in 1609, he made the famous voyage in the Half Moon and hit on the Hudson River; just as in his first voyage he had tried to reach the Indies by crossing the North Pole, and in his second by following a northeast route. [Footnote: Asher, Henry Hudson, the Navigator, cxcii. - cxcvi.] Much of the exploration of the coast of South America was made with the same purpose. To reach India was the deliberate object of Magellan when, in 1519 and 1520, he skirted the coast of that continent and made his way through the southern straits. The same objective point was intended in the "Molucca Voyage" of 1526-1530, under the command of Sebastian Cabot, [Footnote: Beazley, John and Sebastian Cabot, 152.] as well as in other South American voyages of Spanish explorers. Thus the search for a new route to the East lay at the back of many of those voyages of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which gradually made America familiar to Europe.

The same object was sought in explorations to the eastward. The earliest voyages of the Portuguese along the coast of Africa, it is true, had other motives; but the desire to reach India grew upon the navigators and the sovereigns of that nation, and from the accession of John II., in 1481, every nerve was strained to find a route to the far East. Within one twelvemonth, in the years 1486 and 1487, three expeditions left the coast of Portugal seeking access to the East. The first of these, under Bartholomew Diaz, discovered the Cape of Good Hope; the second was an embassy of Pedro de Cavailham and Affonso de Paiva through the eastern Mediterranean to seek Prester John, a search which carried one of them to the west coast of India, the other to the east coast of Africa; the third was an exploring expedition to the northeast, which reached, for the first time, the islands of Nova

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Zembla. [Footnote: Beazley, Henry the Navigator.] The Portuguese ambition was finally crowned with success in the exploit of Vasco da Gama in reaching the coast of India by way of the southern point of Africa, in 1498; the Spanish expedition under Magellan reached the same lands by the westward route twenty years afterwards. Even after these successes, efforts continued to be made to reach China and the Indies by a northeast passage around the northern coast of Europe. Successive

expeditions of Portuguese, English, French, and Dutch were sent out only to meet invariable failure in those icy seas, until the terrible hardships the explorers endured gradually brought conviction of the impracticability of this, as of the northwestern, route. What was the origin of this eagerness to reach the Indies? Why did Portuguese, Spaniards, English, French, and Dutch vie with one another in centuries of effort not only to discover new lands, but to seek these sea-routes to the oldest of all lands? Why were the old lines of intercourse between the East and the West almost deserted, and a new group of maritime nations superseding the old Mediterranean and mid-European trading peoples? The answer to these questions will be found in certain changes which were in progress in those lands east of the Mediterranean Sea, which lie on the border-line between Europe and Asia. Through this region trade between Europe and the far East had flowed from immemorial antiquity; but in the fifteenth century its channels were obstructed and its stream much diminished.

Mediaeval Europe was dependent for her luxuries on Asia Minor and Syria, Arabia and Persia, India and the Spice Islands, China and Japan. Precious stones and fabrics, dyes and perfumes, drugs and medicaments, woods, gums, and spices reached Europe by many devious and obscure routes, but all from the eastward. One of the chief luxuries of the Middle Ages was the edible spices. The monotonous diet, the coarse food, the unskillful cookery of mediaeval Europe had all their deficiencies covered by a charitable mantle of Oriental seasoning. Wines and ale were constantly used spiced with various condiments. In Sir Thopas's forest grew "notemuge to putte in ale." [Footnote: Chaucer, *Sir Thopas*, line 52.] The brewster in the *Vision of Piers Plowman* declares:

"I have good ale, gossip, Glutton wilt thou essay? 'What hast thou,' quoth he, 'any hot spices?' I have pepper and peony and a pound of garlic, A farthing-worth of fennel seed for fasting days" [Footnote: Text C, *passus VII*, lines 355, etc.]

Froissart has the king's guests led to "the palace, where wine and spices were set before them." [Footnote: Froissart, *Chronicles*, book II, chap lxxx] The dowry of a Marseilles girl, in 1224, makes mention of "mace, ginger, cardamoms, and galangale." [Footnote: Quoted in Beazley, *Dawn of Modern Geography*, II, 433, n.] In the garden in the *Romaunt of the Rose*, "Ther was eek wexing many a spyce, As clow-gelofre, and licoryce, Gingere, and greyn de paradys, Canelle, and setewale of prys, And many a spyce delitable, To eten when men ryse fro

13 table." [Footnote: Chaucer (Skeat's ed), lines 1367-1373.]

When John Ball wished to draw a contrast between the lot of the lords and the peasants, he said, "They have wines, spices, and fine bread, when we have only rye and the refuse of the straw." [Footnote: Froissart, *Chronicles*, book II, chap lxxiii.] When old Latimer was being bound to the stake he handed nutmegs to his friends as keepsakes. [Footnote: Froude, *History of England*.]

Pepper, the most common and at the same time the most valued of these spices, was frequently treated as a gift of honor from one sovereign to another, or as a courteous form of payment instead of money. "Matilda de Chaucer is in the gift of the king, and her land is worth 8 pounds, 2d, and 1 pound of pepper and 1 pound of cinnamon and 1 ounce of silk," reads a chance record in an old English survey. [Footnote: *Festa de Nevil*, p 16.] The amount of these spices demanded and consumed was astonishing. Venetian galleys, Genoese carracks, and other vessels on

the Mediterranean brought many a cargo of them westward, and they were sold in fairs and markets everywhere. "Pepper-sack" was a derisive and yet not unappreciative epithet applied by German robber-barons to the merchants whom they plundered as they passed down the Rhine. For years the Venetians had a contract to buy from the sultan of Egypt annually 420,000 pounds of pepper. One of the first vessels to make its way to India brought home 210,000 pounds. A fine of 200,000 pounds of pepper was imposed upon one petty prince of India by the Portuguese in 1520. In romances and chronicles, in cook-books, trades-lists, and customs-tariffs, spices are mentioned with a frequency and consideration unknown in modern times.

Yet the location of "the isles where the spices grow" was very distant and obscure to the men of the Middle Ages. John Cabot, in 1497, said that he "was once at Mecca, whither the spices are brought by caravans from distant countries, and having inquired from whence they were brought and where they grew, the merchants answered that they did not know, but that such merchandise was brought from distant countries by other caravans to their home; and they further say that they are also conveyed from other remote regions." [Footnote: Letter of Soncino, in Hart, *Contemporaries*, I., 70.] Such lack of knowledge was pardonable, considering that Marco Polo, one of the most observant of travellers, after spending years in Asia, believed, mistakenly, that nutmegs and cloves were produced in Java. [Footnote: Marco Polo (Yule's ed.), book III., chap. vi., 217, n.] It was only after more direct intercourse was opened up with the East that their true place of production became familiarly known in Europe. Nutmegs and mace, cloves and allspice were the native products of but one little spot on the earth's surface: a group of small islands, Banda, Amboyna, Ternate, Tidore, Pulaway, and Prelaroon, the southernmost of the Moluccas, or Spice Islands, just under the equator, in the midst of the Malay Archipelago. Their light, volcanic soil, kept moist by the constant damp winds and hot by the beams of an overhead sun, furnished the natural conditions in which the

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spice-trees grew. Here the handsome shrubs that yield the nutmeg and its covering of mace produced a continuous crop of flowers and fruit all the year around. Cloves grew in the same islands, as clusters of scarlet buds, hanging at the ends of the branches of trees which rise to a greater height and grow with even a greater luxuriance than the nutmeg-bushes. [Footnote: Wallace, *The Malay Archipelago*, chap. xix.] Pepper had scarcely a wider field of production. The forests that clothed a stretch of the Malabar coast of India some two hundred miles in length, and extending some miles back into the interior, were filled with an abundant growth of pepper-vines. One of the earliest of European travellers in India, Odoric de Pordenone, says: "The province where pepper grows is named Malabar, and in no other part of the world does pepper grow except in this country. The forest where it grows is about eighteen days in length." [Footnote: Odoric de Pordenone (D'Avezac's ed), chap. x.] John Marignolli, in 1348, also speaks of this district as "where the world's pepper is produced." [Footnote: Quoted in Marco Polo (Yule's ed), II., 314, n., and Sir John Mandeville, chap. xviii.] Its habitat was, however, somewhat more extensive, for in less abundance and of inferior quality the pepper-vines were raised all the way south to Cape Comorin, and even in the islands of Ceylon and Sumatra.

Cinnamon-bark was the special product of the mountain-slopes in the interior of Ceylon, but this also grew on the Indian coast to the

westward, [Footnote: Marco Polo (Yule's ed), book III, chaps, xiv., xxv.] and, in the form of cassia of several varieties, was obtained in Thibet, in the interior provinces of China, and in some of the islands of the Malay Archipelago. Ginger was produced in many parts of the East; in Arabia, India, and China. Odoric attributes to a certain part of India "the best ginger that can be found in the world" [Footnote: Odoric de Pordenone (D'Avezac's ed), chap. x.] and Marco Polo records its production of good quality in many provinces of India and China. [Footnote: Marco Polo (Yule's ed), book II, chap. lxxx., book III., chaps, xxii., xxiv., xxv, xxvi.] A great number of other kinds of spices were produced in various parts of the Orient, and consumed there or exported to Europe. Precious stones were of almost as much interest to the men of the Middle Ages as were spices. For personal ornament and for the enrichment of shrines and religious vestments, all kinds of beautiful stones exercised an attraction proportioned to the small number and variety of articles of beauty and taste in existence. "No saphir ind, no rube riche of price, There lacked than, nor emeraud so grene." [Footnote: Chaucer, Court of Love, lines 78, 79.] These were as much characteristic products of the East as were spices. Diamonds, before the discovery of the American and African fields of production, were found only in certain districts in the central part of India, especially in the kingdom of Mutfli or Golconda. Marco Polo tells the same story of the method of getting them there that is

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reported by Sindbad the Sailor. [Footnote: Marco Polo (Yule's ed), book III., chap, xix.; Arabian Nights.] Rubies, the next most admired stone of the Middle Ages, were also found, to some extent, in India, but more largely in the island of Ceylon, in farther India, and, above all, in the districts of Kerman, Khorassan, Badakshan, and other parts of the highlands of Persia along the Oxus and Jaxartes rivers. [Footnote: Heyd, Geschichte des Levantehandels, II., App., I.] Sapphires, garnets, topaz, amethyst, and sardonyx were found in several of the same districts and also in the mountains and streams of the west coast of India, from the Gulf of Cambay all the way to Ceylon. The greatest markets in the world for these stones were the two Indian cities of Pulicat and Calicut; the former on the southeastern, the latter on the western shore of the great peninsula. Pearls were then, as now, produced only in a very few places, principally in the strait between Ceylon and the mainland of India, and in certain parts of the Persian Gulf. In the native states in the south of India they were, however, accumulated in enormous quantities, and scarcely a list of Eastern articles of merchandise omits mention of them. One of the early European expeditions brought home among its freight 400 pearls chosen for their size and beauty, and forty pounds of an inferior sort. The passion of the native rajahs of India for gems had made the treasury of every petty prince a storehouse where vast numbers of precious stones had been garnered through thousands of years of wealth and civilization. This mass served as the booty of successive conquerors, and from time to time portions of it came into the hands of traders, along with stones newly obtained from natural sources. An early chronicler, in describing the return of the Polos to Venice from the East, tells how, from the seams of their garments, they took out the profits of their journeys in the East, in the form of "rubies, sapphires, carbuncles, diamonds, and emeralds." [Footnote: Ramusio, Raccolta, quoted in Marco Polo (Yule's ed.), book I., chap, xxxvii.] Drugs, perfumes, gums, dyes, and fragrant woods had much the same

attraction as spices and precious stones, and came from much the same lands. The lofty and beautiful trees from which camphor is obtained grew only in Sumatra, Borneo, and certain provinces of China and Japan. Medicinal rhubarb was native to the mountainous districts of China, whence it was brought to the cities and the coast of that country on the backs of mules. Musk was a product of the borderlands of China and Thibet. The sugar-cane, although it grew widely in the East, from India and China to Syria and Asia Minor, was successfully managed so as to produce sugar in quantities that could be exported only in certain parts of Arabia and Persia. Bagdad was long famous for its sugar and articles preserved in sugar. Indigo was grown and prepared for dyeing purposes in India. [Footnote: Heyd, *Geschichte des Levantehandels*, II., App., I.] Brazil wood grew more or less abundantly in all parts of the peninsula of India and as far east as Siam and southern China. This wood, from which was extracted a highly valued dye, made a particularly strong impression on the mediaeval imagination. European travellers in India gave accounts of its being burned there for firewood, as their strangest tale of luxury and waste. It gave its name to a mythical

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island of Bresil, in the western seas, which was the subject of much speculation and romance. The same name was eventually applied to the South American country that now bears it, because it produced a similar dye-wood in large quantities. Sandal-wood and aloe-wood, which were valuable for their beautiful surface and fragrance when used in cabinet-work, and for their pleasant odor when burned as incense, grew only in certain parts of India.

Many articles of manufacture, attractive for their material, their workmanship, or their design, came from the same Eastern lands. Glass, of superior workmanship to anything known in Europe, came from Damascus, Samarcand, and Kadesia, near Bagdad. Objects of fine porcelain came from China, and finally became known by the name of that country. A great variety of fabrics of silk and cotton, as well as those fibres in their raw state, came from Asia to Europe. Dozens of names of Eastern origin still remain to describe the silk, cotton, hair, and mixed fabrics which came to Europe from China, India, Cashmere, and the cities of Persia, Arabia, Syria, and Asia Minor. Brocade, damask, taffeta, sendal, satin, camelot, buckram, muslin, and many varieties of carpets, rugs, and hangings, which were woven in various parts of those lands, have always since retained the names of the places which early became famous for their manufacture. The metal-work of the East was scarcely less characteristic or less highly valued in the West, though its varieties have not left such specific names.

[Footnote: Heyd, *Geschichte des Levantehandels*, II., App., 543-699.]

Europe could feed herself with unspiced food, she could clothe herself with plain clothing, but for luxuries, adornments, refinements, whether in food, in personal ornament, or in furnishing her palaces, her manor-houses, her churches, or her wealthy merchants' dwellings, she must, in the fifteenth century, still look to Asia, as she had always done. It is true that in the later Middle Ages many articles of beauty and ornament were produced in the more advanced Western countries; but not spices nor drugs, nor precious stones, nor any great variety of dyes. Oriental rugs are even yet superior to any like productions of the West; and a vast number of other articles of Eastern origin then held, and indeed still hold, the markets.

In return for the goods which Europe brought from Asia a few commodities could be shipped eastward. European woollen fabrics seem to

have been almost as much valued in certain countries of Asia as Eastern cotton and silk goods were in Italy, France, Germany, and England. Certain Western metals and minerals were highly valued in the East, especially arsenic, antimony, quicksilver, tin, copper, and lead.

[Footnote: Birdwood, Hand-book to the Indian Collection (Paris Universal Exhibition, 1878), Appendix to catalogue of the British Colonies, pp. 1-110.] The coral of the Mediterranean was much admired and sought after in Persia and India, and even in countries still farther east. Nevertheless the balance of trade was permanently in favor of the East, and quantities of gold and silver coin and bullion were used by European merchants to buy the finer wares in Asiatic

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markets. There was much general trading in Eastern marts. Numbers of Oriental merchants, like Sindbad the Sailor and his company, "passed by island after island and from sea to sea and from land to land; and in every place by which we passed we sold and bought and exchanged merchandise." The articles enumerated above were almost without exception in demand throughout the whole East, and were bought by merchants in one place and sold in another. Marco Polo, in describing the Chinese city of Zayton, says: "And I assure you that for one shipload of pepper that goes to Alexandria or elsewhere destined for Christendom, there come a hundred such, aye and more too, to this haven of Zayton." [Footnote: Marco Polo (Yule's ed), book II., chap. lxxxii] Even as late as 1515, Giovanni D'Empoli, writing about China, says: "Ships carry spices thither from these parts. Every year there go thither from Sumatra 60,000 cantars of pepper and 15,000 or 20,000 from Cochin and Malabar—besides ginger, mace, nutmegs, incense, aloes, velvet, European gold-wire, coral, woollens, etc." [Footnote: Quoted in *ibid*, book II., 188.] Nevertheless the attraction of the West was clearly felt in the East. Extensive as were the local purchase and sale of articles of luxury and use by merchants throughout India, Persia, Arabia, Central Asia, and China, yet the export of goods from those countries to the westward was a form of trade of great importance, and one which had its roots deep in antiquity. A story of the early days tells how the jealous brothers of Joseph, when they were considering what disposition to make of him, "lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a travelling company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt." [Footnote: Genesis, xxxvii. 25.] When the prophet cries, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with garments dyed red from Bozrah?" he is using two of the most familiar names on the lines of west Asiatic trade. Solomon gave proof of his wisdom and made his kingdom great by seizing the lines of the trade-routes from Tadmor in the desert and Damascus in the north to the upper waters of the Red Sea on the south. The "royal road" of the Persian kings from Sousa to Ephesus made a long detour through northern Asia Minor, which was inexplicable to modern archaeologists until it was perceived that it was following the line of a trade-route much more ancient than the Persian monarchy. [Footnote: Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor*, chap. i.] The harbor of Berenice, named after the mother of Ptolemy Philadelphus, was built by him as a place of transit for goods from India which were to be carried from the Red Sea to the Nile. [Footnote: Hunter, *Hist. of British India*, I., 40.] Roman roads followed ancient lines through Asia Minor and Syria, and medieval routes in turn, in many places, passed by the remains of Roman stations. Thus the East and the West had been drawn together by a

mutual commercial attraction from the earliest times, an attraction based on the respective natural productions of the two continents, and favored by the vast superiority of the East in the creation of articles of beauty and usefulness.

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CHAPTER II

ORIENTAL AND OCCIDENTAL TRADE-ROUTES (1200-1500)

In the fifteenth century Eastern goods regularly reached the West by one of three general routes through Asia. Each of these had, of course, its ramifications and divergences; they were like three river-systems, changing their courses from time to time and occasionally running in divided streams, but never ceasing to follow the general course marked out for them by great physical features. The southernmost of these three routes was distinguished by being a sea-route in all except its very latest stages. Chinese and Japanese junks and Malaysian proas gathered goods from the coasts of China and Japan and the islands of the great Malay Archipelago, and bought and sold along the shores of the China Sea till their westward voyages brought them into the straits of Malacca and they reached the ancient city of that name. This was one of the great trading points of the East. Few Chinese traders passed beyond it, though the more enterprising Malays made that the centre rather than the western limit of their commerce. Many Arabian traders also came there from India to sell their goods and to buy the products of the islands of the archipelago, and the goods which the Chinese traders had brought from still farther East.

The Indian and Arabian merchants who came to Malacca as buyers were mostly from Calicut and other ports on the Malabar coast, and to these home ports they brought back their purchases. To these markets of southwestern India were also brought the products of Ceylon, of the eastern coast, and of the shore of farther India. From port to port along the Malabar coast passed many coasting vessels, whose northern and western limit was usually the port of Ormuz at the entrance to the Persian Gulf. A great highway of commerce stretched from this trading and producing region, and from the Malabar ports directly across the Arabian Sea to the entrance of the Red Sea. When these waters were reached, many ports of debarkation from Mecca northward might be used. But the prevailing north winds made navigation in the Red Sea difficult, and most of the goods which eventually reached Europe by this route were landed on the western coast, to be carried by caravan—to Kus, in Egypt, and then either by caravans or in boats down the line of the Nile to Cairo.

Cairo was a very great city, its population being occupied largely in the transmission of goods. A fifteenth-century traveller counted 15,000 boats in the Nile at one time; [Footnote: Piloti, quoted in Heyd, *Geschichte des Levantehandels*, II., 43.] and another learned that there were in all some 36,000 boats belonging in Cairo engaged in traffic up and down the river. [Footnote: Ibn Batuta, quoted, *ibid.*] From Cairo a great part of these goods were taken for sale to Alexandria, which was in many ways as much a European as an African city. Thus a regular

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route stretched along the southern coasts of Asia, allowing goods produced in all lands of the Orient to be gathered up in the course of trade and transferred as regular articles of commerce to the southeastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

A second route lay in latitudes to the north of that just described.

From the ports on the west coast of India a considerable proportion of the goods destined ultimately for Europe made their way northward to the Persian Gulf. A line of trading cities extending along its shores from Ormuz near the mouth of the gulf to Bassorah at its head served as ports of call for the vessels which carried this merchandise. Several of these coast cities were also termini of caravan routes entering them from the eastward, forming a net-work which united the various provinces of Persia and reached through the passes of Afghanistan into northern India. From the head of the Persian Gulf one branch of this route went up the line of the Tigris to Bagdad. From this point goods were taken by caravan through Kurdistan to Tabriz, the great northern capital of Persia, and thence westward either to the Black Sea or to Layas on the Mediterranean. Another branch was followed by the trains of camels which made their way from Bassorah along the tracks through the desert which spread like a fan to the westward, till they reached the Syrian cities of Aleppo, Antioch, and Damascus. They finally reached the Mediterranean coast at Laodicea, Tripoli, Beirut, or Jaffa, while some goods were carried even as far south as Alexandria. Far to the north of this complex of lines of trade lay a third route between the far East and the West, extending from the inland provinces of China westward across the great desert of Obi, south of the Celestial mountains to Lake Lop; then passing through a series of ancient cities, Khotan, Yarkand, Kashgar, Samarcand, and Bokhara, till it finally reached the region of the Caspian Sea. This main northern route was joined by others which crossed the passes of the Himalayas and the Hindoo-Kush, and brought into a united stream the products of India and China. [Footnote: Hunter, Hist. of British India, I., 31.] A journey of eighty to a hundred days over desert, mountain, and steppes lay by this route between the Chinese wall and the Caspian. From still farther north in China a parallel road to this passed to the north of the desert and the mountains, and by way of Lake Balkash, to the same ancient and populous land lying to the east of the Caspian Sea. Here the caravan routes again divided. Some led to the southwestward, where they united with the more central routes described above and eventually reached the Black Sea and the Mediterranean through Asia Minor and Syria. Others passed by land around the northern coast of the Caspian, or crossed it, reaching a further stage at Astrakhan. From Astrakhan the way led on by the Volga and Don rivers, till its terminus was at last reached on the Black Sea at Tana near the mouth of the Don, or at Kaffa in the Crimea. [Footnote: Heyd, Geschichte des Levantehandels, II., 68-254.]

Along these devious and dangerous routes, by junks, by strange Oriental
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craft, by river-boats, by caravans of camels, trains of mules, in wagons, on horses, or on human shoulders, the products of the East were brought within reach of the merchants of the West. These routes were insecure, the transportation over them difficult and expensive. They led over mountains and deserts, through alternate snow and heat. Mongol conquerors destroyed, from time to time, the cities which lay along the lines of trade, and ungoverned wild tribes plundered the merchants who passed through the regions through which they wandered. More regularly constituted powers laid heavy contributions on merchandise, increasing many-fold the price at which it must ultimately be sold. The routes by sea had many of the same dangers, along with others peculiar to themselves. The storms of the Indian Ocean and its adjacent waters were destructive to vast numbers of the frail vessels of the East; piracy

vied with storms in its destructiveness; and port dues were still higher than those of inland marts.

With all these impediments, Eastern products, nevertheless, arrived at the Mediterranean in considerable quantities. The demands of the wealthy classes of Europe and the enterprise of European and Asiatic merchants were vigorous enough to bring about a large and even an increasing trade; and the three routes along which the products of the East were brought to those who were able to pay for them were never, during the Middle Ages, entirely closed. They found their western termini in a long line of Levantine cities extending along the shores of the Black Sea and of the eastern Mediterranean from Tana in the north to Alexandria in the south. In these cities the spices, drugs, dyes, perfumes, precious stones, silks, rugs, metal goods, and other fabrics and materials produced in far Eastern lands were always obtainable by European merchants.

The merchants who bought these goods in the market-places of the Levant for the purpose of distributing them throughout Europe were for the most part Italians from Pisa, Venice, or Genoa; Spaniards from Barcelona and Valencia; or Provençals from Narbonne, Marseilles, and Montpellier. [Footnote: Beazley, *Dawn of Modern Geography*, II., chap. vi.] They were not merely travelling buyers and sellers, but in many cases were permanent residents of the eastern Mediterranean lands. In the first half of the fifteenth century there were settlements of such merchants in Alexandria in Egypt; in Acre, Beirut, Tripoli, and Laodicea on the Syrian coast; at Constantinople, and in a group of cities skirting the Black Sea. Even in the more inland cities of Syria, such as Damascus, Aleppo, and Antioch, Italians were established. [Footnote: Heyd, *Geschichte des Levantehandels*, II., 67.] The position of European merchants varied in the different cities on this trading border between the East and the West, from that of mere foreign traders, living on bare sufferance in the midst of a hostile community, to that of citizens occupying what was practically an outlying Venetian or Genoese or Pisan colony.

In the greater number of cases the Italian and other European merchants

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had quarters, or *fondachi*, granted to them in the Eastern cities by the Saracen emirs of Egypt and Syria, or by the Greek emperor of Asia Minor, Constantinople, and Trebizond. These *fondachi* were buildings, or groups of dwellings and warehouses, often including a market-place, offices, and church, where the merchants of some Italian or Provençal city carried on their business affairs according to their own rules, under permission granted to them by the local ruler. A Genoese or Venetian *fondaco* was usually governed by a consul or bailiff, appointed by the home government, or elected among themselves with the approval of the senate and doge at home. Two or more advisers were usually provided by the home government to act with the consul in negotiations with the local government. In more important matters embassies were sent directly from the doge to the ruler on whose toleration or self-interest the whole settlement was dependent.

For whole centuries Italians had made up an appreciable part of the population of many cities of the Levant; the galleys of Venice, Genoa, and Pisa lay at their wharves discharging produce of the West and loading the products of the East; a large part of the income of the local potentates, or governors, was made up of export and import duties, harbor charges, and other impositions paid by the Western

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