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DOWNLAND MAN

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IN PRAISE OF ENGLAND

UNTRODDEN WAYS

SOME BIRDS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE

H. W. M.

LETTERS TO X

PEOPLE AND THINGS

A TREASURY OF SEVENTEENTH CENTURY VERSE

ETC., ETC.



THE STONES OF AVEBURY.
(From Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*.)

DOWNLAND MAN

by

H. J. MASSINGHAM



With an Introduction by
Professor G. Elliot Smith

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TO
MY DEAR PARTNER
IN THIS BOOK

OZYMANDIAS

'I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said : Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed :
And on the pedestal these words appear :
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings :
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.'

P. B. SHELLEY

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PREFACE

EVER since the study of megalithic monuments began, observers have remarked their general uniformity in every country settled by the megalith-builders. But no accepted opinion prevailed as to the source or date of these monuments. To-day has arisen a school that tends to attribute the megalithic cult to an indigenous evolution common to Western Europe. This school holds the citadel of scholarship, while the obvious intercommunication between the megalithic countries and the East is explained away by the hypothesis of trading relations between them.

But since the War a new school of cultural anthropology has come into being, headed by Rivers who is dead, and by Dr. Elliot Smith and Mr. W. J. Perry, of London University. This school, as is now well known, derives the whole of the megalithic culture, from the British Isles to Mexico, either directly or indirectly from Egypt. To prove its case, it has collected a vast array of data which must have been accepted as final but for the prevalence of Neo-Darwinian views¹ about the history of man. Since the megalithic cult was of practically world-wide distribution, certain megalithic districts of the world have unavoidably escaped intensive study. Mr. Perry's investigations have been mainly concerned with the Pacific and the Far East, and England still remains largely an incult territory to this new historical method of research. It has, thanks to the generosity of Mr. Perry, fallen to my privilege to attempt to fill in this lacuna. From many joint consultations, travels over England and interchange of home with foreign evidence, has been born a new interpretation which I am about to place before the reader.

This book is divided into three parts. The first gives

¹ By 'Neo-Darwinian' I mean the false implications of evolution foisted upon the teaching of Darwin by men like Adolf Bastian, and adopted by modern ethnologists.

P R E F A C E

a general view of what is called the 'Neolithic' period in England as centred in Avebury, its seat of government. It goes on to describe the civilization of Avebury as a coherent whole, traces its foreign origin in detail, summarizes the leading principles of its thought and relates it to its successor of the 'Bronze Age,' and both of them again to the original East-to-West movements that were responsible for them. The second part examines the life of this archaic civilization as testified by certain of its works in England, sketches their Eastern inspiration and the degeneration which becomes much more marked with the arrival of later peoples. The third and last part is chiefly devoted to the aftermath of degeneration, artistic, political and psychological, and tries to find out what degeneration really means, what were the social causes that produced it, and how it affected human welfare. Here again the conditions both of England and the East and of both primitive and modern man are reviewed. The story closes with the case against the misapplication of biological theories of evolution to the development of human society, and with the suggestion that the study of early civilization gives us ground for revaluing our own social institutions and for seeing them in a clearer perspective.

I should make the meaning of my words the case against the 'evolutionary' position more explicit. In the book he published last year, *Concerning Evolution*, Professor Arthur Thomson outlined 'four great ideas' as organic to the term 'Darwinism' – the interlinkage of living organisms in the web of life, the struggle for existence between organisms whether as species or individuals and against their respective environments, variability or the occurrence of fortuitous and minute fluctuations or novelties in the structure of organisms, and natural selection or 'the sifting of the new departures that living creatures show, the winnowing of their experiments.' By the case against the 'evolutionary' position, I do

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not of course mean that the early history of civilization contradicts what should be regarded as the twin essentials of the Darwinian canon – the organic relationship of all life and its descent from simpler and more generalized forms. Since, by the argument of the historical method, civilization had a common origin, the factors of descent and relationship are stressed rather than obscured. But I do dispute the application to man in his achievement of civilization of the two lesser canons of biological evolution, chance variations and survival by struggle, or the weeding out of the 'unfit.' Professor Thomson attempts to soften their despairfulness by pointing out, and justly, that the struggle for existence includes every kind of response in the living creature to its conditions. But he cannot obliterate the common interpretation of the Neo-Darwinian process as one of advances made through the media of accident and violence. These minor canons, borrowed illegitimately from biology, have been misapplied by ethnologists to account for the origins and progresses of civilization, and it is their validity that I dispute throughout. The misapplication of these principles to human society I have summed up in the course of the narrative by the term 'Neo-Darwinism,' which is used by Mr. Bernard Shaw in his Preface to *Back to Methuselah*, and they do, as Samuel Butler said before him, knock the bottom out of the universe. If any analogy can be made between biological and sociological processes, the growth and decline of civilized societies is in its essence Lamarckian. My full meaning will appear more clearly as we advance into the narrative. All I need say here is that if this theory can prove its case, the mere assumption, almost universally believed because it is repeated over and over again, that civilization was the product of accident, violence and savagery, will go the way of the Ptolemaic system in astronomy.

In a book so long, and in an argument intricate by its

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nature and continuous in its purpose, external aids to definition and lucidity are not to be despised. I have accordingly divided and subdivided the book into as many sections as it would stand. The need to relate the story of megalithic England both to modern civilization and to human life, to look before and after, to show that this wonderful story, as it is by its own nature, has a definite meaning for us to-day, makes still larger demands upon a lucid and ordered treatment. In the attempt to respond I have sometimes repeated the central issues. At the same time, I have not hesitated to lie down more than once in the shade from the heat and burden of the long journey. That journey has taken me by necessity over a wide and varied country, and often far beyond the borders of England in space and of the megalithic ages in time. Thus, though the story is meant to be consecutive, it is in no sense set down as a formal historical treatise. For that I have no qualifications whatever. Distance and romance also combine to make a fairy-tale of it, and I have tried to keep the proportion between these and reality. The advance of the narrative reveals more and more clearly that what lies behind the story of the first civilization of England not merely undermines the social philosophy of ethnological 'evolution,' which is largely the religion of the modern State, but outlines a different and what I believe to be a truer and a sounder one which may some day effect a complete revaluation of ideas concerning the welfare of society.

It is impossible to express how much this book owes to Mr. W. J. Perry of London University. The specific debts are acknowledged in various portions of the text. But I owe him something larger than a formal recognition of all the help he has given me. His door has always been open to me, and in stimulus, criticism and sympathy he has been my friend of friends. There are three other acknowledgments I must make. One is to Mr. Forde, also of London Uni-

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versity, for drawing the maps and certain geographical suggestions. Mr. Cox of the London Library I have to thank for checking my list of authorities. Lastly, I am very grateful to Mrs. Ethel Candy, who typed the manuscript under difficulties that might well have driven a less patient and accomplished decipherer to despair. To my partner in this book I need offer no thanks.

H. J. M.

INTRODUCTION

BY

G. ELLIOT SMITH

THE distinctive temper and achievements of the English people cannot be explained merely by considerations of race and geographical environment. A happy blending of the best racial stocks certainly conferred inborn aptitudes unsurpassed by any other community. The insular position of Britain enabled its inhabitants to share the benefits of European culture without sacrificing their individuality or hampering their freedom to give expression to their own feelings and inclinations.

Without attempting to minimize the tremendous significance of these factors they are, after all, only the predisposing circumstances for the performance of great deeds, rather than the reason why such inborn aptitudes and opportunities found expression in certain definite ways. The true explanation of the distinctive qualities and achievements of the English is to be found only by the study of the history of the events that provided them with the stimulus and guided their course of action to take advantage of their great birth-right. The calm and dispassionate consideration of the historical evidence, not merely such as relates to Britain itself, but in particular also to those peoples beyond the seas whose influence inspired and shaped the nascent culture of England, is clearly the process essential for a correct understanding of the achievements of the English people.

The essential features of English civilization were determined long before the Romans crossed the Straits of Dover; and not even the power of Rome was able to delete its distinctive qualities or force it into conformity with her stereotyped forms and regulations. To interpret the real spirit of England it is necessary to discover how its culture came into being. The adventurous immigrants who brought

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the germs of civilization to Britain were impelled by certain definite motives, which determined the places chosen for settlement and the behaviour of each community. These influences shaped the civilization of England for all time. Hence it becomes a matter of fundamental importance to devote particular attention to the achievements of the people who lived during this early period, usually distinguished by the misleading word 'neolithic.' That this has not hitherto been done in a satisfactory way is due to several reasons, but in particular to the state of confusion introduced into this field of study more than fifty years ago, which Mr. Massingham is attempting to clear away in this book, as illuminating as it is iconoclastic.

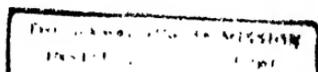
The use of the technical term 'neolithic,' introduced by Sir John Lubbock (afterwards Lord Avebury) in 1865, for the phase of culture immediately before the known use of metals in Britain and Western Europe involved a twofold confusion in chronology that has distorted the whole perspective of history. In the first place, writers tacitly assumed that the age of polished stone implements was vastly older than the evidence warrants. Secondly, they ignored the fact that in the Ancient East metals had been in use for many centuries, perhaps for a millennium or as much as two or more millennia, before the neolithic period began in England. Hence a point of fundamental importance was overlooked. For the polished stone implements, the most distinctive feature of the neolithic culture (which in fact suggested that label), were originally merely imitations in stone of the tools cast in copper by the Egyptians. The neglect of these considerations was responsible for inverting the proper sequence of many events in the early history of Western Europe, and thereby destroyed for the time the possibility of explaining their mode of origin and development. In addition it left out of account the vital considera-

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tion that a high state of civilization was flourishing in the Eastern Mediterranean for many centuries before the neolithic period began in the west. Hence the clear evidence for the derivation of the latter from the former was ignored.

But there was a more potent factor at work (than even this confusion in chronology and cultural sequence) to obscure the real issues involved in the discussion of the origin of civilization in England. In 1871 was published Sir Edward Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, a book that has dominated anthropological doctrine ever since. Sir Edward's wide knowledge and exceptional gifts of luminous exposition were responsible for making his book a potent instrument in shaping opinions in the new and plastic subject of ethnology. In this he was so successful that his views acquired something of the influence of dogmas; and ever since they have hampered independent thought and judgment on the part of his disciples.

The book itself is a document of peculiar psychological interest. It expounds views in flagrant conflict with the claims for the diffusion of culture set forth by its author six years previously (*Researches into the Early History of Mankind*, 1865). Yet much of this antagonism is unwittingly retained in the later work, which was intended to expound the hypothesis of the independent development, rather than the diffusion, of culture. The learned author himself discusses (*Primitive Culture*, 1871, Vol. I, pp. 378 and 379), with characteristic frankness, the curious phenomenon that ethnologists enunciating certain views often cite evidence stultifying their own opinions. After giving specific illustrations of this neglect of logical consistency he makes this interesting comment: 'such cases show how deceptive are judgments to which breadth and generality are given by the use of wide words in narrow senses.' I have referred to this as a curious phenomenon because the book in which it



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appears is itself the most conspicuous example of precisely the type of irrelevance and inconsequence Sir Edward Tylor was justly attacking. These grave defects in the work of the leader of ethnology have been responsible for more confusion in humanitarian studies during the last fifty years than perhaps any other book. The matter is of such fundamental importance that it is essential to exorcise the vices of such false dialectic as definitely as possible. Sir Edward himself impresses this obligation upon us in these words: 'it is a harsher, and at times even painful, office of ethnography to expose the remains of crude old culture which have passed into harmful superstitions, and to mark these out for destruction.' 'Yet this work, if less genial, is not less urgently needful for the good of mankind' (Vol. II, p. 410).

The dominant theme in *Primitive Culture* is the strange speculation of 'animism,' the claim that in a certain phase of their development mankind was impelled by some innate impulse to attribute life and soul to the inanimate things around him. Such a speculation comes into definite conflict with the historical method of interpretation, which implies continuity and the diffusion of culture. Yet Sir Edward quotes with approval Comte's statement that 'no conception can be understood except through its history.' But he goes much further than this in his scathing exposure of what he calls 'the elaborate sophistry' of those who neglect the historical method. 'To ingenious attempts at explaining by the light of reason things which want the light of history to show their meaning, much of the learned nonsense of the world has indeed been due.' He cites a number of specific illustrations of such tendencies on the part of his contemporaries and adds: 'such are the risks that philosophers run in detaching any phenomenon of civilization from its hold on past events, to be simply disposed of by a guess at some plausible explanation (*op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 18 and 19).

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It would be difficult to find a more glaring instance of the process of 'detaching a phenomenon of civilization from its hold on past events' than Tylor's own theory of animism, which is the merest 'guess at some plausible explanation' in flagrant defiance of the known facts. But I have considered the book *Primitive Culture* at such length because it has done infinite harm by making this game of plausible guessing the fashionable method in ethnology, as the result of which countless 'pages of elaborate sophistry' have been, and are still being, published. His most famous disciple, Sir James Frazer, took perhaps the worst of his master's fallacies as the text of *The Golden Bough*. By the literary charm of his style and the richness of his references to classical and more recent literature he has given a new lease of life to what Sir Edward Tylor had in mind (the neglect of the historical method) when he coined the phrase 'learned nonsense' (*loc. cit.*, p. 18).

Tylor seems to have been led into such misleading extravagances by an undue haste to adopt the teaching of Adolf Bastian, the German 'apostle of confusion.' It is a happier task to return to some of the wiser counsels in *Primitive Culture*, directly relevant to the subject of Mr. Massingham's book. 'The notion of the continuity of civilization is no barren philosophic principle, but is at once made practical by the consideration that they who wish to understand their own lives ought to know the stages through which their opinions and habits have become what they are' (p. 17). 'History, taken as our guide in explaining the different stages of civilization, offers a theory based on actual experience. This is a development-theory, in which both advance and relapse have their acknowledged places. But so far as history is to be our criterion, progression is primary and degradation secondary; culture must be gained before it can be lost. Moreover, in striking a balance between the effects of forward and backward movement in civiliza-

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tion, it must be borne in mind how powerfully the diffusion of culture acts in preserving the results of progress from the attacks of degeneration. A progressive movement in culture spreads, and becomes independent of the fate of its originators' (p. 34).

These are the principles that have been widely neglected for half a century, while the process of 'plausible guessing' has held the field. What is most needed at the present time is the elimination of 'learned nonsense' and of the vagaries of pseudo-technical phraseology. The pose of professional exclusiveness – which in most cases implies the neglect of common sense – is fatal to these studies. The history of mankind deals with matters that concern and come within the common experience of every one and do not need technical language for their exposition. Hence the man who comes to these studies without claiming to be an archæologist or an ethnologist, and is free from the bias that goes with these high-sounding words, can render a very useful service to learning by setting forth in plain English the evidence he has collected and his interpretation of its meaning. In this book Mr. Massingham has put into his debt all who appreciate an impartial and honest attempt to interpret human nature as expressed in the beginnings of English civilization.

The book is entirely his own work. It deals with matters of fact that anyone in England can see for himself. No technical knowledge or training is needed for such observations. No cryptic phraseology is necessary for recording the results. Nor need the observer bow the knee to any esoteric cult or become a member of any secret society before expressing his opinion of what he has seen with his own eyes and appreciated with his own intelligence. What is most needed in humanitarian study to-day is common sense and common honesty. Mr. Massingham's book is an attempt to supply such needs.

PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE: AVEBURY

An older school upon our oldest monument. The neglect of Avebury to-day. The demolition in the eighteenth century. The stone-veterans that remain. Their office to the imagination. Description of Avebury. A city of the gods. Its suburbs. The 'savage' theory of its origin. The illogic of Neo-Darwinism. The genealogy of Avebury. When the 'Neolithic' Age began. The functions of Avebury. Colloquy with the Stones.

'A great admirer hee is of the rust of old Monuments, and reades onely those characters where time hath eaten out the letters. He will go you forty miles to see a Saint's Well or a ruin'd Abbey; and if there be but a Crosse or stone foot-stoole in the wāy, hee will be considering it so long till he forget his journey.'

JOHN EARLE

'Hard to tell but may yet be told.'

PEPYS ON STONEHENGE

CHAPTER ONE: AVEBURY

PART I

The First Capital of England



§ I. THE FOSSIL DINOSAUR

‘WITH awe and diffidence,’ writes Sir Richard Colt-Hoare in his noble work, *Ancient Wiltshire*, ‘I enter the sacred precincts of this once hallowed sanctuary, the supposed parent of Stonehenge, the wonder of Britain, and the most ancient as well as the most interesting relict our island can produce.’ The modern antiquary has so strenuously adopted the mole habit that he appears to suffer from the mole’s disability when he comes to the surface. Under ground, he is a man of might, but in the clear light of day he does not see Avebury with the eyes of an Aubrey, a Stukeley, a Colt-Hoare. Therefore let it be in their company that we in our turn enter the sacred precincts.

‘The next day,’ writes Aubrey in his account of Wiltshire, ‘when the Court were on their journey, His Majestie left the Queen, and diverted to Aubury; with the ruin whereof he and his Royal Highnesse, the Duke of Yorke, were very well pleased; his Majestie then commanded me to write a description of it, and present it to him; and the Duke of Yorke commanded me to give an account of the old camps and barrows in the plaines.

‘Aubury is a monument the greatest, most considerable and least ruined of any of this kind in our British isle. . . . It is environed with an extraordinary great vallum, or rampart, within which is a graffe of a depth and breadth proportionable to it. . . . Round about the graffe, sc, on the

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edge or border of it, are pitched on end huge stones, as big, or rather bigger than those at Stoneheng, but rude and unhewn as they were drawn out of the earth. Most of the stones thus pitched on end are gonne, only here and there doe still remain some curvilinear segments, but by these one may boldly conclude, that heretofore they stood quite round about like a corona or crowne. . . . This old monument does as much exceed in greatness the so renowned Stoneheng, as a cathedral doeth a parish church. . . . From the south entrance runnes a solemne walke, sc, of stones pitched on end, about seven feet high, and goes as far as Kynet, which is at least a measured mile from Aubury, and from Kynet it turnes with a right angle eastward, crossing the river and ascends up the hill to another monument of the same kind but less. The distance of the stones in this walk, and the breadth of it, is much about the distance of a noble walk of trees of that length; and very probably this walke was made use of for processions.'

This is an accurate description of Avebury as it exists to-day, except that there are now less than a third of the number of stones there were in Aubrey's day, that the south-east avenue from the great vallum to West Kennet did not cross the river, and that the stone circles on Overton Hill to which it led were destroyed in the eighteenth century to the general regret of the neighbours round. *Stat magni nominis umbra.*

A thousand books and pamphlets have been written about Stonehenge, while the record of mightier Avebury is gathered into a few fragments. It is as though Teddington were enshrined in a set of folios, and Greater London saw itself reflected in a paper *vade mecum*, penny plain and twopence coloured. True, there are only a few grizzled leaves left upon the knotted poles of Avebury, but what strange disproportion has given Stonehenge, the fossilized cotyledon

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thrown off by the parent tree, a botany, and Avebury but a glance from an eye curious but unseeing? The parent of Avebury rose from the slime of the ancientest of all men's rivers and gave us the civilized world, and yet a grandson of the first of all great houses has received nothing better at our hands than disinheritance and the mere oddments of our regard.

But isn't this just magniloquence, the idle crowning of a beggar? Maybe, but it isn't tatters that always reveal the beggar. Before I went to Avebury, I had read pretty well everything that had been written about it, no eye-strain, and thought that I should find no material for putting the dinosaur's egg together again but some bits of shell, catalogued in the curiosity shop of the archæologists. But when I stood on the rampart that winds about the village which, as Lord Avebury once said, has 'grown up like some beautiful parasite at the expense of and in the midst of the ancient temple,' I felt in a forgiving mood towards eighteenth-century Farmer Green, whose execrable zeal heated up the stones, poured cold water over them and then broke them up for haulage, twenty cartloads to a single stone.

All the kings' centuries spent themselves in vain upon the Avebury stones: the triumph was reserved for Messrs. Green and Robinson. A kind of dementia appears to have seized these dull finite clods, and to have directed them towards spending most of their lives in the work of demolition. Many of the stones they broke to pieces, others went to build cow-sheds and pig-sties, pubs and cottages.

'Thus this stupendous fabric,' is Colt-Hoare's eloquent comment, 'which for some thousands of years had braved the continual assaults of weather, and by the nature of it, when left to itself, like the pyramids of Egypt, would have lasted as long as the globe, has fallen a sacrifice to the wretched ignorance and avarice of a little village, unluckily placed within it.'

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According to Stukeley, the entire edifice once took 650 stones, while 100 huge monoliths once composed the outer circle alone. But Stukeley included 200 stones for the Beckhampton or south-western avenue in this estimate, and though Colt-Hoare accepted it, there was no certain evidence of its existence in his day. Originally then the work took some 500 stones,¹ some of them weighing 90 tons: and of the whole archipelago of 'Sarsens,' less than a score remain.

'It was no very easie taske for me to trace out the vestigia,' writes Aubrey, 'and so to make this survey. Wherefore I have dis-empstred [disentangled] the Scheme from the enclosures and houses etc: which are altogether foreigne to this Antiquity, and would but have clouded and darkned the reall Designe.' 8962

But it is much easier if we allow our disrelish for the vandalism of the village to obliterate it altogether from our minds, a piece of poetic justice it has thoroughly earned. Blot out the village and the stones that remain will in our imagination do the work of the stones that have gone.

These straggling *Reliquiae Aveburianae*, charged with our imagination, will reincarnate their missing fellows as well as if the ghosts of all the stone heroes came trooping before your eyes within the sacred round and formed up their shadowy bulks in the true places and alignment their architect designed. I cannot analyse the process of the recon-

¹ The number of stones fitting into the general architectural plan was as follows: outer circle, 100; northern circle, 30; inner circle of same, 12; the same numbers for the southern circles; central obelisk within the latter, 1; cove within the former, 3; ring-stone between the circles, 1; Kennet Avenue, 200; outer circle on Hackpen Hill, 40; inner circle of same, 18; Long Stone Cove called the Devil's Quoits at Beckhampton, 3. If we include the circles on Overton Hill within the general structure, the total number of stones must have been about 500.



HABITATIONS OF THE LIVING DEAD.

(From Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*.)

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struction, nor explain how it comes about. Here are seven grave monsters in an open field, three of them headlong, prostrate, lapped by the rising lake of green; here looms a solitary on the lip of the fosse within the vallum; another Cyclops wears the plumes of a whole tree's branches whose leaves tickle a head hoary with near four thousand summers, while over there stand a pillar and a wall close to a farmstead with its barn, built of their comrades.

Surely, then, those eighteenth-century farmers were no mean men, not lacking in might and skill that, even with a gang of centuries to aid them, could pull a piece of work like Avebury to ruin. I say again that we know what that work was like, and what astounds the gazer on the rampart is that any archæologist, however provincial and timid of venturing, could ever have had the shadow of a doubt of who were the only people in the ancient world capable of inspiring it. And I doubt whether the reconstruction of Avebury from old prints will give us as true an impression of the 'temple' as it once was as the stone hulks that remain. Perhaps it is the lightning suggestiveness of the way they are strewn about, here in an odd corner, here dimly shaping out of a curtain of leaves, here standing vastly out into the sun, here like a house come apart. A pair of wheatears, birds accustomed to a wide vision and life on a broad scale, once nested in one of the Avebury monoliths. They knew.

The stones appear so suddenly, so unexpectedly, that they act like hammer-strokes upon the imagination, as the eyes of a feline burning from a pool of night reveal the forest in the mind's day and every prowling mystery within it. The pile of Stonehenge sticks sheer out of the 'Plain,' and not only leaves nothing to the imagination but is dwarfed by its own exposure. The fingers of Avebury, which are all that is left of the body, have such a straying, secret way with them and the fragments are so tousled in vegetation that the mind

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easily vaults the ages and reaches the landscape-city that once was.

We need no zoological survey to that haunted forest, nor measurements and statistics for Avebury. Let us leave it to the sceptic Fergusson (*Rude Stone Monuments*) to tell us that its area was five times that of St. Peter at Rome, that half a million people could stand within its outer circle, and that it was two-thirds larger than Carnac. Of the ring of menhirs or monoliths fringing the inner rim of the fosse, nine stones are still *in situ*; of the double concentric circles of megaliths standing north and south within,¹ but six. They are enough. The vallum, which is the best preserved of the Avebury remains, sweeps and undulates round the village like a line of Down for a circuit of 1,480 yards (the outer circle of Stonehenge is 100 feet), 80 feet² above the floor of the ditch, and girdling close upon thirty acres of houses, barns, fields of cattle, streets, waste lands surfed with belts of the wild chervil and groves of time-weary trees whose forefathers hung in their cradles when that stone over there was beginning to yield to the picks of the frost. Such figures do but set up a formula of our thought, and superfluously confirm it.

This containing work, broad-backed beyond all other earthworks, alone is worthy of the whole, an image of the Downlike imagination that created Avebury and willed the very earth to heave itself up and sweep onward like a bird. Nature's weathering has rounded the wings, but Man sped the buzzard-like flight round the corner and out of sight. In that arc, glowing with its cargo of rock-rose, bird's-foot trefoil, meadow vetchling, milkwort dancing on from pure white to mauve and on to peeping blue, burnet rose flushing the earth to madder-crimson, spotted orchis and tossing

¹ The northern, according to Sir R. Colt-Hoare's survey, 350 feet in diameter and the south-eastern 325.

² In places — as measured by Mr. Forde, Dr. Elliot Smith, Mr. Perry and ourselves — 100 feet.

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flowering grasses, a sense of eternal motion is imparted to an earthwork whose stability has outlived forty centuries. The pure spirit of the flying Downs is in this arc, and wonderful beyond their towering conceptions was the quality of an Oriental people, wandering all the continents and branding country after country with their tenacious culture, that could thus translate the poetry of the high places where they lived and entice its soul into the form and stature of their monuments. Nature and time have indeed perfected their art, but that is its saving grace, since theirs is a rude way with works that are thrust upon them and flout them with the perishable glories spun out of the self-sufficiency of man alone.

§ 2. THE HOLY CITY

Avebury was the 'capital' of England; let us get that off our chests. The capital stands against a Thomas popping up for every year it has withstood obliteration. A stone circle, as we can gather by inference, was a place of assembly for Parliamentary, legal and ceremonious purposes, a place for leaping and law making before the Lord, and so an inland sea into which the brooks and streams of humanity poured their widening and converging waters. Actually, the Avebury circles were the largest in the world, and the other numerous stone circles of Britain are a mere collection of finger-rings beside this ancient crown that assuredly was fitted for a head.

What of its immediate environment? Upon Overton Hill, connected with Avebury by the Avenue,¹ of which nine stones remain, stood, according to Stukeley, a baby stone circle of two concentric ovals of forty-eight and eighteen stones respectively, called the Sanctuary, and joined by this umbili-

¹ Reminding one, says Mr. Hippisley Cox in *The Green Roads of England*, of the Avenue of Carved Sphinxes at Egyptian Karnak.

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cal cord to Mother Avebury. On West Kennet Hill reposes the finest long barrow in England, and between the long barrow and the capital there is something which gives the whole show away. But we will not spoil it by peeping behind the scenes. As I have said, it is doubtful whether the second avenue ever existed. Certainly none of its stones were standing in Stukeley's day, and this otherwise reliable stalwart of archæology may have been misled by his desire to give his serpent¹ a tail. Unfortunately megalithic avenues are not curved and there is no actual proof of any connection between the Avebury circles and the three stones (Long Stone Cove) when Stukeley drew his plan of the second avenue. Nevertheless, there are no sermons to be found in stones at all, if the Cove was not connected with Avebury.

If some Herodotus of the second millennium B.C., imbued with the once universal reverence for standing stones as the abode of deity, stones motionless but with a power more vehement than the lightning, mute but with an eloquence that shook the hearts of all men, had visited the Avebury plateau, he might well have thought it a city of the gods on earth. In those days the forces of the unseen world chose the cold comfort of a stone for habitacle rather than the fairest prospects of nature, and with trembling would the traveller have walked among all the Intelligences upon this tableland hid within their tents of stone.

The halt, the barren, the luckless, the schemer, the mourner, the curious, the husbandman, the devout, the toiler in the mines, entertainers and entertained, all sorts and conditions of men flocked to Avebury: for stones increased the womb and the harvest, stones poured out medicinal virtue, stones smiled upon the faithful and turned the tide of ills, stones blessed, stones cursed, stones gave life to the dead, stones and stars had subtle correspondence, and among

¹ Stukeley believed that Avebury was a representation of a kind of stone sea-serpent.

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the stones were jollity, feasting and dancing.¹ It was not the words so much as the stones on which they were engraved that gave sanctity to the Mosaic Law. The stone spake the words; therefore they were of Jahveh. Kings, priests and nobles were familiar with the nature of stones, especially kings and priests; therefore with the gods. If then the Avebury plateau can be shown to have attracted more stones 'pitched on end' than any other part of Britain, Avebury was quite certainly our 'Neolithic' London and Jerusalem in one.

The ordered throng of Presences within the holy ground marked out by the wall of gleaming soil² at Avebury itself, the procession of them to the Sanctuary on Overton Hill, the cluster of Downland's Pleiades on Hackpen Hill, these were but a portion of the total constellations gathered upon this small aromatic space of English turf.

Beside the circles on Overton and Hackpen Hills, and the Cove at Beckhampton, there was a circle between Avebury and Waden Hill half a mile south of Avebury, and another beyond the West Kennet Long Barrow, about a mile further in the same direction. At Winterbourne Bassett, west of Hackpen Hill and about three miles due north of Avebury, I found another with its power-stripped stones so sunk into the ground that it was not surprising that the villagers smiled when I inquired the way to it. Yet in the hour of Avebury it was a large double circle with a long barrow surrounded by a peristalith (or sacred enclosure of stone blocks) inside it. Between Avebury and Marlborough there were two more,

¹ Even in those days the division between the performer and the spectator was an accomplished fact. A flat ledge 12 feet wide projects from the vallum at Avebury about half-way between it and the ditch — a kind of stalls for the audience of the shows within the circles. The 'Cursus' at Stonehenge also makes provision for spectators. And now we can guess the meaning of the fosse within the walls of certain earthworks was to separate the performers of the sacred rites from the throng which watched them.

² All the works in earth on the chalk were white before the turf of neglect overgrew them.

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and remains of one of them on the village green of Lockesidge still survive. Stonehenge sufficed unto itself, but the magnitude of Avebury gathered many stone-satellites within its orbit.

Nor does the story end with all these groves of stone. There are the dolmens¹ or stone-tables of England's dead lords and the oldest form of burial for them. Though the long barrow form of sepulture was another phase of the same period, the dolmen (wrongly called 'kistvaen' – a degenerate dolmen and so a much later form of burial – in the books) survived into the Bronze Age, and the stone-chambered long barrow was but a dolmen (the central chamber) approached by a stone passage and covered by an elongated mound.

It is a significant fact that all the chambered (viz., megalithic) long barrows of Wiltshire are in the northern parts of the Downs and within range of Avebury. There are quantities of natural 'Sarsen' blocks in the Stonehenge region, but no chambered long barrows.² Their place was near the seat of government and religion. One of these dolmens lies to the right of the Bath road between Marlborough and Overton Hill, near the area of Sarsens from which were hauled the stones of Avebury. From the appearance of the 'Devil's Den,' a long barrow once underlay it. Now its three uprights and capstone stand forlornly in the midst of an alien sea of ploughland swinging its umber ripples to the foot of a stone isle drifted nearly four thousand years from the happy potencies of its past. Between Avebury and the stone circles of Winterbourne Bassett once stood another; at Luckington a third, with a long barrow near it, both gone, and on Temple Downs, above the Devil's Den, a fourth, and one of supreme magic. According to Colt-Hoare, it was a long barrow sur-

¹ Three or four or more uprights roofed by a large capstone.

² 'That the presence or absence of suitable stone had no influence upon the distribution of the long barrows is certain' – O. G. S. Crawford, *The Long Barrows of the Cotswolds* (1922).



THE DEVIL'S DEN, NEAR AVEBURY.
(From Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*.)

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rounded by a peristalith, surrounded by a stone wall, surrounded by an earthwork, while two 'great stone works' were placed on the top of the barrow, closely reminding one of the serdab or officiating chapel to the Egyptian mastaba-tomb.¹

In works of earth likewise how expressive and crowded with experience is the now mummied face of the Avebury plateau! The Great Ridgeway unites its south and west branches at Avebury and passes over Hackpen Hill (with its double oval circles – 138 by 155 feet – and avenue of 45 feet wide, extending 440 yards) northward to the capital's apex, Barbury Castle. Five other earthworks are in its neighbourhood. In Stukeley's time, fourteen long barrows, now reduced to five, stretched out their lion flanks along the crests of the hills surrounding Avebury and remoulded the contours of the landscape, while the round barrows, harnessed side by side for the triple purpose, it seems, of recording time and place and the dead that were once contained within the two, go humping along in all directions. At the eastern corner of the Avebury triangle is Martinsell Hill, with cultivation terraces, barrows and pit dwellings² for the miners. On Windmill Hill, within an appropriate stone's

¹ Some of the dolmens of San Cristoval in the Solomons were built on top of their mounds. If the dolmen on top of the grave on Temple Downs represented the Serdab, the long barrow beneath represented the rock-cut tomb. San Cristoval has been called a little Egypt of the Pyramid Age, and the evidence for a statement which would have been utterly incredible a few years ago happens to be extremely good and ample. The modern sea-going canoes of San Cristoval, for instance, repeat in shape, construction and technical detail the Egyptian ships of the Sahuré period (2700 B.C.), while the mastaba-like tombs are almost facsimiles of Egyptian graves of the same age.

² None of the ancient pit-villages of Wiltshire have hitherto yielded any but Celtic remains, and so the local authorities date them as Iron Age (from about 700–600 B.C. onwards – the Celtic period). But as the people who built the admittedly 'Neolithic' and Bronze Age barrows and megaliths must have lived somewhere, the obvious deduction, warranted by plenty of evidence as to the Celtic occupation of sites inhabited centuries before the Celtic day, is that the Celts also settled in the ancient villages.

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throw of the great circles, there was a large flint factory for turning out celts, scrapers, fabricators, knives and what not. A glance at an Ordnance Map alone reveals one set of remains after another as the scattered brood of the bird which clucked up the first civilization that hoary old Britain ever saw. That all these remains are not contemporary and do not even belong to the same phase of civilization makes no difference to the impression of them as a whole, since the more widely separated they are in time, the more tenacious was the civilization that originally inspired them. Without doubt, they were satellites of Avebury, whether the parent nucleus was 5 or 50 or 500 years older.

PART II

The Riddle of the Stones

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§ I. AVEBURY AND THE SAVAGES

The authorities now hold that Avebury was built towards the close of the 'Neolithic' period in Britain; and they agree that the long barrows and some of the earthworks belong to the same period. At the same time, they describe the 'Neolithic Age' as one of primitive barbarism and savagery. This is not the place to suggest that the savage and primitive are terms connoting habits of life and culture that cannot and do not mingle. As I mean to try and show later, they have no ethnological relation to one another whatever and belong to entirely different conceptions of social life. But this *is* the place to point out that neither of these terms bears any relation to Avebury. The people who built Avebury could not have been either savages or primitives. What says that

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honoured authority, J. R. Mortimer, who spent forty years investigating the 'prehistoric' remains of Yorkshire?

'The Britons (viz., the long barrow builders) kept and domesticated animals, they cultivated cereals and were considerably advanced in culture, and far removed from the time when primitive man "perished in winter winds, till one smote fire. . . ."'

He remarks too that they must have lived in an organized society ruled by the lords who lie buried in the barrows. The period of the tombs and the megaliths, he says, 'represents the dawn of an advanced civilization.' The inhabitants of Britain during the 'Neolithic' Age are generally called Iberians. Professor Boyd Dawkins, another highly respected prehistorian, writes of them:

'The Iberians brought with them the knowledge of wheat and barley, the arts of spinning and weaving, mining and pottery making. The arts which they introduced have had a continuous history in Somerset (I am quoting from the *Victoria History of Somerset*) from that remote period down to the present day.'

Neither Mortimer nor Boyd Dawkins are blowing theoretic smoke-rings: they are making the only inference possible from a study of the remains visible to this day in our land.

Avebury, then, marks a civilized epoch, and our first problem will be its origin. I shall not discuss here the theory that the conditions of life that begat the megalithic idea were slowly evolved by the natives themselves. There is no evidence whatever that they were so evolved in this country, and so I shall conclude without further preamble that Avebury

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and the culture it embodied were imported from abroad. The Avebury circles, again, are regarded by all the experts as belonging to the period of the earlier stone-work in Britain, or, more accurately, as raised during the period that succeeded the Old Stone Age. Yet Avebury is on a far larger scale than any of the other stone monuments of Britain. As I have described, it is satellited by tombs in stone and earth of a peculiar type, and these, in conjunction with continental buildings of similar structure, have been referred back to the mausolea of ancient Egypt.¹

To begin with, then, we arrive at a quite simple definition of Avebury: it was at once the greatest and the earliest² stone monument of Britain. The most recent book on Stonehenge accepts Sir Norman Lockyer's azimuth reckoning for its date — between 2040 and 1640 B.C., allowing a margin of 200 years earlier or later than the date of coincidence of the midsummer solstice with the alignment of the axis of the Stonehenge avenue, altar-stone and largest trilithon, viz., 1840 B.C. Some authorities would give Stonehenge a later date, others would make Avebury a whole millennium earlier than the daughter temple. Some place Avebury in the 'Neolithic' period, and Stonehenge in the Bronze Age, others place them both in the former period. These contradictory estimates leave us more in the dark than silence, and I shall ignore them in consequence. Nor do I believe that more than a very few centuries separate Avebury from Stonehenge, though for reasons which will appear later, I do think that each building belongs to a different period of prehistory and that the former preceded the latter. In that conclusion, I am happy to find myself at one both with the

¹ My third chapter will explain the derivation of the long barrows in detail and according to new, very precise and ample evidence.

² By 'earliest,' I mean belonging to the earlier epoch. I think that some of the circles and dolmens of Cornwall are earlier even than Avebury. See Chapter IX. The primitives of Britain did not build in stone at all.

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conservatism of British archæologists¹ and with the London University school of ethnology opposed by them and doing for the origin of cultures exactly what Darwin did for the origin of species – relating them to one source.

So the ‘cathedral’ predates the ‘parish church.’ At once, we can see that current archæology has contradicted itself. For the assumptions upon which the archæologists work out their arguments point to the exact reverse – that the parish church or the lesser culture comes before the cathedral or the greater. Modern archæology is in bond to the fixed, mechanical, evolutionary dogma that progress is an operative force among men by its own volition and that the sapling comes before the tree, the hut before the castle, the lower before the higher development, simply because it does. This doctrine they comfortably apply to early Britain, so that later always rhymes with greater.

But if we stick calmly to our formula of earliest and greatest, and can perceive no stone-building to serve as a preface to Avebury, we cannot avoid the conclusion that Avebury itself marks a declension from still earlier and grander models, and is part of a genealogy whose fountain-head is not in our land. Voyagers, who reached us some time in the second millennium B.C., bringing with them the ‘Neolithic’ stage of culture, agriculture, and an intricate ceremonial and set of divinities mixed up with the raising of crops, could only have come from a land whose sacred architecture overtopped our Avebury. When they built it, it was with thousands of hands engaged upon the work, for how many years? but with minds removed and intent upon the towering styles

¹ The reason they give for the greater antiquity of Avebury is that its stones were undressed. In the first place, I believe that close examination reveals that some at any rate of the Avebury stones show signs of the tool on them, and, in the second, the undressed stone is evidence for a later rather than an earlier date. The obelisks of the ancient East were dressed in the earlier periods and in the centres of culture.

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of — Memphis, or Thebes. Intent but projected to a distance, and depending only upon a memorial inspiration. And if a parentage to diminished Avebury be conceded at all, its genesis is from the founders of civilization and from a people who alone in all the world reveal a graduated development from the primitive and are now thought to have dispersed what they had achieved first to their neighbours and finally, through their daughter-states and their paraphrases of an original text, over the greater part of the world.

Authorities are not agreed as to the beginning of the 'Neolithic' Age in Britain, which is hardly surprising, when they assume that the era of the polished stone was a normally indigenous step-up in evolution from the era of the unpolished flint. But if we pin our faith to a different concept¹ of the evolutionary theory, we shall boldly declare that the 'Neolithic' Age began at the hour, the minute that these voyagers set foot in our land. Our business now is to track them, nor must the amount of globe-trotting that entails deter us.

Is it because the idea of culture-diffusion is so upsetting and the stream of Nilus so erosive of petrified traditions of thought that our wise men will not accept it, or because within its ovary lies a seed promising a more dangerous growth than has ever been fertilized from the antiquary's garden? And whoever walks over from Avebury to the Bath Road across the water-meadows of the Kennet and up the grassy slope to the West Kennet Long Barrow, would dream that this English poem, English to the tip of every grass-blade, bears the water-mark of Egypt? Who thinks of burnt and wrinkled Egypt where the little Kennet frisks along, splashing the sedges to a morning green, or among its meads, where the meadow geranium opens its rounded petals of the tint of our hollyblue butterfly with that air of glad surprise that is English country, or as you breast the Down beyond and wandering breaths of wind, rippled with the bleatings of

¹ Viz., a derivation of stone-building and its culture to a single source.

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the sheep, stray wooingly across your face? But there on the crest of the hill, prone and with a broken back, lies our serpent of old Nile, the largest chambered barrow in England with its peristalith encompassing the mound gone, but the two stelæ¹ at the entrance remaining.

§ 2. THE VOICE OF THE STONES

Before I leave Avebury, a farewell communing with its stones will put me in heart for the long journey. There can be no doubt that the Avebury circles were not primarily sepulchral in intention, though the idea of the temple probably originated from the idea of the grave, the house of the mighty dead. One may gather indeed that the offices of stone circles were largely secular, so far as any public life was secular in those days. The temper of the Old Kingdom in Egypt was highly judicial. Even harem conspirators were rarely executed without what is called, with little more meaning to-day than then, a fair trial. Though the European stone circle had religious and magical properties, yet it is likely that its other parent was this legal-mindedness of the ancient Egyptians, which on its less vulnerable side represented a genuine dislike of arbitrary measures and an authority that ruled by force and *hubris* alone. Stones were oracular, since gods and ancestors swooped down into them. Thus the stone circle became a council chamber and a place of public assembly, whence the petrified elders of the past could commune with their flesh-and-blood brethren of the present. So it became the custom in all the megalithic regions for the aristocratic councillors to seat themselves each upon an ances-

¹ A peristalith is a ring of upright stones that often encompassed a long barrow like the wall round the Egyptian *mastaba*, and a stela is a monolith, frequently set up as an obelisk-portal to the entrance of the stone-chamber within. In Egypt, it was usually inscribed.

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tor, as did the wise men in Homer's account of the trouble over the shield of Achilles, and as to this day is preserved the tradition of the Rollright Stones in Oxfordshire. How they managed to perch themselves on the cyries of the Avebury megaliths is a puzzle. But it is possible that the Avebury Parliamentarians took records by using the surface of the stones as a receiver. We can surmise from tradition and folk-memory that the stone circle was a court of law, as well as a place of assembly, a *palais de danse*, a priestly college, a provincial theatre and a centre for functions and ceremonies. Avebury, then, was a central court of justice, a national theatre, a *Palais de Danse* and a priestly University. I am assuming for a moment that Egypt was the parent or rather grandparent of Avebury.

The ruins of all these imposing monuments are everywhere about us. Yet are they and all their fellows really gone, are they altogether dispossessed of that magic energy with which all men once endowed them? No, something lingers, something they have still to say, and it is this: — 'We were not the work of unpremeditating primitives, but of men to whom in the final account you owe your cities, government and social organism, and not one bone in the anatomy of the Leviathan of State but was built of their dust and the thoughts that made the power in us.' That was their first word. This the second: 'We were the work not of wandering flock-masters and wild nomads, driven by the moods of Mother Earth to seek new homes, but of a whole community divided into classes but spun of one fabric much as you are. From here at Avebury, where we are gathered together, the men who caused us to be set up and whose spirits we preserved ruled the whole land. Yet though we were the beginning of religion and governance in your land, we too had an origin and it was not here nor anywhere in the country of Britain. The men who raised us came from a far country where there were grander stones than even we, very mighty in our day,

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have ever been; and they came to this island seeking certain gifts which, if you seek in your turn, you shall discover and the meaning and the purpose which guided their steps.' And the third oracle they had to speak was this: 'Look about you; refill the empty spaces where we once stood and regard our great congregations. Look further to the Orkneys, to Cornwall, to the Pennines, to the Western Isles, to all the sacred places that testify our presence, and trusting not to books but to what intelligence you have, ask yourself this question: Were the men who raised us far and wide, and many other works likewise over the length and breadth of the land, not promiscuously, but of set intent, not casually between the flitting of a moon but with reverence and an infinity of toil – were those men savages who lifted themselves up to civilization by knocking one another on their crazed and empty heads?'

This was the kind of talk the stones and I had together at Avebury, and then and there I resolved to put on paper what I had learned, or thought I had, of the riddle of the stones.

CHAPTER TWO: THE STRUCTURE OF ARCHAIC
ENGLAND

The ordering of this chapter. The mark of the Orient on megalithic England. Wares from the Egyptian factory. The beaker, chalk drums, amber, stone circles, the purple-shell industry, etc., and their Ægean inspiration. England and the mines of Rhodesia. The specialism of mining. The colonists of prehistoric England as expert metallurgists. The imitation flint implement. The evidence against the trade-route theory. The web of trackways. The relationship of the mining areas to the Downs, and of Avebury to the outlying settlements. Dolebury Camp and the lead-mines. The distribution of megaliths and mines. The ancients and the Dorset hills. Along the Fowey river to the mining settlements of Bodmin Moor.

'Surely there is a veine for the silver, and a place for gold
where they fine it,
He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the
mountains by the rootes;
He cutteth out rivers among the rocks, and his eye seeth
every precious thing.
He bindeth the floods from overflowing, and the thing that
is hid bringeth he forth to light.
But where shall wisdom be founde? And where is the place
of understanding?'

JOB



THE SHAFT-GRAVES OF MYCENÆ.

(From Schliemann's *Excavations*, by permission of Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.)

CHAPTER TWO: THE STRUCTURE OF ARCHAIC

ENGLAND

PART I

English Wax—Eastern Seal

'THE men who raised us came from a far country' — that was the message the stones hummed to us like telegraph poles as we left the Avebury rampart and took our way along the megalithic avenue to West Kennet. And now begins the story. It is a story of the past which is no preserve of scholarship but builds itself up into direct and living contact with the civilized life of to-day. The rest of the book will attempt to justify this claim and to follow out some of its more momentous implications.

I am dividing this Chapter into two parts. In the first, I shall take the reader a purely haphazard ramble over the England of the megalithic period and, pausing by certain examples of its presence, whether tombs or implements or raw materials of industries or ornaments or sacred objects or sites of settlement, point out to him, on the best archæological evidence available, that they came out of the East. We shall not bother ourselves about disentangling the 'Neolithic' from the 'Bronze' Ages, which represent the two phases of our megalithic or, as I shall often call it, archaic civilization. We shall not concern ourselves either with the carriers or the originators of our Period of the Big Stones except quite casually and without committing ourselves to any close problem of origins. Nor lastly, with the exception of the mining industry which is the key to megalithic England, shall we attach greater importance to one object or site or industry or association than another. My sole object is to turn the reader's vision to the East.

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But in the second part of the Chapter we shall leave idly handling these divers-coloured threads of Oriental fabric and look at them as a pattern, single and indivisible. And the bridge between these two parts of our Chapter and two methods of treatment will be the question as to whether these Oriental influences took the form of trading enterprise (the orthodox hypothesis) or permanent occupation. In the chapter to follow the present one, we shall seek to discover the identity (as closely as we can) of the Ancient Mariners who were responsible for the archaic civilization of England and to examine some of the most prominent elements of their culture. The Chapter after that demands an exposition of the motive that directed their high-hearted ships over the veto of seas and lands and archæological orthodoxy. Our own voyage over, we shall return to England and take up those problems of date, of the distinctions and interrelations between the two periods of megalithic England and of their specific relation to their Oriental origins we are now avoiding. That brings us to the end of the first division in a volume cut into three parts.

§ I. EGYPT IN DOWNLAND

Our task is simplified in principle and complicated in detail by the uniformity of the archaic civilization as a whole. If for a moment we take it for granted that Egypt was the source of the first civilizations of western Europe through the medium of other Mediterranean countries, we should expect to find the prehistoric civilizations derived from her impulse and expansion becoming less distinctively Egyptian the further away they are planted out from the home nursery. This divergence in uniformity is exactly what we do find, for certain elements of Egyptian culture are dropped, others are modified, and mingled with local adaptations, while all that

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appear are reproduced upon a lower and lesser scale. The western brands of the archaic civilization are different paraphrases of an original text and the divergencies from it represent a series of gradations. Thus, when I point to this object and call it Egyptian, to that and murmur Crete, to a third and say it reminds us of Mycenæ, the policy is not exclusive. I mean that the object in question and the cultural idea it embodies take us back, within the limits of our knowledge, to one Mediterranean country rather than another. On a broad survey, our titles are perfectly simple. They try and give a picture of the archaic civilization as a whole with Egypt for its fountain-head, the Eastern Mediterranean as its homeland and Britain as its most westerly extension. One last warning. I am choosing here only the more interesting remains which are Oriental in source, and but a fraction of them, for the rest form a more relevant background to future chapters.

Egypt comes first. The terraced cultivation of the Downs; the great artificial mound of Silbury; the evidences for the calendar and the study of the heavenly bodies in the orientation of megaliths; the dolmen and the chambered barrow and the worship of the dead they represent; sun-worship; the religious office of stone-building – all these central elements were products of the high-pressure Egyptian factory of ideas. As they are the vital organs of the archaic civilization, their discussion falls more appropriately to later chapters. The Iberian physical type of 'Neolithic' England was pure Egyptian. The bee-hive huts of Dartmoor, Portland and other places are identical with those used by the Egyptian miners for turquoise and copper in the Sinaitic Peninsula. Mr. George Coffey, the Keeper of Antiquities in Dublin Museum, points out that the solar disks with downward rays inscribed upon the megaliths of New Grange near Drogheda exactly resemble the Egyptian solar symbols. Mr. Donald Mackenzie, the folklorist, tells

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me that the boat with an eye on the prow¹ is still used in the Hebrides and one locality in Yorkshire. Its origin was certainly Egyptian. Some blue glaze segmented beads of a peculiar cut found in round barrows on the Wiltshire plateau are practically indistinguishable from beads deposited in graves of the eighteenth dynasty in Egypt. Their importance is too great for me to do more than introduce them here.

§ 2. THE ISLES OF GREECE

Even more abundant are the evidences of Ægean influence. In a round barrow on Folkton Wold in the E. Riding of Yorkshire were found three anthropomorphic chalk drums which can now be seen in the British Museum. Their most remarkable feature are a pair of conventionalized eyes with eyebrows similar to those carved *objets de culte religieux* which Siret in his great work on Prehistoric Spain says are common sacred objects of 'Eneolithic' (the last phase of 'Neolithic') Europe. He calls these anthropomorphic designs Phœnician, but they are actually found in the Ægean.² The British Museum remarks of these idol-drums that 'they recall the Neolithic and Bronze Age antiquities of the Mediterranean area.'

Mrs. Greene, in her *History of the Irish State to 1014* (1925), quotes the most recent research as to the derivation of the Irish bronze dagger from the Ægean. The

¹ These eyed boats are still used in Sardinia and doubtless have been used since the megalith-builders set up their 'giants' graves' in the island. Mr. Perry has shown me early Egyptian drawings which clearly betray the origin of the eye on the prow. They depict Horus standing on the prow and looking for his father, Osiris. Later, the figure was left out and a conventionalized eye painted on the prow. Thus the eye became a symbol for Horus.

² There is one, for instance, consisting of nose, eyes and eyebrows, carved on a recumbent block of stone in the Island of Thasos, once deeply mined for its gold. The Greeks used such symbols for averting the Evil Eye. (See Toser's *Islands of the Ægean*, p. 290.)

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spiral motive on the Bronze Age stones of New Grange is repeated in Crete, in Mycenæ, on Etruscan vases, in Scandinavia and in Brittany. It also appears on Egyptian scarabs of the Twelfth Dynasty. Mr. George Coffey in *New Grange* (1922) describes a carving on one of the stones of the Dowth chambered tumulus in Ireland as 'an incised work which resembles the two eyes, probably of a polypus . . . so often found on old Mediterranean patterns.' The next chapter will reveal the great importance of the octopus motive on Cretan bowls as a strong argument for the diffusion of Ægean culture westward. Mr. Coffey, again, points out the close resemblance between the tomb of New Grange and the domed tumulus of Mycenæ known as 'The Treasury of Atreus.'

Charcoal found in some of our Long Barrows reminds us of the charcoal found in Breton and Cretan burials, and investigation leaves little doubt that it was used as incense in the rites, derived from Egyptian mummification ceremonies, paid to the dead.

Or let us glance at amber, in the search for which the Ancient Mariners are known to have penetrated Scandinavia and the Baltic. Now in England amber was found along the East Coast, and plenty of it was deposited as a funerary offering in the barrows of Wiltshire and Dorset. Look into the cloudy depths of a piece of sacred amber, that is to say, and you will see a broad landscape indeed, composed of eastern and south-western England made one.

But amber is not only important as showing the intercommunications of the English prehistoric settlements. In *Prehistoric Gold in Wilts* (1918) Mrs. Cunnington describes a disk of red amber found in a gold casing on Mere Down. It is exactly the same as one found at Knossos in the Tomb of the Double Axes of the Late Minoan period (see *Archæologia*, Vol. 65, p. 42) and dated at 1500-1450 B.C. It may be that the Phœnicians had something to

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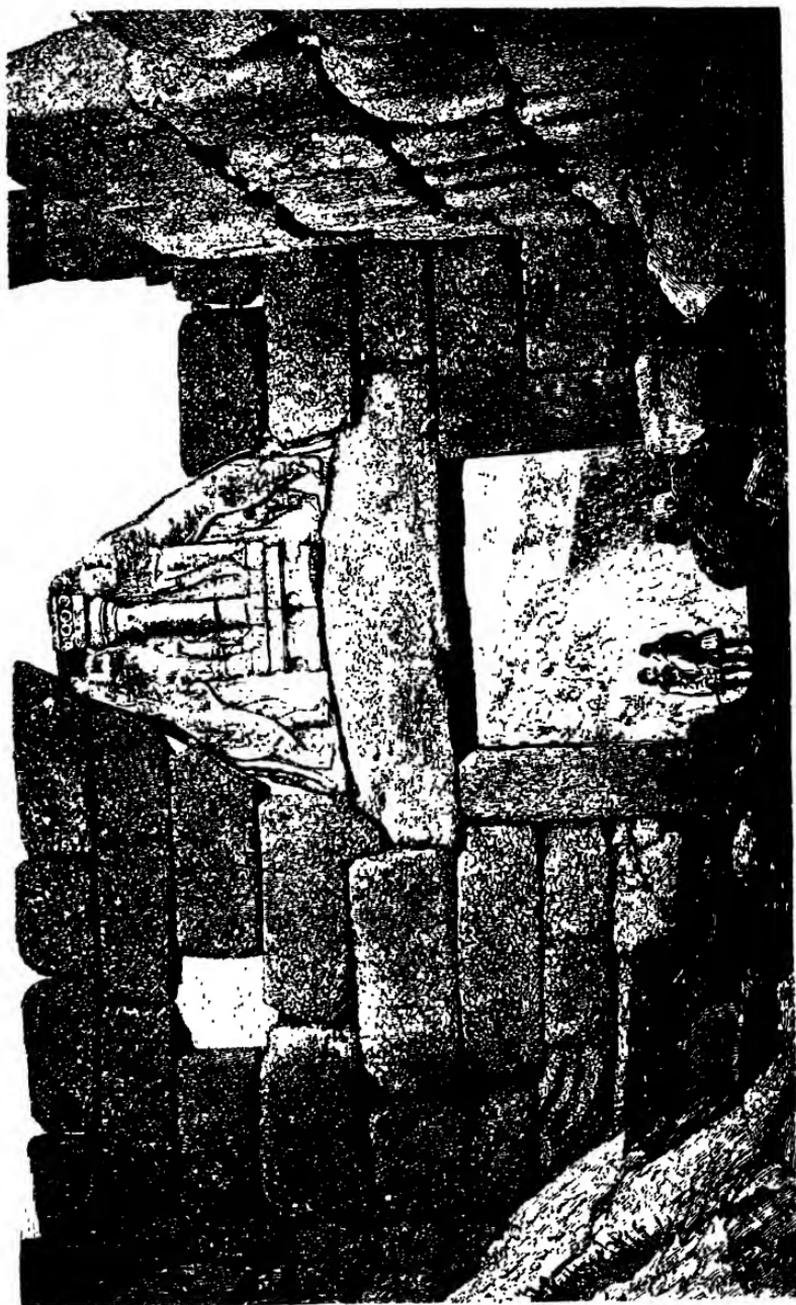
do with the exploitation of amber in north-western Europe, and preserved the preceding Ægean tradition. But there is no telling evidence that the Phœnicians were moving in Western Europe before the tail-end of the Bronze Age, and megalithic Europe was dying by the time they arrived.

§ 3. THE STONE CIRCLE AND THE PURPLE SHELL

The purple-shell industry and the stone circle suggest the same sequence of Mediterranean diffusion as does the quest for amber. There are, for instance, numerous stone circles in Syria and Canaan; there is one in the neighbourhood of Tyre and there are three on Mount Heshbon. Stonehenge resembles the tomb of Seti I (Nineteenth Dynasty), and the pock-markings of its trilithons (according to Flinders Petrie) are like those of the Phœnician temple of Lachish, while the trilithons themselves are exactly like the postern to the Lion gate of Mycenæ.¹ Here again we have to seek for an earlier source of the stone circle and we find that the shaft-graves of Mycenæ were surrounded by circles of stone slabs,² while Sir Arthur Evans has suggested that Stonehenge is an elaboration of a funerary monument.³ This is extremely important in view of the fact that Elliot Smith ('The Origin of the Rock-cut Tomb and the Dolmen' in *Essays and Studies Presented to William Ridgeway*—1913) gives plans of Algerian and Nubian stone circles with niches in them to represent the *Serdab* or chapel of the Egyptian mastaba-tomb. And recent excavation at Stonehenge has revealed that the stones of the outer circle were placed close together, bringing still closer the parallel of the Mycenæan shaft-graves. Lastly, the use of shell-purple was certainly Cretan

¹ Engelbach (*Problem of the Obelisks*, 1921) compares the unfinished granite obelisk at Aswân with the ripple-marked surface of the Stonehenge tooling. See O. G. S. Crawford's *The Long Barrow of the Cotswolds* (1922).

² Mycenæ is simply another name for Late Minoan Crete, transferred to the mainland. ³ See the *Archæological Review*, Vol. II, p. 312 *seq.* (1889).



THE ANCESTOR OF STONEHENGE, LION GATE, MYCENÆ.
(From Schliemann's *Mycenæ*, by permission of Mr. John Murray.)

STONE CIRCLE AND PURPLE SHELL

before it became one of the staple industries of Phœnicia, and the *Murex* (purple-shell) dumps at Leuke and Palakastro long preceded those of Tyre.

Look about us here, and we read in Mr. Jackson's *Shells as Evidence of the Migrations of Early Culture* that shell-purple, cowries, pearl-shell, and conch-shell¹ for trumpets were obtained from all of south-western England, and particularly Somerset, on whose shores *Purpura lapillus* was abundant in ancient times. Purple dye from shells was used as late as the eighteenth century in Somerset for marking linen and in the Middle Ages for dyeing parchment or vellum missals. In Britain, again, shell-mounds of *Purpura*, *Patella vulgata*, *Littorina littoralis*, *Margarita margaritifera* (pearl-shell) and oyster were found at the earthwork of Bury Castle in Sussex and elsewhere in association with kitchen-middens and early hand-made pottery. The enormous shell dumps found in Devon and Cornwall are thought to be earlier than the Bronze Age.

There is no doubt that the large British pearls were one of the motives of Cæsar's invasion of Britain, whence the Phœnicians obtained a dark shade of shell-purple called 'Black Purple.' There are certain isolated archæological records which I have ferreted out here and there to add to Mr. Jackson's material. Dr. Thurnam found three pearl-beads in a Dorset barrow. A shell of *Purpura lapillus*, a shell actually used by the Tyrians in their purple-shell industry, was found in the cist or enclosed stone chamber of a round barrow perched on Cop Hill, near Warminster, on

¹ Shells were eagerly sought by the Ancient Mariners of the East as 'life-givers' for re-animating the dead, as bringers of fertility to women and as talismans for conferring long life and prosperity upon their possessors. They were regarded as repositories of the vital principle or substance, and these properties were transferred to gold (a bright and plastic metal easily worked into imitations of the cowry-shell, the first of all the 'life-givers': see Elliot Smith, *The Evolution of the Dragon*), precious stones, resins, balsams, gums, certain plants and other objects by a series of fancied homologues and associations.

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the borders of Wiltshire and Somerset, showing an obvious cultural connection between the country of the lead-mines and the country of Avebury and Stonehenge. Neither was the British shell-cult confined to the Bronze Age, for pearl-mussel was discovered among 'Neolithic' remains in the caves of Denbighshire, in North Wales and Western Ireland, while *Patella vulgata* and *Littorina littoralis* were discovered in 'Neolithic' kitchen-middens near Corfe Castle.

No student of the modern discoveries in Crete can doubt that the Cretans were the original distributors of the shell-cult over Western Europe, just as they were the inventors of the conch-shell trumpet used for summoning the deities into stones. The Phœnicians were certainly famous for their shell industry, but not until the later phase of the archaic civilization and the dawn of the historic period.

§ 4. THE WORKING OF THE ENGLISH MINES

In archaic times, the gold and copper mines of the Zimbabwes in Rhodesia, between the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers, were very extensively worked by a highly civilized mining people. We shall devote part of the next chapter to a survey of the Zimbabwes because of the very instructive parallels to be gathered from a comparison between the archaic civilization of Rhodesia and that of England. What I want to point out in this introductory chapter is that the old tin-smelters of Cornwall used quills for holding a small quantity of gold obtained in tin-streaming operations exactly similar to those used by the ancient Rhodesians. At the Great Zimbabwe (the Avebury of Rhodesia), Bent, one of the great authorities on the African ruins, discovered a soapstone ingot mould corresponding in shape (astragalus or knucklebone) with those used in the ancient East. In Falmouth Harbour was found a tin ingot mould, identical in shape with

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that of Zimbabwe. Those ingot moulds had a common source.

In Rhodesia, the disposition of the remains indicated operations covering many centuries; that the mines were under one supreme direction; that the skill used in extracting the gold was highly developed and that the greater quantity of it was exported. In the same way, the finds in our barrows represent only a small percentage of the metals which, judging from the extent of the workings, were obtained from the mines, while the shafts sunk at Cissbury and elsewhere were the work of trained delvers. Rhodesia, according to Hall and Bent (see next Chapter), presents three strata of occupation, Sabæo-Egyptian, Phœnician and Arabic; the British remains are universally divided into the 'Neolithic,' Bronze Age and Celtic periods. Lastly, in all the important mining regions of England, there are stone circles connecting one district with another and themselves connected by ancient trackways with the districts of the chalk Downs. This method roughly corresponds with the distribution of the Zimbabwes, which were divided up into districts, each with its capital town, like Stanton Drew on Mendip, Arbor Lowe in Derbyshire, and the Rollright stones in Oxfordshire. Whether these parallels can be carried further will be seen in future Chapters.

Thus we have been unable to avoid mentioning the Eastern Mediterranean in a purely casual stroll among the antiquities of England. Let us leave it at that for the time being and come to close quarters with the question of the English mines.

A highly interesting study would be the old 'Stannery' or mining courts of Britain, which were held within stone circles, and so remind us of the ancient legislative functions of the Avebury councillors. Now miners have a very peculiar congeries of administrative and other customs peculiar to themselves, and to this day the Cornish miners

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carry their ideas of looking at the world all over it. Mining, in other words, is one of the least spontaneous of all callings; it is almost as ritualist and exclusive as a secret society, and hands down its traditions from father to son in cotton wool.¹ Its training is indeed so specialized that when the mines of England fell into disuse in Elizabethan times, miners from Saxony were fetched over to reopen them.

I conclude that the miners who worked the flint-mines of Cissbury in Sussex, washed the gold from the Devon rivers and delved for lead in the Derbyshire and Somerset limestone and tin on the Cornish moors, could not have been aborigines who thought out the mining principle for themselves, but trained Iberians brought over from Iberia (Spain), whence the Ancient Mariners launched their ships to explore us.

It is possible to prove over and over again that these colonists were, as their settlements and workings reveal, expert metallurgists. That was what they were here for — to work metals, and their very abundant use of flint tools for domestic and agricultural purposes indicates, not that they were unacquainted with metals, as the archæologists practically to a man assume, but that they settled permanently in the country. We noticed in Chapter I that Avebury and its long barrows were inter-related. Wherever long or round barrows or megaliths occur in Britain, those areas can be shown to possess mineral or flint resources or other substances desired by the ancient mariners, such as jet and amber and shale, nor, as will be seen later on in the book, is there any genuine exception to this rule.

¹ In remote country places, especially in Dorset, I have come across more than one example of mining communities which practise an intense inbreeding to the detriment of their posterity. The flint-mines of Brandon in Suffolk have remained predominantly Iberian in racial type from 'Neolithic' times. The pearl-fishers of the East preserve the same exclusiveness. In the Gulf of Mana, between India and Ceylon, for instance, there is a caste of pearl-fishers who are purely Polynesian in physical type.



STONEHENGE TRILITHON, CHILD OF MYCENÆ.

To face p. 58.]

WORKING OF ENGLISH MINES

The polished stone celt was almost universally an imitation of the copper chisel, and so very conservative an authority as Mr. Harold Peake (*The Bronze Age and the Celtic World*), who declares that the Egyptians were obtaining gold in central Europe before 3200 B.C., has it that the stone axes (viz. celts) of Morbihan in Brittany, which he dates at 2500 B.C. (far too early), repeat the copper axes from Cyprus. Siret, again, suggests that the stone-polishing of countries distant from the Eastern Mediterranean was a substitute for copper. Elsewhere, he points out some very striking analogies between the 'Neolithic' cultures of Spain and the Troad, long of course, before the Trojan War. Yet the eastern culture possessed metals and the western not; while the art of the eastern was superior to the art of the western.

The inference that western flint was a technically degraded substitute for eastern copper is obvious. Why should we be so arbitrary as to assume that Britain was an exception in this particular? Is not this substitution the most natural consequence of mining exploration, especially in a country with an abundance of good flint for the working, and where the activities of men are necessarily less accomplished and highly developed than in their native homes? The most valued workmen stay at home, and we are on pretty safe ground in saying that the most valued goods, copper, gold, tin, pearl-shell, etc., mostly left the country, while the flint remained. Thus it begins to dawn upon us that the term 'Neolithic' has two meanings. It not only means polishing stone, but leading you off the right road.

§ 5. SETTLEMENT OR TRADE

I submit that the imitation of the copper chisel by the flint or stone celt is extremely damaging to the theory which postulates that all these Oriental influences which we have

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been discussing are due to trading contacts between England and the East. In the first place, we have seen that the East sent not merely objects but ideas to archaic England and, as Siret remarks so soundly, 'de simples relations commerciales ne suffisent pas à répandre des idées religieuses.' The professional archæologists may go on lecturing about their prehistoric commercial travellers, but common sense knows that traders do not leave their religion with their goods in the countries they visit. Their mission is to cheat not to convert the natives.

But we have on our side a much stronger argument than this. It is that though merchants may trade in gold or amber or bronze or earthenware objects, they certainly do not trade barrows, earthworks, terraces and megalithic monuments. As the vast majority of prehistoric objects in metal or stone are found in barrows or megalithic monuments, the conclusion is patent that they, no more than the sacred places in which they were housed, were the produce of commercial exchange. And now let us turn our attention to megalithic England as a whole and, by a study of the inter-relations of its various districts and industries, drive home the issue that our own country was occupied by the mariners of the archaic civilization not as a commercial *point d'appui* but as a permanent habitation.

PART II

The English Formula of Mines and Stones

It is the design of the web of ruins and the disposition of its strands that must now engage us. It is not enough to set out the case for the Oriental penetration of our shores: it should be shown whether the voyagers came as traffickers or permanent colonial settlers. It is not enough to earmark their aim as metallurgical: it must be seen whether our

THE TALE OF THE TRACKWAYS

English land expresses the mine-thought intelligibly and in connected sentences. These enigmas are soluble together and the first chapter of the book has already outlined an immediate environment to the great stone circles of Avebury, the pivot of what we may now more legitimately call the archaic civilization of England, inspired and fashioned by some people or peoples who derived their culture from the Eastern Mediterranean. Is it possible to extend this environment?

§ I. THE TALE OF THE TRACKWAYS

The answer is that all the green roads lead to Avebury as clearly as do our metal ones to London on an ordnance survey map of the home counties, and as inevitably as the watersheds that form the ribbing between the Upper Thames and the Severn, the Kennet and the little waterways of the south, are riveted upon the triangular plateau on which Avebury stands. It is becoming slowly apparent that all the vestigia left by the Downland occupants of pre-Roman Britain, earthworks, trackways, hut and stone circles, barrows and the scars of ancient mining works, are the ruins of one vast architectural whole, constructed upon a definite and systematic plan. It is not only that there exists, could we but grasp it, a topographical key to the unification of the highways. To possess the archives of this organized Transport Union would not be the end of the matter. The trackways join hands with the more ancient of the earthworks, the circles with the barrows, the barrows with the earthworks, the circles with the trackways, and each of them separately and all of them together with the mines. These are all the leaves, scattered, foxed, torn and barely decipherable, of a single volume, part of a set wrinkled deep in time, written in a foreign language, but very history. And when we have put the leaves together and then the volumes, and read them from first page to last, we shall know many things

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at last of which we now possess hardly a glimmer, and that knowledge is going to burst the safe and studious walls of the archæological hermitage and throw its beams upon the world as it is to-day.

But I feel far from comfortable in the grandiose robes of the prophet, and hasten to step out of them and back to Avebury, seated on the plateau between the Pewsey Valley and the pastures of North Wilts, there in the centre of its web of trackways.¹ With their chains of earthworks and barrows, like the knots and rugosities along the underground root-system of a leguminous plant, they and their Milky Way of daisies come trolling along from the Wash and from the Channel, from Salisbury Plain and Stonehenge to the south, from the North and South Downs with their network of shafted flint quarries at Cissbury, from the Chilterns and the Cotswolds with their long barrows, from the Purbeck Range and the Dorset Downs with their massive earthworks carved some to the contour and all to the measure of the hills, Maiden Castle, Ham Hill, Badbury Rings and the others; and from the Bristol Channel over Mendip ridged with earthworks of stone, pitted with the ancient workings of the lead mines and embossed with the stone circles and avenues of Stanton Drew.

It is impossible to grasp the meaning of Avebury, unless we fix it as the node of an intricate geometrical pattern, and that we can only do by gradually working outwards from the centre of gravity. To the east, the Ridgeway throws out a tributary to Inkpen Beacon, the pivot of the Hampshire Highlands, right to the centre of the great camp (Walbury) on its summit with its long barrow outside. The main line follows the chalk south-westward to the mouth of the Devonshire Axe. Thus Hampshire, Devonshire, Dorset and Wiltshire are made one. Another green-

¹ For a very valuable summary of the trackway system, see Mr. Hippiusley Cox's *The Green Roads of England*.



STONEHENGE.

(From Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*.)

THE TALE OF THE TRACKWAYS

way passes various long barrows and camps and on through Stonehenge to Old Sarum, where it joins the Roman Road (built along the line of older and curlier trackways¹) from Winchester over Mendip top to the mouth of the Somerset Axe in the Bristol Channel.

A trackway connects Streatley and Hitchin in the Hertfordshire chalk region, and from Streatley the Great Ridgeway that connects Avebury with the Devonshire Axe crosses the Berkshire Downs to the holy city. The Thames, the Wiltshire Avon, the Wylie, the two Axes, the Stour, the Parret and the Severn are out of sight but not of mind of one another, for currents of thought pass from one to the other and many other rivers with them, and of all these interlacing threads of communication Avebury was the brain and nerve centre.

From the Winchester district, again, trackways run over the North Downs, and again south of them past Selborne and across the southern watershed, and south of that again to Butser Hill where the South Downs extend eastward for sixty miles to Beachy Head. A trackway crests them all the way. From Hitchin, the Icknield Way, which is the site of an ancient trackway and becomes the great Ridgeway in the middle of the Berkshire Downs, travels through Cambridgeshire on to Thetford, and itself passing on eastward, spouts out a turf jet northwards past the flint quarries of Grime's Graves and on to the Wash. The famous 'Pilgrim's Way' I shall tread later on in the story. Derbyshire is linked on to Wales and the Cotswolds by other trackways, South and North Wales had similar arteries of

¹ Other examples of Roman roads which are believed by good authorities to be more or less superimposed upon the sites of 'broad green ribands of turf' far earlier in date and used from 'Neolithic' to Celtic times, are the Icknield way connecting Cambridgeshire and East Anglia with the south-west, Watling Street, Stane Street and the famous Pilgrim's Way from Winchester to Canterbury, and once connected, in Mr. Belloc's opinion, with Avebury.

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communication with the Mendips eastward via the Bristol Channel and south-eastward via Gloucestershire with Avebury, while other nerve-fibres kept Derbyshire in touch with the Yorkshire Wolds. Yorkshire, Westmoreland and the Cheviots were likewise threaded by trackways, and Lancashire, Herefordshire and Shropshire (where there are also 'prehistoric' remains), were not isolated from Wales and the Cotswolds. Such a complex of lines and settlements reminds one of a modern railway system with Avebury as Paddington, Euston, Victoria and Liverpool Street all fused into one junction.

§ 2. CHALK, GRANITE AND LIMESTONE: A PART-SONG

But the key to these inter-relations is really quite simple. It is the interplay between flint and metals, between the chalk and the limestone and the granite.¹ Archæology asserts that the ancients made a swarm, to adopt a bee-simile, on the bleak limestone hills of Derbyshire for the sake of the cattle pasturage. As lead objects occur in at least one (Alnwick) round barrow and the megaliths and barrows (long and round) upon these hills are disposed in relation to the lead-mines almost as closely as hats on to heads, it seems a circuitous form of argument to suggest that the celts were imported from abroad. In the same way, the round barrows and earthworks of Mendip and the dolmens of Wales cluster about the lead-mines. In Forfar, Inverness, Fife, Perthshire and Sutherland, as well as in South Scotland, the megaliths occur in the ancient gold districts. The stone circles of the Western Isles accompany gold, tin and lead deposits. The megaliths of Cornwall and Devon stand upon the granite, holding tin, copper and gold, of the Land's End, Camborne Moor,

¹ And, of course, other strata bearing on or beneath the surface gold, hæmatite, ochre and other minerals or substances particularly valued by the ancient globe-trotters.

CHALK, GRANITE, LIMESTONE: PART-SONG

Bodmin Moor and Dartmoor, but not upon St. Austell Moor, where the china clay screened the mines.¹

In all these metal-bearing regions, flint implements foreign to their soils occur in abundance, delivering the same message in another idiom as the trackways. They are the score of the part-song between chalk, granite and limestone. These earths, metals and flints are the secretaries of the ancients: the journeys of the former record the intercourse over a network of counties of the latter. The Wiltshire barrows report amber from the east coast, jet from Yorkshire and shale from Kimmeridge, while a bronze dagger handle from Normanton Bush Barrow (Wilts) is twinned by one from a Yorkshire mound, and a drinking cup ("beaker") found at Green Lowe on Alsop Moor (Derbyshire) can only have been made by the same craftsman or his apprentice as the cup figured in Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire* (Plate 18, Vol. I). Purbeck shale ornaments were laid with the dead in the barrows of Derbyshire.

The great bowl of Dolebury, the giant stone earthwork in the centre of the Mendip lead-mining district, was studded when Mr. Perry and I saw it two years ago with surface piles of ochre² and hæmatite used for pigmentation, as well as dumps of smelted lead-ore. The nearest place where ochre could have been obtained was Winford, near Stanton Drew, and, if it was used in quantity, the long barrowed Cotswolds, while the hæmatite came either by the Cotswolds from Oxfordshire in the area of the Rollright stone circle, where it was extensively worked, or the Brendon Hills behind the Quantocks. Dolebury is ribboned to maypole Avebury two or three times over, but the principal track from the Wiltshire Downs descends into the valley at

¹ Mr. J. W. Jackson's fine discovery.

² Red earth was a blood-substitute and so a life-giver. It is possible that this is the reason why red was one of the principal symbolic colours of ancient Egypt.

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Warminster and climbs the foothills of Mendip beyond Frome where the dolomitic conglomerate and carboniferous limestone that bear lead begin. It then passes over the hills to the Priddy-Charterhouse region, where the lead deposits were once a mile long and contained half a million cubic yards of lead-ore, and so past Dolebury on to the Bristol Channel. Large tracts of the country between Priddy and Dolebury are conspicuously occupied only by round barrows and 'gruffy-ground,' the local term for the sites of old mining works and recognizable at once by the barren, pitted and convulsed set of the ground. Let us pause a moment between Dolebury and Avebury.

§ 3. AVEBURY AND STANTON DREW

That Avebury represents, in Mr. Hadrian Allcroft's words, 'an organized effort on a vast scale,' is self-evident. It 'implies,' he says, 'a considerable population living in a settled condition of peace, united in the observance of a widely recognized cult, and accustomed to combine for common action under the direction of some recognized authority.'¹ But how wide, how inter-related that effort was, is, I would submit, hardly recognized at all. Elsewhere in his book (*Earthwork of England*), Allcroft, in contemplating Dolebury, sees the shadows of Avebury and Stonehenge upon it and is led to the pregnant wonder as to whether all three were not 'the product of a pious collectivism or of Egyptian absolutism.' But he, in common with most other home-grown antiquaries, stops dead on the shore of this uncharted sea, will wet his feet but will not take the plunge.

Now you have in Dolebury, and in the plainest terms, a part-solution of what is in more senses than one the riddle of the Sphinx. At Dolebury four links in the chain of

¹ A very striking parallel with the Zimbabwe mines. See above.



HELL STONE DOLMEN, PORTISHAM, DORSET.



THE DEVIL'S DEN, NEAR AVEBURY.

AVEBURY AND STANTON DREW

causation I have discussed are clapped together and jangle their meaning at us. Its district was the seat of the old lead-mining industry of Mendip; trackways from north, east, south and west mingle their courses there, and in it have been set up the very ancient megaliths of Stanton Drew, with their ruined 'Cove' hard by, brought by ropes and rollers no doubt chiefly from the limestone quarries of Harptree-on-Mendip, six miles away. Stanton Drew, that is to say, is not only in touch with Dolebury but with its junction of trackways from Gloucester to the north, Brent Knoll to the south-west, the Wiltshire Downs away to the east, Brean Down westward as the crow flies and the great camp of Worlesbury on the coast to the north-east.

The huge inner wall of Dolebury, twenty feet high, is built of unmortared limestone blocks and in such quantities that the debris at its foot looks like a continuous scree, while the plateau within is a 'gruffy-ground' rashed with ancient mine-workings. We cannot divorce mines from stones: the very traditional names declare they shall not be put asunder. Apart from blue stones, 'Sarsen' stones is the name for all megaliths. 'Sarsen' is a corruption of Saracen, viz., foreigner and especially mine-worker, while 'attol Sarsen' is an old country term for mining refuse.

The camp, again, is built on Rowberrow (Round Barrow) Hill which is overhung and dominated by Blackdown, the loftiest hill of Mendip, while Crook's Peak and Wavering Down, a few miles to the south-west, are not only higher than Dolebury but much more commanding from a strategic and geographical point of view. There are no camps on either of these three hills, so that if Dolebury was a defensive citadel, its builders were putting a child in heavy armour and leaving its six-foot brothers to look after themselves. Dolebury, in other words, was a mine-thought, not a war-thought, and Allcroft denies his own fortress-formulæ and

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military assumptions¹ by remarking: 'Then must the Pax Britannica have been a very real, very lasting, very lucrative fact in a society which commonly receives small credit for such pacific habits,' especially, I may remark, from the writer. It must have been, he says, a society which presupposed a condition of abiding peace and 'guaranteed ample leisure to its peoples.' If this little ordnance survey of mine does not suggest an intimate connection between mines and megaliths, megaliths and earthworks, earthworks and mines, between all three and a similar energy and similar purpose in other parts of England, let us go on reading the script upside-down, and sighing, 'Ah, all buried in impenetrable mystery!'

The Dolebury region, whose Antæan remains start the ghosts of an *infinita multitudo hominum* into active life, is, according to the text of the trackways (he who runs them may read) but an outlying suburb of Avebury. Though the monument of Stanton Drew covers a much wider space of ground than Stonehenge, its scope and scale bear no comparison with those of Avebury. Yet the plan and architectural methods both of Stanton Drew and Avebury are alike.² The two inner double circles of Avebury were composed of twelve stones within thirty. The same number and arrangement occur at Stanton Drew, the circle of twelve stones (according to Ernest Sibree, *The Stanton Drew Stones*, 1919) corresponding to the months of the year, and the circle of thirty with the days of the calendar month. It is highly probable that there is an astronomical symbolism in the nineteen stones of many of the Cornish stone circles.

¹ Allcroft's book might be called a military manual of ancient warfare, so much, in common with other antiquaries, does he insist on this aspect of 'pre-historic' Britain.

² 'Whenever circles of stones are to be found . . . it seems clear that they owe their origin to the same design which attained its perfection in Abury, and finally in Stonehenge' (Borlase, *Noenia Cornubiae*, 1872).

Diodorus says: 'They say also that the god comes into the island at intervals of nineteen years, in which time the stars perform a complete revolution, and therefore the period of nineteen years is among the Greeks called a great year.' This is in fact the Metonic cycle, the golden number of the Prayer Book. The Egyptians were the first of all peoples to divide the year into twelve months of thirty days each, and a sacred period of five feast-days at the end of the year. In Egypt, agriculture, astronomy and mathematics were all essential parts of one whole, and it seems we can only read any meaning into Stanton Drew and Avebury by the aid of Egyptian pictographs.

But there is a further remarkable likeness between Stanton Drew and Avebury. In the garden of the inn at Stanton Drew, there is a 'cove' of three huge monoliths which the books call a ruined dolmen. You have only to go there and see them for yourself to find out that this is a mere guess and these stones could never have formed a dolmen, even if the capstone had been removed. Is it permissible to suggest that they remind us of the idea of the triune god applied particularly to Baal and the goddess Tanit (a fertility goddess, corresponding more or less with Hathor and the Greek Aphrodite) in Phœnicia and represented by three standing stones? The same grouping of three to express the triple embodiment of the single deity was a peculiarity of Egyptian tree-worship and, as Sir Arthur Evans has shown (*Mycenæan Tree and Pillar Cult*), trees and stones can be 'equated' to each other. He gives many examples of this Egyptian trinity grouping in Crete, and the dragon-worship which originated in Egypt suggests, as Dr. Elliott Smith has described, the same idea of tripartite impersonation. Here is, in fact, yet another example (see above) of an Ægean cultural symbol, derived from Egypt and imitated by the Phœnicians at a later date either from Crete or direct from Egypt. The archaic civili-

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zation was a unity joining three continents. The 'cove' at Stanton Drew must have been an organic part of the circles and avenue, and we know that the Ægean peoples were builders of stone circles.

This, however, is pure hypothesis, and the real point is that exactly the same grouping of three stones disconnected from the circle occurred within the northern inner circle of Avebury and likewise at Beckhampton a mile away, while there stands another 'cove' within the stone circle of Arbor Lowe on the Derbyshire limestone, and within a mile of a large lead-mine. Arbor Lowe is almost a replica in structural plan of Avebury, but the phenomenon of three 'coves' with their peculiarly sacred signification¹ appearing in the most important flint region and two of the most important lead regions in all England is a good reason in itself, and, apart from all other and analogous manifestations, for drawing a triangle of intercommunication with its three points at Avebury, Arbor Lowe and Stanton Drew.

Before leaving Dolebury and its lead-mines, let me point out that Crete was very rich in silver vessels of all kinds. Now the silver of England and Wales were its lead-mines, and from Mendip lead the Romans extracted large quantities of silver. And wherever there were lead-mines in our country, on Mendip, on the Derbyshire hills, in the Isle of Man, on the Cheviots, in North and South Wales, there followed a concentration of megaliths, barrows, long and round, and other characteristic identification marks of the 'archaic civilization.' Their distribution is as clear for lead as it is for gold (Merioneth as well as Devon and Cornwall), copper (the Lake District, Isle of Man, North Wales, Anglesea and the South-West), tin and flint, while on the

¹ This triune symbolization plays a very large part in Celtic superstition and magic and must have originated in the trinity of Osiris, Isis and Horus. The significance of the Celts having inherited the triform idea will become apparent in our later chapters.



THE HARVESTER'S VASE, HAGIA TRIADA, CRETE.

(From Angelo Mosso's *Palaces of Crete*, by permission of Messrs. T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd.)

To face p. 70.

AVEBURY AND STANTON DREW

coasts of southern England have been found their dumps for export. In all Berkshire, only two of these bronze or flint hoards have been found, but on the Sussex, Hampshire and Dorset coasts, and in the estuaries of the Thames and the Medway, they have been dug out 'in enormous numbers.'¹ The hæmatite and iron pyrites of Oxfordshire, the amber of the West, the shale of Dorset and the jet of the Whitby region complete the tally.²

§ 4. MAYPOLE AVEBURY

According to Perry (*The Growth of Civilization*), Avebury spells flint, and the first 'invasion' of Britain within 'Neolithic' times took the expeditionary form and sought to exploit certain raw materials to be found abundantly in our land, rather than to make the permanent settlements of Stonehenge and the early Bronze Age. But since I had the privilege of accompanying this great investigator to Avebury, I feel fairly confident that he would modify this view. The immensity of Avebury spells more than flint and Wiltshire. There are other hieroglyphs in the name—lead from Derbyshire, Wales, Somerset and the North, tin and gold from Cornwall, ochre and other substances from the Cotswolds, jet from Yorkshire, purple-shell from Somerset, pearl-shell from Dorset (see p. 55), shale from the Pur-

¹ See Mr. O. G. S. Crawford, *Man and his Past*, p. 151.

² DISTRIBUTION: *Lead*: In the Isle of Man and on the Cheviots, stone circles; in Wales, dolmens and stone circles; in Derbyshire, long barrows and stone circles. *Gold*: dolmens and stone circles. *Copper*: dolmens, stone circles and long barrows. *Tin*: dolmens and stone circles. *Flint*: everything. *Hæmatite*: dolmens and stone circles. *Amber*: flint and bronze implements. *Shale*: stone circles and long barrows. *Jet*: stone circles. The list is not inclusive and mentions only the principal monuments. Earthworks, menhirs, round barrows and villages omitted. The presence of a few megalithic monuments on Exmoor has long been a difficulty. But recent investigation reveals the possibility that alluvial gold was found in the streams, and traditions still exist to that effect.

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beck Hills, hæmatite and iron pigment from Oxfordshire, terraces on the Downs.

To account for Avebury, therefore, by the chalk of Southern England and its flint deposits alone, is to account for London as the core of the home counties. The trackways throw a wider net, and the ring to which they are attached is too broad and heavy for so slight a cast. Even Fergusson of *Rude Stone Monuments*, supercilious, derisory, able Fergusson with his quaint theory that the Avebury stones were set up to commemorate a post-Roman battle, is overcome by 'the power and grandeur which few of the more elaborate works of men's hands can rival' which Avebury impresses upon all. That Avebury was built upon the chalk demonstrates the prime importance of the flint-mines, but not that Avebury had no thought beyond flint. If I could transport myself on a dance-and-feast day back to an Avebury that walked as well as talked as it does now, I feel sure I should meet the Devon tin-miners, the Whitby jet-workers, the Pennine and Mendip lead-workers with those of Denbighshire, the Somerset dye-extractors and the Cornish gold-washers there as well as the Sussex flint-miners. Sussex – we can go further and watch the flint-knappers of Grime's Graves near Brandon coming along the Icknield Way, over the Chilterns, across the Thames at Streatley and along the Berkshire Downs to Avebury.

In one respect, the relation of Avebury to gold, tin, copper and lead was closer than to flint, since the nature of the former was more sacred than that of the latter. And since these substances rather than flint were the more potent cause of the first¹ discovery and exploration of Britain, the

¹ The Bronze Age civilization of England was, of course, more *extensively* distributed than the 'Neolithic.' But a consultation of p. 71 will *alone* reveal that the men of Avebury, the builders of the long barrows and the dolmens (though it must be remembered that the dolmen overlapped into the *early* Bronze Age) had already opened up most of prehistoric England before the arrival of the round barrow men.

MAYPOLE AVEBURY

quest of them led to the settlements on the chalk rather than vice versa. But the capital would naturally be built upon the chalk as the region of the main domestic industry, and this surely, apart from the stupendous size of the place and the labour of the building to match it, gives Avebury the right to be considered the hub of a numerous and settled community rather than a temple built haphazard for worship, ceremonial and council alone, by foreigners who used England, though with nothing of their predatory violence, much as the Romans did.

Surely this preliminary stroll over the England of the archaic civilization, during which I have tried to do no more than observe certain general phenomena, allows us some slight justification in challenging the accepted data of the prehistorians? They talk of tribal savages, battailous and dim-minded, and we are witness of an organized whole of civilized minds with definite aims. They talk of war and we gain courage to answer them with peace. They mesmerize us with formulæ of barter and trade-routes and we reap an impression of a permanent and settled population devoted to a variety of interdependent pursuits, and chiefly mining. Cornish moor, Pennine hill, Mendip plateau mean only pasturage in their eyes: they see none but shepherds with a spear in one hand and a crook in the other, and they are oblivious to the mines beneath. They speak of invaders, but we prefer the term of colonists. They will not hear of the diffusion of Oriental culture, though it is already evident that the long and the round barrows were the labour of civilized men and men who had some contact with the Eastern Mediterranean.

§ 5. THE WELCQME OF DORSET

The main Ridgeway from Avebury passes through Cranborne Chase between the great earthworks of Hod Hill and Hambledon Hill (a long barrow district) and travels on as

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we have described, through the backbone of Dorset to the mouth of the Devonshire Axe. Leave it near Blandford and drop south to Wareham. Draw a line westward from Wareham to Bridport with Dorchester half-way between, and you will find a quite astonishing concentration of the megalithic peoples between that line and the coast. The archæology of Dorset is still largely undiscovered country, and I for one could hardly believe my eyes before the profusion of remains that stretched from horizon to horizon for mile after mile. The Downs of Long Bredy are said 'not to be equalled in the whole world for the sight of their barrows'; yes, and on Bincombe Down there is a 'music barrow' from which hums an unearthly melody, stirring the grasses to sighing and swaying with its sweetness. There are any number of magic mounds in other counties: but none, most fittingly, owns a mound of melody but Dorset the Blest.

A musing stroll across the heath from Studland, again (between Poole Harbour and Swanage), brings you to the Agglestone, the holy stone (Helig - Anglo-Saxon for holy) hurled by the Devil on to the crest of a hillock rising above the peaty waste. Fiends often do dress like angels, and it is certainly hard to detect anything of the Devil when the Madonna-blue chalices of that visionary flower, *Gentiana pneumonanthe*, are open on the heath. But devils did traffic with holy stones in archaic England, for devils were once gods themselves fallen from heaven upon evil days, the days when the usurping Celts looked with dread upon the works of their predecessors. For the Agglestone is a menhir.

The landscape is hummocked with barrows gazing over the sea from the high coastal ridges and over the vales from the inland ranges. There are actually more stone circles and dolmens now existing in South Dorset than there are on the Wiltshire Downs, and I certainly believe that the terracing of the Dorset Downs is more extensive than in what I may call the metropolitan area of North Wiltshire.

THE WELCOME OF DORSET

Run the eye along a triangle composed of Dorchester as the apex, Long Bredy as the western angle and Poxwell as the south-eastern, and there are remains and sites of at least seven stone circles with the mightiest earthwork in the world in the centre. Within the same area, leaving out of account the necklaces of tumuli and clasps of earthworks, there are or rather were the peculiar cone barrows of Came Down (see Chapter V), there is the Long Barrow of Clandon, and there is the dolmen known as the Hell Stones hunched upon the heights above Portisham to the west of Blackdown, and sweeping an illimitable arc of sky and sea in a contemplation which tide upon tide of centuries has not been able to subdue. We are strange to that fixed meditation, but it still catches the wild cries of the wantoning lapwing and still watches its mid-ether revels that no millennia can tire.

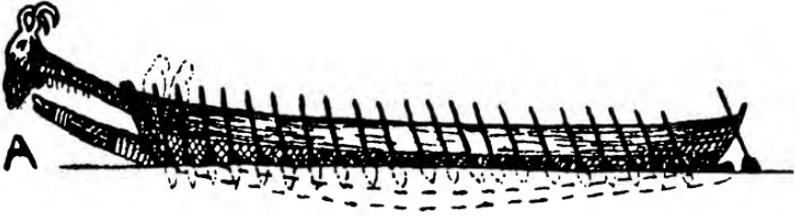
To the east is the God-given country of the Purbeck Hills, the country of the Kimmeridge shale, and here where southern sea, hills soaring and plunging in huge waves and the heathy glooms of Egdon preserve their solitude, once hummed the ports and maritime cities of venturing seamen from the Isles of Greece. Or take the main road – yes, the main road from Dorchester to Bridport – and all that prim-rosed way you will pass through avenues of barrows. Pause by Shipton Hill and look down upon the ranges of hills to the west. In all England there are no hills more individual, more truly shaped according to each its own, powerful nature, and yet so comforting to the human spirit as the Dorset uplands.

When I saw them, the sun had furled his wings and dropping to his roost below the western wave, had spread beneath the shoulders of the hills a divinely golden light that flowed into all the channels and bowls of the valleys. Beneath the heights spread this light of everlastingness which endureth but for a moment, while above it rose the swart

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backs of the hills sporting like primal whales, dolphins and behemoths in the flood of creation. It was a canvas that some mediæval artist might have taken for his original in depicting the first world-thought of God. I never expect to see anything better than those rejoicing hills with their flanks dipped into that celestial light, no — not even the sun-steeped isles of the Ægean whence came the voyagers to live in Dorset. For on nearly every one of them — Waddon and Ways' Hills, Welcome and Boar's Barrow, Pilsdon, Lewesdon and Eggardon, Round Knoll and Lambert's Castle, Thorncombe Beacon, Eype Down and Golden Cap, North, Loders, Coppet and Hamdown Hills, Trinity Hill and Coney's Castle, the descendants of the men who built the Palace of Minos plied their industries and buried their dead.

I think there are five explanations for what one might call the congested megalithic occupation of the Dorset Hills. Firstly, they were the highway between the mining districts of Cornwall and Devon and the home counties of the Wiltshire Downs. Secondly, mile after mile of the uplands are scarped with terraces and I shall try to show in a future Chapter that this meant an agricultural civilization contemporary with the megaliths. Thirdly, the Purbeck was the centre of the shale industry, and shale, as we have seen, was deposited in the barrows of Wiltshire and Derbyshire. Fourthly, a reason that smells of the rankest archæological heresy, I believe that the ancients occupied the highlands of Dorset because they liked them. We shall consider their eye for landscape 'in another place,' as the phrase goes, but there can be no real difference of opinion as to the precedence of the Dorset over the Wiltshire Downs for the pleasure of dwelling upon them. Both possess the wildness, nobility and freedom of the heights; their curves and undulations equally delight the eye, but Dorset gives a welcome to the human spirit that the Wiltshire Downs do not.



A

B



C



A. BOAT USED TO-DAY ON LAKE VICTORIA.

B. EGYPTIAN BOAT OF THE 18th DYNASTY.

C. BOAT CARVED BY THE ANCIENT MARINERS ON THE ROCKS OF SWEDEN.

(From Elliot Smith's *The Ancient Egyptians*, by permission of Messrs. Harper and Brothers.)

THE WELCOME OF DORSET

The fifth reason is perhaps the most important of all. It will be remembered that the caches and hoards of implements found along the Dorset coast are very numerous, while its little ports and harbours offer great facilities for sea-going ships rowed with banks of oars. Dorset in fact was the county of the Ancient Mariners in a truer sense than any other.

§ 6. THE TIN AND GOLD OF BODMIN

I will end this chapter by passing over from Dorset to Cornwall and tracking the footsteps of the ancient metal-seekers on Bodmin Moor. Let us take our journey at ease and along the course of the little Fowey River. The Fowey River empties its waters at the grey little town of smacks and smells and slants and stone steps from which it takes its name. It has come to town and, like other country dwellers that leave their native home, gulls and men and rivers, it has put on a new nature in which memory alone is insignificant. Plainly, Fowey River is now one of the important ones; it boasts quite an estuary and across it runs a ferry as clearly dotted on the map as a row of medals across the veteran's dilated breast. Three eastward-flowing tributaries, too, have been left behind – Port Pill, Penpoll and Lerryn – and the Fowey River enters the sea and Nirvana for its fusion with the watery All, with a due sense of honours, a record, a carèer. It no longer remembers that the two inland vassal streams three or four miles to the north, the lowest south of St. Veep and the highest west of Lanreath – that rare thing in Cornwall, a village of ripened beauty – are called Creeks.

The Fowey might well be proud of Lerryn Creek with a stone bridge as shapely moulded as Mary Stewart's eyebrow and tiny projecting bays that might be stands for bunches of flowers, and with its waters broadening deep into the shadows of the climbing woods. But here Fowey has only just begun to think of its sea voyage, and a bare three miles

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higher up at Lostwithiel, beyond the point where the venturing bass think better than to go, it has, for all its tidal stream, become its country self. Now it is at home with the wagtails, grey and pied, prinking between bank and bank in two flickers of the wing, while round a bend they can stand in mid-stream of the fretted shallows without Fowey of Fowey Town, smack-bearing Fowey of three tributaries, a ferry and an estuary, achieving more than a splash upon their flanks. Nor do the delicate chimes of Lostwithiel, its humble-jumble of grey buildings, odd corners, ups and downs of streets and turnings and pockets of house-hedged lanes sewn up at their ends, exact much gravity from their river.

The river saunters on, brown and irresponsible, passes Restormel Castle a trifle further north, where they tell you about the Black Prince, but the river is more wagtailian than ever, and, bending to the east, slips into the abrupt and heavily wooded valleys between Bodmin Road Station and Doublebois. High overhead, the Great Western engines pound asthmatically over the viaducts on their way to Penzance from the mighty waterways of Plymouth, and Fowey River is no more than a peddling freshet, humming along under the hills with a twist here and a straight dash over there, as it passes one bearded solemnity after another. It is when it reaches Doublebois that the way to its source is once more north, and it trickles over the southern edge of Bodmin Moor.

Here is where the Fowey River, flowing between open banks of russet moor, goes fey. From Bolventor under the seamed brow of Brown Willy, the cradle of its being, and the tousled rim of the Moor, its course is nearly straight and the waters are very clear, smooth and persistently shallow. Suddenly it has lost the self-importance of its journey's end, the prettiness and capriciousness of its manner past the hanging woods of Doublebois. It has dropped all its airs, and the aridity of the soil along its banks, the poverty of their flora

THE TIN AND GOLD OF BODMIN

(mostly fleabane in the summer), and the simplicity of the stream-floor with only pebble-beds and locks of dun and streaming weed to variegate its levels of sand and gravel, leaves no room for graces. Yet it has become radiant, wearing a special beauty that owes nothing except by way of contrast to the massiveness of the shoulders of the Moor on either side, nothing to anything decorative in itself – cascades, lichened boulders, pools of sanctuary and what not. But it is a beauty, a radiance I have never seen upon any other river in England, ten times as long, broad or deep, or clothed in no matter how richly embroidered a gown of green.

The Fowey River owes its transfiguration to its colour alone. That colour is gold, but it certainly cannot be matched with any earthly gold. The gold of all our yellow flowers is much too bright for it; the gold of autumn hedges-rows and trees delivering up their summer life, even the ash, too ruddy with the first and too lightless with the second; even the golden manes of Blake's lions and the golden borders of a missal are too metallic to compare with the spiritual gold of the Fowey River. But on a cloudless day the heavens show it from the wake of the bedding sun. Let this afterglow be caught too late and it is whitened, too early and it is tinted with flame. The colour of the Fowey River is that of the afterglow without flame and without whiteness, and the sun had nothing to do with it, since I saw it on a cloudy morning.

Mutability is the nightmare of the reflective mind. How much of art is not an attempt to fix and eternize the moment of the rare, the true, the cherished experiences of life, and how much of our lyric poetry is not a confession of their fleetingness? In ancient times, the Moor and the River were sought by the seekers of tin and gold before the days when metals were but the strong right hand of earthly power. They were sought because in them resided the essence incorruptible of life that should save men from mortality and the

fading of all brightness.¹ On the swart heights that lift their masses on either side of the Fowey River whence was washed three and four thousand years ago the gold that was not yet dust, the seekers set up their rings of monoliths, the sacred stones that were the habitacles of deity. Here indeed, beside the numerous hut-circles, is one of the finest specimens of stone-circles in Cornwall, set round with thin slabs like those surrounding the shaft-graves of Mycenæ. Within three and four hundred yards of it are four disused shafts of tin-mines, comparatively modern, of course, but showing how abundant was the tin in the neighbourhood. Stand within this circle and look over the unchanging Moor with its protruding humps, the Cheesewring at one's back, Brown Willy to the right, Browngelly Downs over against one, Rough Tor in the distance beyond like a foundered cloud. They are as the builders saw them, but the spirit has departed even from the enduring stone, and the builders and all their thoughts of the timeless land² have perished.

Gold to these ancient metal-seekers was the gift of life and the golden tint of the Fowey River is like the afterglow of the sun, the source of life, but a glow that endures only for a moment. The wonder of the little river is that this same tint, born to die, is fadeless. It must, you think, steal off the water and leave it muddy, brown or silver, but it stays. Turn your eyes and look again, and the radiance is still there. Legitimately or not, we seek to find in Nature some key to the landscape of our own mental life. This most beautiful colour was a pledge that what we feel as the rarest, truest and most cherished experiences of our lives, brightnesses rescued from the confusions of darkness, redemptions from pain, harmonies from division, fulfilment from failure and vain-longing – do not fade into the light of common day.

¹ Viz., as 'givers of life.' See note on p. 55.

² The search for the 'Earthly Paradise' originated in the search for 'givers of life.'

CHAPTER THREE: THE ANCIENT MARINERS

The rock-cut tomb of Western Europe. The passage dolmen and the long barrow merely variations of it. The rock-cut tomb of Twelfth Dynasty Egypt and Middle Minoan Crete. The peculiarities of its ground-plan repeated in all the countries where it occurs. Diagrams of its structure. The contents of the rock-cut tomb – gold, jadeite and callais. Jadeite in Crete but not in Egypt. Callais a substitute for Egyptian turquoise from Sinai. Amethyst. Charcoal, used as incense, found in the long barrows as well as the rock-cut tomb. The beaker repeats the tale from Twelfth Dynasty Egypt to the West Kennet long barrow. The second megalithic movement from Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt through Late Minoan Crete to Bronze Age England. The evidence. The appearance of the rock-cut tomb in the tin-bearing regions of Western Europe coincides with the common use of bronze in Crete and Egypt. These facts offer a direct challenge to the Darwinian theories of modern archæology. Meaninglessness of the terms 'Neolithic' and 'Bronze Age.' The dates of the two successive megalithic periods in Western Europe. The relations between Egypt and Crete. Where do the Phœnicians come in? At the tail-end of the megalithic periods. The civilization of the Rhodesian gold-mines. The peaceful penetration of the ancient mariners.

‘O breeze of the morning, blow me a memory of the ancient
time;
If after a thousand years thy odours should float o’er my
dust,
My bones, full of gladness uprising, would dance in the
sepulchre.’

HAFIZ

CHAPTER THREE: THE ANCIENT MARINERS

PART I

Egypt and Crete – The Source of the Megalithic Culture of Western Europe

★

§ I. THE LONG BARROW, THE PASSAGE DOLMEN AND THE ROCK-CUT TOMB

IN various countries of Western Europe, but more especially in France, Spain and Portugal, are found certain graves of a peculiar ground-plan which are known as the rock-cut tomb. In France and Iberia, these particular types of graves are confined to Brittany, the Marne, Provence, the Pyrenees, Central Portugal and Southern Spain, and they can all, though this is a point of minor significance, be almost certainly dated as 'Neolithic.' Hitherto these tombs have lacked the rites of baptism. In other words, they have been cut off from family inheritance and our main case rests upon the effort thus to legitimize them.

At present there are two views current as to the origin of the megalithic grave. The first and orthodox view – that of the French archæologist, Mortillet – holds that it was a native evolution from the natural grotto in which 'Neolithic' remains were sometimes deposited. The second view – that of Montelius, Déchelette, Perry, Elliot Smith and Sophus Müller – is that it had an Eastern paternity, while the genius of Dr. Elliot Smith was the first to detect the structural resemblances between the dolmen and other megalithic monuments and the mastaba-tombs of ancient Egypt. If we accept the fact that local variations to the original and uniform type of rock-cut tomb sprang up in each differ-

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ent region where it is found, we can quite easily commit the unpardonable sin of reconciling these two conflicting views. All we have to do is to replace the natural grotto with the rock-cut tomb, and so confused and negative is the status of orthodox archæology that it has actually smoothed the way for us by admitting that the chambered long barrow, the 'passage dolmen' and the rock-cut tomb are all of the same family. Mr. E. Thurlow Leeds, for instance, one of the most aggressive supporters of the native evolutionary theory, expressly admits (see *Archæologia*, Vol. 70) that the Spanish rock-cut tomb definitely merges into the passage dolmen.¹

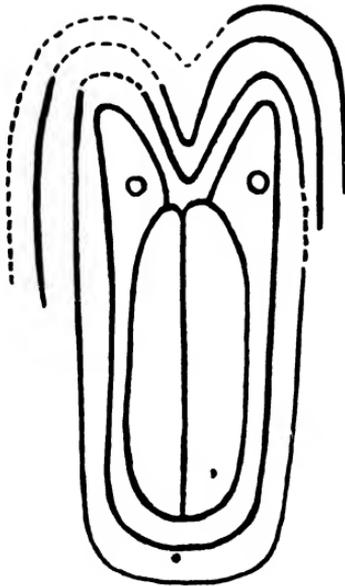
No orthodox archæologist, again, would deny that the passage dolmen and the chambered long barrow are to all intents and purposes one and the same thing. Thus, if we have not yet found a father for the rock-cut tomb, we know its offspring all right, and the first conclusion we reach is that the chambered long barrows of England are descended from the rock-cut tombs of France, Spain and Portugal. If it be asked why the practice of cutting into the rock was abandoned, the answer is that the further the archaic civilization expanded from its source, the less trouble it took with its architecture. There are no rock-cut tombs in England because the constructional difficulties were too great in a country so far removed from the home-lands of the voyagers.

Now for the rock-cut tomb itself. There are two main things to be said about it, and two only. The first is that its peculiarities of structure were repeated with quite minor modifications in all the parts of Western Europe where it was built. The second is that though we do not find the passage dolmen in the Ægean, yet we do find there, and particularly in Crete, rock-cut tombs of a precisely similar ground-plan to that of Western Europe on the one hand and of

¹ It seems possible, therefore, that the dolmen without a stone passage-way is a degraded form of the passage-dolmen. The passage was simply left out.



OCTOPUS VASE FROM GOURNIA, CRETE.



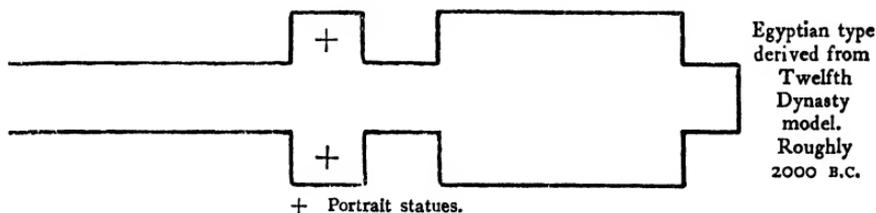
DEGENERATE SQUID.

(Morbihan, Brittany.)

To face p. 84.]

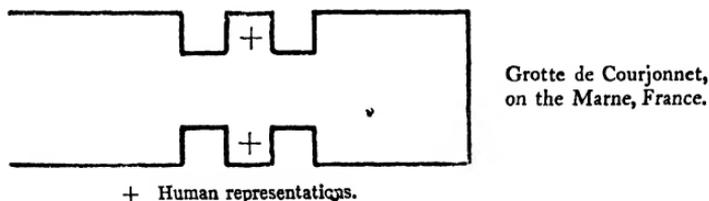
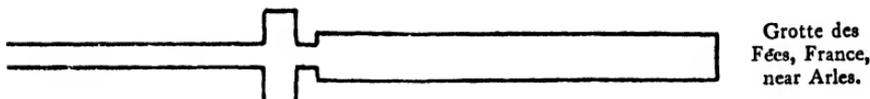
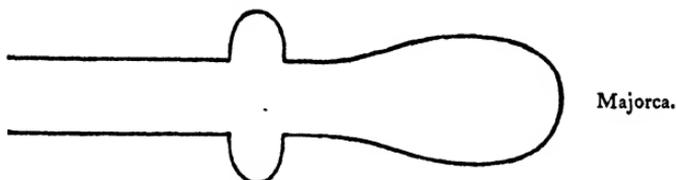
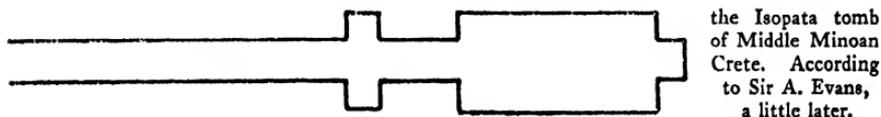
THE ROCK-CUT TOMB

Egypt of the Twelfth Dynasty on the other. As this discovery¹ implies an entirely revolutionary departure from current evolutionary doctrine, I will illustrate this similarity of ground-plan (which consists of a passage leading into a fore-court followed by another shorter passage opening out into the main burial chamber) by a series of comparative diagrams.



+ Portrait statues.

COMPARED BY SIR ARTHUR EVANS WITH



+ Human representations.

¹ It is Mr. Perry's, worked out with the assistance of Mr. E. C. Forde, also of London University. See also *Archæologia*, Vol. 59, Part II, pp. 559-60.

THE ANCIENT MARINERS

The reader will see at a glance the local modifications in what was a Twelfth Dynasty Egyptian type. The Cretan Isopata tomb repeats the Egyptian in a narrower form and with the portrait statues in the antechamber left out. The French and Balearic tombs omit the apse attached to the main chamber, which, however, some of our chambered barrows (viz. that at Wellow in Somerset) retain. The Majorcan rock-cut tomb deserts the rectangular while imitating the ground-plan, and the Grotte de Courjonnet substitutes rudely carved human figures for the Egyptian portrait-statues.

§ 2. THE FUNERARY OFFERINGS OF THE ROCK-CUT TOMB

Such is our own ground-plan for the derivation of the megalithic civilization of Western Europe from Middle Minoan Crete and Twelfth Dynasty Egypt. But our case is tremendously strengthened when we pass from the structure of the rock-cut tomb to its contents. In those of France and Iberia the funerary offerings consist of a certain pottery, gold ornaments, jadeite votive axes, and pendants and beads of a turquoise-like substance called callais. With the exception of the pottery, these substances are not found in other types of megalithic monuments in Western Europe. Refer back to Crete and the jadeite, the callais and the gold, there they were, reposing in tombs of the Middle Minoan period. The pottery, too, found in the rock-cut tombs of Portugal and the passage dolmens of Finisterre, very closely resemble a type of stone bowl found in the Cretan rock-cut tombs of the same Minoan period. •

The absence of jadeite from the Egyptian rock-cut tombs of the Twelfth Dynasty strengthens rather than weakens the scent. For during this period of the Middle Kingdom, the Egyptians were making widespread use of turquoise which they obtained from the mines of Sinai. They were

THE FUNERARY OFFERINGS

also responsible for the cult of the amethyst which was greatly valued by the megalith-builders of Western Europe, while Middle Minoan hieroglyphs are carved on amethyst scarabs of the Twelfth Egyptian Dynasty. At the same time, the callais ornaments of Crete and Western Europe are shaped precisely like the Egyptian turquoise ones. Therefore, the absence of jadeite from the Egyptian tombs actually supplies us with the most definite evidence that Crete was the connecting link between Twelfth Dynasty Egypt and the megalithic age of Western Europe.

To dispel a mystery which has hung like a dark fog over the age of the megaliths for so many centuries by evidence so clear, co-ordinated and solid as this is a very warming experience. But there is still more to come. Much charcoal was found in the Middle Minoan rock-cut tombs and there is little doubt that it was burned as incense and that its use was the Cretan variant of the Egyptian mummification custom of restoring the vital breath to the corpse by the burning of incense. Again we are enabled to fill in one more gap in our structure of evidence, for charcoal was also used not only in the rock-cut tombs of France, Spain and Portugal, but in the long barrows of England.

One characteristic of megalithic Western Europe was the making of what is termed Beaker Pottery, which, according to Montelius (*Die Chronologie der Alttesten Bronzezeit*, p. 88), is very similar to pottery made by the Egyptians in the Twelfth Dynasty and the people of Hissarlik in the Troad. This pottery recalls in some of its forms the carinated stone vases in the rock-cut tombs of Middle Minoan Crete. According to John Abercrombie* (*Bronze Age Pottery*, 1912) the English beaker is found in Cornwall, Dorset, Devon, Wiltshire, Somerset and Yorkshire, and here the connecting links are strengthened at the western end of the chain, which shows us the rock-cut tomb degenerating into the passage dolmen and the long barrow.

THE ANCIENT MARINERS

I am only dealing with England here as a part of Western Europe, as, in fact, a country which exhibits specimens of the type of grave which originated in the rock-cut tomb. But I may mention here that a beaker was found in the most important long barrow in all England, that of West Kennet near Avebury, so that the current archæological theory as to the distribution of the beaker throughout Bronze Age England by a 'Beaker Folk' coming from the Rhine, rests on the sand.¹ With the later types of English *round* barrow go, as we shall see later, the English segmented beads mentioned in the last chapter. Precisely the same type of beads occurred in megalithic Spain, in late Minoan Crete and in Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt. I bring these elements in here to show that we are dealing with a single complex of culture, and I will leave the reconciliation of date to a later chapter in which we return to England.

There is one more item to be added to a series of data all travelling the same road and all arriving at the same destination. That is the occurrence of the octopus motive upon certain megaliths of Brittany. It appears on the dolmen of Crach in Morbihan and a modified form of the same design appears on the stones of the Pierres Plattes allée couverte at Lockmariaquer and of the Gavr'inis tomb. The octopus was one of the most favoured subjects with the craftsmen of the superb polychrome ware so abundant in the Middle Minoan period.

§ 3. THE TINKERS

Consider then how positive and exact is the mass-evidence which points straight to 'Twelfth Dynasty Egypt as the

¹ It is curious that Mr. Gordon Childe (*Dawn of European Civilization*, 1925) repeats this current error of the Rhineland Beaker Folk, though he brings strong evidence to bear upon the extension of Cretan civilization westward. But his treatment of England is cursory and, an unusual flaw in so learned a book, marred by slight inaccuracies.



THE WEST KENNET LONG BARROW.



PIT DWELLINGS ON MARTINSELL HILL.

THE TINKERS

originator and Middle Minoan Crete as the distributor of the megalithic cult in what is termed without foundation of reality the 'Neolithic' period of Western Europe. First, the structure of the rock-cut tomb, which pushes up out of the ground as the passage dolmen and the long barrow; then the imitation of the portrait-statue of Egypt by the human representations in the Grotte de Courjonnet on the Marne, placed just where the Egyptians deposited the originals; then the charcoal, the gold, the jadeite and the callais occurring in the same type of tomb from the Ægean to Portugal and Brittany; and lastly, the beaker pottery, the use of amethyst and the octopus motive of Brittany and the beaker over again, the amber disks, the anthropomorphic drums, and the segmented beads of the Bronze Age, all going directly back to Mycenæ and Crete and from Crete to Egypt. And with the exception of the argument as to tomb-structure, the evidence is all drawn from Montelius, Abercrombie, Leeds, Evans, and other orthodox sources.

It is with such forces behind us that we approach the last phase of an archæological statement of fact wearisome perhaps in detail but extraordinarily significant in its total effect and in the conclusions to be drawn from it. Now Montelius has shown in the same book already referred to (p. 141 *et seq.*), that it was not until the Twelfth Dynasty that tin, with copper, the component of bronze, came into general use in Egypt. The Egyptians actually knew bronze as early as the Fourth (Pyramid) Dynasty, but it did not become a common and familiar metal until the dawn of the Middle Kingdom, *circa* 2000 B.C. The same is true of Crete, whose Middle Minoan period opened more or less contemporaneously with the Twelfth Dynasty.

It is, therefore, of the utmost interest and consequence that a type of tomb based on an Egyptian model, together with other characteristic features of Egyptian culture, should have appeared in Western Europe in those very countries

THE ANCIENT MARINERS

which contained abundant tin deposits. It is in fact incredible that the presence in tin-bearing countries of megalithic monuments derived from Egyptian tombs of a particular date should coincide only by accident with the presence of tin in the Egypt of that very period as a household commodity.¹ We can now be certain that the tin handled by Cretan and Egyptian workmen from 2000 B.C. onwards was the tin dug out of the mines of Spain, Brittany and Cornwall during the 'Neolithic' period. And if we want a flat proof of it, one of the 'Neolithic' rock-cut tombs of Italy supplies it. Tin buttons were found with the primary interment.

§ 4. THE CHALLENGE

If the reader's patience has been able to sustain such a tax on its resources, he will not fail of shock and surprise on emerging from the Museum doors. The caverns measureless to man of limestone Mendip have been hollowed out by drops of water. In a similar way, the beliefs, implanted in us from childhood and moulding the ideas and principles of our manhood in their approach to the problems of modern life, are eaten away to a papery skin empty of all tissue by what appears the insignificant agent of a single archæological record. We are reminded of Gabriel Oak's probe in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, which let out the wind from the sheep in the clover field and saved them all from the death to which the modern evolutionary theory of mankind is certainly driving modern civilization.² This sounds an arrogant claim, but the objective facts before us are susceptible of no other interpretation. It is impossible to account for these facts except as

¹ Says Prof. Glotz of the University of Paris in *The Aegean Civilization*, p. 211, of this same period: 'It is not impossible that they (the Cretans) supplied Egypt with the products of the furthest countries, such as tin and amber.'

² See Chapter XII.

THE CHALLENGE

the clearest evidence for a movement of people from Crete into the megalithic countries of Western Europe. What are the immediate consequences of admitting them?

The first is the dispossession of the theory, based on the 'survival of the fittest' and the 'struggle for existence' in the animal world, that civilization was a gradual and ascending process of evolution indigenously born of savage conflict. On the contrary, civilization was full-grown when it abruptly arrived in the metal-lands of Western Europe, and it was a degenerate edition of its source. Let us leave these large issues to work out their authenticity in the course of the narrative and confine ourselves here to conclusions at near range. The second consequence is the displacement of the terms 'Neolithic' and 'Bronze Age' as meaningless. The term 'Neolithic' is, indeed, utterly wrong at both ends. The working of flint and the polishing of stone were continued right through the Bronze Age, while the 'Neolithic' civilization was transplanted from the East as the result of a knowledge of and search for not merely copper and gold, but of the tin which, when smelted with copper, made bronze. In other words the 'Bronze Age' was the 'Neolithic' Age and the 'Neolithic' the 'Bronze.' The 'Bronze Age' was, in fact, simply a degraded phase continuous with the earlier phase of the 'Neolithic,' and both should be gathered into one heading which we may call the megalithic or archaic civilization. This brings us to a further definition — that of dates — about which the wildest confusion prevails.

According to the evidence, the Celtic invasions of Western Europe, which broke up the government of the archaic civilization, occurred during the last phase of the Bronze Age, *circa* 1000 B.C. That punctuates the virtual termination of the megalithic eras at one end. At the same time the Ancient Mariners who created 'Neolithic' Western Europe and built the rock-cut tomb, the passage dolmen and the long barrow for their illustrious dead, not only came from

THE ANCIENT MARINERS

the Eastern Mediterranean but from two specific countries, and at a period of time it is now possible to fix within a hundred or two of years. The royal rock-cut tomb of Isopata was built more or less at the beginning of the Middle Minoan period and was a model of an Egyptian tomb-type in the Twelfth Dynasty. Thus 'Neolithic' Europe owed its civilization to what Sir Arthur Evans calls 'The Age of the Palaces' in Crete and Prof. Breasted the Middle or Feudal Kingdom of Egypt. The Middle Minoan period of Crete and the Middle Kingdom of Egypt dawned at much the same time – 2000 B.C., so that, allowing one or two hundred years for the transmission of this Cretan and Egyptian culture, the megalithic civilization of Western Europe lasted for eight or nine hundred years.

There remains the 'Bronze Age.' That it owed its existence to the same sources at a later period is shown by the segmented beads I have already mentioned, reinforced by the amber disk and the Folkton Wold drums, all of which appeared in England and came from Crete and in Crete owed their example to the Egypt of the Eighteenth Dynasty which witnessed the dawn of the Egyptian Empire. In *The Palace of Minos* (Vol. I, 1921 – unhappily no second volume has yet followed), Sir Arthur Evans has shown that the Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt corresponded in time with the opening of the Late Minoan period in Crete, which he fixes at 1580 B.C. This or a little later is the era in which Mycenæ on the mainland of Greece appears to have transmitted the Late Minoan culture abroad. Thus the 'Bronze Age' of Western Europe – the second phase of its megalithic culture – occurred somewhere about 1400 B.C. It is a very interesting fact that the Celts who invaded Western Europe betray (as we shall see later) a very pronounced Hellenic influence in their culture, so that England, between Avebury and the Roman Conquest, may be said to have owed her whole life to the Eastern Mediterranean.

EGYPT AND CRETE

§ 5. EGYPT AND CRETE

Such is the skeleton of our subject; to clothe it will be the indirect attempt of subsequent chapters. I will close this portion of the present one by a very brief reference to the relations between Crete and Egypt.

The way that definite phases of the Minoan culture follow upon equally definite ones of Ancient Egypt suggests a very close relationship indeed.

There are passages in the Egyptian Pyramid Texts, for instance, which explicitly declare that Osiris was the 'Encircler of the Haunebu (Ægean) lands.' Everybody admits that both the Cretans and Egyptians went scafaring and the earliest known sea-going vessels are Egyptian in cut and rig. As early as the Third Dynasty, Egyptian sailors were bringing shell-symbolism to the Eastern Mediterranean, and the Cretans (see previous Chapter) diffused the cult of the shell westward. Like the Egyptians, the Cretans belonged to the Mediterranean race, as the cupbearer of the Knossian wall-painting shows. Dr. Elliot Smith has pointed out in *The Evolution of the Dragon* that the double-winged disk of Egypt, the life-sign of Horus, the prototype of the sun-god, Ré, is represented in Crete by the double axe. The Cretan solar symbols were Egyptian in origin; the snake-goddess was the Cretan form of Hathor-Isis with the protecting uræus, and the cow and lunar symbols of the Queen of Heaven were also part of Cretan religious imagery. The matriarchal basis of early Egyptian society was reproduced in Crete. The wonderful Cretan faïence-work originated in Egypt.

This represents but a portion of Crete's indebtedness to Egypt, particularly large in the Middle Minoan, when 'Egypt . . . throughout the whole duration of the Twelfth Dynasty stood in continuous relation with Crete' (Evans). Just as close were the bonds between Crete and Egypt at

THE ANCIENT MARINERS

the time of the Eighteenth Dynasty and the opening of the Late Minoan period – the era of the transmission of the Bronze Age culture to Western Europe. For apart from the English segmented beads, whose originals were common both to Crete and Egypt at this period, Egyptian scarabs, necklaces and rings of Eighteenth Dynasty make were laid in the Late Minoan graves of Tiryns on the mainland. As the beads of this epoch, together with the amethyst and turquoise of the earlier one, were carried to Western Europe, Crete was not only, in Prof. Burrows's words (*Discoveries in Crete*), 'the half-way house between Egypt and the Ægean,' but the gateway between Egypt and Avebury. Yet Crete, though she embodied so many elements of Egyptian culture, never became a pseudo-Egypt like Phœnicia, the errand-boy, postman, clerk, agent, dealer and general factotum of her Western neighbour at the close of the Bronze Age.

This thought of the relations between these two great countries of the mind has so occupied Sir Arthur Evans in his great book, *The Palace of Minos*, that he dismisses the theory of commercial interchange as in any way adequate to account for them. He therefore suggests that the foundation of Crete was due to an actual colonization of the island by the Egyptians, during the trouble between Upper and Lower Egypt which resulted in their union under the First Dynasty in 3400 B.C. If this suggestion be upheld by later investigation, we have a further simplification – the correspondence in time between Early Minoan Crete (3400 – 2000 B.C.) and the early Kingdom of Egypt. It is strange too that the event which happened in 1688 B.C. in Egypt (between the Twelfth and Eighteenth Dynasties) which resulted in the establishment of the Semitic Hyksos or Shepherd Kings upon the throne of Egypt for a century, had its repercussions in Middle Minoan Crete when an abrupt and temporary decadence of the arts and dislocation of life took place. It is this event which brings us to the second part of the chapter.

THE PHŒNICIANS

PART II

The Explorers

*

§ I. THE PHŒNICIANS

Let us now leave the Eastern Mediterranean and sail along to Spain. The great authority on Spanish antiquities is, of course, Siret, *Questions de Chronologie et d'Ethnographie Ibériques* (1913), and though one doubts the validity of many of his claims, his main lines are pretty clear, and he would indeed be an enquirer of unusual hardihood and ignorance who ventured to dispute them. His evidence, too, is exhaustive and his arguments tally very effectively with the plain and concise statements of Strabo and Diodorus.

But when we turn to Siret's evidence for the *Phœnician* colonization of Spain during the 'Neolithic' period, which he places at from 1500 B.C.—1200 B.C., we find that the tombs he describes, the cult of the palm-tree (which grew wild in Crete), the picks, the ornamentation of Spanish 'Neolithic' objects (chevrons, rosettes, etc.), the feminine figurines, the ivory combs, the ostrich-egg cups and the alabaster vases, appear in Sir Arthur Evans's *The Palace of Minos* and Mr. H. R. Hall's *Ægean Archæology* (1915), and are far more distinctively Ægean than they are Phœnician. At the same time, Siret ascribes a still earlier period of Spanish occupation to Ægean influence, while his 'Neolithic' period corresponds with our own 'Bronze Age' (in which the Cretan and Egyptian segmented beads, etc., appear) and the Mycenæan and Late Minoan period of Cretan history. Siret's Phœnician Spain of the 'Neolithic' period is, in fact, not Syrian at all but late Cretan, and if we make this substitution, we find that his evidence exactly

THE ANCIENT MARINERS

tallies with that given in this and the previous chapter. But that does not mean that the persistent European legend of the Phœnicians is a false one. The Phœnicians inherited the archaic civilization of Crete and Egypt in a debased form, and I take it that they appeared in Western Europe after the collapse of Crete towards the end of the second millennium. They appeared as traders and slave-raiders in the troubled times of the first Celtic movements and the development of organized warfare. Thus, if we get our dates and successions right, we shall understand that Phœnician legend.

The same explanation covers the settlement of another distant land by the mariners of the archaic civilization.

§ 2. THE GOLD OF RHODESIA

Away, then, with the swallows and the flamingoes, over mountain, sea and desert, to the East Coast of Africa and the mouths of the Limpopo and Zambesi rivers.

The principal authorities on the Rhodesian gold-mines (the epic of Zimbabwe, or rather the Zimbabwes or nuclei of ancient settlements, is made up of 500 distinct sets of ruins) are Hall and Bent, whose books are named in my bibliography. I have also studied the arguments on the other side that the ancient monuments and workings were the product of the native tribes, arguments which have been closely examined by Hall in *The Ancient Ruins of Rhodesia*. I cannot reproduce Hall's evidence here, and for once in a way I will ask the reader to accept a deliberate statement that no court of law which impartially weighed the claims of the disputants could hesitate for a moment in awarding a unanimous judgment to Hall. If ever a man proved his case it was he.¹

¹ The opposition dated the ruins as mediæval on the ground that specimens of Nanking pottery (obviously brought over by the Portuguese) were found

THE GOLD OF RHODESIA

Briefly, what is it? He claims that the area of the Rhodesian gold and copper mines¹ was occupied by three successive peoples, the Sabæo-Arabians, the Phœnicians, and the Arabs. But actually the culture of Saba resembles that of Egypt² rather than of Syria, and that of the second Rhodesian period, the archaic civilization as a whole rather than of Phœnicia. There is a similarity between the two Rhodesian cultures, but also a difference, which I shall deal with in a later chapter at the length its importance deserves. The date of the first Zimbabwe colonization has been roughly determined by the orientation of the temples. It is obvious from many indications that the gold-miners observed the seasons, punctuated the tropical year by astronomical and solstitial reckonings and, as the innumerable solar symbols reveal, practised sun-worship. Hall made his own calculations and concluded that the Sabæan ships dropped their anchors off the Golden Paradise of Havilah somewhere about the beginning of the second millennium B.C.

We are thus nearly a thousand years away from the commercial alliance between Solomon and Hiram, King of Tyre,

in them. If ever I have lunch again within the ramparts of Maiden Castle, I shall bury a spoon in the ground to help some archæologist of posterity to a professorship, and for the pleasure it will give my ghost to be called a member of the Spoon Folk.

¹ From a paper by Prof. Raymond Dart of the Johannesburg University, handed to me by Prof. Elliot Smith, it is indeed probable that the ancient prospectors reached the Transvaal and exploited the fringe of the Kalahari Desert, not merely for copper and gold but for the 7 per cent. of nickel which with tin was a characteristic alloy of many ancient bronzes of Egypt and the neighbouring East. Identical bronzes have been discovered in the Transvaal. Three thousand tons of metal were abstracted from the mines north-west of Pretoria in ancient times. But let us stick to the gold-mines of Rhodesia with their ring of copper-mines.

² The land of the Sabæans is separated only by a narrow neck of the Red Sea from Punt, the 'god-land' on the African side, and familiar to the Egyptians as a country of invaluable natural resources before 3000 B.C.

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the age of the merchant and the Oriental despot when gold and ivory and apes and peacocks (or birds of brilliant hues) were traded between colonies that had grown independent from very age and long establishment. The 'gold of Ophir' came probably from Havilah, and Havilah was Rhodesia. In the words of Hall 'no part of the known world yields such overwhelming evidence of extensive continuous and successful gold-mining operations' and no country in the Old World bled such an abundance of treasure as Havilah with her veins of gold.¹ From Zimbabwe came the much gold of the Queen of Sheba, but Zimbabwe was grey in grief and labour, old in folly and splendour when this poppet peeped upon the stage. Some of the shafts of the old workings are 150 feet deep and the galleries 1,500 yards long, while to this day they are the most paying and are advertised as such by the brokers. In Mashonaland, the men of old not only worked the quartz reefs, but washed for alluvial and shed gold.

Thus the Sabæans became the gold merchants of the world, but it was not for merchandise that they bent their first sails for the Zambesi. For from the gold lands sprang the forest of towers and temples, 'ancient, massive and mysterious,' as Bent says, 'and standing out in startling contrast to the primitive huts of the barbarians who dwell round them.' The decipherment of this gold-inlaid manuscript first by Bent and then Hall and Neal, the detection of its scribes and their ways of living, is indeed a masterpiece of scholarship, which is itself part of a volume promis-

¹ 'The value of the gold taken from Rhodesia in early times has been variously estimated at between £75,000,000 and £200,000,000. When it is remembered that after 400 years of European occupation, and with all the advantages of modern transport and equipment, it has taken fifty years to extract £900,000,000 worth . . . in South Africa . . . the scale of the operations in ancient times may be the more readily appreciated.' — Prof. Raymond Dart.



AN ANCIENT DOWNLAND TRACKWAY.

(From Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*.)

THE GOLD OF RHODESIA

ing to sing one day the story of mankind and draw the world's ears to hear as only in whispers and echoes has ever been told before. The derivations of the Zimbabwes have been brought to light by a study of the types of building, the nature of the remains and the particular religion identified from them.

§ 3. THE ANCIENT MARINERS AND THEIR WAYS OF PEACE

We have seen where this archaic civilization went and why it went; there remains to be asked, how it went. We have seen too that people who went about the world planting out themselves, the whole bundle of themselves, could not have been traders or merchants, whatever the books say: they became so but they did not start so. And we shall now see that the customary archæological talk about 'invasions' and conquest and emigration through the pressure of war is even more baseless. Once again, the ancient peoples became invaders and conquerors; they did not start so.¹

Prof. Breasted in his *History of Egypt* emphasizes the pacific habits of the early Egyptians. They were, he says, a 'totally unwarlike' people. The Pharaoh of the Old Kingdom was no Harry the Fifth, no plume-tongued showman (poor king, so overfed with ritual) capering and mouthing 'For God and Egypt': he had no standing army and the only fighting men were the civil militia. The 'conservatism of millennia' (I quote Breasted) was not broken until the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings invaded Egypt in 1688 B.C. and established a Semitic dynasty for a century. The historian Manetho, indeed, makes the extraordinary statement that this conquest was made 'without a battle.' It was after this usurpation that the Egyptians 'learned aggressive warfare for the first time, and introduced a well-organized military system.' 'Egypt was transformed into a military Empire';

¹ See Chapter IX.

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sun-god obediently took on the part of war-god, and Pharaoh the pious hierophant became Pharaoh the conqueror, and in ravaging other countries destroyed his own. Heeren¹ supports Breasted's contention in declaring that Egypt established a dominion not so much by force as by superior knowledge and 'a civilization connected with religion.'

If some of the stelæ of this earlier period depict the Pharaoh trampling on his enemies, then the said Pharaoh was either a liar or pulling the leg of some ferocious archæologist of the distant future, since all the evidence is on the side of the conquered represented living humdrum lives in their home-lands. Squibby wars there were perhaps, but nothing on the scale of those waged by later dynasties. Ré, the Egyptian sun-god, was not metamorphosed into a war-god until Theban rule. And well this evidence squares with the character of the great expeditions. They were in no sense military forays or conquests.² The human cargo were not soldiers but sailors, miners, grandees, priests, dancing-masters, undertakers, artificers and the princes who invariably led them, as Princess Dido led part of the Phœnician nobility to Carthage. They went for gold amulets, not iron crosses, as they did in the age succeeding the Bronze, the age of the nomad Celts, the military aristocracies and the predatory Empires of the East.

The evidence for the peacefulness of the Cretans is even stronger, and the Cretans, who owed a debt to Egypt as complete as was that of Tyre, Sidon and Byblos,³ accom-

¹ See list of books at the end. •

² Osiris himself is represented by Diodorus as a peaceful explorer, bringing home precious (*viz.*, 'life-giving') substances to Egypt.

³ Recent excavation has revealed that there was an Egyptian colony of the Fourth Dynasty at Byblos. It was to Byblos that Isis went in search of the body of Osiris, killed by Set, and a temple was founded there in his honour.

plished what the Phœnicians, lacking in depth, originality and creative gifts, never did – an independently artistic unity and personality of their own. Prof. R. M. Burrows, in *Discoveries in Crete*, has made out a strong case for the peaceable habits of the Cretans, and this contention is borne out by the remarks of Sir Arthur Evans. ‘Of ordered government,’ he says in *The Palace of Minos*, ‘we have the proof and, in a not less striking degree, the evidence of extraordinary achievements in peaceful arts.’ ‘This density of population implies that the Minoans lived a comfortable life in peaceful conditions. We have found nothing that suggests war, nothing to imply civil strife or even defence against foreign raids. . . . The peaceful untroubled existence of the Minoans is shown by the objects buried with their dead, and particularly by the stone vases which make it clear that they had leisure to expend a vast amount of time and trouble on vessels of which the only use was sepulchral.’ (Stephanos Xanthoudides, *The Vaulted Tombs of Mesara*, L, 1924). The Minoan civilization, he adds, ‘was singularly continuous and harmonious,’ and but for the calamity that befell the island at the time of the Hyksos usurpation of the Egyptian throne, remained free to develop its arts, science and multiplicity of technical processes up to the extinction of its civilization about 1200 B.C.

No scholar now dreams of denying that the Cretans were great seafarers, and Sir Arthur Evans calls the Middle Minoan period the ‘cradle of European civilization.’ I take it then that the reason why these scholars speak of the Cretan ‘navy’ rather than Cretan ships, and Cretan ‘sea-power’ or ‘thalassocracy’ rather than Cretan voyages, is because they apply to pre-history the theories of struggle learned from pseudo-Darwinism. They are not really looking at the past but the present. They are so accustomed to the idea of war in modern Europe that they cannot think of the rise of nations except in terms of war. The only strong evidence

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for the Cretans being a warlike people¹ are the Philistines, and Philistia was a decadent offshoot of Crete. The significance of the Philistines will be made manifest in a later chapter.

¹ I shall deal with Cretan weapons and the absence of fortifications at Knossos in later Chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR: MOUNT SILBURY

Description of Mount Silbury. The memory of a pyramid. Comparison with the pyramids of Egypt. Silbury and the wandering-shepherd theory. Avebury and Silbury. Silbury a royal tomb. Silburiana. The cone-barrow. Where the round barrow comes in. Silbury, Egypt and the Ægean. The distinctions between the 'Neolithic' and the Bronze Ages. A parallel from Rhodesia. Silbury the work of peace.

CHAPTER FOUR: MOUNT SILBURY

PART I

The Pyramids of Egypt

★

§ I. THE SHEPHERDS' DELIGHT

LESS than a mile from Avebury (1,200 yards due south of the outer circle) is an enormous mound of chalk, covered with turf and tapering to the summit from a very broad base. The books call Silbury Hill 'the largest artificial mound in Europe,' and there, with sublime discretion, they stop. They haven't any more to say. Silbury Hill 'is the largest . . .' just as the giraffe is the tallest quadruped in Africa. Now you will know a giraffe when you see one. Then, blowing out the usual smoke-screen, your archæologist disappears. Silbury Hill, he says, 'is the largest . . .', but the meaning thereof is 'involved in mystery.' You will find plenty to read about the church at Avebury; about Silbury, the most extraordinary mound in Europe, you will learn that it 'is the largest. . .'. I wish I had the fine feather in my cap of having been the first living native of England to have seen what Silbury really was. That honour belongs to another, who went to Avebury, returned and said to me — 'Either Silbury is a pyramid, or I have been walking in my sleep.' And so it is, and I feel sure that Mr. Perry, who saw Silbury for the first time at the identical moment that I did, would stand by us.

Stukeley called Silbury 'the most magnificent mausoleum in the world, without excepting the Egyptian pyramids,' and Colt-Hoare, though more temperate in his language and less hyperbolic in his comparisons, fully shares his enthusiasm. As for Aubrey, you can almost see him poking

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out his chest, cocking his head to one side as he surveys Silbury with twinkling eyes, and positively strutting as he walks round it. He describes how that most gifted and enlightened of all our kings, Charles II, ascended the burial pile of his predecessors:

'As his Majestie departed from Aubury to overtake the Queen, he cast his eie on Silbury Hill, about a mile off, which he had the curiositie to see, and walkt up to the top of it, with the Duke of Yorke, Dr. Charlton and I attending them,' and you can taste the relish with which he received the royal command to write an account of Avebury and Silbury in words that are successive sips of a very old and hallowed port.

Of course I cannot prove that Silbury was a pyramid or rather the memory of a pyramid, which is a very different thing, and would easily account for the discrepancy between the pyramidal and the conical forms. We might put it in this way. Granted that a people accustomed to the building of pyramids in brick or stone came to a foreign country, bringing with them as much luggage of their home-grown ideas, habits of life and religious observances as they had not dropped on the way, and granted that chalk was their building material in place of stone or brick, Silbury, as it stands now after centuries of weathering and denudation, would be the nearest approach to a pyramid which these circumstances allowed. We have to remember that even an Egyptian pyramid was nothing more than an overgrown cairn, while the general shape and contour of Silbury certainly resemble a pyramid much more closely than a long barrow through the rock-cut tomb resembles a mastaba-tomb.¹ If there is the very best authority for ascribing the long barrows to a mastaba origin, it is hardly mere freakish-

¹ The mastaba was the tomb of the Egyptian nobles, and the underground portion of it, as distinguished from the chapel aboveground, was the original of the rock-cut tomb.

THE SHEPHERDS' DELIGHT

ness or brief-making on my part to ascribe Silbury to the inspiration of the pyramids. Its position, again, between the finest example of the megalithic long barrow in England and the largest stone circle in the world, recruits these monuments to the aid of the derivation I have suggested. The contiguity of Silbury to Avebury and the great avenue between its rampart and the vanished stone circles of Overton Hill could only be accidental to that type of mind which sees a collocation of casual atoms in the order of the universe.

The pyramidal suggestion also comes out more clearly when we begin to appreciate the wonderfully accurate and graceful proportions of the mound. Silbury is no more a heap of chalk rubble than a rubbish heap is a form of architecture. It was quite evidently constructed 'according to plan' and was the formulation of a purposeful design. Walk round what remains of the ditch or platform that surrounds it, in which a peristalith of Sarsen blocks was once placed, and you will notice slight rounded projections of the man-made hill just where the angles of a pyramid would be. These projections would, of course, be more prominent the further one travelled back into the past, since the tendency of denudation on a chalk soil is to create a concave surface. I do not wish to lay too much stress upon these projections because they are by no means stressed themselves, nor do I intend to throw in this argument as a sword of Brennus.

What I do mean to suggest from many observations of this wonderful mound is that it only needs an accentuation of these projections together with a foolscap clapped on its crown to make Silbury a perfect replica in earth of the Egyptian stone pyramids. And if we allow for the miles separating the Kennet from the Nile and the depreciation of memory and good workmanship implied in the number of those miles, Silbury as it is will be related to the pyramids by exactly that degree of cultural depression we should

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expect. And this contention acquires greater force from the fact that the pyramids of the Twelfth Dynasty (the father of our 'Neolithic' Age) were themselves very degraded from those of the Fourth Dynasty.

Unforgettable will abide the memory of that first peep at a pyramid in our midst round the skirts of Waden Hill that hides it from the Avebury vallum. Unlike nearly every other funerary monument in England, Silbury Hill does not command a very extensive view.¹ But its builders were not taking advantage of a hill; they were making a hill of their own, and you can only pile hill on hill, Pelion on Ossa, if your strength and skill are more than mortal. They were, after all, men, these giants of old, and they had to make a start from at most a plateau. Once, no doubt, Silbury stood higher than it does now, but denudation has worn the apex of this great mass of chalk rubble (illustrations give the feeblest impressions of it) down to just under 130 feet and 110 feet across the truncated top. The angle of slope is 30 degrees to the horizon, and the base covers five acres. It is true that our native pyramid (the bird's-foot trefoil grasping the turf with a myriad tiny claws and draping it with their golden mantle, do they not help to make it our *native* pyramid?) is less than one-third the height of the Great Pyramid of Khufu (Cheops), founder of the Fourth Dynasty, at Gizeh. But as that building, in the words of Professor Breasted (*History of Egypt*), 'is the greatest mass of masonry ever put together by human hands,' we do not do so badly, we in Wiltshire. And it is larger than half the size of the Fifth Dynasty pyramids at Abusir and Sakkara, whose core was of rubble and even sand, instead of limestone blocks, a fact which further attests the principle of cultural shrinkage. At any rate, the sight of our holy mount pointing rigidly heavenward, and built, as it must

¹ The reason why the Ancient Mariners chose the hills on which to live will be explained in a later Chapter.



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(From Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*.)

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have been, from the hackage of an entire hillside, creates a breathless wonder.

The building of the Great Pyramid at Gizeh claimed the highly organized labour of a hundred thousand men for a period of twenty years, and we may be sure that the people of Avebury were not a band of wandering flock-masters who took it into their heads to spend their substance and their sweat in transplanting a natural hill into an artificial mound from an overflow of the life-force. These men could not have belonged to the pastoral-nomadic stage which, as the Children of Israel who belonged to it show clearly enough, was a warlike one. Pastoral nomadism can be proved to have post-dated the agricultural age, and marked a definite cultural depression in the history of man.

If, again, there had been no agriculture, no corpus of definite beliefs and customs evolved from man's first and uncertain grasp of biological principles,¹ no motive as powerful as the architecture which embodied it, and no crystallization of social and political forces to give it material shape, it is very certain there would have been no Silbury. The conception of Silbury is the western spur of a range of thought whose Snowdon towered up from the valley of the Nile. Well may the Roman road from Bath to Marlborough, the Street that is called Straight, divert its course at the base of Silbury Pyramid in a gesture of symbolic deference to the power of a greater civilization.

§ 2. THE ROYAL TOMB

Once we have drawn our perspective, certain details in the table of descent assume a clearer outline.

'I think there can be no doubt that it (Silbury),' writes Colt-Hoare, 'was one of the component parts of the grand

¹ We shall see more clearly what this means in Chapter VII.

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temple at Abury . . . its position opposite to the temple, and nearly in the centre between the two avenues, seems in some degree to warrant this supposition.'

The meridian line of the whole work, he says again, 'passes from Silbury to the centre of the temple at Abury.' Lord Avebury, again, declared the position of Silbury to be such that it must have formed an integral part of the general setting of the Avebury plateau. A geographical clearly follows a symbolic relationship. As is well known, the Egyptians made portrait-statues both of their dead and their living relatives in stone, the former of which came to represent the corpse and to be the dwelling of its spirit. In Egypt, as Dr. Elliot Smith has explained in many places, tomb and stone pillar or groups of pillars were intimately connected, and the dweller in the tomb, elevated to god-head, took up his new residence in the stone. The folklore and traditions of the living being turned into stones are all derived from the symbolism of megaliths, and to this day the country people explain the stone circles in their midst by stories of wedding parties which danced on Sunday being petrified.¹ The trilithons of Stonehenge, for instance, very strongly suggest, as I have already mentioned, the postern of the Lion Gate at Mycenæ, which Mr. Hall (*Ægean Archaeology*) calls 'a simple trilithon.' It gave entrance to the tombs. The tomb of Seti I, again, has affinities of structure with Stonehenge. Hence the megaliths supply yet another intimate link with the practice of embalming (viz., preserving) and housing the dead in pyramids, their

¹ A neat example of the process of rationalizing ancient beliefs whose substance remains but whose causes and motives have been lost. The original idea was that the ancestor-god dwelt in the sacred stone. Superstition became substituted for a religious concept and petrified human beings for gods. But how explain the petrification? Why, of course, as a punishment for breaking the Sabbath - by dancing, for which the stone circle was the traditional arena.

THE ROYAL TOMB

'stately homes,' and both these customs are known to have originated in Egypt. Silbury and the barrows being sepulchres of the mighty, and the Avebury stones the habitacles of the spirits of the immortal dead, it was proper and natural that here at the seat of government a unified symbolism should be expressed in a corresponding grouping of monuments.

What was the structural environment of the Egyptian pyramid? Avebury is a long barrow district, and in Egyptian sepulture, the mastaba-tombs (the originals of the long barrow) of the nobles who served the Pharaoh were set up near his pyramid. The nine pyramids of Gizeh were built on the edge of the plateau overlooking the valley, and every pyramid, there as elsewhere, was connected with the palace, the temple, the town and various outbuildings, all of which were surrounded by a wall. A 'massive causeway of stone' (Breasted) linked town and pyramid. The pyramid at Nippur in Mesopotamia, built about 2400 B.C., was also surrounded by a walled court, and the same structural principle was imitated in the pyramid-building of Ceylon, Southern India, Cambodia and Java, until it became the 'dominant feature of the religious architecture of Eastern Asia' (Elliot Smith), and was carried forward among the pyramids of Peru, Ecuador, Mexico and Central America.

Avebury has been defeated by time and climate and vandalism to a far greater extent than in Egypt, America and the East, where, if one acid has been operative, the others, in whole or in part, have left well alone. Yet it is possible to trace a worn copy of these same lineaments on our Wiltshire plateau, and we will begin with extracting a plum out of the old folk-pudding of England.

Once a year, the villagers of Avebury used to mount Silbury Hill to eat fig cakes and drink sugar and water. Now why should the villagers of Avebury perform this pleasing rite rather than the villagers of West Kennet, and why

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should the Corydons and Phillidas of Avebury take the trouble to climb Silbury, when Waden Hill was nearer and not so steep – if Avebury and Silbury, now dumb, had not once spoken mystic and memorable words to one another? And those fig cakes, there is nutriment in them, for the fig was an ancient ‘surrogate’ of the Cretan Great Mother, or, as we know her better, Egyptian Isis. According to Dr. Elliot Smith, in his little book on Tutankhamen’s tomb, the temple was simply a development of the rooms provided at the tomb in which food and drink were placed to keep the dead man alive. But it was not until thirteen hundred years later than the Fourth Dynasty (*circa* 2800 B.C.) that the kings began to build their tombs miles away from the temple. At Avebury, tomb and temple are almost within a stone’s throw of each other.

Silbury, again, was reared between the avenue of menhirs leading to the Overton Hill circles and Long Stone Cove at Beckhampton which Stukeley thought was the destination of his second hypothetical avenue, while a deep trench was dug on the south side of the pyramid upon a neck of land, leaving twin bridges to give approach to it. Whether avenues or bridges were a degenerate adaptation of the covered causeway (if the latter, on the principle that building in earth was a substitute for building in stone) or not, it is obvious that there were once veins of communication between Silbury, Avebury, the West Kennet long barrow, the village settlements and the stone circle at the further end of the south-easterly avenue, and a justified inference that the plan of co-ordination was originally derived from the more ambitious systems of the Egyptian pyramids.

Silbury then is a pyramid, a royal tomb of a distinctive cult and type.

Stukeley the derided came, two centuries ago, to much the same conclusion, and without any modern ideas about

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the distribution of the first civilizations to help him. Stukeley has been ridiculed by the archæologists for his serpent theory of the construction of Avebury (no doubt that serpent-worship, connected with dragon-worship, was mixed up in it), but Stukeley divined that Avebury was a dump from abroad, and believed that a monarch was buried at Silbury. So there was a King in Avebury, as de la Mare might have sung, and over there on the brow of the hill lay perhaps his nomarch of Wiltshire, and to the west in the long barrow of Wellow or Butcombe ('Fairy's Toot') his nomarch of Mendip, and south-east again his nomarch of Kent in his Coty House, he that was called Kit.

It was these civil nomarchs, or governors of the provinces, each with a tutelary animal emblem, that were in command of the untrained local militia during the Third and Fourth Dynasties, and it is legitimate to suppose that the same system, with local modifications, prevailed, at any rate to begin with, in the Britain of the Avebury period. For, even though the 'Neolithic' civilization of England owed its ultimate inspiration to Twelfth Dynasty Egypt, when, of course, sun-worship was in full blaze, it by no means follows that the culture both of Egypt and the lands to which it was transmitted did not retain for a long time the atmosphere and many of the forms of the older religions. The mining and quarrying expeditions were under the superintendence of the 'treasurer of the god,' as, being sacred and not commercial, they naturally would be. It is possible, then, that some such high official, closely associated with the royal house, which must have spent at least half its total waking hours in religious ceremony, was buried in the West Kennet long barrow, a stroll across the meads away from Silbury Pyramid. •

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PART II

The Pyramids of England

★

§ I. THE BROOD OF SILBURY

What do the archæologists say about this '*collis conspectæ magnitudinis*'? Some five excavations have been made of Silbury Hill, though the *History of Marlborough College*, 1923, only mentions four. The first was on the top of the hill in 1723 and reported a horse with its iron bit and bridle. Nothing could better inspirit us. As the Marlborough History says, 'We do not look for primary interments in the upper layers of a tumulus'¹ and the sure inference to be made from such a top-layer burial is that the Celts of the Iron Age used the monuments of the civilization they found here and destroyed. 'It would be contrary,' wisely remarks the Marlborough History, 'to everything we know of the ages which placed iron bits in horses' mouths to suppose them capable of so stupendous an effort as the erection of Silbury Hill.' The mount, then, was a traditional sepulchre and the foreign invaders of the Iron Age followed in the cultural wake of their predecessors.

Other excavations were made in 1776, 1867, 1887 and 1922. The usual flints, flint knives and antler-picks² were uncovered, or, as Mallory would say, 'unhilled.' It was also

¹ 'I have never found sufficient proof of a primary burial having ever been placed above the base line of a barrow' (J. R. Mortimer, *Forty Years' Researches*).

² Walter Johnson in *Folk Memory* gives an illustration of the antler-pick used by the 'Neolithic' flint-knappers of Brandon, in their quarrying of the flint-mines of 'Grime's Graves'—side by side with the modern miners' iron pick. The resemblance between the two is as striking as the anatomical and racial one between the Iberian and the modern flint-miner of East Anglia. A double continuity has been preserved for something like 4,000 years.

THE BROOD OF SILBURY

definitely proved that Fergusson's theory (*Rude Stone Monuments*) that the Roman road ran beneath the base of the hill was untenable. It skirts Silbury to the south and thus definitely establishes the pre-Roman age of the mound. We are left with the certainty that Silbury Hill was erected either in the 'Neolithic' period or in the early dawn of the Bronze Age. But the geographical association with Avebury, combined with the towering style of both monuments, weighs the scales down into the former age.

This may appear a decidedly American view of culture. We do not judge the excellence of a poem, say, by the number and length of the pages it fills, nor a voice by the loudness of its accents. But this epical style of building in earth and stone is a sound criterion to go by in Britain, and whoever has seen Avebury and Stonehenge on the same day cannot deny that it is an extremely telling one, quite apart from the fact that, except for its earlier colonization, there is no reason whatever to regard the archaic history of Britain as different in essentials from that of the cultures of the Far East.¹

A further line of enquiry points to the same conclusion. Every description of Silbury that I have read describes it as unique, and the reader may imagine the cerebral excitement that surged within me when I discovered that it was nothing of the kind. There once existed at least nine other Silburys, and all lesser Silburys, a point of the utmost importance. Of these Silburiana, Merlin's Mount, which still exists in the grounds of Marlborough College, is one of the most remarkable. Among the beautiful engravings of Colt-Hoare's account of the Marlborough station are two of Merlin's Mount and Silbury Hill side by side, leaving no doubt that the lesser hill was derived from the greater, or vice versa. All we have to go by is that the other Silburys

¹The same reverse process of development happened, though much more rapidly, among the Mayas of Central America, in the Pacific, in Cambodia, etc., whose earliest cultures were, without any intelligent question, imported.

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can nearly all be certainly dated Bronze Age where they can be dated at all. And these were all built on a much smaller scale than was Silbury itself.

Merlin's Mount encompasses only an acre and a half of ground in comparison with Silbury's five and a half, and reaches a trifle more than half its height (60 feet). In every other respect the twain are akin. Both were raised at the foot of a gentle slope, both were made of chalk resting on a thin layer of clay, both were trenched round the bases, and in both were buried the antlered picks of the builders. Both were built near the banks of the Kennet within five miles of one another. Greater and lesser pyramids were artificial cones, and one only has to glance at Colt-Hoare's engravings to realize the extraordinary likeness between them.

The third and fourth examples – 'the gigantic Hatfield barrow' (22½ feet high) situated within the famous Marden earthwork on the Ridgeway about half-way between Stonehenge and Avebury, and the Cuckhamsley barrow (77 feet high) on the Berkshire Downs – have disappeared and were too conjecturally conical for discussion.

The fifth example at Minning Lowe, in the lead-mining district of Derbyshire, is in a way even more remarkable than Merlin's Mount. It was once a large truncated cone, 300 feet in diameter and 15 feet high and covering a double-chambered dolmen 'exactly of the construction of the well-known Kit's Coty House' on the Pilgrim's Way in Kent.¹ Here, then, the pyramid and the stone blocks were combined in the same sepulchre as they were in Egypt, where trilithons were raised within the pyramids. The date of Minning Lowe is late 'Neolithic' or early, probably very early Bronze Age. In more than one of these apparently aberrant barrows, we seem to be hovering on the borderline between the two periods.

¹ Which, by the way, is the chamber of a long barrow, not a free-standing dolmen.



MERLIN'S MOUNT, MARLBOROUGH.
(From Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*.)

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The most distinguished example of all comes likewise from the lead-mining carboniferous limestone region of Derbyshire. It is (or was) called Gib Hill Barrow and is connected with the famous stone circle of Arbor Lowe by a large earthen rampart serpentining to the tumulus from the southern entrance of the vallum surrounding the temple. Unfortunately, I know nothing of Derbyshire outside the printed word, but the careful description given by the trustworthy antiquary, Thomas Bateman (*Vestiges of the Antiquities of Derbyshire*, 1848) can leave no possible doubt that we have in Arbor Lowe and Gib Hill Barrow a replica on a smaller scale of the Avebury-cum-Silbury complex. Arbor Lowe itself is but an echo of Avebury, for it too is surrounded by a rampart and contains a fosse between stone circle and vallum, while within the circle is a 'cove' of three monoliths, just as there is within one of the inner circles of Avebury. The winding rampart linking Gib Hill Barrow with the circle is a memorandum of the stone avenue linking West Kennet with Avebury.

Lastly, the barrow itself. It is described by Bateman as being 18 feet high and 'very conical' — 'its height, immense size and remote antiquity,' he says, 'are calculated to impress the reflecting mind with feelings of wonder and admiration.' Within the barrow was found a stratum of clay laid over the natural surface just as at Silbury and Merlin's Mount, while the primary deposits included burnt human bones (*not* cremated), charcoal, some calcined flint-flakes 'brought from a considerable distance,' a beautiful flint arrow-head, a basaltic celt, and some elegant pottery. Here again it is impossible to tell from the funerary furniture whether the barrow was raised in the 'Neolithic' period or very early in the Bronze Age. All we can be certain of from the direct imitation of the great Wiltshire model is that Arbor Lowe and Gib Hill Barrow were raised either during the 'Neolithic' period or before the Bronze Age culture

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had had time to exert its influence from Wiltshire over the Derbyshire lead-miners and their directors.¹ Arbor Lowe and its satellite do, at any rate, drive home the moral of Avebury as 'the work of a whole nation' (to quote Colt-Hoare) and the centre of the first British government, and of the interlinkage between the occupational region of the chalk downs and the industrial ones of Somerset, Derbyshire and Cornwall.

The greatness of the 'Neolithic' civilization is expressed not merely in the scale of its architecture but in the range of its distribution. So these were savages! The last example worth a few words was named by Colt-Hoare the 'Cone-Barrow,' being 'remarkable for having a more pointed apex than any other barrow I remember to have seen.' It forms one of a group of a dozen barrows near the trackway leading from Everley to Pewsey a mile or so to the north-west, and very happily Colt-Hoare has given us a picture of it which at once establishes its kinship with Silbury and Merlin's Mount. The size is not given, but Colt-Hoare's own excavation of it proved that it was Bronze Age in date, while there is nothing in the text to suggest that it was larger than the barrows of the usual type clustered in its neighbourhood.

I cannot feel that this survey is exhaustive, for it seems highly probable that other cone-barrows once existed whose record has disappeared.² Nor have I included another type of barrow, found abundantly in Derbyshire, which may be dubbed a sub-species of the cone-barrow, barrows large in

¹ Another indication of the early date of Arbor Lowe is the encroachment of a Bronze Age barrow upon the fosse which surrounds the circle of stones. See B. M., *Guide to the Antiquities of the Stone Age* (1922).

² The 'Mighty Mounds' (see Warne's *Ancient Dorset*) of Came Down, which have been levelled by the plough, were probably other members of the Silbury family. In the *Celtic Tumuli of Dorset* (1866), Warne says of the Dorset cone-barrow: 'The cone or hill-shaped tumulus is less common and of larger size [than the round].'

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diameter but with flat tops too broad and low to be called cones. They are little Silburys which giants have sat upon. All that I have enquired into show their age by the bronze daggers unearthed from them, one of which might have been made by the very craftsman who turned out the one figured in Plate 23, Vol. I of Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*, so exact is the resemblance, even to the number and shape of the rivets between them. Can it be maintained that all these barrows are early drafts from which Silbury was evolved? Of course not: such a view makes nonsense not merely of Silbury but of any intelligible thought about it.

Silbury, then, was the patriarch and these deviations from the orthodox type of round barrow were its progeny. For since there is not the smallest ground for concluding that the 'Neolithic' civilization originated in Derbyshire, the cone-barrows there must have been offshoots of Silbury, and so, we may justly assume, were the others in other parts of the country.

§ 2. SILBURY AND THE ROUND BARROW

Have we here, then, the secret of the transition between the 'Neolithic' pyramid of Silbury and the orthodox round barrow of the Bronze Age? The long barrow belongs to so different a style and is so different in shape from the round that there can be no relationship of descent between them. But the similarity between Silbury and the round barrow is much clearer, and these transitional forms really account for all the divergences between the two. The pyramid, again, had a solar meaning, and the round barrow, according to that highly distinguished scholar, Mr. A. M. Hocart, was a 'ritual representation of the universe,' and, being associated with the Bronze Age people, was raised in the full blaze of the sun-cult. It is a pretty problem in hill-anatomy, and I can see no way of settling it except by regarding these forms I have been discussing as intermediate and inde-

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terminate experiments between the fixation of types at the Silbury and the round barrow ends.

Of course, I realize the difficulties of the case. No authority has hitherto suggested this solution or related the cone-barrows to Silbury. Speculations upon the great monuments of Silbury and Avebury very rarely occur at all in modern archæology because it is almost exclusively pre-occupied with cataloguing what lies inside them. Another more serious difficulty is the arrival here of the Bronze Age people with (presumably) the round barrow form of tomb in their heads. Certainly the tomb furniture of the long barrow period differs from that of the round – in the sudden appearance of the bronze dagger within the latter, to give the most striking example. But if we gather, as we are beginning to, that the Bronze Age civilization was derivative from the 'Neolithic,' it will appear quite natural that the Bronze Age nobles should gradually adopt (with modifications) the kingly type of tomb, so that in time both pyramids and long barrows disappear and we are left with the round barrow only. This is, of course, a mere suggestion, and many other alternatives offer themselves. But I am inclined to this view, because the mastaba-tomb of the Egyptian noble was itself the origin of the pyramid. The pyramid resulted simply from the piling in the Third Dynasty of one mastaba upon another. We know the origin of the long barrow in England – the Egyptian mastaba and the rock-cut tomb of the Twelfth Dynasty. Why should not the Egyptian pyramid have been the ultimate source of the round barrow? And if we accept for a moment this derivation, we have one more reason for placing Silbury and Avebury together in the earlier or 'Neolithic' period of the megalithic civilization in Britain. For the shape of Silbury is much closer than is the cone-barrow or the round to the original pyramidal form.

As for the cone-barrow itself, it may be said to have a

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double origin—Silbury and the Mycenæan Tholos or beehive tomb-chamber entered by a doorway and, as in the Treasury of Atreus grave, built beneath the hill-slope. In Crete we also have the cone represented by the 'aniconic' obelisks, and these were the tombs of divinities. It seems to me highly probable that the Tholoi and the obelisks were derived from the Egyptian pyramid just as our cone-barrows are derived from Silbury. As our own Bronze Age was a derivative of the late Minoan or Mycenæan culture, there is really no gap in the evidence for the pyramid as the source of the cone. Yet we are confronted with the remarkable fact that there were no pyramids in Crete, and this surely suggests that the 'Neolithic' culture was not merely Cretan through the Egypt of the Twelfth Dynasty but a mixture of Cretan and Egyptian influences as well. Let us not forget that in the Grotte de Courjonnet imitations of the Egyptian portrait-statues appear which are lacking in the rock-cut tombs of Crete. They were Egyptian *and* Cretan ideas as well as Egypto-Cretan that went on board the westward-sailing Cretan ships.

PART III

The Megalithic Ages : Their Distinctions

In Chapters II and III we saw that England was one of the monoliths that made up the magic circle of an expanded and highly distinctive civilization, characterized by certain arbitrary elements which remained uniform in spite of the modifications wrought into them from one country to another, elements which give us 'a prompt clue to identifying the source and recognizing the spread of this civilization. We hardly attempted any distinctions between one period and another, but applied what may be justly claimed as the infallible mine-formula to England in common with other allotments of the megaliths.

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And now in our fourth Chapter distinctions are forced upon us whether we will or no. We can no longer escape a rough classification of periods, but our difficulties have been much enhanced by our inability to accept the ruling archæological definition of those periods as 'Neolithic' and Bronze Age. The real division is not between metallic and non-metallic eras, partly because an obvious continuity and inter-relationship between the two eras have begun to emerge, and partly because the less prolific though grander settlements of the 'Neolithic' people reveal a concern with mining just as intense as those of the Bronze Age. Both periods knew bronze. It follows that our distinctions will be nothing like so sharp as those commonly drawn. Silbury Pyramid we have credited to the 'Neolithic' Age on the ground of its kinship to Avebury, its immensity, and its close descent from the Egyptian pyramids. At the same time, there is a community of descent between Silbury and the round barrow. The inference is that a definite continuity existed between the 'Neolithic' and Bronze Ages, the nature of which I shall try to unravel in the Chapter to follow.

What then are the distinctions between these two periods? The first is a fuller development of the sun-cult in the second period. The Egyptian pyramids and so Silbury were linked on to solar theology, and register the sun's courses. The shadow of a pole placed on Silbury falls to the north on the level meads of Kennet, and, the daily gauge being about four feet, is almost precisely that of the Great Pyramid of Cheops. But the solar evidences and symbols in England are much more abundant in the Bronze Age than the 'Neolithic.' It seems more probable, therefore, that the second period marked the arrival on our shores of the 'Children of the Sun,' the divine kings and princes who were permeating Europe in the dawn of the Bronze Age, and wore, they and their nobility, bronze daggers as orna-

ments of rank. For it is in this second period that the bronze dagger appears in the barrows.

The second distinction registers the only clean dividing-line between the two periods. It is that between the long and the round barrow, and that line, as we have seen, is crossed by the cone-barrow. The third distinction shows a greater number of funerary objects, metallic and otherwise, deposited in the barrows of the second period. That suggests partly that the population of the second period was more extensive, as it naturally would be, and partly a commoner use of metals which, being less highly valued by the settlers in consequence, were not all or nearly all exported as they were in the 'Neolithic' Age. The fourth distinction considers the greater architectural scope, the more grandeur and nobility and the better workmanship of the earlier period – and so leads us straight to the fifth distinction, if so it can be called. That is that the Bronze Age represents a period of decadence from the 'Neolithic,' in which cultural, psychological, religious, æsthetic and architectural elements are all mingled. Later Chapters will explain and develop these statements.

Let us end the Chapter by citing a further Rhodesian parallel to our own megalithic periods. We learn that its architecture in its purest and most solid form was the earliest, and that the later forms were imitative and adulterated. The second period adhered to the main type of the Sabæo-Egyptian architecture, but introduced new features and extended and reconstructed the old. As Hall says, it is difficult to say whether it 'was introduced directly into the country or was the result of evolution and the development of the older style of architecture.' No violent dislocation between the two periods is perceptible. The first period was marked by massive strength, great solidity, plainness and first-rate workmanship. So solid was the construction that a waggon with a span of sixteen oxen can to this day pace the walls.

The second period abandoned the elaborate drainage

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system of the first¹; its pottery had deteriorated with the quality of the building materials, the workmanship was altogether cruder and more careless, and all the buildings were set up on a smaller scale. The conical towers, the unhewn monoliths, the pyramidal cones and the soapstone birds belonged to the first period. Lastly, the gold ornaments were much more abundant in the first period than the second, though symbolic objects, more profusely though less artistically decorated, were more plentiful as a whole in the second period than the first. If we compare this evidence with the rest of the subject-matter of this chapter, it will be seen that the parallelism I have suggested between ancient Britain and ancient Rhodesia is not drawn at a venture. It will become still closer as we go along.

If then Avebury be the metropolis of the Britain of the first megalithic period, the work, as Colt-Hoare said, 'of a whole nation,' Silbury may be said to stand as the beginning, front and apex of a civilization slowly declining from it for seven or eight hundred years. How justly then are these great monuments ranged within arm's length of one another, gazing together at the fruits of their federated being down that long slope of years! And talk as the archæologists may of the savage warfare of these early times, such monuments could themselves have only been the fruits of peace. Colt-Hoare in his own mammoth folios, worthy in the scope of their achievement to be a record of works so massive, quotes a passage from a fellow-student as follows:

'The grandeur of the designs, the distance of the materials, the tediousness with which all such massive works are necessarily attended, all show that such designs were the fruits of religion and peace.'

Avebury and Silbury are their own warrant for the truth of such wise words.

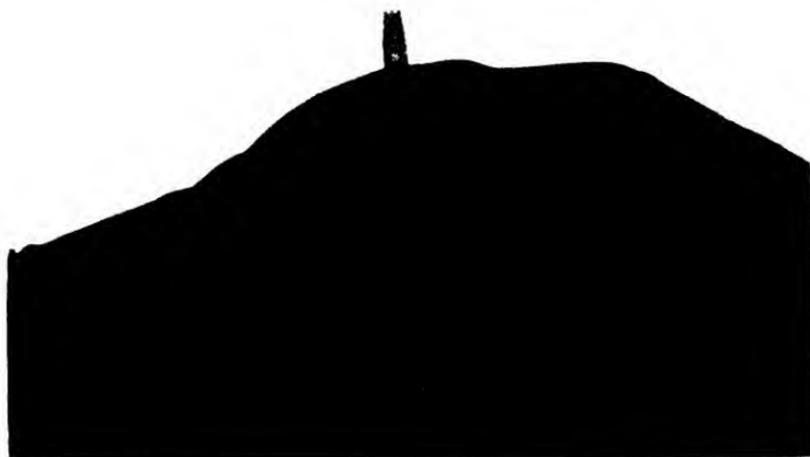
¹ Reminding one of Knossos.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONTINUITY

The break between the Old Stone Age and the New, and between the middle and late Bronze Ages. The unbroken continuity between our two megalithic periods. The evidence for it. Long-heads and round-heads. Burning and burying the dead. The beaker belongs to both periods. The Egyptian beads and the dating of Stonehenge. The relation of our two megalithic periods to Middle and Late Minoan Crete. The weapons of the two English periods and the baselessness of the neo-Darwinian theory of early warfare. The evolution of the sword. The defencelessness of Crete.



WINTERBOURNE ABBAS.



GLASTONBURY TOR.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONTINUITY

§ I. THE GAP, THE BRIDGE AND THE FORD

WHEN I speak of the continuity between the two megalithic ages I mean them and them only. Between the old Stone Age and the New in Britain I believe that the evidence points to a very sharp break indeed, the sharpest break, or, to use a biological term, 'mutation,' that has ever occurred in human affairs, the break between the primitive and the civilized structures of society.¹ Something happened: Nature and Man were living happily together, and then, suddenly, without any forecast or portent of the great change, nature appears as the servant of man, and on her placid Downs were revealed the effects in earth and stone of this new commerce between them.

For tens of thousands of years, Britain was inhabited by small hunting groups working unpolished flints but making no use whatever of the peculiar and abnormal custom of raising huge slabs of stone and mounds of earth. Then somebody gets hold of a stone lamp, by whose dim light the cave paintings of France and Spain were executed, rubs it, and bids the genii raise Avebury! That would be an explanation just as credible as the one that it was conceived out of the lamp-rubber's inner consciousness. And when we come to study the social temper of the real primitive and to find that he had no governing class, and so no incentive at all to raise monuments to kings and lords that were not, when we

¹ 'We suddenly find a different culture, and different kinds of implements, all indicating a different way of life,' says the B.M. *Guide to the Antiquities of the Stone Age* (1921) — a mild enough admission, but still an admission. The *Victoria History of Devon* says the same thing of the strata between the Old and the New Stone Eras at Kent's Cavern, Torquay. See Chapter I for a closer treatment of this important point.

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realize his essential conservatism and remember that the Ægean miners in Spain found that the aborigines attached no value to metals, we shall think of this explanation as one of the most extraordinary fallacies ever hatched by a learned brain.¹

Less completely do we find the continuity of the 'Neolithic' and Bronze Ages carried over into the Early Iron Age (*circa* 1000-800). The evidence here is not so clear. The Celts (a heterogeneous people who entered England soon after 1000 B.C.) did undoubtedly destroy the 'archaic civilization' in Britain, just as they smashed up (see Siret) the megalithic settlements in Spain. But they also imbibed many of its customs² and incorporated its history as folklore. The break between the Celts and the Ancient Mariners was the difference between peace and war. Warfare was, in fact, a later development of civilized life and the 'archaic civilization' was *primarily* organized upon a basis of peace.

I feel then that I am justified in treating the 'Neolithic' and Bronze Ages as a distinct entity which owed nothing to its predecessors in Britain, but all over Europe bequeathed to its imitators the seeds of warfare which caused its violent overthrow and introduced a new organization of human

¹ In *The Dawn of European Civilization* (1922), Mr. Gordon Childe confirms this view. He discusses the transitional people in Europe (the Azilians and others) between the Old Stone Age and the New, the people of what is generally called the 'epipalæolithic' period. But he finds no evidence at all that these epipalæolithic peoples differed in any essential of culture from the palæolithic. He agrees, therefore, that the 'Neolithic' peoples brought a new and imported culture from without. He also carries the Minoan culture of 'Neolithic' times as far west as Sardinia. All that remains is to fill in the gap between Sardinia and Britain.

² I beg the reader to be patient with me, for I shall make plainer in many subsequent Chapters, particularly Chapter IX, the nature and extent of the debt the Celts owed to the 'archaic civilization' and the process of the real change they introduced.

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society. From this point of view the Saxons may be grouped with the Celts, for, though they fought the men of Iron, they completed what the Celts had begun. History is a much more complicated affair than the onward and upward ideas of the 'evolutionists' give it credit for. It does not depend upon geographical factors, nor any mechanical law of evolution, but upon the will and spirit of man, and that will and that spirit alone.

§ 2. THE BRIDGE OF STONE

Granted, then, these reservations to our theme of continuity, we shall find a certain amount of support for it from archæological opinion. It was, for instance, the guiding principle of Walter Johnson's¹ husbandry of the past. The modern school of antiquaries pays very little attention to Walter Johnson, but he was a highly honoured man at the beginning of our century, and no unprejudiced mind can read his books (to which I shall often refer) without recognizing in him a sound thinker as well as a delightful writer.

Again and again he voices his belief in the essential continuity between the 'Neolithic' and the Bronze Ages, the ages, as he assumed, of the megaliths, the barrows, long and round, the trackways, the earthworks and the terraces. Of the same periods, Professor M'Kerry says, 'There is no proof of any break or gap or cataclysm but only of continuous changes.' In a book called *Barrows and Bone Caves of Derbyshire*, by Rookes Pennington (1877), we read:

'In Derbyshire, no such wave of destruction seems to have swept over the land. No traces of any break between the Neolithic and Bronze times occur; and if it did occur, we must suppose that both conquerors and conquered were of similar races, possessing similar customs.'

¹ *Folk Memory, Byways of British Archæology*. See list of books at the end.

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From what I have written of the trackway system and the communications between the mining and the Downland areas, it will be apparent that the continuity existing in the lead-mining region of Derbyshire was no isolated occurrence. Pennington was simply hypothecating a cataclysm in other districts from what he had read; his own district he knew too well. Without recruiting further examples of archæological belief in continuity, let us turn our eyes to the contrary opinion and examine the arguments upon which it is based.

Take the racial argument. The broad generalization is the interment in the round barrows of a broad-headed, thick-set and rather massive race somewhat of the Alpine or Armenoid type,¹ and associated with bronze daggers, tomb-furniture, beakers or drinking-cups (hence the 'Beaker Folk,' just as the moderns are roughly divided into the Cigar Folk, or aristocracy; the Briar Pipe Folk, or middle classes; and the Clay Pipe Folk, or workers), pottery, body ornaments and, later on, cinerary urns,² most of which do not appear in the long barrows. The primary burials in the long barrows are without exception those of the long-headed Iberian type. Unfortunately, this generalization has so many holes in it that it becomes water-logged. The long barrows did contain tomb-furniture, and pottery, though for reasons I shall suggest later, very sparsely. For the moment, let us stick to the cranial differences.

The trouble is that the round barrow burials are by no means confined to a broad-headed race. Canon Greenwell, in *British Barrows*, pointed out that the round barrows of the Yorkshire wolds (chalk) contained more skeletons of long-headed than of broad-headed notables, and in his

¹ The Slavs are its descendants.

² The cinerary urn, which, according to the British Museum, was not anterior to 1000 B.C., was introduced by the Goidels, the first of the Celtic invaders.



A BEAKER.

(From Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*.)

To face p. 130.

THE BRIDGE OF STONE

opinion this intermingling represented either a friendly partnership or a fusion of races. J. R. Mortimer, in *Forty Years' Researches*, says that the builders of the round barrows were of a mixed cranial type with many intermediate forms between long-head and round-head. Evidently, then, the Neolithic-Iberian long-heads overlapped into the round-barrow period, while the bulk of the British (as of the Egyptian) people remained predominantly long-headed up to the Roman invasions and even beyond. It is not by their skulls that ye shall know them, but by the mounds above them.

If we turn to the Cretans we find that Sir Arthur Evans calls them of the long-headed Iberian type like the Egyptians with an infusion of mesocephalic and brachycephalic types, to use the barbarous terms of current anthropology. Prof. Burrows in *Discoveries in Crete* (1908) comes to the same conclusion. We shall neither lose nor gain much by a study of craniology. What I am trying to show is that the cranial argument is no serious impediment to our continuity brief.

The practice of cremation is another apparent difficulty. Inhumation was the invariable practice of the long barrow men, and the cremations of the round barrow period flatly contradict its symbolism. In burials, the preservation of the body of the dead for its paradisaical journey was the alpha and omega of the whole Egyptian theory of immortality: in cremation, the soul was freed from the body by burning its fleshly envelope. It ascended to the sky-world in the smoke of the funeral pyre. But the soul still needed clothes and implements, so they were burned too, and the old material solicitude for the dead that mummified the corpse and provided it with a stone habitat resembling its earthly dwelling, with food, amulets and other necessities and privileges of life, lingered on into a change of thought which denied their rational meaning. Actually, the crema-

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tion custom is an excellent illustration of our theme. For the British Museum authorities contend with telling evidence on their side that cremation does not occur in England before 1000 B.C. The Bronze Age up to that period maintained the burial rites of the 'Neolithic' and the abrupt change of custom coincided with the arrival of the Celts. But the Celts still imitated their predecessors to the extent of providing the dead with charms and earthly belongings.

The long and round barrow men both were miners seeking flint for their implements, lead, silver, gold, tin and copper, and the remains of both are constantly intermingled in the same areas. So obvious is it that each of them pursued much the same aims and the same routes in different degrees only of intensity that the two ages are like two geological strata, the one above the other.

§ 3. THE TRANSITION — BEADS AND BEAKERS

Let me take an example of the transition between the two periods from pottery. Both peoples made pottery for sepulchral and domestic uses, and I will quote a very significant illustration of overlapping in the same types from the catalogue of the Devizes Museum. In the chamber of the West Kennet Long Barrow, raised on the next (natural) hill to Silbury, and the best example of chambered long barrow we possess, were found fragments of pottery 'of two distinct types of ware' — 'the one very thick, and profusely ornamented with finger-nail and finger-tip indentations, impressed cord pattern, etc.' . . . the other ware is thin and of the "drinking-cup" (beaker) type, ornamented in the manner usual in this class of vessel. In a paper on *The Development of Neolithic Pottery*, Mr. Reginald A. Smith contends that these thick round-bottomed vessels, with characteristic decoration and hollow moulding below the lip, are repre-

sentations of truly neolithic British pottery. On the other hand, the "drinking-cup" type is found in Britain in barrows of the *earliest* (italics mine) Bronze Age, but on the continent these vessels are found in associations that are purely neolithic. The discovery, therefore, of these two types at West Kennet can only be explained by an overlapping of the periods, or rather of the types of pottery, characteristic of these two periods in Britain. The interesting discovery of prehistoric pits at Peterborough, in which these two types of pottery were again found together, goes to prove that their association at West Kennet is normal, and not due to any later intrusion or disturbance. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that the discoveries at Peterborough show that these vessels were for domestic use, and not made solely for burial or ceremonial purposes.' Thus we have the beaker occurring in the heart of the long barrow period and in the most important megalithic district in England. It would be hard to find a more convincing instance of transition. It does not seem to leave much of your Bronze Age 'Beaker Folk.' Four 'Neolithic' beakers have been found in England, one on Windmill Hill near Avebury, one at Mortlake, also in association with 'Neolithic' objects, and the two described in this quotation. They are mentioned in archæological records, but not in the books of the 'Beaker Folk' party. The discovery of a small bronze awl in a dump of purely 'Neolithic' celts in Upton Lovell Great Barrow (round), near Warminster, writes continuity still plainer.

In certain round barrows of Wiltshire were discovered two types of Egyptian necklaces of blue-glaze segmented and star-shaped beads. The former are exactly identical in type with those taken from graves at Deir-El-Bahari in Egypt¹ and can be seen in the Devizes Museum. The symbolism of beads is a strong index of cultural affinities,

¹The time of Hatshepsut, and not long before Tutankhamen. They disappeared by 1200 B.C.

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since they were worn secondarily as ornaments but primarily as amulets or 'life-givers' to the dead, and as such are keys to the ancient theories of immortality.

The extreme importance of this discovery has never received its due among English archæologists. In Volume I of the *Journal of Egyptian Archæology*, Prof. Sayce attempted to fix the date of Stonehenge by these beads. They are abundant in Wiltshire, and occur in barrows all over south-west England from Cornwall to Sussex, while three of them come from Stonehenge itself. The Professor describes them as 'well-known Egyptian beads of Egyptian faience and coated with Egyptian blue glaze. They are beads, moreover, which belong to one particular period of Egyptian history, the latter part of the Eighteenth Dynasty and the earlier part of the Nineteenth Dynasty.' The date of their interment in the round barrows he fixes at 1300 B.C., allowing a hundred years 'for their passage across the "trade routes" to Wiltshire.' That would place the construction of Stonehenge between the fifteenth and the fourteenth centuries B.C. The appearance of these beads and the building of Stonehenge would then occur in 'the first dawn, the early streaks' of the Bronze Age.

Professor Sayce in his bead-argument proceeds to dive into the usual 'trade-route' fallacy, but we will remain on the bank with the beads. Now, though Mr. H. R. Hall, of the British Museum, denies that these were imitation Egyptian beads, an article in the *Archæological Journal of Scotland*¹ proves that they were so, while the B.M. *Guide to the Antiquities of the Bronze Age* (1920) says that they 'appear to be of local origin.' Colt-Hoare also describes a local imitation of the segmented bead in tin in Vol. I, p. 103, of *Ancient Wiltshire*. The beads were made of paste, not glass, and the process of heating and manufacture was extraordinarily delicate and

¹ *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, Vol. XL, 1916, p. 396 *seqq.*: Mr. Ludovic Mann. Sir Arthur Evans (*Palace of Minos*) inclines to the same view.

THE TRANSITION-BEADS AND BEAKERS

elaborate. Thus, they were local beads, but made by highly skilled jewellers who were acquainted with the methods of Egyptian workmen. They were not 'traded' at all, but manufactured by colonists who were either Egyptians or Cretans¹ themselves or in very close touch with them. Nor are these beads the only example of Egyptian ware in the Wiltshire *round* barrows. Item, a small pot: item, a small bulbous jar with a round bottom: item, a small, wide-mouthed pot: item, a piece of red ware: and item, a broad thin knife of brown jasper. One last and very telling example of continuity between the two megalithic ages: In stone-building, the difference between the 'Neolithic' and 'Bronze' Ages in England is marked by the loss of the stone-passage-way and the substitution of the cist (stone coffin) or cairn for the central burial chamber, composed of large blocks. But in Brecknockshire, cists occur in *long* barrows, and in one of them (Pen-y-wyrhod) was found one of the blue segmented paste beads mentioned above. In the face of examples like these, I am unable to understand how our archæologists can continue to talk of their Bronze Age 'Beaker Folk' from the Rhineland. It is perfectly obvious that our 'Bronze' Age grew straight out of the 'Neolithic' and that both periods were different phases of one civilization.

Put all this evidence together; compare it with Part I of Chapter III, particularly the second section, and to what does it lead? First of all, there is the beaker found in the West Kennet Long Barrow, the most important chambered barrow in England, and set up in its capital. As we shall see in the next chapter, the funerary offerings in our long barrows were very sparse, and provide us with the minimum of evidence. But ornaments and charcoal incense were

¹ The segmented beads were Cretan and Egyptian; the star-shaped Egyptian only. Here again, as at Silbury, is Egypto-Cretan influence combined with pure Egyptian.

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deposited in some of them, while here at West Kennet was the beaker. Of the six clues of funerary offerings, that is to say, to identifying the early megalithic civilization of Western Europe as Middle Minoan and thence Twelfth Dynasty Egyptian in origin – the presence, namely, of jadeite, callais, gold, charcoal and the beaker in the rock-cut tomb, and the octopus motive on the stones of Brittany – we have two in 'Neolithic' England, charcoal, the beaker, and the Egyptian segmented beads,¹ a third. At the same time, I have described the chambered long barrow itself as continuous in structure with the passage dolmen and the passage dolmen with the rock-cut tomb. Middle Minoan Crete was, in fact, responsible for the long barrows of England, as she was for the rock-cut tombs of France, Spain, Portugal, Sicily and the Balearic Isles.

But as soon as we reach the round barrow period in England, we find that Ægean evidences are more abundant, for the simple reason I gave at the end of the last chapter, that the local products were less abundantly exported, and, owing to the closed cists of the round barrows, could not be robbed. We have in the order of their importance the imitation segmented Egyptian beads of the Eighteenth Dynasty which were also Late Minoan, the amber disk identical with the Cretan forms, and the Folkton Wold drums whose incised designs definitely recall Late Minoan patterns. And not once but many times more we have the beaker, deposited in no fewer than six of the megalithic counties of England. We are confronted, in short, not merely with a single continuity but three continuities in one – that of Egyptian with Cretan civilization in two different periods; that of Cretan with the successive megalithic civilizations of Western Europe, including England; and that of megalithic England I with megalithic England II. The tracing of these Ægean objects in our *round*

¹ In the Brecknockshire long barrows.

THE TRANSITION-BEADS AND BEAKERS

barrows is also extremely important, because it robs the comparative absence of them in the long barrows of all confusing significance. As the long barrow age is so patently continuous with the round barrow age, the Cretan inspiration of the one must, apart from all evidence, be logically extended to the other. We cannot give the megalithic era as a whole a native head and a foreign tail.

§ 4. THE CONTINUITY OF PEACE

What then of the clash of arms between the long and the round barrow men which the archæology of pseudo-Darwinism takes for granted upon the hypothesis that the ones invaded and conquered the others? Where is the evidence?

Is it in the weapons? Go to any museum, all the museums, pick out the indubitably battle-weapons among the 'Neolithic' implements and see what proportion the former bear to the latter. Personally, I have never seen a single Iberian tool that can quite certainly be called a weapon of war, as the Celtic swords and spears can be so called. I do not pretend that my experience is exhaustive, of course, but presuming that a few such weapons do exist, yet they *are* so few that it is only in imagination that the Iberians of Britain can be called a warlike people. As for the abundance of bronze daggers in the round barrows, people do not make war with daggers, and it is certain that they were worn only by the nobility, as concrete symbols of their privileges, just as Privy Councillors wear swords when they go to Buckingham Palace.

When we come to the spearheads, we are on less certain ground, and warfare was undoubtedly developing as we pass through the Bronze Age. But it is interesting to see what Colt-Hoare says about them: 'Daily experience convinces me that those implements we originally supposed to be spearheads may more properly be denominated daggers or

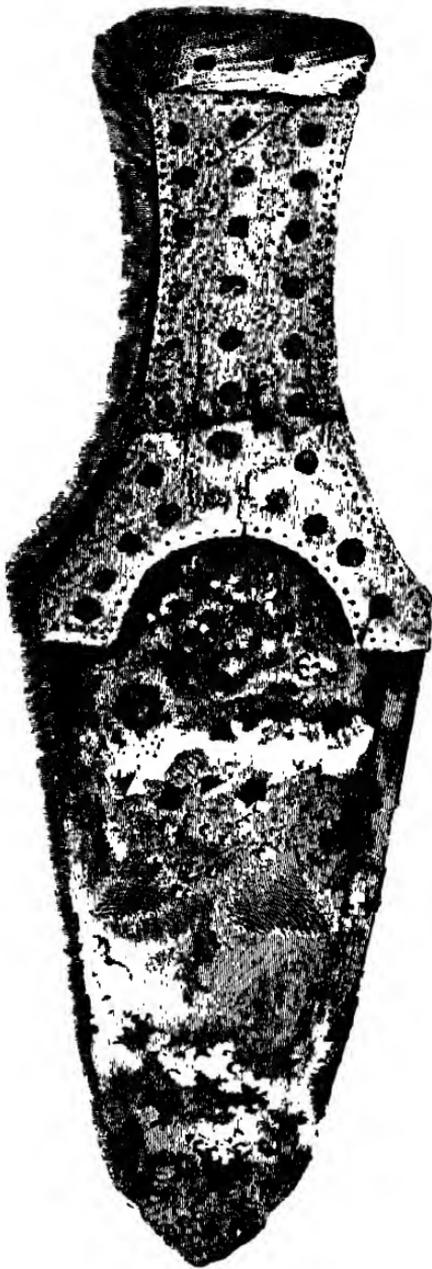
CONTINUITY

knives worn by the side, or in a girdle as an article of dress.'

But do not let us leave so momentous an issue unbuttressed. The enquirer will have no qualms about the orthodoxy of the Devizes Museum catalogue of Wiltshire antiquities. Well, it was from its most recent publication that I obtained this revolutionary information. First of all, it supports Colt-Hoare's conclusion, and then comes this remarkable affidavit: 'The Bronze Weapons . . . generally found in the Barrows are the Dagger and Knife Dagger. . . . The Bronze Sword is never found in Barrows either in Wiltshire or elsewhere, and the true socketed Spearhead . . . seldom or never. The most probable explanation of this is that the majority of the Barrows belong to an earlier period of the Bronze Age than that to which the Swords and socketed Spearheads belong.' Again: 'The *earlier* [italics mine] form of Bronze Dagger (the thin, short, broad-bladed and blunt-pointed type) doubtless served the purpose rather of a hunting knife . . . than of a weapon, while the specimens spoken of by Colt-Hoare as "Lanceheads" or "Spearheads" would be more accurately described as knives for domestic purposes. . . . The larger, stronger, sharply pointed blades are believed to be of a somewhat later date and are no doubt true Daggers.'¹

It is unmannerly to triumph over one's adversary, but I may at least venture the surmise as to whether Mr. Allcroft, and indeed the whole school of archæology which assumes warfare to have settled most of the problems of 'primitive' man, can have failed to have observed these words, because they are tucked away in a footnote. The words are in a footnote, but their import is absolutely shattering not merely to current ideas about 'prehistoric' England but about the

¹ Mortimer also says that the bronze dagger could not have been a weapon. 'It was intended for cutting rather than stabbing.' The great warrior, perhaps, cut his ragout with it. There is one example of a flint dagger (found in a round barrow) with a chisel at one end.



A BRONZE AGE DAGGER.

(From Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*.)

To face p. 138.]

THE CONTINUITY OF PEACE

general history of mankind. They show no less than that war, so far from being a condition of existence natural to 'primitive' society, was a by-product of the first civilizations of the world in their later phases. The sword was the final evolution of the lengthening dagger, and as our eyes travel down the Bronze Age, they can see barrows getting smaller and smaller — and daggers longer and longer. When Avebury and Stonehenge were raised, there were no English swords. The horse and the bronze leaf-shaped sword came in with the first Celtic invasion at the close or latter part of the Bronze Age, and Mr. Harold Peake, the author of *The Bronze Age and the Celtic World* and the writer of articles in our Victoria Histories, expressly acknowledges the development of the sword from the dagger. The B.M. *Guide to the Antiquities of the Bronze Age* also describes the sword and the spearhead as genealogically descended from the dagger, while they designate the shield as late Bronze Age.¹

Of course, I do not pretend to claim that the Bronze Age was weaponless. The B.M. Guide describes the 'rapier' as an intermediate form between the dagger and the sword, while it places the halbert, which was attached to a shaft, in the early Bronze Age. But the typical curved form of the halbert is not found in Britain at all, and the rare straight form is not really distinguishable from a dagger. Now Siret devotes several pages to a discussion of the halbert and by well-documented methods shows (1) that the halbert was absolutely unknown in the Orient, and (2) that it originally came, wielded by the Celts, from Central Europe. We need not therefore worry much at the B.M. Guide putting the halbert in the early Bronze Age; since it ignores the possibility of an Oriental derivation for our Bronze Age. To paint up a kind of Meissonier battle-picture of early Britain upon such meagre data as these, is quite unwarrantable.

¹ Professor Boyd Dawkins states that the Late Bronze Age is 'characterized by the appearance of swords, spears.'—*Prehistoric Man in England*.

CONTINUITY

But step down the terraced centuries to the Celtic burials, and the abundance of savage battle weapons tells a story of which there is no need to stress the point. On what then do the hypothecators of the gap build their theory of the Bronze Age 'invasion'? On 'axe-heads'? They are almost certainly misnamed for domestic and agricultural celts. On arrow-heads? Their diminutive size, careful workmanship and association with mortuary remains betray their usage for ornament and ceremony.

Now to compare our English evidence with the parallel conditions in Crete and Egypt. The best guide to the former is Mr. H. R. Hall's *Ægean Archaeology* (1915). The great palaces of Knossos, Phaistos and Hagia Triada were left unfortified not merely in the Middle Minoan period but the Late Minoan (1500 B.C.) as well. The massiveness of the North Gate of Knossos was an expression not of fear but mental power and breadth of conception. 'It does not look as if, when this gate was originally designed (in the Middle Minoan), hostile attack was much feared by the builders of Knossos.' This is rather awkward for a neo-Darwinian, and so the writer entertainingly tells us that 'we may *imagine* [*italics mine*] that the towns and royal seats of the Early Minoan period were fortified. That Knossos was fortified in the Early Minoan period is rendered probable by the discovery of a vast early well at the south end of the hill. Such a well would have been unnecessary had the land been altogether peaceful.' Pseudo-Darwinian prepossessions die hard, and a well revives the fainting gladiator.

But when we turn to Late Minoan Mycenæ and Tiryns on the mainland, we find that they *were* fortified and that definite weapons appear at a period (*circa* 1400-1300 B.C.) within hail of the invasion from Northern Greece, which took place about 1200 B.C. But according to Mr. Hall, the war axe was not used in Crete; the double axe was a tool rather than a weapon; the leaf-shaped sword was brought

THE CONTINUITY OF PEACE

in by the northern invaders, while the bronze spearhead, sword and arrow-head all belong to the last phase of the Late Minoan. Egypt tells the same story, and I gave it in Chapter III. Between the Twelfth and Eighteenth Dynasties, the two sources of our long and round barrow periods, occurred the Hyksos invasion, and it was after the Hyksos were driven out (1588 B.C.) that the military empire of Egypt began. But it has to be remembered that we are dealing with a uniform and continuous process of civilized development, and war came to the centre of the archaic civilization earlier than to its periphery, just as did other manifestations of decadence. I shall go into the problem of the development of warfare more fully in a later chapter, but I submit here that the English evidence in relation to the warlike phenomena of the Eastern Mediterranean unfolds according to expectation. In the age of the round barrows the world began to change and conflict and disharmonies to spread their slow stain. We have to call this second period between the age of the long barrows and the Celtic invasions a transitional one between peace and war.

I misdoubt me, indeed, whether the war-theory is derived so much from evidence as from abstract preconceptions. It is highly probable that the orthodox archæologists think of the process in this way. At least I have never read one that did not give that impression. They think of civilization as a process that has grown out of savagery and the struggle for existence, confusing the savage with the primitive; they think of savages in terms of tom-toms and assegais and, lastly, they, humane and pondering men, without doubt, subscribe to the doctrine that early history and the growth of civilization are a record of the survival of the fittest by the clash of arms. And these assumptions they apply to our subject. They have every advantage over me except one, and that is that I am not tied to the scythed chariot of Neo-Darwinism, a release which

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enables me to conduct this study without such prepossessions and to try and show that they are not warranted by the actual data before us.

We already have sufficient data to warrant the conclusion that the transition between the two periods in Britain was gradual and harmonious. They glided and melted into one another, and though the one ultimately supplanted the other, it retained its form and pressure, while the ideas it had inspired worked themselves out in its heritage to their logical conclusions. The long barrow men intermingled their blood and their conceptions of life with the round barrow men; they both came from a common source and joined their ways of living and, very probably, their houses by intermarriage at the common westerly end of their journeys again. Thus the kingdom would pass by such means into the hands of the second-comers.

PART TWO

CHAPTER SIX: THE LONG BARROWS

The distribution of the long barrows. We issue from Avebury on a lion-hunt. A pause on Martinsell Hill. Adam's Grave on Walker's Hill. The sense of the heights. Its origin. Climbing to godhead. The celestial Downs. The spirits and the spirit of the Downs. Westward again. The Tilshead long barrows. The margin of Mendip. The Mendip long barrows. Change in their type. The same change in the Cotswold long barrows. The pasturage theory of 'Neolithic' occupation. The regional modifications of the long barrows and the connections between the mining and the residential districts. The absence of metals in the long barrows is no proof of an ignorance of metals. Mummification in England, Portugal, Crete and Mycenæ. The gospel of life.

'When Westwell Downs I 'gan to tread,
Where cleanly winds the green did sweep,
Methought a landscape there was spread,
Here a bush and there a sheep;
The pleated wrinkles of the face
Of wave-swoln earth did lend such grace.' . . .

WILLIAM STRODE

CHAPTER SIX: THE LONG BARROWS

PART I

The High Places

I AM tired of burrowing and for the first half of this Chapter we will come to the surface and wipe the grime of so many centuries from our eyes. Say the Welsh Triads, 'The long graves in Gwanas, no one knows to whom they belong nor what is their history.' Not so fast, too quick despairing harper, for have we not lamps to-day whose tiny gleams not the most jaundiced fog shall douse?

Let us take up the burden of the story where we dropped it in the second Chapter and follow the route of the long barrows westward from the Avebury plateau. For it is their distribution which is our real guide to their meaning. The current archæological view is that the long barrows belong to an age that preceded the discovery of metals, and they base it upon the absence of metals from their interiors. This is indeed a simple conclusion in the face of the evidence given in the last Chapter as to the essential inter-relationship between the 'Neolithic' and the Bronze Ages and the development through various transitional forms of the one from the other. The real point about the long barrows is that they have very little in them of any kind, so that the distinction between metals and other objects is an arbitrary one, while tomb furniture is abundant in the Portuguese and Spanish megalithic tombs which correspond with our long barrows. Pottery (including the beaker), flint implements and other funerary offerings, *again, have* been found in them, though in small quantities, and this is sufficient to rail them off from the Old Stone Age, which neither valued metals nor made pottery nor polished stone implements.

THE LONG BARROWS

And what of the imitation – Egyptian, blue segmented beads found in a Brecknockshire *long* barrow (see previous Chapter)? These beads belong to both periods¹: how grotesque the assumption that the one knew metals and the other not, when their kinship can be proved in so many different directions! Knowledge of metals in one period, ignorance of them in the other, ought to place them cultural seas apart. Flints, too, can be associated with polished stone implements, because they both possessed a sacred value. Boyd Dawkins (*Pre-historic Man in Britain*) points out that flint arrow-heads were known in England as ‘elf-darts,’ while the flint-flake ‘was preserved by the superstition of succeeding ages, and long survived in ceremonials’ (p. 336). Flints can also be associated with metals, because they were *substitutes* for the copper and bronze tools of the colonists’ homelands.

But distribution is the surest means of telling whether the long barrows were the graves of the lords of the earlier metal-seekers. In Celtic folk-lore, the Iberians were the mining folk, the gnomes and Nibelungs of the underworld, rich in treasure.² But the proof that the English ‘Neoliths’ were miners, lies, as I say, with the distribution of the long barrows, and I shall take a journey from Wiltshire to Somerset to illustrate it. We shall find that the process of material

¹ The conclusion surely is that the Brecknockshire Neoliths were building their long barrows after the Bronze Age people had arrived. This is exactly what we should expect as a result of the slow exploration of the country from Avebury. The Bronze Age people followed in the track of the mining pioneers of the previous age. How could the one people have known metals and the other not?

² Mr. O. G. S. Crawford, the Ordnance officer, gives a significant piece of Cotswold folklore in *The Long Barrows of the Cotswolds* (1922). On certain days of the year, megaliths run down to the nearest streams to drink and fairy gold is revealed at their bases. It is interesting this legend should occur in the Cotswolds, where the megaliths are nearly all remains of chambered long barrows.

THE HIGH PLACES

degradation from the greater civilization to the less, to which I have referred in previous chapters, is a double one. There is not only a lowering of style between the two periods but an exactly similar one from the centre outwards. As the long barrows travel away from the chalk areas along their various radii to the mines, they change their style, or rather the quality of it, and it is this relationship of chalk to granite and limestone I want to bring home to the reader.

§ I. THE GIANT'S GRAVE

The exploration itself is one of the pleasantest things a lover of idleness, freedom, Downs and solitude can do. But it is not so easy as my two eyes first told me, because, though the long barrows are lions that scorn slinking into cover, some of them have grown long manes of trees to hide them in their age, and many others have been destroyed. We have to supplement our own stalking with the lucid and beautiful maps of Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire* (1821). Imagine, then, our *safari* setting out from Avebury, through the great avenue southward to the Kennets, with those two noble folios borne on the shoulders of our porters, as the men who spake with gods were borne in the days when the stones of Avebury were more living than the men who raised them.

The route is first south, not west, where the Downs of North Wilts are stopped short of their career a few miles away at Calne. South, too, is the course of the great Ridgeway after passing Avebury in the south-westerly bend of its turfy stream over Hackpen from the Berkshire Downs. The East Kennet and West Kennet Long Barrows it leaves on its right, the East Kennet less than a mile to the south-east of the West Kennet one, its worthy fellow, and clothed in a whole beechwood. Two miles or so farther south and over the Wansdyke come Adam's Grave on Walker's Hill, the Giant's

THE LONG BARROWS

Grave¹ on an extension of Martinsell Hill from two to three miles east, and a long barrow on Huish Hill, now destroyed, between them. I will pause by them, for we are now on the edge of the Pewsey Vale, which virtually separates the North from the South Downs of Wiltshire and travels westward deep down into the dying day to where the beams of the sun mark their golden trackways between the plateaux of Wiltshire and Mendip. Along the terraced slopes of the Vale and the god-familiar hills beyond them went the long barrow men, tirelessly from horizon to horizon, and the round barrow men after them, until the streets of Mycenæ and Memphis seemed so distant in their memories that they were gilded by the sun of another world.²

Martinsell Hill with its British village³ is carved roughly half-moon fashion with the blunter tip facing towards Savernake Forest and the eastern boundary of the Downs. Never did hill throw out so bold and soaring a bluff as Martinsell over the valley. Its enormous dome, towering and yet so smooth, casts a shape of thunder over the dreaming plains and yet a benediction in its green-clad front. A Peace enthroned and bending in unconscious threat over the indifferent vale; a front commanding not like Jove but Isis-Rhea, the great Mother that held the veneration of mankind, before the King-gods had ousted her from her sole sovereignty and

¹ The Martinsell Long Barrow is not generally recognized as one, possibly because it is cut in half by a modern track. But it has every appearance of being one, and is known as the 'Giant's Grave' in the village of Oare below it.

² I am not positively saying that our long-barrow men were actually Cretans and Egyptians. That may have been so, but there are the Spanish intermediaries to be reckoned with.

³ As I mentioned in a previous Chapter, the antiquarians call the pit dwellings of Wiltshire Iron Age or Celtic. My reply is that the Celts settled on the sites of the old habitations, just as they buried their dead in the older mounds, copied the cultivation system of the former inhabitants and worshipped and sacrificed in the antique stone circles. I shall give an abundance of evidence for this in subsequent Chapters.

THE GIANT'S GRAVE

made her part drab, part scolding huswife, of their skiey halls.

To the north-east of this rounded but precipitous height, the hill stretches out a wing tufted at its shoulder by the flutter-feathering of a beech-wood, and on this spur of Down reposes a little underground town with pit-dwellings ranged in line along its twin parallel streets of turf embankment. Climb the hill above the beech-wood along a greenway and a worn earthwork rims the summit, old as the conventional portraiture of Time, and half-eaten by the plough. Let your feet swing west over the enamelled turf and a dewpond succeeds. The hill now loops towards its other tip and narrows from the waist into a long spit of land lifted high above the tree-bosomed village of Oare. On the northern slope lie further depressions, while down the slope three horizontal tiers of cultivation terraces carve the hill into a stairway for the giant to climb to his eternal bed.

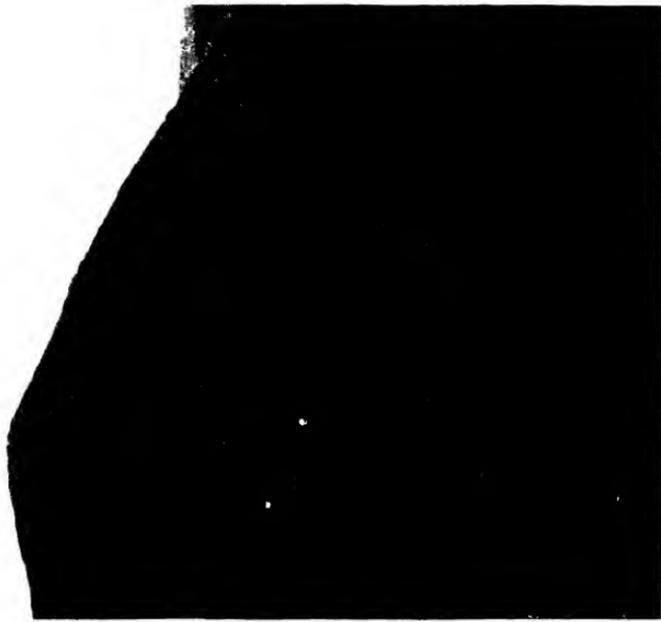
Martinsell Hill, then, is an open-air museum of the dwellers in high places, and is littered with the furniture of the giant. Where then was his bed? If one climbs the elongated neck of land with a thorn-cap on its crest, one is confronted at the highest point of the ridge by a large turf embankment cut in half by a modern pathway and hiding the prospect of the vale below. Colt-Hoare, making almost the only and very pardonable mistake in fact in his splendid long barrow of a book, regarded this embankment as a defence of the hill from its western side. It is no embankment, but the cubicle of the giant for four thousand years. It is of wonderful great thickness at the easterly end, though the giant himself had for his pride and by the mercy of God been transformed into a wheatear that found the grave a fine stance for bobbing to the sun. It straddles right across the hill and some way down the slope on either side, while the tapering snout of the western end is so perfectly fitted into the contour of the slope that it looks uncommonly like the proboscis of

THE LONG BARROWS

some grass-grown monster struck into eternal immobility as he rooted for his food in the soil. In exactly the same way, the bulkier eastern extremity, where the interments were made, dies placidly into the curve of the slope.

I dwell a little on the appearance of this majestic long barrow because it illustrates two principles achieved by the men of old in earthen work. One is their extraordinary skill in catching the rhythm of the Downs, so that their labours appear as a heightening of nature's mood in her serenest and most gracious aspect. The other is what I may call their intuitive sense of advertisement. Actually the Martinsell Long Barrow, though in the full long barrow tradition, is not quite so large as many others, but it is well named 'The Giant's Grave,' because its peculiar position across the contracted hill-top makes it loom larger than the hill itself. This is really making bricks of straw, for the long barrow is nothing but an oblong mound of earth covering or not, as the case may be, a sepulchral passage way and chamber of great stone blocks. But seen as its builders have raised it in so many places, it communicates a slightly troubling awe, a faint dread, that is not due either to its age or its mystery.

Well, the Giant's Grave needs to be so called, so magnified, lest it should shrink before the god-like spectacle below it. To the south, across the pinguid vale of Pewsey, a double line of Downs lift their smooth backs from Buttermere to Bratton Castle, from one border of Wiltshire to the other, and where the first line sinks into the plain, the further takes up the running and shoots on westward beyond all but the beams of the sun's eye. If it comes to picking out the earthworks like the scattered chess-men on the kind of board the giant would play on, there are Knap Hill, Clearbury, Chlorus, Chidbury, and, a greater wonder, Cley Hill far to the west, that very Cley Hill that I have seen from Maesbury Camp on Mendip so far away to the east. Really it makes



ADAM'S GRAVE, NEAR AVEBURY.



GIANT'S GRAVE, MARTINSELL HILL.

THE GIANT'S GRAVE

you feel like a giant yourself, or rather some volatile being of mid-ether, small but of arrow-flight and tireless wings, to have seen Cley Hill islanded in the haze from one county to the west and from the other to the east.

To the north over Huish Hill with its complex of nether-ground villages and covered ways lie those three clumps of trees whose leafy domes uphold the northern roof of Wiltshire, and mark the line of the Ridgeway north-eastward from Avebury through Barbury and on over the Berkshire Downs to the Thames. Shift the vision closer in and further west, and a little range of clustered Downs appears, magically carpeted with the smoothest turf that ever was, most of them bare of top, a few with tree feathers in their caps, and one crested by a curious dorsal arch. This is Adam's Grave upon a hill that must bear the name to perpetuity of a Mr. Walker, which, however, has common ground with Adam in being as familiar to us as our own. It could be but a step on Downs of such a sward to see the Giant's Grave from Adam's, as I was seeing Adam's Grave from the Giant's. So I made for old Adam.

§ 2. ADAM'S GRAVE

One of the delights of this Downland travelling among the memorials of the dead who achieve a kind of vicarious life in us through the witchcraft of the Downland air and the pulse-stirring adventure of hunting them out, lies in the resemblances between one memorial and another that constantly strike the wanderer. The climb to the top of Walker's Hill is interrupted on the right by an outlying knoll carved into spiral terraces which are the very image on a little smaller scale of those that go tossing round the flanks of Cley Hill. Everywhere the same hand—the giant's hand whose very bones would crumble to dust should we touch them, and yet whose works will outlast the most of ours. Adam's

THE LONG BARROWS

Grave was, from its dominant position, presumed by Colt-Hoare to fulfil the office of a stone circle and mark a place of gathering for all the people round. To-day it differs from the majority of its fellows in having one of the stelæ at its eastern entrance still protruding from the ground, and one of the stone blocks of its peristalith still, though recumbent, remaining in the ditch which surrounds the mound. It lies close to the Ridgeway, which here makes north over the Wansdyke towards the Kennets.

One could gaze for a year at the prospect spread in wealth untold from horizon to horizon, but let it remain untold, lest I weary the reader in gathering yet another handful of bulrushes into my boat of words. Let them grow and keep their greenness. What we saw from Martinsell is here repeated from a different angle of perspective, a shifting of the cloud-like masses in the distance and a readjustment of the foreground like a painted stage seen first from a box and then the gallery. But it is only by climbing Walker's Hill that one can appreciate the beauty of Martinsell from the western end, the sullen wavy line of the camp on Knap Hill to the north-east, and the sinuous folds and flowing curves of the Downs in the immediate neighbourhood. Their symmetry and variety of line combined with the almost silken texture of their barren surface contrast with the expanse of the plain below, roughened, like the manes of a windy sea, with innumerable trees.

And the shaven knolls (nature's round barrows) that are plumed with trees, how curiously reminiscent of less endearing Eastern desert scenes, with palms, precise and thin of body, rising from the hummocky waste! Possibly, the fancy here is in the service of historical fact, for the accidence of pines upon so many barrows and earthworks is too frequent to be ascribed to natural grouping. Some ties with the Ancient East these workers in Wiltshire earth and stone had without question, whether we speak flatly of Egypt and the

ADAM'S GRAVE

Ægean or not, and one thinks of the cypresses that embodied the spirit of Osiris above his grave.¹

§ 3. MEETING-PLACE OF GODS AND MEN

No wanderer, indeed, in enchanted barrow-land, among these forsaken shrines of dead heroes mightier in their dissolution than in the springtide of their lives, can doubt that such piles of sacred earth were raised of a proud and set purpose to dominate the scenes they do. Our barrows were reared where they could contemplate the world without end beneath them and, like the deified lords resting within them, lived in a mid-world between earth and heaven. Seen along the skyline, they are indeed the stepping-stones of the gods.

Now in many of the creation myths of antique mythology, the dry land emerges from the primeval waste of waters. I turn to the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* (July, 1924) and I read that a mount or hill was the abode of divinity from the most ancient times. Hills were the 'navel of the world.' All the navels of the ancient world, Delos, Delphi, Ida, Dikte, Jerusalem, Sinai, Mount Meru, were 'cult-centres,' and the origin of all the sacred mounts and hills lay, according to the text, in the emergence of the first and highest elevations from the yearly inundation of the Nile.² Hence,

¹ Pines were 'givers of life' (see end of Chapter) in China as were cedars in Babylonia and Egypt, myrrh- and frankincense-bearing trees in Arabia. In the ancient tree- and pillar-cults they personified the dead, and their gums and resins were used in the ceremonies of reanimating the dead in the mummification ritual.

² From the *Chronicle of Gildas*. 'Nor shall I enumerate those diabolical idols of my country, which almost surpassed in number those of Egypt, and of which we shall see some mouldering away within or without the deserted temples, with stiff and deformed features as was customary. Nor will I call out upon the mountains, fountains or hills, or upon the rivers, which now are

THE LONG BARROWS

the holy 'navel-hill' was the resting-place of the gods from which to crow. The sun-god, Ré, originally appeared on a mound, a word which means 'to appear' in the Egyptian. Ré was the 'lord of the High Place,' and at Heliopolis, his city of worship, was a sacred mound, crowned by an obelisk. In the Egyptian texts, too, the god on his mound is 'equated' with the king on his throne, an indication of the god-king complex. Gods, as we know, descended into stones, when the Cretan conch-trumpet summoned them, and Hatshepsut's obelisk at Thebes was called 'the noble Mound of the First Time,' the time of the emergence of the land from the waters. Ptah, one of the most ancient of the Egyptian gods, is described as he who formed the mound from the flood. Mr. Leonard Woolley, the head of the British Museum expedition which excavated the site of Ur, describes how the Sumerians, living in a flat country, built artificial hills with brick on which to worship. They were called the Mountains of God.

The Egyptians, again, believed that the sun was born from the splitting of the Holy Eastern Mountain (*Parturiunt montes . . .*), and the same symbolism was applied to the idea of rebirth when the corpse passed the threshold of the tomb with two obelisks or stelæ on either side. So too the horizon was the birthplace of the gods. The Cretans certainly inherited the worship of the mountains, and the summit of Mount Juktas, overlooking Knossos, was a place of veneration. Here was a votive shrine and 'temenos' or sanctuary within which was celebrated the mourning for Adonis (Osiris). On the ridge of Mount Juktas, too, was the famous Profile of Zeus. The shaft graves of Mycenæ were built on its subservient to the use of men, but once were an abomination and destruction to them, and to which the blind people paid divine honour.'

Yes, and why should *rivers* have divine honours paid to them? — when the population was hill-living and their cultivation terraces were not irrigated by them? The simple answer is Old Father Nile. It was no more natural for the Ancient Britons to worship rivers than dragons.

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acropolis. Mrs. Greene (*The History of Ireland to 1014: 1925*) wrote more closely to the truth than she knew in the passage: 'Works on such a scale and of such architectural design (megalithic Ireland) must have been carried out by a society fairly settled and organized and with . . . a sense of the majesty of the hills.'

Wiltshire, too, was crowned with sacred mountains, our Sinai, our Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land.

As I sat on the stela of Adam's Grave, I was really gazing down the heaving slopes of human thought, and Nature spoke to me of Man's visions of her, no less than of her own unequivocated loveliness. For an hour I was a droplet left by the tide of humanity that had ebbed from their slopes, and I knew that it was only by treading in the worn steps of the hill-dwellers that I could realize so much as a fragment of the seeming incomprehensibles of their lives. I do not believe for a single moment that Downland man chose the high places either in search of pasturage for his flocks or because the wooded valleys were the haunts of peril or even demons, or as a refuge from human foes. He went there because he was a man of self-regarding, of devastatingly material and yet of appealing piety. He dug metals not to become rich but immortal; he climbed the hills to come nearer to Godhead, not in terms of the spirit but of the fortunate and desirable life he lived.

In some lights, he appears the most prosaic as well as the earliest of civilized men in Britain; in others, the most imaginative. He was preoccupied with the next world in an absorption not shared by a man in a million nowadays, but heaven to him was no more than himself in heaven, a quickening of the flesh, not a release of the soul, not a state of blessed being nor a flower of essential life but a place very pleasant. The Downs were to him the foothills of Ida; and they were a good deal warmer in winter, those heavenly

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Downs, nor did one ever get tired or hungry by walking on them. If, indeed, we can understand why Richard Jefferies climbed up to Liddington Camp, to attain an existence 'infinitely higher than Deity,' we can understand a great deal better why this Spanish Egypto-Cretan of Wiltshire lived and was buried on Walker's Hill. I say 'he,' when I mean the rulers of ancient Wiltshire, for I do not suppose that the Iberian miners and agriculturists had any such ideas: they must have been too hard at work to think much, nor was their destiny a share, however humble, of these celestial comforts.

Yet in the earlier Kingdom of Osiris, the poor man had his place in the Elysian Fields, while, judging from the *Harvesters' Vase* from Hagia Triada, happiness and fellowship played some part in the common life of Crete.

This, of course, is not the only reason why the wanderers chose the Downs for their dwelling-place: their flint-industry was another, not more practical, since the religious system of the archaic civilization was thoroughly business-like, but more actual. Yet, even with this subtraction, our suggestion is mere heresy to the modern archæological temper. Then, it has omitted to study Colt-Hoare as attentively as it should. The ancients lived in the high places, he says, because they were raised above the lower world and afforded a closer communication with heaven. They were places of contemplation and prayer, 'high and pleasant spots' with which the gods were 'extremely delighted.'

If we take a bird's-eye view of early religions, if we so much as mention the words 'high places,' this ritual significance will need no stressing. 'Thy Mother Nut,' says a Pyramid Text, 'giveth unto thee a path in the horizon to the place where Ré is'; the royal Isopata and others of the Cretan tombs were built so that all that lovely world lay below them, and as for Jehovah, he, like Jove and Zeus, was never content with less than a mountain from which to issue his

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rumbling menaces. The big round barrow on the southern escarpment of Scratchbury Camp, for instance, was not erected on the apex of the hill, but just below it, and I had sufficient curiosity to go on climbing to the highest point beyond it. I discovered that the bellying out of the hill above the barrow cut off a large slice of the foreground without taking in any more background. The barrow had settled down upon the best view. So from the Knighton Long Barrow you get a sumptuous view south over the Stonehenge region, and from the Corton Long Barrow of the semicircle of the Downs pacing in single file west towards the Frome valley, and on the other side north, in a band of brothers, towards Avebury. The point about the barrows is not only that you see them, but that they see you. Wherever the archaic civilization went, it settled high. Moses was born in a river-valley, but he was promoted to the hills.

It is from this principle of hill-habitation that a sidelight is thrown upon the close association between gods and rulers. Gods were no more than rulers deified¹ not by virtue but by death, and rulers, they were gods potential or, if kings, gods positive, or at the half-way house to deity. The ruler then, whether priest or king or lord, had the ear of divinity, and earthly lords and heavenly lords, with common privileges and interests and powers of mutual advantage, met and communed together half-way between heaven and earth, upon the Mount of Sinai or the Wiltshire Downs. When 'the Lord spake unto Abraham,' he was not addressing any common Israelitish flockmaster, but the member of a royal Babylonian house; he was a jealous god and delivered his oracles only to the right people. *

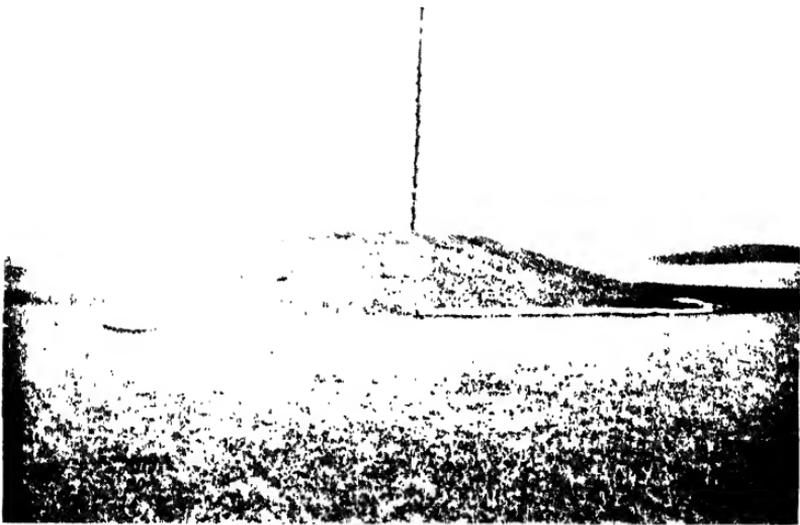
¹ This applies more particularly to the Bronze Age, when the 'Children of the Sun' (see Perry's *Children of the Sun*) were heading expeditions from the Orient in search of metals and other precious substances. They were the sons of the Sun-god by a mortal maiden of royal birth (viz. Heracles), and became immortalized and identified with the sun after death. See my *Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum*.

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And does this matter-of-factness, this snobbery of the ancient religions, more apparent in the second than the first phase of the archaic civilization, rub the bloom from our contemplation of the ancients themselves or the places where they lived? I do not think so, because we are viewing them from different angles of vision and in different terms of thought and knowledge. They trouble us no more, these shredded delusions, because we have ceased to believe in them. And because we can observe them with such detachment, we are enabled to see the pathos and even the beauty in them and that their passion for nature and the Downs contained within its womb the germ of an authentic spiritual perception. It is easy for us to see how such conceptions were bound to bear a poisoned fruit from the eating of which we suffer to this day, but it is not so easy for us to find scraps of treasure among all the lumber. They had ideas, these vanished people; they did not scour the earth for wealth just in order to be wealthy. They climbed to Martinsell for material results, but not altogether for material motives. They climbed upon the Wiltshire Downs to be nearer unto heaven, and though their heaven was a pheasant preserve rather than a grove of singing birds, still, as we follow in their footsteps, and witness their harmonious works, we feel that they were right. They were true to what they called the spirits and we call the spirit of the Downs. But, above all things, they were preoccupied with life, and the story of our book, as will be seen more and more clearly as we go along, travels on from an absorption with life to an equally patent absorption with death. This is the central issue of our theme, but to explain the meaning of it is not yet.



'WHITE BARROW,' NEAR TILSHEAD.



'SILVER BARROW,' NEAR TILSHEAD.

LONG BARROWS OF THE DOWNS

PART II

Long Barrow Lairs

*

§ I. THE LONG BARROWS OF THE DOWNS

It is high time I got on with my journey, lest the twilight of the past quite swallow me up.

After crossing the Pewsey valley, the western branch of the Ridgeway travels west along the northern escarpment of Salisbury Plain proper to Edington Hill and Bratton Castle, and so on south-west past Cley Hill, Jack Straw's Castle and Camelot¹ into Dorsetshire. It is along its southern branch, which splits into various tributaries linking up the junctions – Casterley Camp, Tilshead, Yarnbury Camp, Stonehenge, Old Sarum – of this once densely populated region that we shall find the best lion country. Ell Barrow (long) lies south-west from Casterley Camp, a convenient observatory of the whole region between it and Amesbury, while about the same distance south-east (between three and four miles) are two more, one near Winterbourne Stoke, where the Amesbury road cuts the Devizes-Salisbury one at right angles, and the other the Knighton Long Barrow, which, facing east and west, looks askint and perhaps askance at Stonehenge within sight to the south.

Three or four miles north of Stonehenge, you find yourself in the middle (or the end) of the third civilization apparent upon the manuscript you are trying to decipher. Tanks,

¹ Cadbury Camp, the great node of communication between Wiltshire, Mendip and the Dorset Downs. I shall not attempt to make a brief for its ancient name of Camelot. There are other Camelots, but I know and love Cadbury Camp, and as others have called it Camelot, so shall I.

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rows of sheds roofed with corrugated iron, a snowstorm of tents, aerodromes and other warty growths, expressing what Mr. Robert Graves calls 'the military art,' proclaim your own; south of you lies Stonehenge, a little older than when you last saw it, and, north of you, this Knighton Long Barrow, an earthen sphinx with head hidden in its forepaws and that arch of the back which, as in all the long barrows of the Downs, so melodiously represents their curves in miniature.

Now make straight west for Tilshead, a lair of long barrows, and, with sad appropriateness, the last retreat of the great bustard. Tilshead hums with trackways, spinning out threads of greeting to their fellows ranged in a half-moon from Ell Barrow through Knighton Long Barrow to the four of them north of Yarnbury, where travellers broke their journey from the west on the way to Old Sarum. One of the Tilshead long barrows is 377 feet long, 11 feet high and 99 wide, and so may claim to be the biggest in England. White Barrow close at hand reached 255 feet, and Hill Barrow 173. Here, too, we are in touch with the barrow-cum-village passage way marked on the maps as the 'Old Ditch.' In Colt-Hoare's peerless map of this, the district of Shrewton and the Chitternes (within five miles of Warminster), we get so sure an idea of the direction taken by the ancients, from the Tilshead group of long barrows to that on Knook Down a mile or two still further to the west, that we can almost visualize this bit of Downland as it was nearly four thousand years ago without stirring out of the easy-chair.

South of Knook, on the other side of the Wylie valley, is the Corton Long Barrow connected with two other long barrows in the region and by trackways, first with Jack Straw's Castle, and then with Camelot near the Dorset border. This barrow, then, on one of the routes between Avebury and Maiden Castle near Dorchester, should have

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had something to say for itself. It speaks with a smaller voice nowadays, for the plough has diminished its length to 216 feet. But Colt-Hoare found a 'flint pyramid' within it, housing the human remains, so that a voice which spoke in such characters might be said to carry as far as the Mediterranean.

I know I am only just putting down names and am conveying nothing of how kindling is the adventure of picking out these long-backed, couchant forms upon the ridges of the hills, that seem haunted even at a distance with a life immobile but deathlessly vigilant. As you go back to your home and fellow-men, lift a hand in greeting to these old watch-dogs of the hills.

So we arrive at Downland's marge and a region which in Colt-Hoare's time was scored with no fewer than nine of them, the largest concentration since we left Avebury. Is not this hill-saga plain to read? South of Salisbury and the Wylie valley, there are few long barrows; the chambered long barrows on the chalk in the full megalithic style are confined to the neighbourhood of Avebury and the slice of the Berkshire Downs within its shadow. This circumstance has nothing to do with the abundance of Sarsen stones on the Marlborough Downs, since there are just or almost as many of them in the Stonehenge area. And I would refer the reader to that portion of my first Chapter which dealt with the architectural environment of Avebury for an impression of its richness in megalithic long barrows constructed in the grand manner.

Indeed, the chain of round barrows which swell northward up from Stonehenge along the rolling Downs beside the Avon valley, matching the circular groves of beeches that float like atolls upon the mirage of the haze, seem an intrusion upon the nobler sanctuary of the Avebury region, Egypt's English Downland. They were an intrusion upon Salisbury Plain itself, for there were once twelve long barrows within

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an area of 20 square miles round Stonehenge, showing how frequented the district was before the coming of the round barrow men.

§ 2. THE LONG BARROWS OF THE SILVER LAND

But we have arrived on the high coast of the sea of leaves that separates us from the Silver Land,¹ and east across the valley lie the foothills of Mendip. Our next stop is to be at the Wellow Long Barrow. Among those foothills lies what is left of the Orchardleigh (near Frome) Long Barrow, close to the Littleton Drew Long Barrow over the Wiltshire border and four miles from Wellow. We arrive and at once we see that something has happened to the distinctive long barrow-style of the Wiltshire Downs.

Our new species lies about half-way between Stony Littleton and Wellow, which itself lies between Frome and Bath and so a little off the metal-bearing (lead, bearing silver) limestone. You approach it through a soft dairy country, through Faulkland, where a Somerset worthy built the ugliest tower or obelisk that ever was, even in these days of war memorials, to overlook the park of a rival squire he hated. Personally, I rather admire him for a deed of such consummate malice, for at least he never pretended that his tower was a decoration to the landscape. He knew what he was about, and that he was not adding elegance to the view, and so by his deliberate violation of it must have possessed a proper sense of beauty. So on to our long barrow, which the Office of Works, in dramatic contradistinction to the Squire of the Squinting Tower, cheerfully describes as 'declared by competent judges to be the most perfect specimen of Celtic antiquity still existing in Great Britain'!

There is nothing remarkable either about the position or the immediate surroundings of the Wellow Long Barrow,

¹ Silver in ancient times was extracted from lead.

LONG BARROWS OF THE SILVER LAND

and that at once marks it out from every other barrow I have seen, whose dead knew how to find their shortest way to heaven. In fact, the most remarkable thing about the district is not the barrow at all, but a flock of *Orchis morio*, the green-winged orchis, that in the spring spread their wings in the meadow above. That is not the kind of thing that you would say about the other long barrows, earthen sphinxes majestically aloof and still ruling in dignity the terrain below them.

The Wellow Long Barrow lies on the slope of a field, and has only a poor, common little view on which to gaze and dream, a view commensurate in spirit with its own size – 107 feet long, 54 feet wide and 13 feet high, according to the measurements of Colt-Hoare, and so less than a third the length of the West Kennet Long Barrow. It stands aloof indeed, since there are no other ancient workings or remains in its neighbourhood, but it seems the aloofness of the forsaken and not of a chosen apartness. One thought at once – whatever your mystery, you have diverged from the barrows of the great tradition.

So I think it proved to be. The gallery of the chamber within¹ is 47 feet 6 inches in very moderate length, and the three square and lateral transepts at right angles to the slabbed and horizontally stone-piled passage going on beyond the third transept, as in the Egyptian rock-cut tombs, are more like hen-coops than burial chambers. Then again the workmanship of the interior is decidedly amateurish and provincial in comparison with that of the megalithic structures of Spain or Brittany or the Avebury region. Even though the gallery has been restored, its

¹ It is an interesting fact that so many of the degraded long barrows of the mining regions are chambered, like those in the neighbourhood of Avebury. That suggests two factors to my mind – the great importance of the industrial element to the Ancient Mariners and their occupation by miners rather than by residents.

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masonry is ill-fitting, and the roof is so low that one has to traverse it almost on hands and knees, a stooping of the chamber itself from the usual stature of its elder barrow and dolmen brethren. The stone slabs again are small and the passage way is crooked, yet another departure from the practice of the early megalithic builders in their chambered barrows, while the entrance no longer greets the sun and heretically faces north-west.¹

Here then was an anomaly. Here is a kind of flightless dodo among long barrows lingering on (for it is obviously late and only just precedent to the round barrow age) into alien days, or a sort of mongrel derivative of the long barrow, for it is flattish and quite formless in appearance. What are we to make of such a hybrid, and how straighten up its lop-sided genealogical table?

I believe that the answer to the question lies in the three other long barrows of the Mendips. Those at Orchardleigh and Butcombe ('Fairy's Toot' — the prying-place of the fairies or Iberian gnomes) between the Stanton Drew circles and Dolebury Camp, fifteen miles from Orchardleigh, are almost useless for comparison, for I can find only scanty records of either of them before they were destroyed. They were both chambered and the Somerset archæological papers say they resembled Wellow. As both of them were built in the lead-mining region, the degraded style of Wellow was not due to the fact that it did not actually rest on the limestone. After all, it is within five miles of the nearest 'gruffy-ground.'²

Fortunately, a record of the fourth chambered long barrow of the Mendips (upon Chârmborough Hill, near Holcombe) has been preserved in the Rev. J. D. C. Wickham's *Records by Spade and Terrier*. Little remains of it, but I know its

¹ Nearly all the long barrows of Wiltshire face east and west — say I, from Egypt to Mendip — say they, from the rising sun to the going down of the same.

² The local name for ground humped and pitted by ancient lead-workings.

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district pretty well, and the marks of old lead-mining are abundant in it. The hill was called the Giant's Ground, as other long barrow sites are so called, and 'Neolithic' flint-flakes, pottery, a quern, and other funerary offerings were found in it, including quartz, rock crystals and quantities of shells.

But the saving grace of Charmborough Barrow is a diagram of it in the book. The shapeless, bulgy appearance, neither curved nor angular, like a pantomime monster, is totally different from the strong and positive forms of the Wiltshire long barrows, but exactly like that of the Wellow barrow. How clear an illustration not merely of the inter-relationship between the flint and the mining regions, but of its *character*. The mining regions were an extension of the flint, and the 'archaic civilization' as a whole declined in its distribution from the main centres of its energies. The relation between Charmborough and West Kennet is a miniature of the relation between Egypt and Britain and of the first to the second megalithic period.¹

If a Somerset reader exclaims that the numerous round barrows of the Mendip lead region, standing up against the skyline in that desolate land like pledges of eternity, are more impressive than Wellow, I agree. But it is obvious that the exploitation of the lead-mines was much more intensive in the Bronze Age than in the 'Neolithic,' and its population much larger. That does not affect my general contention that the round barrow represents a diminished style of building from the style of the long.

The Romans followed, and they have left little or no architecture at all. The slags and slimes abandoned by the old workers were there waiting for them. They were reap-

¹ Mr. Forde of London University gives me a striking example of degradation from Finisterre. The capstones on the dolmens are all slanting up from the ground, thus obviating the need for an upright slab at one end. The megaliths of Finisterre are all late.

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ing what others had sown before them, carrying off along their roads the riches others had dug for them. All they really left were their mining roads, and when their slags were re-examined in the last century, it was found that from 20 per cent. to 25 per cent. of metal had remained in them — showing the hasty and careless methods of a people bent upon exploitation alone, and conquerors rather than colonists.

§ 3. THE LONG BARROWS OF THE COTSWOLDS

But let us make speed with our *safari* and jog over a wider area, pursuing the noble quarry over the Cotswolds.

The Cotswolds are the Ordnance Survey's line of defence against the distribution of the 'archaic civilization' from the Mediterranean, against the connection between the miner and the builder of the megaliths. It holds the Cotswolds against the Ancient Mariners. There are no megaliths in the Cotswolds, but there are chambered long barrows and earthworks, and if, as I shall maintain, many of these, no less than of the megaliths, were planted in England by the first wave of immigration from the Eastern Mediterranean, the highest civilization in England before the Middle Ages, then something more important than ochre¹ must have swung it over the Cotswolds. As Mr. Hippisley Cox remarks: 'The great number of camps on the spurs of the Cotswolds overlooking the Severn between Stroud and Cheltenham, must have served some special purpose,' whereupon this sagacious writer drops off the track into the usual warfare swamp. May not the explanation lie in the famous Rollright Stones between the Stour, the Evenlode and the Cherwell, the Stones with their long barrow hard by and their folklore of kingship; the Stones set up on

¹The only substance in the Cotswolds desirable to the Ancient Mariners. But there are *terraces* on the Cotswolds (see next Chapter).



WAYLAND SMITH'S FORGE.

(Long Barrow.)



THE DRAGON OF WHITE HORSE HILL.

LONG BARROWS OF THE COTSWOLDS

a lesser scale but of the same pattern as Avebury¹ and Stanton Drew? It seems to me a pretty safe generalization to make that the presence of stone circles marks a nucleus of concentration wherever they appear and the ancient iron workings of the district (hæmatite for pigmentation and iron pyrites for strike-a-lights) are considerable enough to account for Rollright.² Well, a strong trail leads direct from Avebury through Ringsbury Camp east of Malmesbury, through Cirencester, and, making a necklace of the Cotswold earthworks, on to Rollright. There is your trackway between the two structures, the two clasps of the extended necklace, and there your row of beads. All we have to do is to snap the clasps together and drop the necklace gently over the head of the opposition.

The old theory of the significance of the Cotswold long barrows is contained in series No. 6 of the *Ordnance Survey Papers*. 'The factor,' the paper tells us, 'which influenced prehistoric man in his choice of a settlement was not elevation but vegetation and water supply,' and the Cotswold region 'in neolithic times was "bush country," with a good deal of grassland intermixed.' It would be interesting to ask the writer why, if this was the factor influencing 'prehistoric man,' he pitched upon Dartmoor, Bodmin Moor and other of the Cornish wastelands,³ which are and were about as

¹ Sir Arthur Evans (*Folk-Lore*, Vol. VI, 1895) has given a graphic description of the traditions of festal pilgrimage to the Rollright Stones which greatly encourages me in my account of the ceremonial usages attached to the Avebury stones given in Chapter I.

² Why iron, the reader may ask, when the Iron Age came after the Bronze Age? The answer is that the dolmen-builders sometimes made use of iron which they chanced to find in the gold regions. Thus the gold-crushers of Hyderabad (who erected dolmens and stone circles) also used the iron of the district, for ornament not war, centuries before the Iron Age.

³ In *Man and his Past*, Mr. Crawford says that prehistoric Cornwall and Devon supported 'a scanty pastoral population,' when Dartmoor, for instance, contains more villages than any other ground of the same area in Great Britain! They exist there 'in hundreds' (*Victoria History*).

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eligible for settlers governed by such a motive as sheer bog.

The distribution of early man over the earth's surface surely makes one thing perfectly clear – that he was not the pawn of geographical conditions, and that if he went to a place, it was at the dictation not of his body but of his mind. Nobody who visits the extraordinarily bleak and desolate region of the Priddy lead-mines on Mendip, where the grass is useless for grazing, the bones of the earth protrude through its flesh like Durer's portrait of Death in "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," and the round barrows are the discarded crowns of the kingdom of man, can have the slightest doubt about it. If he settled in a comparatively waterless district, he sifted the mists and vapours of the atmosphere and enticed them into dewponds. Many of these are, of course, modern, but the careful analysis of Walter Johnson in *Folk-Memory* and the contiguity of the dewponds to earthworks point to the men of Avebury as the inventors and the more recent pond-makers as inheritors of an extremely venerable tradition.

Nor is it explained to us how it came about that the 'prehistoric shepherd or cowherd' would ever have dreamed of erecting such numerous and elaborate monuments as the earthworks, barrows and megaliths. And a question still more vital is – where on earth did he get the elaborate *cultural* associations of the megaliths from? A vast and complex system of thought grew like lichen upon the megaliths all over the world. Did later people invent this thought which has come down to us in the garbled shape of legend and tradition? In that case, it is very odd that megalithic folklore should be so alike from the Carolines to the Cotswolds, and stranger still that its meaning is so plainly discernible in the institutions and mythology of ancient Egypt.

The writer, indeed, appears so little convinced by his own assumptions that in the same monograph he gives

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an admirable digest of certain features in the Cotswold long barrows that support Prof. Elliot Smith's contention that the long barrow was simply a degraded form of the Egyptian mastaba. It is permissible to ask how he reconciles this generous acceptance with his hostility to the Elliot Smith-Perry mapping of the distribution of Egyptian culture, with his Saxon lynchets and his prehistoric cowherds. At any rate, his descriptions of the Cotswold long barrows reveal the fact that they, like the Wellow long barrow, are not in the great style of the Wiltshire barrows.¹ The Cotswolds, in other words, were a route between one group of megaliths and another, between one mining area and another; a branch line, and mark the trail of an experimental penetration northward. The admirable quarter-inch ordnance map of the Midlands shows the connection between our Wiltshire-Mendip stone circles and those of Radnorshire and Oxfordshire even more definitely than do Mr. Cox's maps.

§ 4. WHAT LONG BARROW DISTRIBUTION MEANS

I will leave the Cornish dolmens (which are probably 'Neolithic' long barrows without mound of earth or passage of stones, and which Prof. Elliot Smith also derives from the mastaba) to a future Chapter. Long barrows are absent or nearly absent from Cornwall, being replaced by the dolmen. The search for gold led the first voyagers who sighted Britain to Cornwall,² where there are prolific signs

¹ The Somerset archæologists point out the resemblance between the Somerset and Gloucestershire long barrows. At the same time, it is fair to point out that the Colnpen Long Barrow, is 300 feet long, and, judging from a photograph I have seen, a fine specimen. But the majority of the Cotswold long barrows are certainly degraded (see *The Long Barrows of the Cotswolds*, by O. G. S. Crawford, 1925).

² See Chapter VIII for further light upon this question.

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of 'Neolithic' man in the gold, tin and copper regions. They then, in all probability, explored the country as far as Avebury and made their permanent and capital settlements there. I think it probable that future research will establish every dolmen in England as a degraded chambered long barrow.

What applies to Mendip and the Cotswolds in long barrow language also applies to the Derbyshire limestone. The long barrows in the neighbourhood of the lead-mines there betray exactly the same type and manner of degradation. So do those of Caithness (gold) and the Lake District (copper).

Turn now to the chalk hills of Dorset, Berkshire and the Yorkshire wolds, and we find that their long barrows have suddenly recovered their form, their lofty and flowing style. Their kinship is with the unchambered long barrows of Wiltshire. The chambered long barrow (Wayland Smith's Forge - now uncovered by a mound) close to the Ridgeway on Whitehorse Hill in Berkshire, for instance, is of the same family as the West Kennet Long Barrow, a few miles to the north-west. Dorset was a county of great importance to the Ancient Mariners for reasons I have already given in Chapter II, and its megalithic remains used to be considerable. It once, too, was the haunt of no fewer than twenty-three long barrows, some of which were chambered. Those that are left suggest a continuation of the grand manner (viz., Pimperne Long Barrow between Shaftesbury and Blandford) in the areas nearest to and on the trunk lines from Wiltshire. Charles Warne, for instance, in *Ancient Dorset* (a sumptuous folio published in 1872) says of the Dorset long barrows that there are 'several very noble specimens,' which mainly 'occurred 'in the north-east district beyond Blandford,' a statement which greatly strengthens our contention. Nobody can call the Derbyshire, Cotswold or Somerset long barrows 'noble specimens.'

LONG BARROW DISTRIBUTION

Clandon Long Barrow near Maiden Castle is a fine specimen, but then it does lie on a main trunk line and in a thickly congested and importantly maritime and agricultural district. The long barrows of the Sussex Downs are small and unchambered but shapely. We are still on the chalk, that is to say, but a tidy distance from the metropolis at Avebury. The Yorkshire Wold long barrows are also smaller than those of the Wiltshire Downs.

It seems to me impossible to explain these fluctuations between chambered and unchambered barrows, between barrows with a style about them and barrows with none, between big barrows and smaller ones, except as representing the interplay between the flint and the mining areas, the domestic and the industrial countries, the metropolis and the provinces. The mining regions usually have chambers to poorly constructed tombs; the domestic usually do without chambers in handsomely constructed ones. But at Avebury, style, chambers and scale are united in the one structure. The cult of the long barrow and its regional modifications show us that the chalk Downs were homelands of the earlier megalithic penetration of England; that Avebury was the nucleus of the whole complex, and that other elevated geological formations, whether bearing metals themselves or leading into the metal-bearing districts, were exploited for their ores from the Downs, the permanent homes, and, as we shall see later, the agricultural centres of voyagers who, long centuries ago, sought and found in England their treasury.

THE LONG BARROWS

PART III

Egypt and the Long Barrow

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§ I. METALS AND THE LONG BARROWS

I have already in Chapters V and VI attempted an explanation for the comparative emptiness of our long barrows – that of exportation. A further one steps forward. The chambered long barrows being open in contradistinction to the closed cists of the round barrows, they were much more easily rifled. Tomb-robbing, as Dr. Elliot Smith has shown, was an institution in Egypt, and professionals made a handsome living out of it, while traditions of the treasures locked up in the English mounds linger to this day.

Many round barrows, again, contain no metals, and altogether we have substantial ground for quoting Canon Greenwell's verdict (*British Barrows*) that 'the absence of metals in the long barrows . . . is not in itself a proof that the persons who erected them were ignorant of their use.' That they were not ignorant of them I have tried to show by way of two trunk-lines of enquiry. The first has been the derivation of the long barrow via the passage dolmen from the rock-cut tomb of Middle Minoan Crete and Twelfth Dynasty Egypt, the time when bronze came into general use in both countries. The rock-cut tombs of Western Europe were distributed in the tin and other metalliferous regions, and I have tried to follow this up by pointing out that the early dolmens and the long barrows of England betray an elaborate civilization in the first place, and a system of arterial links between the chalk (flint) and mining settlements in the second.

METALS AND THE LONG BARROWS

The honour of the rock-cut tomb discovery belongs to Mr. Perry, but there have been anticipations of it.

One of the many great services Dr. Elliot Smith has done to knowledge, for instance, is his derivation both of the dolmen and the chambered long barrow from the Egyptian mastaba-tomb in which the nobles of the earlier dynasties were buried. The Professor has clearly explained that the dolmen was an inferior copy not of the mastaba itself but of the *Serdab* or statue chamber to the mastaba. We saw in Chapter I that in the Avebury district long barrows were sometimes crowned with dolmens. The temple itself was originally nothing but a mansion for the reanimated dead, an extension of the tomb, and thus there is very good reason for the profusion of long barrows that once were in touch with the great temple of Avebury.

Mr. R. E. M. Wheeler (see p. 313) also admits the connection between dolmen and mastaba and Mr. O. G. S. Crawford, well known in archæology, follows upon the same lines. This is what he has to say about the Cotswold long barrows in No. 6 of the *Ordnance Survey Papers*. He points out how the plan of the side-chambers 'reproduces in parts the plan of the whole barrow, whose essential parts consist, according to Elliot Smith's scheme, of a fore-court or chapel of offerings, a spirit house, a burial-shaft, and a rubble tumulus held up between four retaining walls.' He himself drives home the analogy between the port-holes in the stones of the chambered barrows and those apertures in the Egyptian mastabas - 'made to open into the chapel, as a means whereby the spirit could pass into the chapel and enjoy the food provided for it' (Elliot Smith), and appears to accept with hardly a single minor qualification the detection of our long barrows as Egyptian derivatives. The extension of the chamber beyond the transepts is also according to the plan of the mastaba. Canon Greenwell, the first authority on our barrows, had some-

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thing of the same thought in his mind, though less precisely, when he wrote:

‘It is almost certain that in the Long Barrow we have the earliest sepulchral mound to be met in England. The great extent of the Barrow itself and the disproportion between the size of the mound and that part of it to which the primary burials seem to be confined (viz., the west end, the land of the departed, according to the Egyptians. Most of the Barrows face east and west, with the east end broader and higher than the west), though not perhaps certain evidence of high antiquity, yet is more in accord with an earlier than with a later time.’

The quotation is important, because it judges the age of the long barrows not by the absence of metals in them, as most archæologists do, but by their appearance and stature. Thus, it is no idle speculation to bring them into line with the Avebury circles and earthworks and other remains built upon that noble and massive scale which breathes so pungent an atmosphere. He also agrees that the long barrows of Europe bear a common resemblance to one another, and the only thing against their being ‘places of sepulture of one and the same people’ is that the crania of the Scandinavian burials are ‘brachycephalic,’ as of course the British never are. But any number of factors may account for this, and it does not affect the fundamentals that all the long barrows belong to one period and one type of culture. He witnesses, in fact, to the validity of the cultural as opposed (in this instance) to the racial test.

§ 2. MUMMIFICATION AND THE LONG BARROWS

Granted, then, the derivation of the long barrows by the evidence I have already discussed, is it possible to



ENTRANCE TO WELLOW LONG BARROW.



STONE RAMPART OF DOLEBURY.

MUMMIFICATION AND LONG BARROWS

discover any other Eastern element in association with them which recalls Egypt and the travelling circus of the Ancient Mariners' mentality?

In several of our long barrows, and particularly in those of the Yorkshire Wolds, have been found what were apparently primary interments with a number of the bones calcined and fractured. In Dr. Thurnam's view, these bones signified cannibal feasts held at the burial when slaves, captives, wives and concubines of the dead lord were first sacrificed and then eaten.

Grant Allen had apparently been reading Dr. Thurnam to the detriment of his night's sleep when he wrote the following passage upon a long barrow burial:

'I saw them bear aloft, with beating of breasts and loud gesticulations, the bent corpse of their dead chieftain: I saw the terrified and fainting wives haled along by thongs of raw ox-hide, and the weeping prisoners driven passively like sheep to the slaughter: I saw the fearful orgy of massacre and rapine around the open tumulus, the wild priest shattering with his gleaming tomahawk the skulls of his victims, the fire of gorse and low brushwood prepared to roast them, the heads and feet flung carelessly on the top of the yet uncovered stone chamber, the awful dance of blood-stained cannibals around the mangled remains of men and oxen, and, finally, the long task of heaping up above the stone hut of the dead king the earthen mound that was never again to be opened to the light of day, till, *ten* [italics mine] thousand years later, we modern Britons invaded with our prying, sacrilegious mattock the sacred privacy of the cannibal ghost.'

This gory extract is taken from a book of essays called *Falling in Love*.

That 'anthropophagism was practised in the British

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Islands' I think is undoubtedly true not only because Dr. Thurnam's Latin authorities, but our own folklore survivals, say so. But my own view, which I shall hope to support by evidence in future Chapters, is that this was a late Bronze Age and Celtic custom. In the meantime, let us not be too hasty in delivering the long barrows and the civilization they represented over to his Celtic imagination.

At any rate, Canon Greenwell, who has written the standard book on *British Barrows*, and was the most thorough-going of field archæologists as well as a model of conservatism in his deductions, disputes Dr. Thurnam's verdict on the ground that the fractures were 'the result of pressure upon bones which have partially undergone, whilst covered up, the action of fire.' As he justly points out, the interments of the long barrows refuse to play up to Dr. Thurnam's fiery assumptions, because you never find in them one or more complete skeletons, 'surrounded by or associated with others which showed evidence of having been those of persons killed by violence, and broken up as if for use at a feast.' Neither have any weapons been found among them nor anywhere else in the long barrows. 'The suspicion has sometimes crossed my mind,' remarks the Canon, 'that people thus destitute of them [weapons] may have been living peaceable lives.' It is the oddest psychological fact that the British field archæologists are constantly giving voice to these suspicions derived from their observations, but yet hold on manfully to a military hypothesis derived from fashionable evolutionary notions and destitute of real evidence, as to what these ancients ought to have been like. Not only, to return to our skeletons, are there no signs of the holocaust pictured by Dr. Thurnam, but none 'of any violent action' upon them at all, and we may be sure that Canon Greenwell left no bone unturned in his investigations. He was not that kind of man.

Were these bodies cremated, then? If they were, the

MUMMIFICATION AND LONG BARROWS

long barrows reveal two customs at total variance with each other, since the cardinal idea of sepulture up to and beyond the dawn of the Bronze Age was not the destruction but the preservation of the body, so far as possible, as it was in life. The next life (for the notables) was presumed to be an *édition de luxe* of this one. Since the entrance to the galleries of the long barrows was above ground and easily penetrable and the cist or closed form of burial was a later and lower invention, it is tenable, of course, that these calcined bones were secondary interments introduced by the Bronze Age people who followed the ritual of cremation. But so far as Canon Greenwell could estimate, these troublesome bones were buried in the long barrow period. The execution block of the cremation theory is that they were only *partially and imperfectly* burned, and there is never a sign of any cinerary urn in any long barrow.¹ We are many centuries ahead of the urn. I will give you the Canon's explanation. He thinks that the bodies 'may previously have been kept in another place of deposit' and have been transferred to their barrows at a later period, and he says elsewhere that some of them show marks of having been buried with the flesh removed.

My own view is that this highly ingenious theory of accounting for the condition of the bones is the right one, and one is the more inclined to trust it because the Canon, in putting it forward, was working on his own ground of field archæology. Further than this relative supposition, of course, it explains nothing. But an explanation there must be, and if we start globe-trotting again, we shall find it. In *The Migrations of Early Culture*, Dr. Elliot Smith describes example after example of the processes of mum-

¹ The B.M. *Guide to the Antiquities of the Stone Age* (1921) makes no mention of this crucial evidence of Canon Greenwell's, and so calls these burials cremated, though it says again and again that the crematory fashion in England came late in the Bronze Age (about 1000 B.C.).

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mification, gathered from all parts of the East and America, and all originally derived, of course, from Egypt. These processes were applied quite unintelligently by the natives because they were imported ready-made, accepted *en bloc* without any experimental training and with a very imperfect idea, no doubt, of the special reasons that dictated the operations.

A very curious illustration of this parrotism comes from Torres Strait, where the methods of embalming plagiarized those of the Twenty-First Egyptian Dynasty. In Egypt, the body was steeped in a preservative brine bath which necessitated the scraping off of the epidermis; in Torres Strait, the epidermis was removed but the brine bath preliminary was left out. The islanders omitted the cause, but faithfully carried out the effect — an illuminating comment upon civilization as an artificial imposition bearing not the slightest relation to the needs and impulses of the peoples who accepted it. In many other places throughout the Pacific and the Far East, the skin was removed and sometimes fitted on to the skeleton again; it was smoked and often cooked over a slow fire for desiccation purposes: the parts of the body (as in Peru) were put together again with a royal disregard of the natural anatomical adjustments,¹ and, after treatment, the corpse was preserved for a year or more in the houses of the natives, no doubt as a tutelary deity, a form of the Lares and Penates of the Romans. Then it was buried under a cairn.²

Now take a long jump back to our long barrows and

¹ Colt-Hoare found a primary burial in a long barrow near Amesbury in Wilts without a forehead, the eye sockets on top of the head and the vertebræ turned up instead of down, as nature directed.

² In *The Long Barrows of the Cotswolds*, Mr. O. G. S. Crawford points out that the skeletons buried in the megalithic chambers of the Cotswold long barrows show signs of having been reburied. In them, too, there was a ritual breaking of the bones.

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compare these various embalming techniques with the condition of the bones found in them. Perhaps the Canon, all unknowing, traced not only the meaning of those bones but of the mentality that worked upon them. It is no argument at all that our climate declares 'Thou shalt not mummify'; we Britons replied, 'We shall because our divine lords have so instructed and commanded us.' That no actual mummies have been found in the long barrows is not in the least surprising, when we consider their vast antiquity (far greater than that of the Far Eastern burials), the humidity of the climate and the easy access to the stone chambers within the barrows.¹

But this is not the whole evidence, and we will leave Dr. Elliot Smith's book for Émile Cartailhac's *Les Âges Préhistoriques de l'Espagne et du Portugal* (1886). The rock-cut tombs of Palmella in Portugal follow the same lines of structure as the Grotte des Fées, the Grotte de Courjonnet, the Isopata tomb of Crete and the Egyptian Twelfth Dynasty tombs. And it was in one of these tombs that Cartailhac found three bodies which he calls 'presque mommifiés.' He also suggests the same explanation for the condition of the body in one of the Portuguese passage dolmens, and the passage dolmen, as I described in Chapter

¹ Evidence from folklore which suggests mummification is much more abundant in Ireland than in England. The importance of salt, for instance, in Gaelic tradition strongly reminds one of its use in many parts of the East for embalming the corpse. In England, we have the Dorking ball-game (see my book, *Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum*) in which ceremonious masks were used. These masks were intimately bound up with the mummification ritual in the Far East. The Gaulish skull-cult carried over into the British Isles in the example, for instance, of the famous talking head of Brân is a degenerate form of mummification and reminds us of the importance attached by the Egyptian embalmers to the head. According to Geoffrey of Monmouth, Arthur's knights were 'embalmed in kingly wise'; in the Mabinogion, balsams were used for reviving the dead slain by the 'Addanc,' while the magic cauldron of Celtic legend had the power of reanimation.

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III, is the link between the long barrow and the rock-cut tomb. I need not underline the significance of this reinforcement of my contention from a new quarter altogether. Though the Cretans do not seem actually to have mummified their dead, they did deposit models of mummies in their graves, while the lords of Mycenæ on the mainland were embalmed in their shaft-graves.

It is the common charge of English archæologists against those I may call the 'Diffusionists' that they invent a theory, apparently out of chaos and old Night, and industriously ferret the globe for evidence to furnish it. Would that it were so! That would be so much more amusing than trying to make a plain story out of the vast slag-heaps of material that confront a seeker not in bond to ideas like the 'psychic unity' of spontaneously evolving peoples and an archæological terminology that no longer means anything. And so, if one of the Old Guard were by some accident to read this volume, he would smile loftily and think: 'Mummification, of course. That would be a very neat bit of scaffolding to the argument, and so it must be set up out of broken bones.'

That is quite true. Mummification, agriculture and stonework were the warp and woof of Egyptian religion and biological ideas of immortality. I say 'biological,' because Egyptian religious ceremony was founded upon an honest attempt to unriddle and synthesise the phenomena of life and death. From their observation that the bodies of the dead did not decay in the hot sand of the desert arose so complex and intertwined a fabric of speculation about life after death that shelves groan with its literature. Mummification, again, is a peculiarly apt illustration of the method of cultural distribution because of its elaborate technique and the misapplication of it in foreign lands whose physical conditions were totally opposed to its practice. It is ludicrous to conjecture that the natives of those lands conceived

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the theory and applied the technical processes of embalming and mummifying their dead by aboriginal mental combustion.

Mummification, again, was indissolubly bound up with the acquisition of givers of life, while the ritual rebirth of the dead was, as Perry has pointed out, the clue to the ceremony of mummification. The two were twin aspects of the same line of reasoning, and many of the resinous gums, balms and perfumes employed in the process were themselves endowed with the animating principle and sought as such by the Ancient Mariners. Mummification was the soul of dynastic Egypt as 'givers of life' were the real incentive for the transportation of her culture. I admit, therefore, that to discover traces of mummification in Britain is rather happy for our enquiry. But it would never have so much as occurred to me to look for them, had not I had the supreme good luck of reading Dr. Elliot Smith's account of mummification in the East in conjunction with Greenwell's book on our own barrows, and Cartailhac's account of prehistoric Spain and Portugal.

§ 3. THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

But to my mind the subject of mummification helps us to a far more vital revelation of the past than as a sure clue to the distribution of early civilization from a single source. Mummification was not only the core of early Egyptian religion. It shows us that religion and science were once united, since the practice was founded on the observation of material phenomena – the preservation of the body of the dead in the desert sands. It not merely indicates the preoccupation of the early Egyptians with immortality and the continuity of life (since the dead were but asleep), but the natural tendency of mankind to build up systems of thought out of direct and concrete experience. Behind all religious,

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political or social institutions, there is an intellectual idea, and behind that idea a definite experience, often wrongly and illogically applied because it is only partially understood. There can be no doubt that the main idea of Egyptian religion was the reanimation of the dead, and this idea was inspired partly by feelings of affection for them, the desire that they should go on living, and partly by the observation that their bodies did not dissolve, *except* when they were buried in brick or stone tombs. Out of these simple elements grew the complex system which has both corrupted and inspired every religious institution in every civilized community.

But what I wish to insist upon as (in my view) the real key to the thought of early civilization and the only true explanation for the development of later social, religious and political phenomena is, quite simply, the idea of life.¹ An examination of the Egyptian mythology, mental processes, ceremonies, psychological attitude from predynastic times to the Twelfth Dynasty, when, as I shall try to show in a later Chapter, a change begins to be manifest, stresses over and over again the fact that what early civilized mankind was thinking about all the time was Life. Death, disease, pain, destruction, malevolence, cruelty, fear, above all, fear—these are later manifestations of thought. Read the Pyramid Texts, and there is barely a sign of them; read the Book of the Dead (New Empire, Eighteenth Dynasty), and men have begun to think of practically nothing else. Therefore, it seems to me that Prof. Elliot Smith's discovery of the part played by 'givers of life' in the building up and diffusion of early civilization is the most profoundly important ever made in the history of anthropology. I have tried to give a digest of this discovery in *Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum*, and I need say no more here than that the cowrie shell came to be regarded as

¹ I have dealt with this aspect more fully in my little book, *Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum*.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

a life-giver because of its resemblance to the female reproductive organ, that Hathor or Isis (the Great Mother Goddess of early religion) was herself no more than a personification of the cowrie shell, and that other substances, gold, pearl-shell, jade, various gums and resins and balsams and metals, were in time accredited with the same powers. The earlier transplantations of Mediterranean civilization were directly due to the search for these life-giving substances¹ and elixirs used both to 'plume up' (as Iago says) the living and to reanimate the dead. The materialism of the concept is obvious, but behind it lies a regard for and tribute to life so intense that I take them to embrace the whole mentality of every one of the earlier civilizations of Asia, Africa and Europe.

There is, in short, no branch of thought in this early period where we fail to find the idea of life sovereign over any other. All the earlier deities are lords of life – Osiris in Egypt, Ea in Babylonia, Varuna in India, the life-giving Great Mother in various guises in country after country. Osiris himself became the embodiment of the life-giving powers of water, and water gave life because it irrigated the fields. Again we detect the false reasoning from concrete experience, since the Egyptians believed that the Nile, with which Osiris was identified, actually procreated the crops. I have no space to spend in multiplying instances, and I have referred to the matter here as a natural and inevitable corollary to the evidence for mummification in our long barrows for two reasons. It is of the highest importance we should realize the 'vitalistic' conceptions of the early voyagers, because they shed a strong light from a different angle upon the peacefulness of the 'Neolithic' occupation of

¹ According to Diodorus, Isis, the wife-sister of Osiris, raised both her husband and son, Horus, from death by the ritual of mummification. Osiris himself is represented as scouring many lands for the life-giving substances used in this ritual for reanimating the dead.

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western Europe. It is inconceivable that the idea of life could have been so dominant in a warlike period. Secondly, it is the displacement of this idea by that of death and fear which we shall trace when the curve of our story carries us to the decadence of the archaic civilization.

And now farewell to the long barrows. It is high time we approached 'the cause of causes, end of ends' of this civilization as a finished product – irrigation in Egypt, cultivation terraces in the Ægean and in England.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE TERRACES

The Saxon lynchet and the hill-side terrace. The fundamental differences between them. Seebohm's theory of the formation of the terrace from the plough. A childlike proof that the terrace was not plough-made. The orthodox case for the terrace-lynchet untenable. The association between terrace and earthwork. Battlesbury Camp and Cley Hill. The evidence for 'Neolithic' cultivation. The Berkshire terraces. Kit's Coty House, its terraces and the Pilgrim's Way. A meditation on the Way. The distribution of terraces. How the miners were fed. Civilization and agriculture are inseparable. The test of the primitive. The origin of the terrace-system. Agriculture and the kingship. Terracing in India, Rhodesia and the Ægean.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE TERRACES

PART I

The Plough Theory

THE terraces, usually called 'lynchets,' are a broad stairing or daising chiefly of the slopes of the chalk Downs into walls and platforms, and the question for us to decide is whether the title-deeds hand over the patent to the Saxon parvenu. The orthodox view (see *Ordnance Survey Professional Paper*, No. 7) is that there were two sorts of lynchets, first the cultivation banks of the Celts arranged in a chess-board pattern of squares, and secondly the strip system of Saxon ploughing claimed to be mainly identical and contemporary with the hill-side terraces.

The Celtic system need not concern us, because it cannot be confused either with the terraces of the hills or the strips of the valleys; its squared fields were made more on the plateaux than the sides of the hills and they correspond on the whole not with the great camps but with small rectangular enclosures which I take (see next Chapter) to be the Celtic form of the earthwork.

The elucidation of the problem, then, depends upon the distinction between the strip ploughed in the valleys and for a short distance up the lower slope of a hill and the terrace cut by spade, mattock, celt or pick-antler from the higher slopes down towards the level. To make the latter a mere extension of the former seems to me to show a lack of perception equivalent to that which denies passion and fire to the poems of Rochester because he was a rake and lived in a period when they were out of literary fashion. The Saxons were a valley people, they cleared the forests and built their homesteads along the streams, while terraces exist among

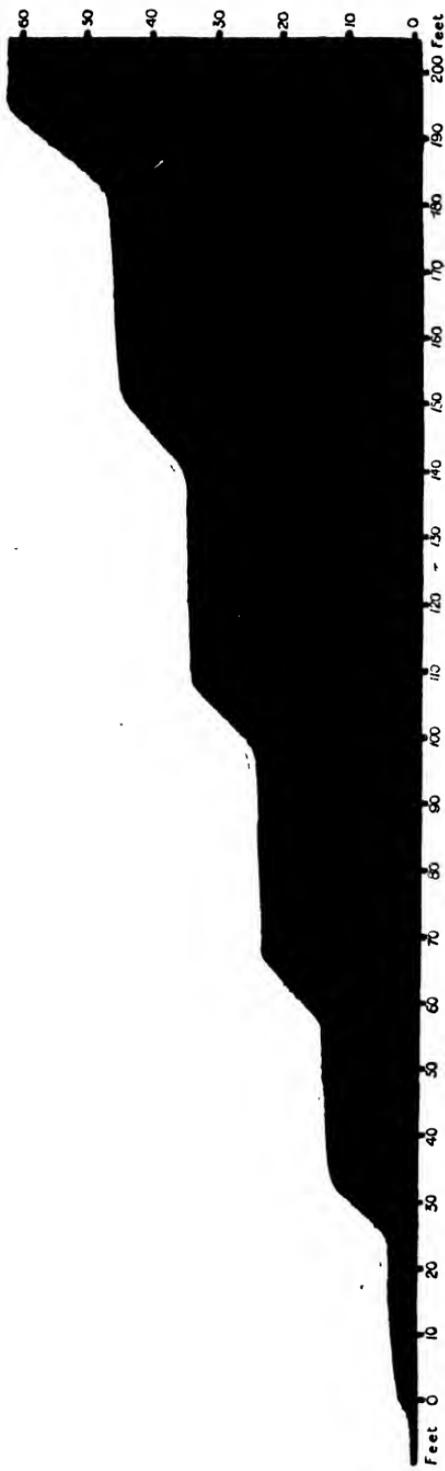
THE TERRACES

the mountains (Argyle, Islay, etc.), and in a large number of places in Wales and Scotland where the Saxons did not settle.

The theory that gives the terraces to the Saxons is derived from Seebohm's that the terrace was formed by the plough turning the sod downhill. But even Seebohm allows that where the hill-sides were steep, 'terraces have been artificially cut,' and so were not originally formed by the natural downward movement of the soil. But surely if it can be shown that a single terrace in Britain is not the result of natural agencies set in motion by the plough, his case and that of his modern followers with it fall to the ground.

I was so convinced that the now official Seebohm case was making preposterous claims, that I determined to go over to Blewburton Hill, near the little town of Blewbury, on the Berkshire Downs, and a few miles east of the Valley of the White Horse. For I had heard that the terracing there was on a particularly fine and large scale. There went with us a very competent geographer by whose measurements we hoped to be able to settle something so definite that it would, so to speak, knock the plough into a cocked hat. I had also read in the *Victoria History of Berkshire* that the Blewburton terraces (two parallel rings right round the hill and three more rows on the north-west) were 'formed by the continuous ploughing of the hill-side causing the parallel benches with the lynches between,' and this Sir Willoughby Patterneish dismissal of the problem proved a further incitement.

So we went, and when we got there I was struck at once with the remarkable resemblance of the Blewburton terraces not only to those of Battlesbury in Wiltshire, near Bratton Castle, but to the earthwork itself on the crown of the hill. Seen against the skyline, where the hill bends to the north, the terraces that took the corner on wings, as one might say, formed a perfect profile with the rampart on the crest. But



BLEWBURTON HILL—TERRACES. Diagram Section on Natural Scale

¶To face p. 189.

THE PLOUGH THEORY

the effect of this I shall leave until I come to the Battlesbury terraces themselves. With balks fifteen feet deep and platforms thirty feet long, they made a proper giant's staircase to the top.

Since it is not to my credit but that of another member of the party that we got our proof at last, I may be allowed a little flourish on the trumpet. Let me illustrate what I mean by a diagram facing this page.

The diagonal line represents the hill-slope and the vertical and horizontal ones are the balks and ledges formed by ploughing its face. Let us assume, then, that the plough did turn the soil downhill. Now the height of the balk is caused by two factors: the earth that falls from the higher level, and the earth that is removed from the lower. But the top balk will only be the height of the soil removed from the lower level, while the lowest balk will only be the height of the soil that falls from the level above. The highest and lowest balks, that is to say, will be precisely half the height of all the other balks between them. Now compare this impregnable axiom with the actual height of the balks on Blewburton Hill, which by having three balks in between the ones at the top and bottom of the hill, offers us a true criterion for testing the plough theory. Are, then, the heights of the top and bottom balks half those of the middle balks? They are not, and, if anything, the top-most balk is higher than the ones that succeed it. That finally disposes of the plough as the originator of the Blewburton terraces.¹

Another objection almost as strong is that the containing walls of a large number of terraces are artificially faced with flints and, in some cases, with Sarsens – the facings being

¹ Mr. Donald Mackenzie tells me that the Hebridean crofters used to make terraces with the spade up to the middle of last century, and a crofter in Lewis told him that, in the event of a land raid, he could cultivate the side of a hill by making 'shelves.'

THE TERRACES

sometimes exposed and sometimes concealed by a thin layer of turf.¹ There is no more need to labour a point of which Seebohm, who was not a field archæologist, may have been ignorant, than there was need for the Saxons to till the soil in an environment unnatural to them and at a distance from their steadings. And we may judge to what straits the writer of the Ordnance paper is reduced in striving to reconcile his valley occupation with hill-side cultivation by the wild and nebulous hypothesis that the Saxons made a 'clean sweep' of the British from Wiltshire. Things do not happen in that way and did not happen, for no further away than Exeter, the Saxons and the Iberians with their Celtic overlords divided the town between them – apart from the fact that there is a strong leaven of Iberian blood in the natives of Wiltshire. I am tempted to retort that his Saxons were only invented by Freeman and Froude.

PART II

Terrace, Barrow, Earthwork and Mine

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§ I. THE ALIEN CORN

So much then for the negative aspect of the argument. Are there any positive indications that the hills were thus staircased by the immigrants of our two periods?

The most obvious is the co-operative distribution of terraces with earthworks² and other monuments of the

¹ 'The terraces,' says Gomme in *The Village Community*, 'were artificially formed with faces of stone and flint by a race of hill-folk who expended upon the construction heavy labour.'

² See the next Chapter for a discussion of some of the earthwork problems. The coincidence of earthworks and terraces I have found by personal exam-

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earlier period. Walter Johnson, in his enticing volume *Folk Memory*, gives some instances of this distribution, a commanding and lucid summary of the whole controversy and a convincing criticism of Seebohm's (*Village Community*) theory from other points of view.

But Battlesbury Camp makes the best translation of these hill-hieroglyphs I know. It is terraced all along and down two sides of its slopes. The hill as it sweeps round to the south throws out a blunt ridge, and it is along this from its foot to the three lines of ramparts winding in a superb crescent along the cap of the hill, that the terraces are built. A speck on that great flowing crest, I sat down on the topmost rampart where I could get the best view of the terraces covering the whole of this portion of the slopes. Then I saw what seemed to me a wonderful thing. Not only did the lines or wrinkles of the terraces continue across and down the hill from the outermost rampart and fosse at an equidistance from them and without any break in the continuity of these man-made ridges, whether earthworks or terraces, from top to bottom, but there were only two minor differences of design and appearance between earthwork and terrace themselves. The one difference lay in the greater bulk of the ramparts over the projecting terraces; the other lay in the levels between the platforms of the terraces and the fosses of the ramparts. The platforms were straight and the ditches were hollowed.

So close is the resemblance that you might well imagine a military-mad archæologist calling them bastions and outworks of the circumvallation. Colt-Hoare, indeed, says that they reminded him of 'a continued line of broken ramparts,' while Pennant's view was that the terraces were employed

ination of the ground and through maps and books to apply to the following counties – Wiltshire, Dorset, Somerset, Sussex, Hampshire, Herefordshire, Berkshire, Kent, Hertfordshire and Yorkshire. It is a difficult study, because terraces are rarely marked even on Ordnance maps.

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by chieftains for inspecting their militia, rank above rank. Another writer was convinced that they were stations for placing the war-chariots before a battle, so that they might swoop down with greater force upon the enemy (and upset the charioteers upon their rumps with a force ever greater). Yet a fourth maintains that they were constructed as 'wolf-platforms.' Meanwhile, in dashes Mr. Allcroft with despatches from Mars, and, where he does not accept the plough for the terraces, propounds his ideas of fortification.

I point out these instances as an illustration of my theme that the Downland civilization constructed its works upon the basis of a broad and massive style and upon the principle of the curve. Let a man with two eyes in his head and an unbiased mind behind them get the contour and perspective of those terraces at Battlesbury. Let him measure the height of the inner rampart close to the southern entrance – seventy-five feet – and forget everything he has read about Saxons and hill-fortresses and evolution and primitives, and end up by following the trackways eastward to Avebury. I shall be amazed indeed if he fails to see them all as parts of one organic whole, and as the work of a mature if naive (not simple, no, certainly not) and fantastic civilization which shows up the achievements of the Goidels, the Danes, the Brythons, the Belgæ and the Saxons as a mere meddling pother, signifying nothing but the introduction of barbarism into a civilized way of life.

It struck Mr. Perry and myself, in fact, that these great settlements on the chalk could not be explained by their need of flint as a raw material alone. The cultivation terraces supplied a further explanation of them, and especially of the massive chalk-built earthworks in whose neighbourhood they are the most abundant.

Lastly, I will mention the terraces on Cley Hill, between the Wiltshire Downs with the hum of its domestic and

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agricultural affairs and Mendip with its industrial ferment. It must have served, then, as an important junction between them, and we should expect to find it duly dressed and modelled. It is – two round barrows, two fixed eyes, one staring over the border valley, the other over the Downs towards Avebury and Stonehenge, never getting tired of the great show of the earth below them, gazing though they had been for three thousand years and more; earthen walls girdling the summit and partly destroyed by modern quarrying which has sliced a sizeable hunk out of the hill, and the largest terraces in the district, along the eastern slope. Some of the platforms spiralling round the hill are forty feet wide and their containing walls sixteen feet high.

We do not, then, need the evidence of the bronze sickles to show that the hill-side terraces were at least as early as the Bronze Age. But though I could give several instances of the association of terraces with the implements of the 'Neolithic' Age,¹ I have not yet established the fact that some of the terraces were built along with Avebury, Mount Silbury, the long barrows and the hut and stone circles of the Cornish moors. Even the flint sickle in the British Museum might be early Bronze Age. But the spade has given further corroborations. There are the terraces at Saffron Walden from the top platform of which a number of flint implements of 'Neolithic' type were disinterred. Then again a mealing stone was found with the primary interment of a Wiltshire long barrow and is to be seen in the Devizes Museum. Another was unearthed at Winterbourne Monkton with remains similar to some of those found in the chamber of the West Kennet Long Barrow.

But a more dramatic turn to the whole controversy occurs in a book called *Neolithic Man in North-East Surrey*, by Walter Johnson and William Wright (1903). The authors are describing a primary interment in one of the long barrows

¹ At Leyburn and on the Yorkshire Wolds.

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of the Warminster district. On the teeth of the skeleton was found tartar which expert analysis showed to be the decayed vegetable matter of cereals, while between the teeth was discovered an actual husk of corn with its adherent outside hairs. The volume gives exact reference to the report of the enquiry for the Seebohmiens to examine. The discovery is particularly suggestive because it reminds us of the stuffing of the mouth of the deceased with rice, jade, gold, pearls and cowries in China (see De Groot's *The Religious System of China*, Vol. I, Ch. 3, and Elliot Smith's *The Migrations of Early Culture*). There can be no doubt that the use of these life-giving substances for the dead was a variant of Egyptian rites of mummification.

§ 2. THE STAIRWAYS OF THE HILLS

Can we supplement this archæological evidence with direct observation of what lies above the ground, a method which has the advantage of giving much more extensive results? A traveller on the Downs who keeps his eyes open will often enough encounter certain eminences or belts of land on which the marks of occupation are 'Neolithic.'¹ They may be historically rather than geographically isolated because they are free of any Bronze Age adulteration. Do any of the hills thus stamped show terracing on their slopes? Walker's Hill south of Avebury is one such and Martinsell Hill,² east of it, another: both are terraced. A magnificent

¹ I get so tired of writing these meaningless designations, and were it not that the lettering happens to be the same as that of Sir Arthur Evans, Prof Burrows and other Cretan authorities for the first two phases of the Early Minoan Period, I should call our Neolithic and Bronze Ages up to 1000 B.C. — the time of the Celts and cremation — E.M.I and E.M.II (English Megalithic I and English Megalithic II). The reader must take it that is what I mean.

² Martinsell Hill has given evidence of Celtic occupation on the sites of the old village, but not, so far as I am aware, of the Bronze Age.



THE TERRACES OF BATTLESBURY CAMP.



TERRACED FLANK OF HAMBLEDON HILL.

To face p. 194.]

THE STAIRWAYS OF THE HILLS

set of terraces, visible from miles away, has been cut into the chalk of King's Play Hill, between Allington and Shepherd's Shore where the Downs decline into the valley, before they take fresh heart and breath and travel on towards Somerset. These terraces have a special geographical significance to which I shall return when I try to sum up the story that terrace-distribution tells us. The point I wish to make here is that on King's Play Hill rests a long barrow.

Let us now make for the Berkshire Downs in a brief exploration of the terrace-system beyond Blewburton and towards Avebury. On the line of the combined Ridge and Icknield Ways, between the Thames at Streatley and the highest point of the Downs at Uffington Camp, mounting steeply up (973 feet) above the Valley of the White Horse, there are but two houses; during the 'Neolithic' and early Bronze Ages, the tide of humanity swept right along the ridge of the Downs from Streatley to Avebury. The Lambourn Downs to the south of Uffington are studded with tumuli; the long barrow a mile away from Uffington Camp along the Icknield Way (Wayland Smith's Forge) is in the proudest megalithic style; there were the megalithic avenues at Ashdown; the trackway system that connects the Berkshire Downs with the Midlands, East Anglia, Hampshire (Inkpen Beacon lies twenty miles south of Uffington) and Wiltshire, while camp after camp, Blewburton, Letcombe, Uffington, Handwell, Ashdown, Membury, beacon the traveller over the Downs first to Liddington, then Barbury Camps, and finally in a great south-western curve to Avebury.

Along these chains of communication are cut some of the finest terraces in the whole of England. Blewburton I have already described. On Charbury Hill, by Bishopstone, the border village, crouched like a roosting bunting on a twig, between Wiltshire and Berkshire, the 'shepherd's steeps,' considered to be the best specimens of terrace existing in our

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country, climb the slopes in an outline of noble beauty. The Ridgeway passes close to them on its way to Avebury near at hand. One reads, therefore, what Pausanias says of the Peloponese with almost bated breath: — ‘There is a circle of huge unhewn stones and inside this circle they perform the rites of Demeter.’

I do not, of course, pretend to claim that the Berkshire Downs reveal an exclusively ‘Neolithic’ occupation. There is plenty of evidence for the presence of the Bronze Age succession. But I do claim (by the script of the Downs) that the former has stamped itself upon the hills, and nowhere more so than at Uffington. A mile or so to the east of Uffington Camp (whose battlements are quite useless for defensive purposes), the hills throw an arm into a vast semi-circle, down whose warm shelter trickles a greenway into a sward at the bottom set delicately for the feet of elves. It crosses the road and prances along under the shadow of a little hill on its left and a little hollow on its right, filled with bustling tits and their orchards of hips and haws. Stand here and follow the trail with the eye up the towering slopes. On either side run a series of terraces, filing away in row upon row, for all the world like the gigantic bastions of an earthwork whose rings took in not merely the crown but most of the slope of the hill as well. Irregular, undisciplined to any neatness of line themselves, they yet obeyed the bidding of the slopes. This conformity to the nature of the hills and nonconformity to more precise canons of measurement I take to be a distinguishing mark of the ‘Neolithic’ style. Stukeley made a bad mistake when he drew the plan of Avebury as a perfect circle. The ancients did not work in this way — until we reach the full Bronze Age.

THE PILGRIM'S WAY

§ 3. FROM THE PILGRIM'S WAY TO THE MOUNT OF GENERALIZATION

Now, for a last example, more definite if less captivating than that of the deep-chested bluffs and grave solitudes of Berkshire. Away in Kent there is a 'dolmen'¹ called in jovial fashion 'Kit's Coty House.' To be candid, it caused me a good deal of discomfort: what was a dolmen doing in Kent and how was I to shepherd this lost sheep into the right geological fold? Dolmen-hunting in Kent – one might as well have looked for a buzzard in Chancery Lane, or the red flag flying from the Mansion House!

So, to try and clear up this outlandish move on the part of the megalith-builders, I went off to see it. It lies, or rather stands, about six miles from Rochester and a mile or so outside the village of Aylesford, a rare find with its pleasing almshouses, finely arched little bridge, ships with their tuncful masts and cordage, and its Doréesque appearance. Over the bridge, through the village (with more than one backward look) and on to friend Kit. And then I breathed a sigh of relief. Kit was all right; he was no scatterbrain; he knew exactly what he was doing. To my surprise I found myself back on the downs, the North downs that are not as other Downs, but are still downs. And there, looking over the first ridge from a bare field, looking for all the world as though it had just walked there on its stone legs, after a saunter round so as to make sure of the best view, was Kit's Coty House.

¹ Kit's Coty House is not really a dolmen, but the stone burial-chamber at the east end of a long barrow of what Mr. O. G. S. Crawford calls 'the false passage grave type' – viz., with a dummy portal, later than the true portals of the chambered long barrows. This is what we should expect along a branch line of the megalith-builders. Stukeley has left a drawing of Kit's Coty House which shows that it was the chamber of a long barrow, and not a dolmen. This drawing is reproduced in the *Ordnance Survey Professional Papers*, No. 8 (1925).

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It came to a standstill for the rest of its days and stood there gazing over the valley and perhaps thinking (for we have to remember that stones once had powerful minds):

‘The hills are shadows and they flow
From form to form, and nothing stands;
They melt like mist, the solid lands,
Like clouds they shape themselves and go.’

Our most ancient monuments always thrill me – they have a way of taking hold of the landscape, of spreading it out beneath them as a kind of symbol of their age and power – but this time it was a double thrill. Kit’s Coty House was where it should be, on the chalk, the retail warehouse of the key industry of Britain’s first civilization – flint.

A fresh discovery fixed it even more firmly into the perspective. The Pilgrim’s Way ran up the hill-side towards the hanging beechwoods within ten yards of it. The Pilgrim’s Way, once so gay with motley, and humming with tales that shall be forgotten never, is trodden now only by the antiquary, the gipsy and the lovers of quiet places, while the lamp of its yews against the white chalk now only guides the mistle-thrush to his drunken frolic within their shades. The only regular travellers of both the Icknield and Pilgrim’s Ways nowadays are the hoodie crows on migration. They leave the Norfolk coast and strike inland to the south-west along the great chalk range which runs through the southern Midlands, or slip westward through the Medway Gap and with those highwaymen’s eyes of theirs prying and prowling along the ground beneath them, sidle under the shoulder of the North Downs.

From Winchester, the Way passes through Alresford and Alton to the Surrey border at Farnham, rears over the Hog’s Back and Merrow Downs to Dorking, fords the river at Burford Bridge, climbs Box Hill and, passing through Merstham, and over the Downs at White Hill, leaves Surrey

THE PILGRIM'S WAY

at Cold Harbour Green. Still continuing over the North Downs, it reaches Kit's Coty House from Wrotham and journey's end at Canterbury, by Hollingbourne and Charing.

But the tenderest memory of the Via Sacra for me is that part of it that goes trolling and tripping along among groves of yews, junipers and beeches, just above Albury. Winding under the crest of the hills, it commands the tree-blue Surrey plain below, and gives off a tributary leading to a little enchanted lake below called the Silent Pool, where golden carp swim through shadow-branches and rub their backs against insubstantial hazel-catkins, that seem less real swinging on their twigs above the tranced and grey-blue water with its lamps of glowing pond-weed. The bower, the bosky girdle of the Pool, is mirrored in the water's translucency with a cameo vividness that makes the old days of reverence for waters as clearly visualized and yet bewitched as are the dingle-dangle catkins themselves.

How many weary pilgrims have stopped to refresh their souls with their bodies at this pool of healing? But the grassy story of the Way stretches many, many leagues behind the mediæval pilgrimage. To the Saxon settlements it had nothing to say; at the boastful Celtic invasions it did not stop; by the Romans it would not be made straight and disciplined, but streamed and wound and curvetted along 'over the hills and far away, beyond their utmost purple rim', on into the veiled dawn of human endeavour, into the very face of the sun-god. Egypt of the pyramids was the destination of this most lovely primrose path, and for its sake we may forgive that ancient people many of its sins and follies, though we suffer from them to this day. The Pilgrim's Way - its course is a matter but of six score miles, but pilgrims have traipsed along it for thousands of years, and make a motlier company than ever was Dan Chaucer's. And old Kit, countryman of Minos long before the ships of Agamemnon fretted the Ægean, perhaps he helped to build it,

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and right fitly is his funeral pile raised beside it, watching for æon after æon the primroses and celandines and violets peep out and back again, but his servants, the swart Iberians, no more.

That the Pilgrim's Way was a 'Neolithic' trackway hardly the most dull-minded can disbelieve, the people to whom things strange and wonderful – full of musical vibrations, visitations revealed and then withdrawn, which float into our ken like the subtle perfume of the elder over the stormy crests of Camelot – are but the occasions of a superior smile. As Belloc and Walter Johnson have shown, the Pilgrim's Way is true to 'prehistoric' type.

'It lies on the hill-side, not on the bleak crest. It lacks directness; never does it attempt to surmount obstacles openly; it never turns a sharp curve; it does not climb higher than there is need; after crossing a river valley, it makes for a spur of high ground.'

'Grim old earthworks and silent barrows' stud its course; 'Neolithic' flints have been unearthed at Merstham (whose giant terraces have only recently been destroyed), Reigate and many other places along its route, while Grant Allen says (I do not know by what authority) that tin was carried along it to Sandwich. Close to it, caches of bronze and ingots have been found. 'Taken as a whole,' says Johnson, these evidences 'indicate probability not far short of certainty' that the Pilgrim's Way was a pre-Celtic *via sacra*. And to complete the tale, Mr. Belloc gives good reasons for thinking that the Way was once connected by tracks, now vanished, with Avebury. But Kit's Coty House is the most striking evidence of the antiquity of the Pilgrim's Way. Kent once had no fewer than eight long barrows (see *Ordnance Survey Professional Papers*, No. 8), grouped in the Aylesford-Addington area – and the Pilgrim's Way passes

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right through this group. Seven of these long barrows, including Kit's Coty House, were chambered. And eight long barrows concentrated on either side of the Medway Gap and in the close neighbourhood of the Pilgrim's Way are seven times more evidence than we want. If then any ponderer chooses to regard the relationship of these long barrows to the trackway as accidental, he is at liberty to do so and, after all, it must have been the Devil who set up Kit's stones to dine off a particularly damned, juicy and well-roasted monk.

Not that the Bronze Age is missing from Kent and the North Downs. Ample evidence of it can be gleaned from *Archæologia Cantiana*, and everywhere the Aveburians went the men of Stonehenge were sure to go. They merely wrote a fresh chapter in the Book of Avebury. At any rate, Avebury stretched out a tentacle over the North Downs. The geographical position of Kit's Coty House reveals the same mining and hill-dwelling preoccupation as elsewhere,¹ and at the same time how wide, deep, closely knit and, in consequence, peaceful was the 'Neolithic' diffusion from the core of North Wiltshire.

Now for the point of my deviations and excursions on Kentish soil. The same hill upon which Kit's Coty House stands, where it joins the sloping ploughland, is scored with a double line of terraces, platforms eighteen feet broad and balks twelve feet high, winding for hundreds of yards along the escarpment and round the bend of the hill. The modern road has been made along the lower platform, paying an unconscious tribute to the broadly conceived and stoutly built achievements of savages, with time and tools and archæological conservatism against them.

¹The Ordnance Survey conjectures that the long barrows of this region were distributed for easy access to springs. That is a reasonable secondary explanation of the Medway Gap grouping: it is no explanation at all of the presence of long barrows on the North Downs.

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§ 4. WHAT TERRACE DISTRIBUTION MEANS

Let us return to the region, therefore, where the chalk Downs of Wiltshire end, and the vale dividing them from the Mendip range, which carries on the story of the heights to the sea, spreads its decorated carpet beneath our feet. On these Downs was an area of cornland greater than any similar concentration in all Wiltshire. It may be said to extend (with long gaps, of course) from Bratton Castle near Westbury past Battlesbury, Scratchbury and Heytesbury, south-east to the Wylie and Langford Camps (whose fosses, as at Avebury, were within the ramparts) above the valley of the Wylie. In the southerly direction, the way is to Cranborne Chase and Blandford; in the westerly to Frome and past the camps of Tedbury, Wadbury and Newbury near Mells, on into Mendip proper.

I wish I knew the Wiltshire Downs so well that I could project a mental picture of them on the palm of my hand, terraces, barrows, earthworks and all. Lacking that privilege, I can only trace the terrace-route westward from Avebury upon a line parallel with but to the north of the country lying between Bratton Castle and Casterley Camp, which is close to the Avon and about half-way between Marlborough and Amesbury, due south of it. Along the Pewsey Valley, at any rate, the story is plain enough to read, and this valley has definite long barrow connections with Avebury. The Pewsey terraces sweep along the flanks of the hills about two miles south of Martinsell Hill (between them and Avebury) and from the southern spur of Martinsell present a beautiful series of wavy lines, like an incised pattern on an earthenware bowl. At one time, before the plough rubbed out the continuity, they must have waved and glided along for at least a mile in tune with the contours of the hills. In places, the platforms are nearly forty feet broad and the walls

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about six feet high, and to compare them with the formal Saxon strip system is like comparing the trail of a living snake in the grass with the mould of a ramrod.

Follow the line of the Downs on the other side of the Pewsey Valley westward (a line as good as a play) and we come to Allington and Bishop's Canning, a little green-embowered village that seriously threatens one's loyalty to the Downs. Beyond the wireless station northwards they descend into the valley, and between this point and King's Play Hill and Morgan's Hill, to the east, they are chiselled with line over line of terraces, descending in tiers from the crests of the hills. Though the lines are broken in at least three places, they must have extended in length as far as, if not further, than the Pewsey terraces. Though more than a mile away from the road, their wide platforms, high and steep banks, and the plasticity of their course to the outline of the Downs, make them extremely conspicuous.

At last, then, we can leave necessarily tiresome detail and tiresomely necessary polemic, and emerge upon a broad and open space – the Mount of Generalization. We can now be quite confident of two things: between Avebury and the western border of Wiltshire, the terraces travel; on the margin of the chalk, they stop. Their food-junction was there. Now I have travelled over Mendip from east to west and from north to south again and again, until I have come to know the whole range pretty well. I know it, in fact, far better than I do Wiltshire. Yet over the whole of the range, I have only once come across the sign of a terrace (near Beacon Hill on the road between Mellis and Wells), and that so insignificant that neither Mr. Perry (who was with me) nor myself were at all sure that the slope was terraced at all. Yet there is no doubt whatever that the long barrow men knew Mendip a good deal better than I do. As I have pointed out elsewhere, Mendip possesses or possessed four long barrows and perhaps others before they were destroyed.

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As for the Bronze Age penetration, Mendip must have been nearly as thickly populated by the round barrow people as it is now.

So the question is, how were the lead-miners fed? At Camelot, twenty miles south of Mendip, there is a noble series of terraces; at Brent Knoll, an isolated peak on the 'moors' or drained marshes of Western Somerset, there are marks of terracing, and I have noticed others on the chalk hills near Bruton, which in all probability had nothing to do with Mendip, but carried on the agricultural settlements from Wiltshire to Dorset. But it is obvious that the men who worked the Mendip mines, built the Mendip earthworks and set up the stone circles and avenues of Stanton Drew, could not have lived on the produce of Brent Knoll, Camelot and the slopes near Beacon Hill, even if they supplemented this exiguous fare with hunting and killing their stock. The only possible conclusion is that they relied upon the Downland cultivation of Wiltshire, so abundant along its western escarpment, for their principal food supply. And, if this conclusion be worthy of consideration, we can at once see a partial explanation for the great earthworks of Bratton, Battlesbury, etc., and especially for the extraordinary resemblance between earthworks and terraces at Battlesbury. These forts were granaries.¹

And if the war argument can hardly be sustained in the face of this interlinkage of givers of life, metallic and cereal, in different but connected geographical regions, still less can the trade argument hold up its head before it. Mark Antony came to bury Cæsar, not to praise him: the megalith-builders came here to settle, not to barter.

The same relationship holds good for Cornwall and Devon and Dorset – and for Derbyshire and the Yorkshire Wolds.

¹ Storing pits for grain were actually found within Worlesbury Camp, the stone fort north and east of Dolebury and on the coast near Weston-super-Mare.

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The gold and tin regions of Cornwall and Devon have no terracing to speak of; the Dorset Downs are profusely terraced. But I never realized how profusely until I examined a section of the Downs between Eggardon Camp and Cerne Abbas, the place of the Giant. There are several trackways from Eggardon, once a populous town, to the coast at Wears Hill, to Maiden Castle (near Dorchester), the mightiest earth-work in the world, to the main Ridgeway and to Cerne itself, which is also connected by a branch line with the Ridgeway. Follow the trackway from Eggardon to Cerne Abbas, from north-east of Bridport, that is to say, to north of Dorchester, and it would be fair to say that there is not a mile's interval between terraces the whole way. At Maiden Newton, about half-way, there are no fewer than five sets of terraces, one set being eight-deep and nearly a quarter of a mile long. I measured the largest balks and platforms, and the former were just under thirty feet high, the latter just under ninety feet wide. Many of these Downs are cultivated with the effect not of making terraces but obliterating them, so that the population during the two phases of the megalithic period (Eggardon is 'Neolithic,' the Cerne Giant Bronze Age) must have been at least as large and possibly larger than it is now. It was all just as it should have been, for to the south were the many cosy little harbours of Dorset, to the west the great mining country of Devon and Cornwall, to the north-east the metropolis.

The area of the Derbyshire lead-mines has no terracing; in the Yorkshire Wolds to their north-east, the same story of terrace-cum-flint that the Downs of Dorset, Berkshire and Wiltshire tell repeats itself. All these counties have dolmens or long barrows. The jet-workers of the Whitby region drew their food-supply from their own terraces, and the same is true of the Cheviots (lead and stone circles) and the Lake District (copper and stone circles and long barrows). We can account for this in two ways. These settlements were

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isolated in the first place, and their geology suits a combined agricultural and industrial occupation in the second. None the less, the terraces in Westmoreland and Durham are *not* in the mining region, but in that of the stone circle known as Long Meg and her Daughters. When we come back to the South and Midlands again, the distribution of the remaining terraces puts the final touches to the picture of co-ordination. The three great belts of chalk settlements running out from Wiltshire north-east through Berkshire and the Chilterns to East Anglia, east over the North Downs to the sea south of the Thames Estuary, and south-east over the South Downs to Beachy Head, all have their terraces, trackways and flint-mines; all these were occupied by the Neoliths. The Cotswolds are abundantly terraced; they could supply the sparsely terraced hæmatite and iron regions of Oxfordshire (the Rollright Stones) to the east and the lead regions north of the Severn (dolmens and long barrows) to the west. Lastly, the terraces of the Herefordshire hills were the most convenient centres of production for the lead-workers and stone-builders of Radnorshire.

Now we begin to understand how extensive and highly organized the 'Neolithic' occupation of England really was; now the 'savage' theory recedes still further into the background and we can realize in something of their true perspective the meaning of the gigantic works in stone and earth for which this colonization was responsible. And lastly, we can see at a glance that the geographical co-ordination, revealed alike by the presence and absence of the terraces, makes warlike conditions, tribal or otherwise, inconceivable.



TERRACES OF CLEY HILL, WILTSHIRE.



TERRACES OVER THE VALE OF THE WHITE HORSE.

CIVILIZATION AND AGRICULTURE

PART III

The Meaning of Agriculture and the Origin of the Terrace

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§ I. CIVILIZATION AND AGRICULTURE

Thus it is a vital matter to disengage the terraces from the plough and the strip and align them with the barrow and the earthenwork to which they belong in geographical fact. The antiquity of the terrace is the capstone of our dolmen. If it can be proved that all the terraces of England, Wales and Scotland owe their existence to the plough, our case crumbles and is scattered, its perspective is violently telescoped and its values fade. In fact, I might as well use these pages for lighting the fire. And if, *mutatis mutandis*, the case for the 'terrace-lynchet' will not bear analysis, down goes the whole brief for the pre-Celtic occupation of Britain by wandering and untutored herdsmen.

Our case rests upon the decipherment of a very ancient manuscript represented by the works and monuments that have survived the thumbings of time, upon the attempt to show that it is coherent literature and not the unlettered jargon of brutal savages, such as orthodox archæology, ruled by the mechanics of pseudo-Darwinist evolution, assumes it to be. Now agriculture is not merely a necessary pendant to civilization; it is its life force, the fundamental qualification of its appearance, and if the men of Avebury, whose high and laborious civilization is manifest in their works, were not agriculturists, we are faced with a contradiction in terms which reduces our study, and with it every attempt to make the past living and intelligible and significant to the present, to chaos. The true line of demarcation between the sparse primitive and the thickly planted civilized community is

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agriculture, and I contend that it was a task utterly beyond the powers of 'primitive savages' (to quote two very prominent archæologists' words for the builders of Maiden Castle, the greatest earthwork in the world!), of primitives *or* savages, that is to say (for the primitive is uncivilized and the savage a degraded descendant of civilization), to raise works like Avebury and Maiden Castle.

Such works presuppose a large, organic and peaceful society; such a society postulates agriculture. 'L'archæologie,' writes Siret, 'nous montre les hommes de la pierre polie comme des "mangeurs de pain," c'est à dire des civilisés.' Archæology, indeed, but certainly not the archæologists. Nor, if we are to bring order, meaning and sanity into the remote past of our own country, can we acknowledge such works as the labour of semi-savages, which is what the Celts and the Saxons were. The object of the first part of this book is to try and show that there is a sound basis for such attribution, that between the 'Neolithic' and the Celtic periods we are witnessing a slow deterioration of culture paralleled by similar processes in other parts of the world, and that we are only prevented from accepting such conclusions by the mechanist formula of evolution from the lower to the higher which hath us in thrall.

§ 2. CORN FROM EGYPT

There is a further reason why the problem of the terrace is of first importance. The former Professor of Agriculture at Melbourne University, Dr. Thomas Cherry, has shown beyond serious contesting that we owe the discovery of agriculture to the Egyptians¹ not because they were

¹ *The Discovery of Agriculture.* The people who attribute this discovery to the Babylonians not only ignore a mountain of evidence pointing to the importation of their culture, but the fact that the floods of the Tigris and Euphrates hinder rather than assist man in the growth and harvesting of his crops.

CORN FROM EGYPT

Egyptians, but because they lived on the banks of the Nile. The unique periodicity of the Nile flood made Egypt the only country in the ancient world where the earliest experiments in agriculture were not practically bound to end in failure of crops. Egypt, says Herodotus in a true epigram, was 'the gift of the river.' The Egyptians, he adds, 'obtain the fruits of the land with less trouble than any other people in the world.' 'Only the Egyptians,' writes Diodorus, 'gather their fruits (crops) with little cost or labour.' This, the greatest material discovery that has ever been made, enabled the Egyptians to forge ahead of all other ancient settlements and to carry their invention and the culture that developed from it first to their neighbours and ultimately through them over the greater part of the world.

'When Adam delved and Eve span
Who was then the gentleman?'

The exact converse is the historical truth. Osiris was a sound naturalist before he became a pre-dynastic king, just as he was a king before he became a god.¹ Egyptian kings are represented on the monuments as cutting irrigation basins, while they bore a special filial relation to Osiris. Osiris himself was regarded as an impersonation of the creative powers of water, and other evidence so closely associates him with agricultural rites that the obvious inference is that he himself was in some way responsible for the discovery of tillage.² Diodorus (Book I) gives a clear and

¹ Readers of Diodorus can have no doubt that the chronicler regarded him as an earthly king as well as a god and explorer, a planter of colonies, a teacher of agriculture to foreign peoples and a benefactor who gained immortality for his services to mankind in the diffusion of civilization.

² Our English folk-dances, so happily rescued by the 'English Folk-Dance Society,' have obvious affinities with ancient agricultural rites. The sword-dances show survivals of the sacrificial and resurrectionary elements which symbolized the death and rebirth of Osiris. These dances, therefore, go back not to a primitive origin, as so many writers state, but a civilized one.

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explicit account of the colonizing expeditions of Osiris in which he taught men to make beer, to plant vines and to sow wheat and barley. With Isis, his sister-wife, he taught the Egyptians tillage and 'the making of bread of wheat and barley.' The ear of barley, again, was regarded as an elixir or giver of life like the cowrie shell,¹ so that both institutional religion and kingship can be quite definitely traced back to an agricultural origin. Pre-agricultural peoples (see Chapter XI) had no governing class nor were their communities divided into rulers and ruled. Agriculture is, in fact, responsible for the entire social organization of civilized countries – so that I have every justification for the length of this Chapter. It is only in Egypt, therefore, that there is a true evolution in phases of culture and styles of handicrafts from the primitive to the civilized, since other peoples received their civilization ready-made and as a consequence of this Egyptian discovery.

Since, then, agriculture was invented in only one country of the 'prehistoric' world, that of 'Neolithic' and Bronze Age Britain can only be ascribed either to the direct exploration of Egyptian colonists or to the indirect example of Egypt. In other words, we can not only make no sense of Avebury unless it was built by an agricultural people, but we have historical warrant for the promptings of our reason. We are compelled by a process of inevitable ratiocination to look abroad for the origin of the terrace, and when we turn

¹At the time of Tutankhamen barley was the currency in Egypt, and for many centuries grains of the cereal had already been regarded as repositories of vital substance, as forms of the Corn Mother, or, more correctly, of the Barley Mother. But in the tombs of Tutankhamen's immediate predecessors and successor figures of the god Osiris, made of germinating grains of barley, were put into the burial chamber 'magically to convey to the dead Pharaoh the life-giving properties of the Great Mother in the act of giving life to the sprouting barley' (Elliot Smith, *The Ancient Egyptians*). We are reminded irresistibly of the corn barrow on Cley Hill with its 'ears of wheat undecayed' (Colt-Hoare).

CORN FROM EGYPT

our eyes to the East, we find exactly what we should have expected.

§ 3. LANDS OF THE TERRACES

Mr. Perry and Dr. Elliot Smith between them have revealed the Egyptian prototype of terraced cultivation. The terracing practised in Spain, India, the Pacific Islands, West and East Africa, Madagascar and Arabia was, says the Doctor in *The Ancient Egyptians*, 'a modification of the ancient Egyptian system of irrigation.' That the origin was not Babylonian is shown by the fact that the Egyptian basin system of irrigation reveals a much closer affinity to the terracing of our own Downs than does the Mesopotamian canal system. The cultivation terraces along the slopes of the Andes organized by the Incas of Peru were as much linked with their megalithic system as are our own, and it cannot be too strongly asserted that the Babylonians were not workers in stone. Lastly, Perry in "The Geographical Distribution of Terraced Cultivation and Irrigation,"¹ has shown the intimate association of terraced cultivation with megalithic monuments, the sun-cult, mummification and other elements of this archaic culture throughout the greater number of the regions settled by the megalith-builders.

In several of my Chapters, I have drawn certain parallels between the prehistoric civilizations of Britain and Rhodesia. Let us wind up this Chapter by having another look at the Zimbabwes. I quote from a geologist who surveyed the area of the ancient ruins: 'I saw at least 150 square miles of country composed of kopjes varying in height from 100 to 400 feet literally covered on their slopes with these stone terraces,' and he calculates that 262 million tons of stone were moved to make their balks. Let the exclamations look after themselves: let us keep our eye on the object, as Words-

¹ *Proc. March Lit. and Phil. Soc.*, Vol. 60, 1915-16.

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worth counselled, for there is something more and rare to come. It is that these terraces were constructed right away from the gold-mining districts, and that what Hall and Bent call the 'stone forts' were perched on the summits of the terraced slopes. The disposition of the English and Rhodesian terraces, again, resembles that of the terraces on the granite hills of India. They also were associated with earthworks, and built by a non-Aryan, flint-using people who adopted the hill-tops for their habitations in contradistinction to the Aryan-speaking peoples who, like our Saxons, occupied the valleys. The Rhodesian forts and terraces were parts of one co-ordinated plan and the hills surmounted by the forts were terraced from top to toe.

So exact is the parallel that it is hardly necessary to murmur – Battlesbury and Hambledon Hill, Mendip mines and terraced Downs. My own astonishment is that such a parallel has never been pointed out before, let alone the inter-relationship between our mining and agricultural districts. Lastly, Hall points out that 'the practical value of these terraces as "fortifications" is considered by military engineers who have inspected them to be not only worthless but absolutely dangerous for the defenders. Had the walls of the forts been fortifications, they would have served admirably as screens for the attacking party.' And, in the most emphatic way, he repudiates the notion that the Bantu peoples, the warlike nomads who preceded the Europeans in the occupation of the ruined Zimbabwes, could, from what is known of their habits of life and conditions of culture, possibly have carved out those terraces.¹ There is nothing collusive in my use of this Rhodesian evidence, for the fact is that I never discovered it until I had drawn my deductions from the English ruins. But the parallels here are to my mind so striking that I am heartened in the difficult task

¹ Any more than the Saxons could possibly have been responsible for ours.

LANDS OF THE TERRACES

which now lies before me – the task of making sense of our magnificent earthworks.

One word more. Run back to the progenitors of the Zimbabwees – the Sabæans. The first colonizers, the men of Saba and the Yemen, possessed a massive and extensive terrace system, while the slopes of Mount Lebanon in Phœnicia were heavily lynched. Volney says that there were as many as from 100 to 120 terraces on the slope of a single mount. But it is to the Ægean rather than to Syria, Canaan or Arabia that we must look for the transportation of the Egyptian irrigation system (modified into terraces) to England. What do we find? That the hills of the Cyclades,¹ whose culture was a branch from the Minoan bole, were abundantly terraced. Once more, it was the genius of Crete, paradise of the arts, that found a nesting sanctuary upon our shores, before the doves of Rhea were slain by the shafts of Ares.

¹ Speaking of the Isle of Tenos in the Cycladic group, H. F. Tozer writes in *The Islands of the Ægean* (1890): 'The whole island, almost to the mountain-tops, was carved into terraces, which gave evidence of the vast labour employed in their construction.'

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE EARTHWORKS

The earthwork and tribal warfare. The meaning of the earthwork from the example of Avebury. The interior and the exterior fosse. Descriptions of Bratton Castle and Battlesbury. The earthwork and sacred building. The continuity of sacred sites. Earthwork superstitions. Old Sarum once a religious site. Degraded to a fortification. The protective purpose of the earthwork. The High Places once more. Landscape-reflections from Oldbury, Yarnbury and Barbury Camps. What the orthodox view leaves out. The Celts and the decadence of stone- and earthwork. The antiquity of the greater earthwork. Why the Celts did not build it. The circular and the rectangular earthwork. Tenuity of the war-theory. The various uses of the great camps. Their geographical communications. The diadems of Mendip. The coloured counties. Egyptian, Cretan and Rhodesian parallels with the English camps.

'Weave a circle round him thrice,
Close your eyes with holy dread
For he on honey-dew hath fed
And drunk the milk of Paradise.'

KUBLA KHAN

'Upon its crest this Mountain grave
A Plume of aged Trees doth wave.
No hostile hand durst here invade
With impious Steel the sacred Shade.'

ANDREW MARVELL ON BULBARROW HILL

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE EARTHWORKS

PART I

The Sanctuary

THE dominant view, of course, both of street and study is that the earthwork is a defensive citadel built by tribal warriors for military and strategic purposes. I say 'dominant,' but that is altogether too mild a word. It is not so much a view as an article of faith and no more questionable than was at one period of history the Ptolemaic system or the divine right of kings or the efficacy of human sacrifice in guaranteeing good harvests. Therefore, in combating this view, I shall be taking a journey as lonely as one round the earthworks themselves.

A. THE INTERIOR FOSSE

Mr. Hadrian Allcroft (*Earthwork of England*) is the principal authority for the military construction of our English earthworks, and I know of only one of the others who does not follow his lead. In them you will find a wealth of picturesque and graphic details as to the heroic combats that anciently took place upon the ramparts – the harsh cries, the panting breath, the whistle of the arrows, the gleam of dagger driven home, the thud of flint or bronze axe upon the cloven pate, the rush, the rally, the pursuit, the victory chant round the camp fires, the fattening of the captives, the sizzling of the roast . . . but if you look for something a little more solid than battle-scenes witnessed by the directing archæological staff or discourses on the art of prehistoric warfare, you will fail to find it.

When it comes to evidence it is not there, and it is not there because earthworks are not funerary monuments and

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so possess only a fraction of the speaking implements and remains to be found in the barrows. If these writers are earnestly studied, it will be found that their data have been built upon two elements and two only. One is the usual 'evolutionary' assumption of the development of civilization from savagery and the survival of the fittest by the killing off of the unprogressive: the second is the appearance of the earthwork itself. It looks like a warriors' camp and so it must be.¹ Upon this basis, the earthworks have been classified into promontory forts, hill forts and so on, and this method nerves me to attempt a classification of my own. I shall divide this Chapter, like Cæsar's Gaul, into three parts, and I shall try to show in them that the earthworks were built for a variety of purposes, but each of these purposes related to the official character of the 'archaic civilization,' and its predominantly religious bias. Each section of the Chapter will be devoted to illustrating what we can learn of the meaning of the earthworks from one cardinal example — the great earthwork of Avebury.

It is inexplicable to me that the significance of the Avebury vallum has been overlooked in earthwork literature. Allcroft only devotes a few lines to it; other writers do not mention it at all, and none have taken it as the criterion upon which to base their enquiries. Yet surely we are fully justified in doing so? I need not remind the reader of the supremacy I have accorded to Avebury, nor how I have tried to explain it as the master-key to the first civilization of England. But even were this the first Chapter in the book, we should still be justified in taking the Avebury vallum as our observation post from which to survey the earthworks.

¹ As a comic example of how far professional archæology is prepared to go to keep the standard of prehistoric warfare flying, I quote the following from a votary: 'I nearly feel at liberty to believe that the country folk have some ground for their belief . . . that the flowerets of the Downs are brighter when they grow where brave men fighting fell.'

THE INTERIOR FOSSE

May not this mighty vallum afford a clue to the purpose, the style, the character and the approximate date of other earthworks that in one particular or another resemble it?

It is obvious that since the Avebury vallum is on the wrong side of its ditch and the largest stone circle in the world was set up within the fosse, its object was not defensive or military. That is an axiom that admits of no qualification, unless we are to assume that the gods residing in the monoliths were thus stationed to strike terror into the foe. In that case, there would have been no need for the 'rampire.' Plainly, then, it bore the same relation to the stone circles as the walls of a church bear to the altar and other sacred objects. So our first quest must be other earthworks with sacred monuments placed either within the folds themselves or in their immediate neighbourhood – stone circles, barrows or menhirs. There are a number of other earthworks which have their fosses within the ramparts and so resemble many of those constructed by the peaceable Mound Builders of the Mississippi. We have noticed several of these already in our Chapter about the cone-barrows whose paternity we traced to Mount Silbury, and in particular the stone circle of Arbor Low in Derbyshire and the Marden earthwork which once enclosed the great Hatfield Barrow between Avebury and Stonehenge. It is pointless to multiply such instances and we will be content with our barely-supported statement that the ceremonious design of the Avebury earthwork is repeated in other parts of England. Therefore, the real object of our quest is to discover earthworks with exterior ditches, whose associations suggest the same intent as that of Avebury. Let us seek such examples and leave the attempted explanations of the reason why their ditches are exterior, until we reach a solid basis of evidence for concluding that the earthwork with the interior ditch is not organically separable from the others.

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B. THE EXTERIOR FOSSE

§ 1. *Bratton Castle*

Long barrows framed by oval earthworks are even better for our purpose than round, and I will take a run over to the corn-hills of the past in South-Western Wilts. The causeway between the Avebury and Mendip groups of these ancient stone and earth embossments of our land is the cluster of earthworks forming the vertebræ of the Wilts and Somerset border. The finest of these, scooped out of the hill on the main Ridgeway from Avebury in the Westbury-Warminster district, is Bratton Castle, the lines of whose forehead are clearly seen from the westbound train entering the suburbs of Westbury. From the carriage windows appears a vague and prostrate shape in the centre of the earthwork, like an expired dragon, with a little conical basilica by its head, which you take to be the rest-house of the knight who slew it. It is a haystack really and the uncouth shape a hugeous long barrow, facing east and west like the rest of them, and with its back fallen in with weight of years, like a dragon indeed but a pantomime one.

On the only fine day in the summer of 1922, I went up to see it. In the valleys, the great surge of summer flowers was already spending its force in ripples and wavelets, and the blossoms moulting before your eyes as the birds in the recesses of the thickets. But all over the long barrow grew the August grasses unreaped and three to four feet high, and nodding scabious bells, harebells some of a blue that, like the moth's kiss, lightly brushed them, others of an azure melted deep into their bells, oxeyes, the field forget-me-not, yellow bedstraw, tall hawkweeds, the field campanula with purple crowns set on their stems, and many others too fair and rich to be beggared to the dullness of a catalogue, mingled their hues in tossing heads and swaying stems. Not only had the

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tomb outlived the years in thousands, but the greatness of the dead within it the loss of name and race and title, since with these flowers Nature year by year had decked their monument. Northward lay the great plain between Mendip and the Downs of Northern Wilts, figured in infinite variety of tree-pattern, fretted and scalloped in shadow. Eastward, beyond Edington Hill and along the Ridgeway towards Urchfont Tumulus, the Downs thrust a beaked prow into the woodland surf of the plain, exposing the cultivation terraces so abundant along this scarp of the hills.

Far away to the east, the higher ground was barely cloud, but a bodying, a faint materialization, like a thought half-brooded into substance, of the heat-haze. Even in their broken and denuded age, the lines of Bratton Castle are no crouchers before a view so splendid. They need too to be broad in back to wear the Jacob's coat of flowers they do (the umbelled heads of the chervil, like daisies of Brobdingnag, waving along their flanks) and the humpiest mounds are fifty and sixty feet up from their fosses. Down they plunge into the valley, and, with no graduations for the eye to lose their massive curves in triviality, break off. The outer vallum is a mile long, and deserves it. Overhead passed the swifts on their migration, steadily south-east, pauselessly south-east, as they had passed when Bratton Hill was not yet Bratton Castle. They worked with Nature, those ancient builders, and in their work they made a bid for her eternity.

§ 2. *Battlesbury*

Away over the Downs southward and here is Battlesbury again above Warminster with four lines, swollen and precipitous, climbing above the northern and south-eastern entrances. Within, the natural body of the earth, once cultivated, curls over in a vast round barrow of its own. These cultivated Downland tracts are inharmonious with the rest of the ground and their growth of flowers is usually

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coarser and much less beautiful. But here Nature had splashed a coat of yellow paint all over it; not only the rudely staring stuff of yellow mustard but the tender gaiety of yellow toadflax in their bushy myriads. They did not make a sheet but isolated clumps, and the effect was like soft golden pools of sun, the dew-ponds of his dripping beams.

The ramparts in August are yet another surge of flowers, bursting and wellnigh thundering billows of purple, yellow, white and green. You don't put them all down unless you are a compiler of indexes: you pick out the stuffs that force their strength or sweetness upon you — *Centaurea scabiosa*, that knapweed that is something more than a knapweed and blue-eyes, the field gentian. Cross over to the southern ramparts, and the Wiltshire Downs, untroubled and so finely knit, go pacing on before you. No, it isn't the Downs are on the move, but the shadows, like a migration of butterflies, big as clouds, straying onwards confusedly and changing the earth to new colours with every veer and turn. Those free Downs, where even sorrow has wings and there is comfort in their bareness that the loveliest patches of the valleys, stuffy with feudalism, can never give! Not without a struggle will we yield these kirtles of Flora to be the pens of mud-rooting Mars.

Beyond Battlesbury is Middle Hill, a medium hill with cultivation terraces down its eastern face, and beyond this middling fellow Scratchbury Camp with seven round barrows within its 'fortifications,' the biggest like a rhinoceros horn, the only one that can be seen from Battlesbury, humped up at its south-western corner. According to Cox (*Green Roads of England*), Battlesbury itself has three, squeezed in between the ramparts also in the south-western corner.¹ Walk along the inner rampart (or skate along it

¹ I shall refer later to the doubt cast upon the age of Battlesbury in connection with its barrows.



THE CYCLOPEAN WALL OF DOLEBURY.

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lightly as a water beetle over a pond) and south-west on the further side of Warminster is Cley Hill with two round barrows within the circumvallation, one hidden, the other with absurd pomp putting a hole through the skyline. Surely even the benighted heathen would hardly have selected their citadels of defence as the churchyards for their god-certificated dead. So far as religious purpose is concerned, a barrow within an earthwork corresponds with a stone circle.

Inkpen Beacon is the crown nearest to heaven of the Hampshire highlands, and Walbury Camp, with its long barrow (used as a gallows in a later age—a clear case of degeneration) almost touching the outer rampart, is the crown of Inkpen Beacon. From it you are the tutelary god of four counties, holding in your royal gaze the Lambourn Downs to the north, the hills of Winchester to the south, the Marlborough Downs to the west, and the Oxfordshire Chilterns to the east.

In the Cotswolds and the Malvern Hills it is the same story. Uley Bury Camp near Stroud has the Uley Chambered Long Barrow, almost a twin to the Wellow Barrow (see Chapter VII), and compared in the books to the Hal-Tarxien temple at Malta, in its shadow. In Minchinhampton Camp are the Long Stone, the Tingle Stone and the Gatcombe Tumulus; Bredon Hill Camp has its 'Bambury Stone'; a chambered barrow, with a leaning menhir resembling the phallic monoliths of Brittany, stands hard by the camp near Bisley on the Salt Way, and other camps with tumuli within them I have omitted.

§ 3. *The Sacred Site*

The Hill and the Circle, by R. A. Courtney (privately printed at Penzance in 1912), recruits the Cornish earthworks (some of which have stone circles within them) for

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sacred associations.¹ He maintains that they were once the sites of sacred monuments. One curious bit of information he gives us is that superstitions about the Cornish earthworks still thrive and that the churches of St. Michael,² both in Cornwall and Brittany, are built within earthworks probably on the sites of pagan stone circles. That would be in accord with the order of Pope Gregory that the Christian British should consecrate the places of heathen worship and economically build their own temples with the aid of their material.

One could accumulate examples from many other quarters all bearing unanimous testimony as to the permanence and continuity of sacred sites. Mr. Edward Clodd, in a paper contributed to the Rationalist Press Association in 1920, gives a fat sheaf of them.

Walter Johnson, in *Byways of British Archaeology*, gives an extremely valuable list of earthworks within whose folds churches have been built either upon the sites of vanished stone circles or within an enclosure deemed sacrosanct. Knowlton Church, four miles south of Cranborne, built within an earthwork which, as at Avebury, has the fosse inside the rampart, is of no evidential value for that reason. But there is a chapel within the oval camp of Chisbury, near Bedwyn in Wiltshire, while two St. Lawrence Churches are built, one within Chorlesbury Camp in Bucks and another within an earthwork at West Wycombe. The earthwork at Fimber on the Yorkshire Wolds is a particularly happy example, not given in Johnson's book. It has cultivation terraces close to it, and two barrows within the rampart, while the church is actually built upon one of the tumuli. Another example not given in Johnson is the church within the earthwork of Burrowbridge Hill rising starkly from the

¹ To the best of my knowledge, none of these earthworks are without the exterior fosse. But this statement has to fall short of personal inspection.

² St. Michael was a transformation of the old sun-god.

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Athelney marshes. So far as I have been able to discover, these earthworks all possess the exterior fosse.

It is a legitimate process of argument to pass from sacred buildings themselves to the mental attitudes associated with them. That is why localized superstition and ceremonial traditions are so valuable. Buildings decay, buildings sometimes give an ambiguous reply to the questionings of the would-be interpreter. But folk-memory can outlive objective monuments, and folk-memory never lies. It forgets its setting and drifts away from its ancient moorings; it invents fallacious reasons for phenomena whose causes are lost in antiquity, but retains until it itself disappears the stamp originally impressed upon it. An astounding illustration of the tenacity of folk-memory is related by Prof. Boyd Dawkins. Near the town of Mold is a barrow known as *Bryn-yr-Ellyllon* – or ‘the Hill of the Goblin.’ Local tradition declared that it was haunted by a ghost clad in golden armour. When the tomb was opened *for the first time* (there being no sign of previous disturbance), the skeleton of a Romano-British warrior was found in it, and with the bones a corselet of bronze overlaid with gold. Memory, with that knowledge in its scrip, travelled safely on through a space of at least 1,400 years. To neglect or ignore the testimony of witnesses so eloquent is a folly for which no words can be too strong. Can we suppose that the Saxons regarded Grim’s Dyke, running through Hertfordshire, as of ‘unearthly origin’ (*Victoria History of Hertfordshire*) for no reason? Grim was a recognized name for the megalith-builders.

The Wiltshire villagers used to play a ball-and-stick game on Palm Sunday within the ramparts both of Cley Hill and Martinsell Hill near Avebury, a probable survival of very ancient agricultural rites. It is the places themselves which hold the form of man’s thought more closely even than the hills preserve the mould and pressure of the ancient ramparts.

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The earthworks that emanate such wraiths of enduring tradition must have been sacred sites. In modern days, many earthworks have been regarded as the abodes of evil spirits, and their unholiness in country regard is the warrant of their holiness in the past. Johnson quotes the priest in *Hamlet*, 'shards, flints and pebbles should be thrown on Ophelia,' and remarks that 'a ceremony, originally indicative of respect, had degenerated into a mark of disgrace.' The gods acquired a long tenure of life at the expense of their characters, for time changed them into fiends. Johnson also points out that the fairs still held in many earthworks indicate that they were once the arenas for sacred dances. The Morris dances, the precious relics of dances far older than the fairies' rounds, often used to take place within an earthwork, and that is an indication of the cousinship between the earthwork and the stone circle. The famous circle of the Dawns' Men in Cornwall means the Stone Dance, and Stonehenge was the *Chorea Gigantum*. The horse-races held within the earthen walls of Lambert's Castle close to the border between Dorset and Devon, and the sheep-fairs within the tremendous 'graffes' and 'rampires' of Yarnbury Camp between the Avon and the Wylie Valleys in Wiltshire, and in Woodbury Camp between Corfe Castle and Lulworth in the Isle of Purbeck, are other examples which only represent a fraction of the total number of earthworks dyed in traditional holiness.

There are various other paths by which we can approach the earthwork as a sanctuary. Along one of them, for instance, we can ride on a dragon, like Charles Watterton on his cayman. In other words, various of the camps, the ordinary camps with exterior fosses, have dragon associations. Such is Uffington Camp on Dragon Hill above the White Horse Vale in Berkshire. Such are Bignor Hill and other camps upon the South Downs. The dragon camp could never have been military barracks during the period

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when dragons were gods. Dragons (see *Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum*) go well with giants, and the Camp of Nettlecombe Toot, in Dorset, is described by Warne¹ as having once been a proper witches' cauldron of local superstition for miles round. Some of the Dorset earthworks, again, are ship-shaped (viz., Shipton Hill Camp), and so remind us of the 'ship-barrows' of Bronze Age Sweden, and of the enormous boat-shaped capstone of the 'Table des Marchands' dolmen in Brittany. We need not go so far as to suggest that these earthworks were symbolic of the Egyptian 'Ship of the Dead' in which the reanimated corpse reached the kingdom of immortality. It is enough to reveal yet another of the bonds that bind up the earthworks with the sacred barrows and megaliths. Are not the more shapely of the Wiltshire and Dorset long barrows remarkably like an overturned ship? The voyages of the Ancient Mariners were not over when they were laid to rest on English Downs.

But a much more striking testimony to the original religious inspiration of the earthwork is the rampart of stone. For Dolebury is not the only example of the hill-top camp built of unmortared stone blocks. There is Worlesbury on the Bristol Channel within a giant's stone's throw of Dolebury; there are Bindon and Chalbury in Dorset, and there are the stone camps of Cornwall. Now the reason why modern British archæology finds nothing to open its eyes about in the stone camp is because it will look no further than its own front door. But if we stretch our gaze eastward from the Downs, we become aware of two historical clues which have long trains of precise evidence to support them. One is that stone-working originated in Egypt where it was purely religious in purpose; the other that stone-building was not secularized until Roman times. Therefore, the stone forts of England cannot have been military in character, since they are certainly not post-Roman; they

¹ *Ancient Dorset.*

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cannot have been Celtic in date, because, as we shall see in the next section of this Chapter, stone working had almost disappeared at the time of the Celtic invasions (from 1000 B.C. onwards) and because, as I shall attempt to show in my Chapter on Degeneration, the religious ideas of the ancients had become academic, mere symbols of fear and superstition, in the Celtic world. And none of these stone forts have their ditches inside the outer valla, while once more we are assured that building in earth was a substitute for building in stone.

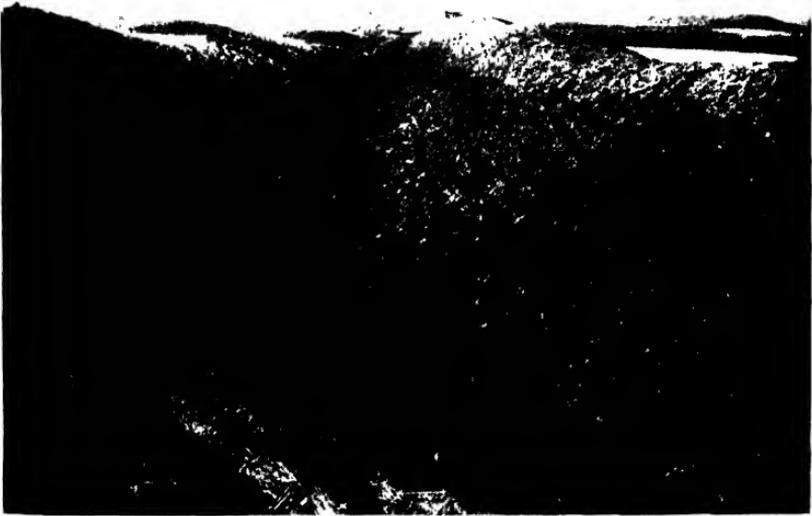
§ 4. *Old Sarum*

As a last and pregnant example of the sacredness attaching to so many of the ancient earthworks, I will take Old Sarum, the scowling fortress that overlooks the spire of Salisbury, and one of the very choicest encampments of the archæological staff which directs the movements of ancient warfare.

The conception and achievement of Old Sarum can only, to my thinking, belong to the men of Avebury. It lies two miles north of Salisbury, and is one of the principal nodes of the trackway system. Seen from the road sloping down from Amesbury, it is of rare majesty, a piece of consummate hill-carving by a people who loved to execute their large designs upon the face of the landscape. How natural for the Celtic overlords to have regarded the works of this little slim, dark, sharp, smiling race as the print of giants! With the unconscious wisdom of the artist, they chose a low, featureless hill perking up from the valley of the Avon, and breathed upon it, and lo, the turf sank and swelled and vast green billows of earth curled round their crests into oval cirques that even the brutal heel of war could not deface and that will endure until the hills themselves have passed away. Who shall say that the builders of Old Sarum are so mingled



BRATTON CASTLE LONG BARROW.



BRATTON CASTLE RAMPARTS.

THE EXTERIOR FOSSE

with the dust and forgotten that to finger it is but the toiling idleness of the pedant – when such contours, ennobling Nature, remain to stir the mind?

Once, however, within the circle of walls so high above the level of their fosses (100 feet) that the swallows, confused in the relationship between high and low, skim their tops and weave their curves on the level of one's hips as, in the distance, they ring the spire of Salisbury Cathedral; once, like a fly, upon the crust of this Gargantuan loaf, and the impression changes. Though I can find no record of any sieges or battles within Old Sarum – only in the fields below – you know that you are within an ancient fortress and have a fellow-feeling with Pepys, who saw 'the great fortifications,' 'and there light and to it and in it, and find it prodigious, so as to frighten one to be in it at all alone at that time of night.' But as I found it, it was not the prodigiousness that scared me, since I have never had a trace of such feelings within the tremendous walls of Maiden Castle, Badbury Rings, Battlesbury and others of the mightier camps of Dorset, Wilts and Somerset. It was the indelible print of human suffering, for we of this age do really know something about war.

Most of the accounts are agreed that Old Sarum, in spite of the greater height of its ramparts and the greater distance between them (you on the inner rampart have to shout to your friend on the outer to make yourself heard), is not so impressive as Maiden Castle.¹ That is true: Maiden Castle shrinks when you see Old Sarum from the Amesbury Road; Maiden Castle swells when you are within Old Sarum's banks. I think that the reason for this is that Old Sarum, almost alone among the great earthworks, bears the marks

¹ For a description of Maiden Castle outside Dorchester, see my book *In Praise of England*. Warne (*Ancient Dorset*) says of Maiden Castle: 'Verily we are too much accustomed to regard the distant and unknown past as an age of unmitigated barbarism.'

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of being tampered with in the interests of war. It has somehow lost contact with Nature: its lines have been smoothed and regularized, while above is the blob of the old Norman keep. Celt, Saxon, Dane and Norman have not spoilt but improved Old Sarum and have converted its uses from those of ignoble peace to the pomps and circumstance of glorious war.

The fact that Old Sarum was once a mediæval city may help to throw a beam of light upon the past. The See of Wessex was transferred to Old Sarum from Sherborne in 1075, and the cathedral within the ramparts was completed in 1092. Here then we have a singular repetition of what occurred at Avebury, Bratton Castle and numerous others of the hill-top camps – the construction of a sacred monument within the girdle of an earthwork. The difference lay in the then use of Old Sarum as a citadel, and the actual reason for the building of Salisbury Cathedral 150 years later was the clash within its walls between the clergy and the military! The cleavage that broke up the city came, so runs the script, '*ob insolentiam militis.*' The tradition of the earthwork as a seemly enclosure for tomb or temple was preserved, but ultimately failed because the earthwork itself had become degraded from the practice of peace to that of war.

Are we not, then, justified in reinterpreting the distinction between the sacred enclosure with its first ditch within the rampart and the military citadel with the same ditch outside? For the meaning of both can be read by the same formula. For what reason, then, at all, did the ancients make their ditches jump from one side of the rampart to the other? Well, of course, I do not know, but a ready explanation does at once suggest itself. The earthworks with the interior ditch had a peculiar sanctity as local centres of congregation for sacred festivals and the holding of councils, while Avebury was the cathedral city for the whole of megalithic England. Their functions were those of the

THE EXTERIOR FOSSE

stone circle, and either stone circles were once raised within them or they served as substitutes for stone circles. But what of those with an exterior ditch? They too were breathed upon by the gods. Yes, but they were put to various other and more practical uses which we shall notice further on in the Chapter, uses framed to the quotidian life of the people. They were their towns, their granaries, their mining enclosures, their route stations, and yet preserved, if less definitely, a certain apartness, a sense of the *genius loci* withdrawn from common contact and a character of local consecration. Anybody who understands the history of ancient Egypt and the lack of all sharp division between sacred and secular peculiar to the archaic civilization, will not call this an arbitrary point. I would even suggest that the earthwork with the interior ditch emphasized its purpose of public ceremonial by using the outer rampart as a stand for spectators and thus dividing them from the performers (see Chapter I). Sacred dances were also held within the normal earthwork, but they may well have been priestly exercises carried on by routine and without such publicity. But this is hypothesis. The evidence is for a thin line of partition between two types of earthwork.

Yet I would not have the reader conclude my meaning to be that the normal earthwork had no *protective* purpose at all. I believe that it had, and the fact that earthworks were built on dragon hills is an indication of this purpose. For the dragon, like the serpent from which it was descended, was, with other functions, a protective symbol. We cannot, in fact, explain this protective purpose without going back to the East, the home of the dragon, and I would ask my readers' patience until I come to deal directly with the development of warfare and the problems of degeneration within the pale of the archaic civilization. The colonists brought this protective idea with them, as they brought so many things, quite regardless of their utility or application

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to local conditions. But this, of course, is a totally different claim from that which rules the speculations and theories of neo-Darwinism. There are other reasons, to be given in the rest of this Chapter, why the earthworks could not possibly have been pure forts and military encampments.

C. THE CROWNING OF THE HEIGHTS

I shall end the first section of this Chapter with an application to the great hill-top earthworks of an idea discussed in the Chapter on the long barrows. I refer to the passion of the ancients for 'the High Places,' a passion essentially religious to them and very happily æsthetic to us.

'You will generally find,' writes an authority on the earthworks, 'the camps on hill-tops command a magnificent view; the reason is obvious; the valley must be commanded from the hill-fortress, and not from æsthetic but from grim considerations of strategy were these view-points chosen.'

Now I am not denying that the disposition of the great earthworks had a strategic purpose – its discussion falls more properly into the third section of our Chapter – but I do say here that strategy was by no means the only consideration of the hill-top builders and that what Mr. Know-all ridicules as the 'æsthetic' motive played a very large part both in the philosophy and the actions of the hill-men. I shall select a few random examples of these high-thoughted camps as an illustration of our present theme.

§ 1. *Oldbury*

I choose Oldbury Camp first because of its obvious relation to Mount Silbury.

Oldbury Camp lies just off the turnpike road from Marl-

THE CROWNING OF THE HEIGHTS

borough to Bath before it enters Calne and, being some three miles to the west of Avebury and an even shorter distance from Silbury, with which it is connected by a trackway studded with tumuli, is the largest camp in its neighbourhood. To reach it from the main road, you climb the flank of Cherwell Down, which curves at this point into a majestic amphitheatre marked off to the right by a hideously conspicuous modern obelisk, a bastard Cleopatra's Needle, and to the left by one of those self-contained beechen woodlands which breathe a darkling presence and a mystery no less potent though different in kind from the influences distilled and preserved by the memorials of human antiquity long after the men whose feelings raised them are resolved into the elements.

The green turf throws wide its fragrant borders not along the margin of the wood but deep into its recesses, as bright beneath the woven tent of darkness as from the gardening of the wind and sun. A few paces to the right lies the stronghold of the sorcerers, giants or demons whose mighty works earned them their epic titles from the race of dwarfs that succeeded them.

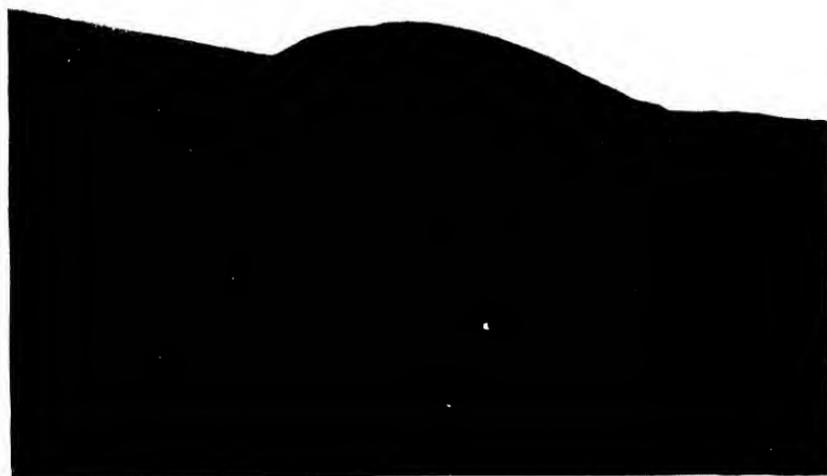
Every one of the great camps of Southern England wears its own special atmosphere, and rugged Oldbury with its wrinkled brow is no exception. In the jargon of military archæology, it is a 'contour fort' and its massively irregular lines, in places fifty feet high from their fosses and enclosing a hard-delved area of twenty-five acres, 'humour,' in Colt-Hoare's happier speech, 'the hill in its numerous sinuosities.' But its relationship with the Down goes one better than this. Walk along the southern rampart, look down the long slopes, and the hill will appear to have been designed to bear this earthen roc's nest upon its crown. For the land descends in a parallel series of great buttresses with a trivial white horse carved at the end of the eighteenth century along the side of one, and two banks of terraces dipping and

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flowing over the foot of another. Nothing could be more beautiful than the set and sweep of these buttresses clasping the lower ground with such firmness and soaring up the steep slopes to make a kind of tripod to support the open bowl of earthenware. Beyond them to the north and west stretches a mounded sea of tree-tops. On the other or southern side of the camp, where the pit-dwellings are most abundant and of a great size and depth, the outlook is quite different, the ground gently sloping to the level expanse of Calston Down with the Roman road running through it like a piece of silver tape, the rougher wall of the Wansdyke running parallel with it beyond on its way to Devon, and a row of three low and retiring barrows between them. Then up mounts the land again with the curve of a falcon from its stoop towards the ridge streaming westward from Shepherd's Shore. To the east the plateau is more diversified, but the folds and what Colt-Hoare calls the 'sinuosities' of the Downland perspective are insignificant not in themselves but in their relative position to Silbury Hill, which here rises from the elevated plain to its full power and stature. Its likeness to a pyramid with the angles smoothed and the top slightly flattened is even more pronounced from Oldbury than at a near view. The very sight of this extraordinary mount from the ramparts of the camp gave me a new confidence in pursuing the intricate and laborious task of this book. It seemed to me that Silbury was unique and isolated from all other earthen monuments of pre-Celtic man in Britain only because it possessed a special significance in relation to them. I felt it to be the nucleus, the keystone, the corolla of all the archaic structures of Downland man's society, nor could one doubt that Oldbury once lay within its spell, and that the men who dug the pits within and without its 'rampires' and issued from its south-eastern gate to go up to Avebury, looked towards Silbury as the Romans to the Capitoline Hill and the Athenians to the Parthenon.



RAMPART OF BRATTON CASTLE.



SURGE OF THE RAMPART ON HAMBLEDON HILL.

THE CROWNING OF THE HEIGHTS

For the same reason, I have no doubt that Oldbury was built by man living at peace. No warring or divided tribes could have raised a pile like Silbury and no Silbury would ever have risen from that densely populated plateau except as the central source of an energy that grouped other works about it. The suggestions of a warlike purpose in the triple circumvallation of Oldbury can only be skin-deep, and as one sees the wild fox padding along the ramparts, the harlequin stonechat flicking his wings above the bowed head of the musk thistle, the crow, the titlark and the kestrel delighting in it as their playground, and the goldfinches forming the only guards in crimson and gold to its entrance, one may reflect that the peace they bestow preserves to the end what was likewise in the beginning.

§ 2. *Yarnbury*

Yarnbury next for another reason. When I first saw it, it was being scaled by the attacking forces spread out into units in irregular storm-formation, presumably to avoid those so formidable processes of the defence (enfilading and the like) upon which Generalissimo Allcroft gives us such copious information. They proved, however, to be little juniper bushes and they and I smiled slyly at one another, as I proceeded, single-handed (since the other hand held that trusty falchion, my umbrella), to breast the battlements.

Yarnbury, situated in one of the very loneliest and remotest parts of the Downs, lies north of the high road from Warminster to Salisbury and is connected by an ancient trackway with Old Sarum. Some seven or eight miles out of Warminster going east, this road joins the Amesbury road to the left at the little village of Deptford. A mile or so along this road is the camp with its three valla often rising fifty feet above its two and in places three fosses, so that it is fully on the scale of the Avebury earthwork.

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Certainly the ancients had a marvellous eye for landscape, and my advice to a patriot in the undebased sense of the term would be to make a pilgrimage from earthwork to earthwork, and barrow to barrow, and use his eyes from their tops. He would be seeing his own home in all its delicate, lovable, generous and ever-changing beauty, as no guide-book could ever instruct him. This special faculty for selecting a site which both reveals and gathers up the true values of a landscape is well marked at Yarnbury. From the Amesbury road you just see the country round; a stroll over to Yarnbury, a hundred yards or so away and only a few feet if any above the level of the road,¹ and Stendhal's process of crystallization has mysteriously taken place. You have seen the Wiltshire plateau in all its intimate form and pressure, in, so to speak, an image of its real self, once and for all. There are the Chitternes and Breakheart Hill to the north-west; the Codfords to the west; the Langfords in the Wylie Valley to the south; and the Woodfords and the Durnfords between Salisbury and Stonehenge to the east. Not that you see them, the dears, any more than you see 'The Voyage to Cythera' which the pairing of villages on this so finely moulded plateau irresistibly brings to your mind. You don't see them — this is just map-talk — for the demure little villages of Western Wilts all hide themselves within small cumulus clouds of trees. Down went my prejudice against clumps and groves of trees among the Downs, for nothing could be more delightful than the way they catch the vision as it roams and hovers like a kestrel over those effortless slopes. Nothing to break the congruity of the view except telegraph poles, and so Downland man had the better of it, for instead of them he saw droves of the great bustard, very possibly the only real difference he did see between our times and his. And in a perfect hoop of light, the horizon

¹ And so quite useless as a fortification.

THE CROWNING OF THE HEIGHTS

binds and blesses the composed and flowing and sun-dappled scene.

§ 3. *Barbury*

My next camp shall be Barbury, a nimbus of green cloud crowning the heights to the north-east of Hackpen Hill, and as different in size, appearance, shape and design as it well could be from the numerous rectangular camps sprinkled about all over it. It was of first importance to the ancients, for it lies at the northernmost point of the Avebury triangle, overlooking the valley of the Og, and the Great Ridgeway, its western and southern branches united, passes by it from Hackpen and Avebury and so on through Liddington Camp, where Richard Jefferies sought so hard to attain 'an existence infinitely higher than Deity,' to Uffington Camp on the Berkshire Downs, the Place of the Dragon, and thence, meeting the Icknield Way, hies on over the Thames at Streatley. Barbury Camp was thus an arterial node; it did not 'guard' the gates to the near Midlands and far Eastern Counties, so much as kept them open to Avebury and gave men with packs good halting before they set their weary feet once more for Mecca and the Holy Mount of Silbury. So we expect things of it, and richly are they given.

Half a mile of ground with earthen walls is girdled round, and the height of the inner rampire, as Aubrey would say, above the level of its 'graffe' is forty-seven feet. The form is oval, and the lines are double, becoming threefold on the northern slope where the pit-dwellings are. As at Maesbury Camp in Somerset, there is a group of pines near the eastern rim, living and perpetuated sign-posts which no longer beckon the traveller, and, though abiding the hare, the kestrel, the magpie and the lark, wave all human life away. East was a little gorse common with its melodious gusts of linnets; northward lay the plain, a blue-edged manuscript large as life with tiny characters writ over it; westward three

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great clumps of trees marking the line of the Ridgeway, that you can see from the hills above Pewsey, ten miles away, and south, the surge of the Marlborough Downs, vacant as the spaces between the stars, vacant but for little boats of cloud sailing their billowy seas and that here on earth were cruising sheep. The solitude! not the stifling loneliness of a hotel drawing-room or the corridors of the Tube Railway at mid-day, but a solitude that frightened one a little because it was so vast and calm. The very wind lost its way in it and tried to hide away in the turf. A solitude bounded only by the inner cirque of the horizon, and beyond that the 'flaming ramparts of the world,' and beyond that the plunge into the infinite of solitude. It seemed as though the voice of God would sound more natural than the roar of London. There seemed indeed nothing between me and the utmost shores of reality. Yet if my soul shrank a little within me and darkened in pace with the twilight stealing upon me, it was not because I was alone in vacancy but because into the loneliness of the hill-tops pours a metaphysical company, the concourse of the multitudinous God, and their voices were too sweet for me to hear. Dearer were the linnets' chimes, whose darling company pealed a soft answer I could understand, and it was in a cloud of their protecting incense that I left the hill to the mysteries of night.

Barbury and Yarnbury are but two examples out of a multitude, for every single one of the great camps, the camps I mean whose ramparts at once take you back to the style of the Avebury earthwork, commands a landscape-kingdom. We cannot as a fact escape from the sanctuary idea even with the earthworks that manifestly served other purposes besides that of religion. That is true both of the industrial forts like Dolebury and Cissbury (since metals were originally 'givers of life') and the agricultural ones like Camelot and Hambledon Hill.

CELTS AND DECLINE OF EARTHWORK

PART II

Their Style and Antiquity

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A. THE CELTS AND THE DECLINE OF THE EARTHWORK

THE original conception of the earthwork, like the quest for metals and the erection of stone circles and megalithic tombs, was, I believe, mainly religious. That in itself is a sufficient reason for ascribing them to the megalithic ages. Now if you take a survey of Western Europe, there is very good reason for believing that the building of stone monuments fell into desuetude during the middle of the latter half of the Bronze Age, just as the vast stone pyramid gave way before the small brick one after the Sixth Dynasty in Egypt. We do not need to theorize on the occurrence of the very same process in England because we can watch it happening under our noses. The dolmens and stone-chambered tombs of the first megalithic period dwindle into the enclosed coffins called 'cists' of the Bronze Age until the stone chamber vanishes altogether in the Celtic tumulus. The British Museum authorities have fixed the date of the practice of cremation at about 1000 B.C., and I have already suggested in Chapter V that this corresponded with the first Celtic invasions. Now the date of the crematory urn is the date of the kistvaen or degenerate cist, and this is practically nothing but a small cairn of stones heaped above the remains of the dead and covered by a mound. Even this rude and careless use of stone was not universal, since the Celts were constantly using the older barrows for their burials. In other words, the arrival of the Celts synchronized with the last stage in the decay of stonework (as of sun-worship, see Chapter IX), and in the Iron Age which

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followed some 200 years later, the ages of stone have closed their long history, and with it their civilization. Siret declares that megalithic monuments are unknown in Central Europe, the home-land of the Celts, and this is so. 'Un des caractères distinctifs,' he adds, 'du civilisation du centre européen, même à la fin du premier âge du fer, c'est l'état rudimentaire de l'art de construire.' It was not, in fact, a civilization at all, but a retrogression from a previous and far higher standard of culture, the process and significance of which we shall have to study in future chapters. And yet to the Celts are ascribed the megalithic monuments of England!

We mark too that Siret notices again and again the great decline in religious objects during the Bronze Age in Spain. Their percentage is very low compared with that of the *objets de culte religieux* abundant in the 'Neolithic' period. This can only mean that the sacred metal-hunt was spending its force and that men were beginning to think about metals as we do, and not as did their forefathers. The gold of religion was becoming the religion of gold. There can be no question but that the decline and finally the disuse of stone-working, a craft purely religious in origin, was the consequence of profound social and political changes in the structure of ancient society.¹

Now, there is no dissociating the Avebury vallum from the Avebury circles: there they are, inseparable, putting a rope round any break-away by idle speculation. Have we then any justification for concluding that, as Mount Silbury declined into the round barrow, and the round barrow into the mere mound of the 'Celts and the ant-hill of the Saxons, as the great megalithic structures declined into cists and rude cairns, so the earthwork changed its style, cramped its

¹ For an able and precise discussion of this, see Mr. W. J. Perry's *The Cultural Significance of the Use of Stone* (Manchester University Publications, 1923).



THE WANSDYKE.

(From Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*.)

CELTS AND DECLINE OF EARTHWORK

generosity of line and diminished its ditch-depth and rampart-height? In other words, if the 'Neolithic' overlapped into the early Bronze Age, as we showed in Chapter V that it did, can we assess the great earthworks of the hill-tops to these twin periods and these only?

Trust your eyes, take no books on your journey, and you cannot fail to be struck by the extraordinary resemblance between the more massive hill-top camps – Camelot, Maiden Castle, Hambledon Hill, Yarnbury, Old Sarum, Battlesbury, Badbury Rings, Barbury, Bratton Castle and others – with the Avebury vallum. One and all are the hill-modellings of Brobdingnag. But their partnership is closer than that. They have a way of catching the larger rhythms of the 'wave-swoln' earth and adapting their folds to the rounded contours of the hills without forfeiting their man-made originality, which at once betrays them as the work of a single mentality. Their oval or elliptical style everywhere repeats the form of the Avebury rampart. To call them embankments and ditches round hills is to be quite blind not merely to their noble workmanship but their architectural reality.¹ I am certain that if any of my readers were to spend a fortnight's holiday getting his eye in with the greater earthworks (and a grander holiday does not exist) he or she would settle the short-sighted fumbling dubieties of professional archæology over this problem for ever. Trust to archæology alone and you are lost in inextricable confusion; trust to your own proper sense of values, and it will not fail you. The æsthetic insight common to us all, however overlaid by meaner things, is no useless drawing-room faculty here: it is of practical service and will enable you to decipher the story of 'prehistoric' England, where the study of books alone will give you nothing but mental dyspepsia.

¹ Mrs. Greene (*History of the Irish State to 1014 – 1925*) speaks of the sense of architectural design and the greatness of the scale in the works of megalithic Ireland.

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Take the irregular lines of these earthworks. J. E. Jackson in his edition of Aubrey's *Wiltshire Antiquities* (1862) has this percipient remark:

'All the old earthworks are irregular; not because the engineers who knew how to move stones of forty tons [often a long distance, I may add] were ignorant how to describe a circle, but because the employers, whoever they were, preferred the ruder to the more elegant symmetry.'

Colt-Hoare held the same view, and it is extremely interesting to observe that he puts the great earthworks in the Celtic period because he considered them to be the works of civilized men. He was a preliminary victim of the usual generalization of the onward and upward evolutionists, but his eye did not play him false. We put them earlier for precisely the same reason, that they were the work of men a great deal more civilized than the Celts ever were.¹ 'Travel down the slope of time, and the earthworks become smaller and more regular, until they end up as mere open and rectangular boxes.

B. WHERE THE GREATER EARTHWORKS BELONG

What further evidence is there for the date of the greater earthworks?² Take Oldbury, which the archæologists are

¹ Speaking of the Dorset earthworks, Warne says: 'Although the Durotriges (the Celtic inhabitants of Dorset) seem to have been a . . . people . . . of barbaric life, they yet speak from their grave-mounds of contact with some race of superior achievements from which they may have acquired their first lessons in the school of civilization, but whether that race were Phœnician . . . may for ever remain a subject of speculation and doubt.' In that sentence he gets, without realizing it, to the root of the matter. His *observation* put him on the right road; the moderns follow *theory*.

² I have no space even in so long a Chapter as this to examine the relations between the greater earthworks and the dew-pond. I referred to Walter

inclined to regard as Iron Age (Celtic) in date, because the pit-dwellings within the 'fortress' were occupied by the Celts. But they forget, firstly, that the Celts can be proved to have constantly occupied the sites of settlements far more ancient than their own and, secondly, that there was once a long barrow within the ramparts.

The number and size of the great earthworks, again, combined with their position as centres of communication, obviously imply, as Allcroft, making a breach in his own fortifications, is forced to admit, a central authority and a widely available supply of labour, or, in other words, a *pax Britannica*.

Consider the archæological or Pots and Pans evidence – what there is of it. As it happens, archæological opinion is hopelessly divided as to the date of the greater earthworks. From such a welter of divergent contentions you go out by the same door as in you went. On the one hand, you have Professor Scarth (*Roman Britain*): 'Antiquarians are generally agreed that the most elaborate and most strongly fortified earthworks are generally the most ancient'; on the other, Mr. Allcroft, on the whole, says precisely the opposite. Often you will find the museum catalogues and field-club records of the same county cancelling out each other's conclusions. I even found a paper in the volumes of the Dorset

Johnson's opinion of the 'Neolithic' origin of the dew-pond in Chapter VI (p. 168). The Hubbards, in a volume called *Neolithic Dewponds and Cattleways*, claim it as such –

(i) because it was frequently 'fortified' like the camps themselves (viz., the Chanctonbury dew-pond);

(ii) because many earthworks were so constructed as to communicate with dew-ponds in their neighbourhood;

(iii) because dew-ponds are frequently within the rings of an earthwork or close to the entrance (viz., Battlesbury). This, of course, is evidence valueless unless taken in conjunction with the other points; and

(iv) pit-dwellings were frequently dug beside a dew-pond and within an earthwork close to it.

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Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club which discussed the possibility of Eastern penetration into England as though the author were unaware of the fact that he was burning his fingers with a very damnable, scandalous and contemptible heresy!

Another writer in Volume 42 of the Series remarks: 'It seems clear that the earthworks were originally made by the men of the New Stone Age, that wonderful race to whom the world owes its megalithic monuments and its "magic"; which may be traced as far afield as America, the isles of the Pacific Ocean and Australia.' This remarkable quotation clearly shows the great change that has come upon archaeology of more recent years, not on account of more intensive observation, but of the tenets of Neo-Darwinism. Trade-routes, 'Beaker Folk,' pottery types, warring savages, pastoral primitives and spontaneous generation of Western European culture followed by evolutionary development, are all you can get out of the modern school.

But even the professionals contradict each other and themselves. One excludes Dolebury from the Uncle Toby view of the earthworks. Another says in one place: 'I believe that many hill-top earthworks . . . will prove, when excavated, to have been originally enclosures of neolithic age.' He then declares that certain earthworks have been 'proved' to be Early Iron Age (viz., Celtic) in date, and in another place he maintains that the rectangular form of earthwork was introduced by the Celts, which view, one that you can make real sense of, is shared by Pitt-Rivers. Earthwork, as a whole, is not, of course, confined to one or two periods. But no attempt is made to classify the different styles of earthwork from any but the defensive point of view, nor to try and group them according to periods, so that the reader, if he accepts these confusing statements at their face value, must abandon all hope of definition, perspective and continuity.



FOREGROUND OF BATTLESBURY CAMP.



OUTER RAMPART OF BATTLESBURY CAMP.

WHERE GREATER EARTHWORKS BELONG

Among the earthworks, for instance, declared to be 'proved' of Early Iron Age (viz., 800-500 B.C.) are Hod Hill and Hambledon Hill, the two great frontier camps of the Wiltshire and Dorset Downs at the eastern end of the Vale of Blackmore, between which the Ridgeway passes from Jack Straw's Castle (where the megalith-builders made their stone grinding querns) through the Tisbury and Shaftesbury districts. From their scope and grandeur, and as their position on the Ridgeway would indicate, they are camps of the megalithic period, early or late. That iron weapons and implements have been found in them 'proves' no more than that they were occupied by the Celts, and indeed flint implements,¹ arrow-heads and celts have been found on Hod Hill and greensand querns on Hambledon Hill. Johnson in *Folk Memory* says that the depressions within the camp afford clear indications of occupation previous to the Iron Age. Mr. Allcroft points out that 'when the original camps of Hod Hill and Hambledon Hill were built, they were designed to shelter a whole population and their belongings.' He adds that at a later date an attempt was made to convert the original camp, upwards of three-quarters of a mile in length, 'into a *fortress* [italics mine] more convenient and tenable'! Actually, there is a Roman castrum within Hod Hill. Is not this a striking example of the decline of the earthwork and of the inseparable links between the Celts, warfare, and degeneration in building? Lastly, the slopes of Hambledon Hill are heavily terraced, while a long barrow still stands within the ramparts. And yet Hambledon Hill is 'proved' to be Iron Age!

¹ That, of course, does not 'prove' that they were 'Neolithic,' since the working of flints was continued into the Iron Age, as it is continued to this day by the flint-knappers of Brandon, who are much more Iberian in type than Aryan. What I am complaining of is the slenderness of the evidence on which the writer bases his 'proofs.' The writer, again, ignores the successive occupation of dwelling-sites during the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages, of which the Swiss lake dwellings are a powerful example.

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Thus, the archæological evidence, meagre as it is, gives us a charter, a confirmation of the soundness of examining these mighty earthworks from the point of view of their style, and of their relation to the Avebury vallum. Oldbury, Old Sarum, Yarnbury, Hambledon – to enjoy them, to release the imagination to play over them, to probe into the mentality that fashioned them, to let book-grubbing go by on the wind, that is the way to discover their *date*. For internal and external evidence are at one.

C. THE CAMPS OF THE EARLIEST PROSPECTORS

In the circumstances, therefore, we have no need to worry ourselves with the conflicting verdicts of archæology. But before leaving this tedious section of the Chapter, we are forced to consider another aspect of that continuity of ancient domestic, religious and industrial sites that is not, at first appearance, so favourable to our theme, as other aspects of it have been. That is the overlying of some of the greater earthworks (Barbury and Oldbury, for example) upon the original positions of still earlier earthworks. It by no means follows, of course, that if earthwork is built after earthwork or barrow in the same area of ground, the former was the work of the Celts. The megalithic ages were not crowded into a day and a night.

Now, a variety of explanations may account for this, and I shall simply suggest what I consider the most likely. We noticed in the last Chapter that Cornwall and Devon, though holding on to one of the ribands of Maypole Avebury, are not long barrow countries as the Cotswold and Mendip ranges are. The long barrows appear to stop short this side of Lyme Regis. At the same time, both counties, and especially Cornwall, are dolmen lands and were heavily settled both by the 'Neolithic' and early Bronze Age peoples. Of 'Neolithic' occupation there is abundant evidence. But there

CAMPS OF THE EARLIEST PROSPECTORS

is even better evidence than this that the route of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset and Wiltshire was followed by the 'Neolithic' people, the Egyptianized Ægean-Iberians, partly because of the abundance of dolmens, stone circles, beehive huts¹ and other remains there, and partly because Devon and Cornwall were a treasure-trove not only of tin but of gold and copper. Though I have called Avebury the centre of the whole complex, we cannot suppose that the first navigators walked straight over to North Wilts from the sea. They must have prospected the country and felt their way about it, before they settled into it permanently, built their capital and linked up the mining with the agricultural, residential and flint-yielding districts.

This first penetration to the chalk Downs from Devon and Cornwall must, then, have been tentative and experimental, and I suggest as a working hypothesis that those earthworks that were built over by others on Barbury and Oldbury Hills, for instance, were the result of it. Once the country had been properly surveyed, a period of intensive building outwards from Avebury followed and the sites of the first sporadic earthworks were occupied by the Gargantuan rings which I have associated with the Avebury vallum. The flint-mines of Cissbury in Sussex, for instance, were probably earlier than the earthwork, one of whose ramparts travels over the tops of some of the shafts. It has been supposed that this implies a disuse of flint-working on the part of the builders of the earthwork. But the builders of the Avebury vallum, which is kindred to the Cissbury ramparts, were unquestionably flint-workers, and it is more reasonable to suppose that new shafts were being sunk inside and outside the ramparts when the earthwork was being built and that the mines built over were exhausted or less easy to work or simply in the way of the proper line of the rampart. It is

¹ Identical in shape with those that housed the Egyptian miners of Mount Sinai.

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self-evident that the earthwork had something to do with the mines and the men of the full Avebury period might well have built it over the abandoned shafts of their earlier diggings. But dubious marginalia to our main text there must be.¹

PART III

Their Communications and Geographical Unity

★

A. THE CAMP OF THE WARRIOR

General Pitt-Rivers is not the only prehistorian who ascribes the small rectangular enclosure to the Celts. J. R. Mortimer, in *Forty Years' Researches*, came to the same conclusion, and reason is on their side. The earliest warlike communities of the ancient world were pastoral nomads who depended upon swiftness of movement for the success of their predatory conquests. This is not in the least problematic, and the issue has only been confused by the assumption, barren of evidence, but squaring with neo-Darwinian ideas, that the pastoral phase was the embryo of the settled and agricultural mode of living. I shall deal with this aspect of our theme in later Chapters and all I need say here is that the evidence is really conclusive for the Celts being typically pastoralist² and warlike peoples. 'They [the Celts] live upon

¹ I confess myself quite beaten, for instance, over one of the Battlesbury round barrows which interferes with the course of one of the inner ramparts. It is an unwarrantable assumption that the Celts built the ramparts and the Early Bronze Age men the barrow. The puzzle is the apparent disrespect with which the barrow was treated, for the Iron men no less than the megalithic men held the barrow in awe.

² Compare, for instance, the extent of the Celtic system of cultivation banks with that of the terraces of the Ancient Mariners, hundreds of years earlier.



OLD SARUM.



JUNIPERS ON YARNBURY RAMPART.

THE CAMP OF THE WARRIOR

the produce of their herds,' says Strabo, 'and have no fixed places of abode.' They (the Celts) were *guerriers par excellence*, says Siret.

At the same time, we know that the agricultural megalith-builders preceded them in the occupation of England, and that these nomadic wanderers had in some way or other inherited their customs and beliefs in a debased form from continental contact with the original megalith-builders. We know it because they frequently buried their dead in the ancient mounds; they, too, were hill-dwellers and occupied the sites of older villages; they worshipped in the stone circles they did not build; stones which they did not set up had demoniacal rather than godlike associations for them,¹ and their lore, as we shall see later, was packed with reminiscences of the archaic navigators' religion. In the face of these facts, for they are facts, it is indeed extraordinary that the baseless hypothesis of the pastoral nomad originating in the wilds and forming the substratum of the first settled and civilized communities should persist. The Celts who overthrew the 'archaic civilization' in Crete (the Dorians) and the Ancient Mariners in Western Europe also dispossessed the rulers of megalithic Britain.

Now mobility was the armament of these nomads and the paraphernalia of the Roman siege artillery was still unknown. I submit, therefore, that these square enclosures are exactly what we should expect the Celt to build, both as pens for

But there is no comparison. Look at their weapons in comparison with those of megalithic England.

¹ The reason we cannot conclude that Christianity was alone responsible for regarding the megaliths as the abodes of demons is (i) because the transition from Paganism to Christianity was not abrupt, not were the observances of the former swept away by those of the latter, and (ii) because giants were closely associated with demons by the Pagan Celts and the giants (see my *Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum*) had an Eastern origin. The whole of Celtic supernaturalism was demonized long before Christianity.

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their flocks and herds and as temporary encampments.¹ The rectangular fort is an obvious degeneration of the oval or circular hill-top camp, just as the Celtic mound is of the Early Bronze Age barrow, the kistvaen of the megalithic chamber, the Celtic lynchet of the terrace. And it squares both with the houses of the Glastonbury Lake-village (Iron Age), many of which are known to be rectangular, and with the Celtic cultivation system, which the Ordnance Survey aerial photographs clearly show (if these fields *are* Celtic) to be also part of the estate of Mr. Square. How could the Celts have built the oval earthworks when under them England was divided into hostile tribes? How could the great earthworks be constructed along the main road systems of a country divided against itself? They simply thunder unity of control and conception.

Since iron implements and Iron Age villages have been identified within the great camps, it is obvious that the Celts, like their forerunners, lived in them, after the conquest of the country and its partition among the various tribes that Cæsar found here. The camps, like the stone circles and most of the barrows, were ready to hand. That the Celts *deliberately* adopted the greater earthworks for warlike purposes I do not believe for a moment. They were far too near the tail of the preceding age to ignore the magical associations of the camps enclosing religious monuments, for one thing, and of what real use were such camps for tribal warriors, for another?

If one takes Hastings as one point of a triangle, Castle Rising by the Wash as another, and Bradbury Banks south of Oldbury Camp as the apex, there are two great chains of fortifications along these two lines 300 miles in length. Their course is continuous with that of the trackways and

¹ An exact parallel comes from the Ægean, where cremation, the use of iron and the inverted cinerary urn were introduced by the northern (Celtic) invaders from the Ægean into Cyprus during the 'geometric period.'

THE CAMP OF THE WARRIOR

regardless throughout of territorial and so of tribal partitions. That is an understatement, for it makes no pretence to be an inclusive survey of the whole series of strongholds, nor of the great extent of land their walls enclose. It has been pointed out that Maiden Castle alone needed a quarter of a million men to garrison it effectually and the Celts should have had millions of men under arms to have satisfied the archæologists that the earthworks were properly used to the purpose for which they assert they were designed. Do they presume that the Celts invaded England in navies and that their 'man-power' lined the hills as the national armies of the Allies did the trenches of France and Belgium? The very extent and multitude of these turf citadels disarm their arguments. The military engineers of ancient England might have fortified a few strategic points but assuredly not the ranges of the Downs from the Chilterns to the Tamar and Beachy Head to the Bristol Channel. Both the trader and the warrior would have avoided all contracts with time to chisel the hills.

It is indeed amazing that the war-theory of the earthworks has held the field so long, for, when you examine it in relation to them, there is not a particle of sense in it. To call the earthworks built for war because they might have been occasionally used in later times as soldiers' camps is to put Phaethon before his war-horses. The *appearance* of the great earthworks, I repeat, is really the only snag which seems to threaten the plain sailing of our barge and its experimental cargo. And even if we ignore all positive arguments as to their utility and assume their purpose was protective only, these great camps surely testify to the defencelessness of their builders, their inexperience in war, and to precautions taken against vaguely apprehended perils. And if such thoughts were in their minds, little indeed did such measures avail them. Against the first forays of the Celtic bands they had not only the earthworks but the disciplined labour of the

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large population which constructed them. Yet down went the 'archaic civilization' of the Bronze Age before the barbarians.

But their geographical position reveals their purpose as utilitarian as well as religious, and their mining and agricultural uses we have already observed.

B. THE CAMP OF PEACE

The example of Dolebury on Mendip gives us a double *aperçu* into the megalith-builders' methods of thought and action. Dolebury is built of stone, and I have already emphasized the fact that the stone-building of the archaic civilization was religious in significance. At the same time, Dolebury was a mine-thought and so industrial in intention. But Dolebury was not the only industrial stronghold of ancient Britain. The commanding and lavishly zoned citadel of Hamdon Hill, for instance, on the Ilminster-Yeovil road between Stoke and Yeovil, encloses an extensive system of flint-mines, and the same, as I have mentioned, is true of Cissbury, three miles north of Worthing Station.

Three to four thousand years ago, its girdled acres, and there are sixty of them, ringed the thickest population throughout the South Downs, and enclosed an underground city of laborious reality, lit by the stone lamps of the Nibelungs. The trackway whips up the hill from the dew-pond at its foot like a startled grass-snake; the wind draws insect-music from the bents of the smooth-journeying Downs; lambs bleat, rooks caw, the lapwing 'swopping up and down' unquietly wails, but these are sounds on the hither side of silence and the voice of busy man has been so long stilled from the rampart that even his ghost has grown too old to tap its pick along the galleries of the mine-field. Yet these remain, reaching to an upper world whose air is like the life-stream by shafts a hundred feet deep. We need no

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ghosts to shrill the song of ancient toil in the night-wind, the song of the mariners as they beat the waves to win the boon of life abundant,¹ of the hot lands and of the teeming gods. All that storied landscape is uncurtained by these scratchings beneath the grassy dome of the world. Look eastward over the tossing hills, and Egypt, no mirage, lies like Tithonus sleeping in the cloud-bed of the departed Dawn.

The agricultural uses of the earthworks have already received a measure of attention, and here too the secular and religious aspects were one. It is also clear that they served as walled towns or villages. One of the most ardent supporters of the military theory remarks:

‘Contrary to general and common belief it must be conceded that the great majority of the enclosures we call camps were used by the Iberians or their successors as dwelling-places, protected, quite naturally, by a strong bank and ditch in the same way as the mediæval city was protected by a wall and moat.’²

Surely a concession that makes such a hole in his ironclad as to sink it. But the writer does not notice the leak because in modern archæology there is a coldness between theory and observation. The vallum surrounding the hut circles at Grimspound on Dartmoor is an unquestionable example of the residential earthwork, and the books are agreed that the settlers of Cornwall and Devon ‘must have led peaceful lives’ (*Victoria History of Cornwall*). Apparently, the further they got away from the mild airs of the south-west, the more savage they became. One of the best examples of the living-in earthwork is Eggardon Camp, a few miles north-east of

¹ In the rites of mummification and the search for ‘givers of life.’

² *Ancient Earthworks and Camps of Somerset*, by Edward J. Burrow F.R.G.S. (1922).

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Bridport and a centre for many trackways. The evidence is all on the side of the pit-dwellings and the 'entrenchments' being contemporary, and the pits, of which there are 123, are of the earlier megalithic period.

Yet Eggardon is strongly fortified, and is the strategic 'key' to south-western Dorset. Three-quarters of a mile of ramparts enclose a tongue of land projecting over the shadow-haunted Vale of Marshwood with the camps of Lewesdon Hill, Pilsdon Pen and Lambert's Castle that rear their massive pylons across the Vale, making the gateway into Devonshire. Southward runs the Chesil Bank, and beyond it Golden Cap lifts a brow of eternal meditation over the swift-mooded sea, while inward to the north the clouds write endless scores upon mile upon mile of Downs lying 'all Danae' to their vagrant will. We know that the men of Avebury built Eggardon, for no bronze or iron has been found in the maze of pit-dwellings within ramparts more apart than in any other camp I have seen. But they were the walls of a town and there is nothing in the torn manuscript we try to read which holds us from thinking that the only charges those walls have seen are the onset of the shadows rolling like the centuries over their crests.

However various the uses of the great camps, they show an unmistakable unity of design and their geographical co-ordination follows. In the Yorkshire Wolds, for instance, there are eighty miles of earthwork country 'constructed,' as Mortimer says, 'on a preconceived plan of great magnitude.' On the main lines, he proceeds, these earthworks are very large, while from them at all angles and in every direction branch tributaries, connecting the two trunk highways or leading to settlements and springs. I may add that they also weave a fabric of intercommunication between the Whitby jet-workings, the Derbyshire lead-mines and the agricultural districts of the Wolds. The Wold earthworks represent, in fact, 'the most laborious work of a numerous



CAMELOT.



SOUTHERN ENTRANCE TO CAMELOT.

THE CAMP OF PEACE

and settled people ever undertaken and executed within their limits.'

It would, I think, be truer to speak of the earthworks as taverns, letter-boxes, signal boxes, shrines and rest-houses between the mining and agricultural districts, than as fastnesses. Their network on the Yorkshire Wolds is repeated in the South. They are stations upon the trackway system and their junctions are stone circles, themselves probably the local council-houses of what corresponded in England to the Egyptian clan-system, the origin, when the 'archaic civilization' broke up, of the independent tribal community. If we take Avebury as our centre once more, we can distinguish three trunk lines running westward: one north-west over the Cotswolds, bifurcating to the stone circles of Wales and Oxfordshire; the middle one passing direct over Mendip to the sea; the third south-west over the North Dorset Downs and the Purbeck Hills, more or less parallel with them, to Devon and Cornwall. It is no haphazard grouping that near Maiden Castle, the largest and most perfect earthwork in the world, there are or were no fewer than three megalithic dumps, at Winterbourne Herringstone to the east, Winterbourne Abbas to the north-west, and Portisham to the south-west, while the 1914 excavations at Maumbury Rings on the outskirts of Dorchester, a mile away, revealed its remarkable affinities with Avebury. In the face of so extensive, orderly and laborious a series of communications,¹ the trade-route theory seems to me to dissolve into the elements of which it was compounded. Your commercial traveller might in troubled times demand a string of block-houses for his protection. But earthworks on the scale of Camelot, Yarnbury, Maiden Castle – does he stop on passage nowadays to build a hospital in one town, a pier in the next, and a cinema in the third?

How, for instance, explain Camelot, geographically

¹ For the Cotswold camps see Chapter VI.

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detached both from the flint and the mining ranges, except as the Crewe of the west and south-west of ancient England? Camelot, a land-leviathan, a monster splendid as Job's rapture on the hippopotamus, and yet with lines of a grace more appropriate than its bulk to the fairies that once inhabited it, was built on an isolated oolitic hill in the valley of the Stour and the Parret. Though this earthwork is persistently associated in legend with the ancient miners, yet, so far as their desires were concerned, the oolite was an empty purse. But quite apart from the fact that its slopes are deeply terraced, it lies on the Ridgeway ten miles west of Jack Straw's Castle, the same Ridgeway which (I quote Hippiusley Cox)

'provides communication from the Wash to the English Channel . . . and is guarded for the whole hundred and fifty miles of its course by a series of earthworks at every ten or twelve miles interval.'

From it the daisy-jewelled track runs south past Sherborne a mile or so to the west through Milbourne Port Camp, and so to Dungeon Hill Camp and the long chain of earthworks on the Dorset Hills. Camelot, in short, knotted the trackways between Mendip, the chalk Downs of south-western Wilts and those between Blandford and William Barnes's Be'minster.

C. THE CAMPS OF THE MENDIP

I shall end this chapter by travelling across Mendip to the sea. Half-way (very roughly) between Cley Hill on the Wilts-Somerset border and Dolebury, and in the direct route taken by the prospectors from east to west, lies Maesbury Ring, at the foot of which runs the Roman Fosse Way from Old Sarum to Uphill, on the Bristol Channel, near that

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modern sprawl of pretentious hideousness, Weston-super-Mare. Says Allcroft:

'That Shoulsbury Camp, Castle Neroche, Ham Hill, Camelot, Maesbury, Dolebury, and Brent Knoll passed on one to another the fiery signal round the whole circuit of Somersetshire – that Shoulsbury should beckon to Pen-y-fan in South Wales and Maesbury to the great Wiltshire fortresses behind Warminster – is picturesque, but it implies a unity of purpose, a collectivism among the tribes occupying wide areas for which there is no evidence, and even if such a feeling existed in the late Celtic time, it can scarcely have existed in the remoter ages when the hill-top fortresses were first built.'¹

'Unity of purpose' – what other interpretation is even credible? It is just as though Allcroft had a glimpse of the real thing and then went back to Uncle Toby.

§ 1. *Maesbury*

Maesbury has so suffered from denudation and other of time's teeth that only one of the rings can be really traced, and that much gnawed and scraped away. None the less it has the authentic stamp of the great tradition upon it. Walk round that rampart and there will not be much of Somerset that escapes the vision. Right away from the Bristol hills, along the coast-line and inward to Blackdown spreads that rich and sky-enamoured land, then flows out again to Quantock and Exmoor, sweeps eastward to Glastonbury

¹ An excellent example of the theoretic basis of modern archæology. Observation points to these camps as in communication. But Neo-Darwinism says no, because civilization was developed from savagery and savages are incapable of such integration. Therefore, the said camps were not in communication.

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Tor, and in a series of ridges and indentations loses itself in the line of the Dorset Downs southward and the Wiltshire uplands east. Between the two swells the visionary mount of Camelot. Before one's feet, with less than half a mile of walking to survey it, lies an ordnance map of the broad-beaved western shire drawn to the scale of seventeen hundred and sixty yards to the mile.

The western rim of the vallum is plumed by a group of withered pines that stresses its desolation and aloofness from the men of to-day.

I went and stood by these pines and looked towards – Namancos and Bayona's hold – no, Dolebury that perhaps I should never see again, for it was my last day and last pilgrimage in the western land that had become more magical to me than ever were the metals the seekers after stores of life found in its womb; more magical and life-giving the better I had come to know it. Once more I travelled back the ancient track and heard the curlew's sweet sorrow above the bones of the dead, and the babble of goldfinch, linnet and stonechat among the deserted lead-mines whose silver had passed into their voices. I saw the magpie paddling his solitary way through a sea of air less lonely than the land that lay beneath him and still bearing the hackings of 3,000 years ago upon its surface. And in my memory stood up those barrows, 'mementos of mortality to living passengers,' along the skyline of Priddy and Charterhouse, whose harmony with Mendip is so perfect, and which yet were the work of man. Such was my barrow that I built to overlook the west, the memorial barrow piled of dear associations, the record of my wanderings, the beacon for my spirit whereto to fly from drabber days and look once more on Camelot, the Mount Desirable not of dreams but of a waking life.

THE CAMPS OF THE MENDIP

§ 2. *Dolebury*

Dolebury shall be the last earthwork to be mentioned in this Chapter, as it was the first in the book, so conveniently does it prove the practical and religious aspects of this vanished civilization. It is built on a low hill and throws an eagle glance over a sea and half of two counties. Indeed, it is the easiest thing to follow the tracks of the 'archaic civilization' from Inkpen Beacon in Hampshire to the Prescelly Mountains in Pembrokeshire, whence (probably) came the 'blue stones' of Stonehenge. It has not so much blazed as raised the trail. And there is nothing but the limitations of mortal sight in the way of seeing Cley Hill with its thoughtful brow from the stone rampart of Dolebury, where it swirls inward along the crest of the hill. If you go to Dolebury from Blacker's Hill on eastern Mendip past Priddy Nine Barrows and through Burrington Combe, where the blackbirds sing like angels and the yew-trees crouch darkling against the grey limestone, there is only your own heart to make you sad. On Burrington there is a camp which even Allcroft is fain to believe 'sepulchral or religious,' since it is completely dominated by a rocky height on the south-east. Hither the men of the round and the long barrows brought their flint¹ celts for the mining.

Dolebury lies between Burrington and Blackdown, where the wilding black game still lingers and whose orange, brown, green and tawny cap wears one headdress after another of carven clouds. The great bowl of the abandoned factory was brimmed, when I saw it for the fifth time in August, with golden ragwort among which scuttled dozens of black rabbits — one of the most fay of Nature's sudden little chromatic tunes. But the extraordinary beauty and

¹ There is no flint on Mendip.

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diversity of the view soon merges all the little tunes into a choral harmony. First the ground rises to Dinghurst Camp on the other side of the Bristol road and, like Dolebury, scabbled over with amorphous old mine-workings. Another dip and rise and Banwell succeeds; a round hill with a wood-cap and another camp, much smaller now that we are off the chalk and the limestone. Another dip; another hill, another dip, a stretch of the flattest water-meads in England, and Brean (again with a small earthwork), like a shoveller dibbling among the shallows of a creek, pushes its huge beak into the Bristol Channel.

Nearer Bristol, to the north-west, is Worlesbury Camp, in the brave old style again because it knots the Severn estuary with Mendip and the Cotswolds. Beyond it, a great hump like the Bass rock – Steepholme – and then, beyond the utmost purple rim of the Cardiff smoke hills, the semi-circular range of the Welsh mountains bears the horizon on its back and marks the edge of the world. On either side of the broken prow of Mendip are two great basins, the one on the left cupped by Crook's Peak (with its nick in the skyline for the handle of the chased vessel) and Wavering Down, and on the right the Somerset flats extending from the sea into Wrington Vale, and so east to the great moonstone of Blagdon Reservoir. To the south-west, Exmoor and the Quantocks once more; to the south-east, the velvet arc of Blackdown. As for the sea, it stretches right away in a narrow strip like the wedding ring of England from the south-west to the east, where it becomes the Severn River.

So vast and crowded is the view that one can understand how these hill-top people were so familiar in their mythology with the sky-world. They looked down upon the world as angels might or do or did. When the mighty perished, they were removed to a high place, where they beheld all the kingdoms of the earth, and the old people seemed to under-



SENTINEL PINES OF MAESBURY CAMP, SOMERSET.



THE WANSDYKE, MAESBURY, SOMERSET.

THE CAMPS OF THE MENDIP

stand that loftiness was not an absolute thing in itself but a superiority conditioned by the extent of what lay visually below. Thus the dead buried in the barrows had but to stand up and their heads were in heaven.

For Dolebury is a mere slope and half of what you see from it I have left out. The great camp matches the great view and both are on that noble and generous scale which, to my mind, is the distinguishing mark of the megalithic civilization in Britain. Turn from that huge pattern of woodland, hill, sea and water-mead to the wall of stone running eastward along the northern rim of Dolebury, and tossing round in that matchless curve to the west on the crest of the hill, and you are satisfied that the view is worthy of the wall from which you up anchor to cruise upon it.

D. THE CAMPS OF RHODESIA

The conception of the earthwork, then, was religious, and building in earth was a substitute for building in stone.¹ I have also noted certain secondary uses for it which, as time went on, no doubt absorbed and supplanted the primary one. The earthworks were stations of communication and connecting links between groups of megaliths and mining and dwelling centres; they were closely interrelated with the terraces, barrows and trackways; they were the shelters, resorts, summer residences, sanctuaries, both of agricultural and industrial districts; they were the habit of civilized hill peoples who in India, Spain, on the Zambesi and the Wiltshire Downs lived their lives and wrote their histories upon high places, the achievement of the same peoples with a taste for massive architecture brought from their homeland.

¹ I have procured a good example of this from Oceania. The founders of new settlements took sacred earth with them as well as stones from their homes.

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What foreign parallels, other than those already given, can we adduce in support of this contention?

First for the Egyptians. When they went into Nubia for gold, they planted a chain of great brick forts by the second cataract of the Nile, in some of which they smelted copper, just as their legatees smelted lead within the stone walls of Dolebury. In spite of these fortifications, it is known that the Nubian penetration was in no sense military. The Phœnicians themselves, a race consistently peaceful until they were compelled by the rise of the Oriental Empires to be otherwise, had the habit of building triple 'Cyclopean' walls with ditches in between them. In Sardinia, whose archæological remains show, like those of Cyprus, distinct evidence of Ægean influence, round or cone-shaped fortresses ('Nauragues') were built like telegraph poles in sight of one another in the lead and copper regions.

Now for Crete, the source of our 'Neolithic' culture. As an example of the transportation of this sanctuary idea, let me take the great stonework on Mount Juktas, which rises above the site of Knossos. According to popular tradition it was the site of a Holy Sepulchre, and Sir Arthur Evans, in *Mycenæan Tree and Pillar Cult*, calls it the traditional home of 'the tomb of Zeus.'¹ 'The highest point,' he says, 'is enclosed by a Cyclopean wall of large, roughly oblong blocks. This primitive enclosure was the temenos of a sanctuary rather than a walled city.' Mount Juktas was, in fact, 'fortified,' while Knossos was not, nor Phaistos nor Hagia Triada. They had queer ideas about warfare – the ancients. Lastly, if we consult Siret's diagrams of the characteristic architecture of the Oriental colonies in Spain during the

¹ Prof. Burrows points out in *Discoveries in Crete* that Sir Arthur Evans's use of the name 'Zeus' is liable to confuse the reader. The Zeus of the Olympians was descended from the Minoan 'Zeus,' but he was quite a different character.

THE CAMPS OF RHODESIA

'Neolithic' period, we find that their fortifications correspond to those of our own earthworks of the more ambitious and elliptical type. Cartailhac, whom I quoted in the preceding Chapter, speaks of the great ramparted 'fortresses built in the richest copper-mine districts of Spain and Portugal where there are megaliths. Here is an obvious parallel with our own Dolebury. Yet the native Iberians of Spain, who owed their culture to Ægean rather than Phœnician penetration, knew, according to Siret, nothing about war.

But the most instructive parallel comes once more from Rhodesia. On the great walls surrounding the Zimbabwe temples were raised alternate monoliths (uncarved, showing degeneration from the carved obelisk) and conical towers, so that wall and temple were equally sacred. But the stone forts along the granite hills are a closer homologue with our hill-wrought earthworks. In the last Chapter I described their association with the terraces below them, and away from the gold-mining regions. But gold and grain were stored in them, as was grain in some of our camps, and ochre and hæmatite brought from a distance in Dolebury. Other correspondences lie in the oval or elliptical form of the Rhodesian forts and their association with the roads linking one district with another and travelling down to the port of Safala. Built a few miles apart, they were used as bases of supply, temporary treasure-houses or refuge-camps for the workers on the adjacent reefs. Penultimately, there is no evidence whatever that their purpose, apart from physical appearances, was warlike. And lastly, the complicated defences of the forts, and the intricate entrances corresponding in scope with those of Maiden Castle and other of the greater earthworks, belonged to the older period. In the later periods, a general deterioration both in the quality of the materials and of the workmanship and in the scope of the architecture set in – and the elliptical form of the

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original enclosures was deserted for the rectangular. The differences between the architecture and so the culture of the Rhodesian and the British civilizations were, in fact, local modifications; the skeletal framework was common to them both.

PART THREE

CHAPTER NINE: THE DESCENT INTO WAR

The Celtic parasitism upon the archaic civilization. Divergence from dependence. The Fall of Lucifer is the transformation of the sun-god into the war-god. The war-gods of the French, English and Irish Celts. The 'sun-heroes' of the Gaels and how they differ from the 'Children of the Sun.' The search for the Earthly Paradise in a new guise. The archaic civilization was the father of the Celtic barbarism. The old gods have become demons and rule the nether-world. The fallacy of the 'Nature-Myth.' The Celtic war between light and darkness an inheritance. The Celts the victims of the arbitrary divisions of the archaic civilization. Conclusions. The setting of the sun-god was a universal process. Examples from Crete, Egypt, Babylonia, India, the Pacific and America. A world-convulsion. The sudden abandonment of the Rhodesian and Siberian mines. Dolebury seems to tell the same story. The rule of warrior nobles and petty kings replaces the ancient monarchy. But the Druidical priesthood survives because of the terror it inspired. Slavery and war, their affinities. The theory of war as the parent of civilization. The reverse is the truth. Barbarism the legacy of warfare. The historical verdict on warfare is clear.

‘Nought can deform the human race
Like to the armourer’s iron brace.’

AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE

‘Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells! hail horrors, hail
Infernal world; and thou profoundest hell
Receive thy new possessor.’

PARADISE LOST

‘And so to the end of history, murder shall breed murder,
always in the name of right and honour and peace, until the
gods are tired of blood and create a race that can under-
stand.’

CÆSAR AND CLEOPATRA

CHAPTER NINE: THE DESCENT INTO WAR

PART I

The Fall of Lucifer

THE third part of the narrative takes us down a steep gradient on which we leave the constructive energies of the archaic civilization behind, and take up the formidable and practically unexplored problems of degeneration. I say formidable because the phenomenon of degeneration was world-wide and embraced every department of human thought and activity. My contention is that degeneration was an inter-related process, that its main element was the development of warlike habits within civilized communities, and that its successive stages are conveniently earmarked for us by the overlying strata of civilization in the west, represented by the 'Neolithic,' Bronze Age and Celtic periods.

I have already maintained that the 'Neolithic' period in Britain knew little or nothing of warfare, and I am glad to remark that Mr. Gordon Childe's recent volume, *The Dawn of European Civilization*¹ (1922), corroborates that view by what he writes of the 'Neolithic' settlements of the rest of Europe and the 'free confederation' of the cities within the closer influence of the Cretan maritime enterprise. The Bronze Age, therefore, represents a middle period between the creative and destructive phases of the archaic civilization (including the Celtic period under that term), and we find evidence from various directions that this was so.

The dagger, for instance, becomes much more prominent in the Bronze Age than it was in the 'Neolithic'; by Celtic times (see Chapter V) it had grown up into the sword. The search for metals and other precious substances

¹ In Kegan Paul's 'History of Civilization' Series.

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during the 'Neolithic' period was coloured by the life-giving idea to which I briefly alluded at the end of Chapter VI; when the Celts came down like a wolf on the fold, their object, as we shall see later, was predatory. The Bronze Age in Britain was, as I suggested in Chapter III, a sucker thrown off by Mycenæ and Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt. Both phases in both countries were unquestionably more warlike than their predecessors, and though the Bronze Age expeditions in search of metals cannot be termed invasions, still their leaders must have been growing acclimatized to habits of violent behaviour. Europe was being permeated by the 'Children of the Sun' (see Perry: *Growth of Civilization*), with their bronze daggers as emblems of rank, stone circles, beehive tombs and solar symbolism during the Bronze Age. These divine kings and princes who went to the sky-world after death (Theseus, Cadmus, the Dioscuri, Heracles and other culture-heroes of the Argo are typical examples), were in possession of more autocratic power during the full blaze of the sun-cult in the Bronze Age than in the earlier period.

Roman Mars began as a god of life and everywhere we find that the idea of the beneficent, life-giving energies of the earlier deities (Osiris, Tammuz, Ea, the Great Mother Goddess) changes with the supremacy of the solar cult. In Egypt, sun-worship replaced the Osiris-Hathor reign probably on account of the invention of the solar calendar. The invention of the lunar preceded that of the solar calendar and both Osiris and Hathor were associated with the moon. 'In the earliest sun-temples at Abusir,' writes Prof. Breasted, 'he (the sun-god) appears as the source of life and increase;' but this, as Dr. Elliot Smith has with true discernment pointed out, was due to the fact that he derived his attributes from Osiris and Hathor, the original life-givers. As the sun-cult became crystallized, the sun's rays began to be thought of as malignant and destructive, and this change in men's attitude to their deities, this change,

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in other words, in their social conditions, can be paralleled in many other quarters.¹

The decline and fall of the Dragon from a creative and life-giving symbol (as he always remained among the Chinese, a comparatively peaceful people for centuries) to a destructive is another example of the same process. According to Dr. Elliot Smith in *The Evolution of the Dragon*, the Dragon took his composite origin from the animal symbols of the Osiris-Hathor-Horus trinity, all of whom represented the 'vitalistic' preoccupations of the earlier Egyptian religion. Osiris as a Nile-god impersonated the fertilizing element of water (that made the food-plants grow), and the Dragon, no matter what his transformations and incarnations in the dumping of deities from country to country, always remained a water-god. But he ended as the embodiment of the Powers of Evil and crawled down the slopes of the archaic civilization from the City of Creation to the Camp of Destruction, while in the middle period his life-giving and death-dealing attributes are combined with perfect indifference to their compatibility. Dr. Elliot Smith contends that 'with the development of a higher conception of religious ideals it (the Dragon) became relegated to a baser rôle.' But Satan (or rather his preceding heathen equivalent) moralized, not the less Satan he, and the loss of the concrete in the abstract was, as will be seen, a symptom of decadence in itself. The real point seems to me to be that the earlier religion of the archaic civilization had little conception of any dark forces at all. Men were not thinking about sin and death and evil then, but of life, and later on these are what they *are* thinking about. For that there must be some historical explanation, and I propose to try and give it.

Or take the Horus Eye which plays so large a part in the

¹ Mr. A. M. Hocart tells me that the Indian gods change their character in just the same way.

THE DESCENT INTO WAR

anatomy of Egyptian religion. Writes Dr. Elliot Smith: 'If it was the beneficent, life-giving aspect of the eye which led to its identification with Hathor (the Great Mother), in course of time . . . it became associated with the malevolent, death-dealing avatar of the goddess.' Hathor herself lost touch with life and her cow-form yielded to the lioness and the serpent. So the eye of life became the evil eye, the stare of Medusa (whose serpent-coiled head represents the destructive powers of Hathor) which turns men into stone. The example is extraordinarily interesting because the letter of the older faith is preserved, the spirit quite transformed. For in that faith the dead, when reanimated, took up their residence in stones which came to represent the living dead in the portrait statue and carved obelisk of Egypt and the rough block of the megalith-builders. The Horus-Eye begins to possess this malignancy when associated with the sun-god – yet another indication that the solar cult of the Bronze Age represented a transitional period between one preoccupied with life and creation and one preoccupied with enmity and death. Mr. R. E. M. Wheeler of 'Prehistoric and Roman Wales' (1922) admits that the 'Beaker Folk' of the early Bronze Age were 'a comparatively peaceable people.' The development of the underworld (originally a place of bliss and ruled over by Osiris) into hell and the growth of the gods from deity to demonism can be watched in precisely the same way not merely in Egypt but all over the civilized world.

In these pages, I have perhaps with wearisome iteration insisted upon the parasitism of the Celtic peoples upon the archaic civilization. Wherever these Central European tribes cut new channels with their bronze and iron swords, whether their spates flew south as the Dorians into Greece, the Peloponese and Crete, to Scandinavia and the Baltic as the Teutons, to the west as the Goidels, the Brythons and other conglomerates of fighting chiefs and their followers, their

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hurrying streams carried with them the floating debris of that uniform civilization which was the source of their being. I have insisted upon this parasitism because its historical truth is quite unrecognized and every history book perpetuates with an iteration even more wearisome the illusion that the barbarians who swept down upon the ancient civilizations were reared in the fastnesses of the wilderness, were rude but noble warriors untouched by the vices of the effete agricultural settlements to whom they brought the fire of cleansing.

Yet my simile of the floods and their broken fleets of vegetation affords us a blurred picture only of the extent of this Celtic parasitism. Metaphor and simile must fail: the slower methods of prolonged and often tedious study can alone make clear the true relationship of the Celts to the archaic civilization. Reduced to its essentials, it is a tale of parricide. The parent of the Celts was the archaic civilization itself; the cause of their migrations was the wealth it had accumulated (a new version of the old mining travel-hunger); the cause of that cause was the descent of the parent whose way of living (its institutions, that is to say) rather than age had brought thus low, and the result was the son's knife in the father's throat. We now have to survey this new ground.

Nearly all the elements that are most distinctive of the archaic civilization — giant and dragon lore (see my book, *Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum*), human sacrifice, ritual rebirth, the Great Mother Goddess tradition (Hathor-Danu), the sacred Mother-Pot (the witches' cauldron), the carriage of sacred earth, female inheritance, exogamy, chess-playing, the serpent cult, the Deluge, the tree, pillar and water cults, the search for the Earthly Paradise, the Tree of Knowledge, the 'couvade,' and many other characteristic constituents of the older culture — appear in a reading of Celtic records (see *Mabinogion*, *Triads*, Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Morte d'Arthur*, etc.).

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I have come across traces of the amazing custom of the *couvade*, or of putting the husband to bed when the wife bore a child, in a remote part of Dorset (near Bridport). The good-man's wife at the farm where I was staying (a very pretty and intelligent woman) told me that her husband always fell sick when she bore a child (she had two) and, what is more, always *would*. The Iberian Basques also have the *couvade*.

§ I. THE WAR-GODS OF THE CELTS

The theme of this Chapter is war, and our burden is to see how divergence grew out of dependence. It seems to me that the proper way to approach this dread theme, this plunge of the world into the 'profoundest hell' of war in which it lies prostrate, bound and tormented in this our enlightened twentieth century, is to illustrate it by one pregnant example. To my mind, this example is conclusive; it suggests very clearly that war was the purely artificial product of a civilization gone rotten, and that the accepted ideas of the origin and significance of warfare in human affairs are fundamentally unsound.

Since its service is a treble one, I am forced to devote some space to this example. It not merely represents very neatly the transition from peace to war during the last centuries of the Bronze Age in Britain and Europe; but it carries us one step further on in the development of our island and native theme and, at the same time, is of universal application. That is how I shall take it, from the particular to the general, and bring the first part of this Chapter to an end by placing before the reader the workings of a single phenomenon, which has wrought a change in human behaviour that might well lead to the obliteration of modern and civilized mankind from the earth.

The example is the Fall of Lucifer, the Hebraic version of the transformation of the sun-god into a war-god. I am

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not sufficiently well-read to know whether any anthropologist or historian has seen that this transformation is indeed reflected and enshrined for us in the Biblical myth, but a study of Prof. Rhys's book, *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion as Illustrated by Celtic Heathendom* (1898), in the light of our new knowledge¹ of the archaic civilization, makes no other interpretation possible.

So late in the book as this Chapter, the reader will take it for granted that the sun-god was the supreme divinity of the Ancient Mariners during the Bronze Age.² At the same time, no school of anthropology would venture to deny that the Celt was a man of war. Prof. Rhys's pages supply the link between these two phases of historical development in the West. First of all, let us take the Celts of Gaul. Prof. Rhys calls their sovereign deity by the composite name of Mars-Jupiter, a war-god, that is to say, cum-sun-god, for that Jupiter-Zeus was a deity of solar origin and attributes, one of the grandchildren of Egyptian Ré, the late Cretan Zeus, Babylonian Marduk, Phœnician Baal, is incontrovertible. 'All the facts bearing on the history of the Gaulish war-gods,' says the Professor, 'conspire to prove that he (Mars-Jupiter) was once the supreme divinity of the Celtic race.' He adds this remarkable passage:

'Even in Cæsar's time . . . the war-god still remained the *god of the state*, in the sense in which no other could well have been. It may help us to understand the scrupulous regard for the rights of the god of war entertained by the Gauls, the Hebrews and other nations of antiquity, if we

¹ For which we owe an incalculable debt of gratitude to Mr. Perry and Dr. Elliot Smith. Prof. Rhys held the Chair of Celtic at Oxford.

² There can be no doubt that the idea of the sun's paternity to the kings of the archaic civilization, and their entry as gods identified with the sun into the sky-world after death, originated in Egypt. It was hatched by the priesthood of Heliopolis, the city of the sun, and became national when the Heliopolitans obtained the throne of Egypt in the Fifth Dynasty.

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look for a moment at the traces of this feeling which manifest themselves among the civilized nations of modern times. I need only allude to the singing of solemn Te Deums after victory, or to our praying in this country that our Queen or King may be strengthened to vanquish and overcome all their enemies, and to our adorning our cathedrals with the tattered flags of the foreigner. That "the Lord is a man of war" is a sentiment by no means confined to the song of Moses.'

Such a quotation will also help us to understand why the Church, whose roots lie deep within a paganism far stronger than the gospel of the New Testament, traditionally seals the warlike ambitions of the State with her spiritual authority, and how sanctified by the past was the good Wordsworth's designation of the nature of Almighty God:

'Yea, Carnage is Thy daughter,
Tremendous God of battles, Lord of hosts!'

Elsewhere, the Professor repeats his verdict in the following words, which I quote because of their signal importance to our theme, and because it is so pleasant to walk beneath the mantle of authority, not to speak of such a scholar as John Rhys:

'That the ancient Celts and Teutons should have agreed in making their war-god their greatest divinity or their greatest divinity a war-god, need, then, astonish no one who will bear in mind the ever-present tendency of their descendants to treat in much the same way a god whom they regard as infinitely greater.'

So much for the Gauls, whose Lord of Heaven was a sun-god whose disk had turned into a shield and whose spear was adorned with the rags and tatters of the ancient solar

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symbols. The war-god of the Saxons, whose mythology so much resembles the Celtic that Prof. Rhys regards Celts and Teutons as offshoots of a common ancestor (the ancestor we have called the archaic civilization) was Tiu, the Nordic form of the Celtic Zeus and the Hebraic Jehovah, who, like Zeus, was a war-god of solar origin and solar vestiges.¹ In Britain we find exactly the same process at work: the sun-god bears the infant war-god who devours him, as the sun-god himself once devoured his own predecessor, the genial water-god, Osiris.² The Gaulish Mars-Jupiter has split into the Irish Nuada Finnfail and the Silurian Llûd, the great cattle-cum-war-god who has given his name to Ludgate Circus, where St. Paul's was built on the site once sacred to him and, doubtless, to the genuine sun-god who preceded him, for both Llûd and Nuada of the Celts were, in Prof. Rhys's words, 'gods of war and of light.' The supreme deity of the Goidels was a war-god, and Taranis, 'appeased with human lives,' was at once celestial and 'the ruler of the Celtic wars.' The Cymric divinity, Hesus, dog-headed like Anubis of Egypt, was also an omnipotent war-god. In the Welsh *Triads*, Hesus brings the Cymry into England from the Summer Country (Deprobanni, somewhere in Central Europe) over the Hazy (North) Sea of Fairies. Surely this Hesus must have been a war-lord with the dog totem. All these, like their archaic progenitors, were gods of the high places, gods whose oracles were delivered in the whispering trees upon the sacred burial-mounds, in the bubbling of springs hard by the sacred oaks, in the cooing of the doves,

¹ This is particularly interesting in view of the fact that the Israelites of the late Bronze Age were in exactly the same stage of cultural progress as the Celts: they, too, were pastoral and nomadic warriors.

² Some idea of the transformation of the old gods may be gained from the name-origin of the River Dee. Dee (deva-goddess) was the Aerven of Welsh literature and she was a goddess of war. So the water-god of creation becomes the water-goddess of destruction.

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wheeling round the shrine as the doves of Astarte once clapped their wings among the holy cedars of Lebanon. But the sun-god was going down in the west, leaving behind him but the 'brede etherial' of his ancient state before he was finally lost in the shadows of myth and, then, in the night of antiquity. No pretty fancy, this, nor shining pebble of symbolism to thread upon the narrative. The sun *was* going down into the nether world; he *was* being smothered in his own storm-clouds still stained with his dying light, and thus may we trace the fiery wake of Lucifer as he fell headlong down from heaven.

He fell headlong down into the nether-world, which was now hell, and now Spain, and now the lands of the pre-Celtic and dispossessed colonists of Ireland.¹ Gaelic mythology is indeed a terrible tangle, but we are well justified in reading into so many of its stories an historical reminiscence² of the colonization of Ireland by the Children of the Sun and of their dispossession, of their being hurled from the sky-world, by the Celtic military aristocracy. Lug, a sun-cum-war-god, is ancestor to Conn, a pure war-hero, but it was neither Conn nor Lug who brought stone- and sun-worship to Ireland. The exile of the original colonists of Ireland, whether Tuatha or Fir-Bolg or Fomorians, to fairyland or the nether-world, is simply a mythopœic way of saying that what they stood for had become old-fashioned and *démodé*.

Indeed, if there is a prize to be snatched from this rubbish-heap of jewelled story, it is the golden truth of the Fall of Lucifer, of the deposition of the sun-gods by the war-gods and, in consequence of its unfamiliarity and supreme importance to our narrative, I beg the reader's indulgence in trying to put it beyond the pale of mere

¹ Part of the Celtic preoccupation with the nether-world is no doubt due to Ægean influence. It also reflects the rise of the nobles who believed in the nether-world against the kings of the Sky-world.

² Just as the Minos myth was an historical reminiscence.

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statement. We have got to give chapter and verse for a statement of such profound significance. Take, for instance, the solar disk or wheel-symbol which rolls thunderously across the crowded and exotic stage of Celtic mythology. In Gaul, it was an emblem of the 'Mars-Jupiter,' the fallen Lucifer. In a British legend, this sun-wheel turns into an enormous ship, filled with a fabulous number of warriors, which sails over land and sea with equal facility. Originally the wheel was made for Simon the Druid on which to sail in the air. It was his magic carpet, and Simon is called the ancestor of the Irish people and of the Fir-Bolg who came to Ireland 'from the East.'

The canvas of Celtic legend is filled with the pictorial adventures of the 'sun-heroes,' the name of one of whom, Cúchulainn of Ulster, can still wake a faint stir in our breasts. These heroes, Cúchulainn, Llew, Ogmios,¹ Gwydion, Aitherne, Pwyll, Diarmid, and the others, whose exploits and attributes correspond in all but local colour with those of the Nordic Balder and Woden and the Aryan Indra of India, were, in fact, the Celtic-Aryan legatees of the vanished 'Children of the Sun.' The resemblances are compelling: Cúchulainn, for instance, is the child of the sun-god, Lug, and no, not a virgin mother, but an experienced lady who poses, quite unwarrantably, as a virgin.² Cúchulainn, Gwydion and Ogmios were the Celtic descendants, pirated editions, shall we say, of Hercules, who was himself a Child of the Sun and was metamorphosed from an Egyptian man to an Ægean mariner-god, to a Phœnician king (Melkarth-

¹ The Celtic Hercules. See my *Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum* for an account of Hercules as one of the Bronze Age 'Children of the Sun,' of his mining adventures and associations with Britain and Western Europe.

² A comical example of 'degeneration.' Arianvrod the mother of Llew is another. The true 'Children of the Sun,' Minos, Hercules, Merlin, the Pharaohs after the Fifth Dynasty, Tagaloa, Zamna, Oro, Tangaroa of the Pacific and America are sons of a virgin mother of royal birth.

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Moloch), to a Greek demi-god, to a Mediterranean giant, to a Spanish military commander. But the unlikenesses are much more important than the likenesses. In the first place, these Celtic sun-heroes are much more manish than divine, while the true 'Children of the Sun' were always deified beings; they are associated far more with magic than religion, in the second; they are warriors, in the third; they are mortal, in the fourth; and their solar connections are merely vestigial and academic, in the fifth. In the words of Prof. Rhys:

'Stories of the sun-heroes failed at an early period to tell with distinction and precision the tale of their origin, and ceased to be understood as applying to the sun, so that the stories in which they figured became severed more or less completely from their original fountain-head. . . . This being so, the sun under other and familiar names might serve as the source of other myths different from the earlier ones . . . and comparatively poor in mythic development.'

And elsewhere:

'At a very early stage in his (Celtic) history, the Sun-god ceased to be in any very strict sense of the term a sun-god.'

The Welsh Eisteddfod used to be held as a gorsed or court for letters and music within a circle of stones with a large menhir in the middle. It was held 'face to face with the sun,' in the eye of light, and the Celtic Zeus was its 'spiritual president.' But we do not thereby conclude that the users of the stone circle were likewise the builders. Neither were the Celtic heroes who usurped the solar prerogatives genuine solar beings. Nor, again, are Merlin and the Mac Oc (Aengus) of Ireland of the sun-hero troop. Merlin¹ was a genuine archaic who found himself among

¹ See my *Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum*.

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the soldiers and pop-guns of the Celtic nursery; Cúchulainn and his fellows are the prototypes of Vortigern, kings rigged in the stolen costume of the Ancient Mariners. They are not divine enchanters but chieftains; they have swords, not wands. The Mac Oc, too, was a Fir-Bolg, and the Celtic heroes were the foes and raiders of these Irish settlers who had been bundled into mythland.

There can be no doubt that the Celts inherited the archaic passion for the Earthly Paradise,¹ which was the grand motive for the exploration of the world. Here again the change from a peaceful to a warlike habit is manifest. The urge that caused the expansion of the Celtic races from Central Europe was no more geographical than it was with the Ancient Mariners. Their object was predatory: it was the wealth of the settled agricultural communities who were their fathers. These migrations and the fact that they were supported by force of arms are clearly reflected in the legends. Prof. Rhys points out that Irish myth is full of the stories of the magic cauldron (the Celtic representative of the Egyptian life-giver, the Mother-Pot – and other treasures belonging to the Tuatha De' Danann, the Fir-Bolg and the Fomorians,² the mythical colonists of Ireland).

¹ See Elliot Smith (*The Evolution of the Dragon*, etc.) for a study of the part played by 'Givers of Life' (the cowrie, then gold, then pearls and other precious stones, metals, balsams, etc.) in the settlement of the metalliferous and pearl-shell regions of the world by the Ancient Mariners.

² The Fir-Bolg were called Ernai or Ivernje – viz., Iberians. They, the Fomorians and the Tuatha belong to the very earliest period of Irish legend, and all three, I feel sure, were historical, non-Aryan peoples, though there is some doubt about the Tuatha, the comers last but one (the Milesians or soldiers from Spain). There is little doubt that all these ruling groups were related, and in the Irish Chronicles Milesius is called the great- (repeat sixteen times) grandson of *Magog*, the giant of the megalithic ages. The legends represent these different colonists of the archaic civilization at constant war with one another, but we need not take that very seriously. They are often captured by Celtic heroes; the Celts naturally applied to them the conditions of life common

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The Celts, he says, regarded all the comforts and luxuries of life as derived from their ancestors in the forgotten past, and their warlike expeditions were registered in the supernatural world by the tales of lands of untold wealth and bliss¹ existing in the nether world which was inhabited by their dead ancestors.

Prof. Rhys declares that this motive is illustrated again and again in the tales, and in the last few lines I have simply paraphrased his words. The heroes are always waging wars against the Fir-Bolg or Iberian miners, and the Fomorians (the old giant-god-kings), of whom it is said that Hercules was king, and who, in Irish legend, dwelt (like the dragon) in a kingdom under the sea, glittering with gold and precious stones. Cúchulainn, for instance, and other sun-heroes raided Hades. The great festival of the Lughnassad (Lammas) was celebrated in honour of Lug's victory over the Fomorians and the Fir-Bolg. It is Prof. Rhys's verdict, not mine, that violence and unscrupulousness in obtaining possession of the treasures are the keynote of the old stories. Once more, are we not viewing, as in a crystal darkling, the military record of the invasions of Britain by the Celts and of the dispossession of its archaic rulers?

Mr. Perry has described how this process happened in Africa, Asia and the East, in his remarkable paper — *War and Civilization* — published in 1918. 'Warfare,' he says, 'does not necessarily accompany an advance beyond the hunting stage,' and in Africa none of the first agricultural

to themselves, while Prof. Rhys remarks very sensibly that the battlefields of these archaic colonists are the sites of ancient barrows, and 'scenes of real interest are calculated to attract imaginary battles.' On the other hand, there may be some truth in the story of the rout of the Tuatha by the Milesians on their first landing, for ever after the Tuatha disappear into fairyland and take no more part in the mythical *history* of Ireland.

¹ The quest for the magic cauldron is paralleled in India by Indra's (the Aryan solar war-god) for the magic *soma* drink, the nectar of immortality.

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migrations were warlike. It was these peoples who caught the first brunt of African warfare, for the obvious reason that they were settled in mine-bearing (viz., wealth-producing) regions which aroused the covetousness of the predatory warrior, who followed some restless and scheming princeling belonging to the very family and community he first quitted and then attacked, he or his descendants. The Dorians who overwhelmed Crete, for instance, were led by the *Heracleidæ*. Warrior aristocracies were thus alien to the peoples they dominated but related to the dynasties they ultimately overwhelmed. The nomadic wave of *inward*-sweeping expansion thus differed radically from the outward expansion of the miners and agriculturists. The same story is to be told of the wealth-producing tracts of Asia and Europe. 'There is the clearest evidence,' writes Perry in the same paper, 'that the gold and amber of these regions were being exploited long before the arrival of any warrior aristocracies,' and in most places many centuries passed between the two phases.

'Warfare is the means by which the members of a parasitic ruling class of alien origin endeavour, while exploiting their own subjects, to dominate those surrounding peoples who produce wealth in a tangible and desired form.' Thus, the warlike peoples were to be found on the fringe of the more highly civilized communities, and a perfect illustration of this occurs in Mr. Gordon Childe's *Dawn of European Civilization* (1925), in which he describes the 'Battle-Axe Folk' as living to the south of the rich amber coast-line of Scandinavia, strewn with megaliths. In the same way the warriors who destroyed the Cretan civilization came from the north of Greece. Diodorus says that these 'barbarians' 'spoke the same language with the antient Cretans.'

Another sign that the old solar cult had become an antiquated legacy in Celtic times is that the old astronomical systems were largely forgotten, and it is not really question-

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able that the preoccupation of the Celtic religion was with the nether world rather than the heavenly bodies,¹ which became decidedly *déclassé*. Celtic mythology, again, is full of the light-against-darkness theme, and Prof. Rhys sees in it partly the contest between the solar heroes and the nether-world, and partly the clan-fights among the Celts themselves. Both Leinster and Connaught (probably the lands of refuge of the Fir-Bolg) represented the powers of darkness, and Ulster those of light. These divisions were, of course, intermingled with moral and naturalistic ideas, but their background was essentially historical. In other words, they reflect the Celtic conquests of Ireland and the tribal wars that followed them. The rulers of the archaic civilization (I take it) were naturally dumped into the nether world, which was also a Land of Bliss (like the Greek Elysium) as well as of Terror, because they took their treasures with them. The process is clear. Lucifer was kicked into the abyss, and the sun-heroes tricked themselves out in his clouds of glory. The men of Leinster also took on the characters of Night because they happened to be the enemies of Cúchulainn, Child of Light, and the men of Ulster.

These coincident contradictions are oddly prominent in Celtic mythology. In Greek myth, Chronos is at once a monstrous Titan and the ancient father of his people, the god of abundance and the king of the happy departed in the Isles of the Blest. 'He went into many parts of the world,' writes Diodorus, 'and persuaded all, wherever he went, to justice and integrity of heart; and, therefore, it is brought

¹ One of the forms of Isis-Aphrodite was the pig. The pig, 'the cutty black sow,' represented the powers of darkness in Celtic myth. Such was the decline and fall of Isis, Queen of Heaven! According to Prof. Rhys, again, the Mars-Jupiter or rather Arcs-Zeus of the Aryans was, first, a kind of senile god of the sun, then of light and the luminous heavens, then of the sea and finally of the nether world. But the complete eclipse comes when Celtic literature begins to speak of the sun as 'it.'

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down as a certain truth to posterity that in the time of Saturn (Chronos) men were plain and honest, free from all sorts of wicked designs and practices; yea, that they were then happy and blessed.' The same account is given by Hesiod in his "Four Ages of Man," while the earlier Minos, the earlier Heracles and Osiris himself are credited with the same civilizing records as the earlier Chronos. I take it that this must partly mean the deposition of the milder by the fiercer divinities, and the retention in the transitional process of the older ideas about the changing gods. The Celtic gods, in fact, play the same part as did the dragon.¹

I will be very brief with the conclusions which this survey of the dominant elements in Celtic mythology logically compels us to draw. For our evidence cannot deliver its full significance until it is brought into relation with foreign affairs. The Celts not only came from Europe but the archaic civilization, and we are called upon to epitomize its fortunes in other parts of the world, and at periods corresponding with the Celtic invasions in political progress rather than in time. But the mythological records of Celtic history in Britain do entitle us to set out a preliminary hand upon the table.

Strip the sun-heroes of their legacy of the marvellous, and their careers resemble the records of a Police Gazette and a series of military communiqués. Fraud, cruelty, murder, ferocity and perpetual war are the burden of the song, these and a faint, elegiac undersong, full of pathos and melancholy, as though the savagery and barbarism of their times drew from the souls even of these petty kings, who are always shouting, boasting and killing, chords of sorrow, laments for beauty incommunicable to be heard even above the clash of arms.

Another thing we learn is that the Celtic invasions did not

¹ See p. 269.

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represent, as we have been taught, a series of isolated migrations set in motion by geographical and other stimuli. They mirrored a political revolution. Therefore the causes of that revolution must have been incubated in the social conditions, the customs and propensities of the civilization that preceded it. At least three causes for the plunge of the Western world into war can be partially revealed by a study of the Celts: the decline of the old mining passion into rapacity for wealth and desire for the power it conferred, the rivalries and ambitions of rulers, and the institution of human sacrifice.

Thirdly, we are surely confirmed in our contention throughout that the Celts were not the original planters of that forest of buildings whose ruins lie scattered over the high places of Western Europe and whose meaning we have tried to decipher. Common sense tells us that a destructive phase of history must be lacking in constructive and creative energy; history has shown us that the former succeeded the latter, and mythology that the war-god in his turn had succeeded the sun-god. The solar ideas of the Celts were purely vestigial relics, and the stone monuments of the ancient mariners were inspired by a solar and astronomical religion.¹ Nor, as I have tried to describe, can the stone tombs and stone circles be dissociated from the trackways, the great earthworks and barrows, the terraces and other remains of pre-Celtic England. They form a single pattern. Lastly, we are strengthened in our case for the general growth of demonism and withdrawal of the more benign divinities of creation and fertilization in the Iron Age and latter part of the Bronze Age. For what demon more fearful could the human race glorify as the controller of its destiny and the ruler of the universe than a war-god?

¹ Prof. Rhys declares quite definitely that the Celts had abandoned the astronomical science of the ancients, by which their buildings were oriented.

THE SETTING OF THE SUN-GOD

§ 2. THE SETTING OF THE SUN-GOD

And now for yet another lightning world-tour, so that we may witness the Fall of Lucifer, as astronomers do an eclipse, from many points of vantage. This is what Siret has to say of the Celtic invasion of Spain:

‘Nous savons que celles-ci [menhirs with arms carved upon them] datent d’une époque où débuta en Occident un régime de guerres jusqu’alors inconnu. Il est donc compréhensible que l’ancien dieu agricole ait acquis peu à peu un aspect guerrier.’ ‘Son culte’ (Ares, the Greek Mars), he says elsewhere, ‘paraît avoir été introduit en Crète par les Doriens (a branch of the Celtic race).’

In previous chapters, I have underlined the peacefulness of the Cretans, which, indeed, but for neo-Darwinian prepossessions, would be an archæological commonplace. Diodorus describes the early Cretans as entirely peaceful discoverers and inventors who ordered men into societies and taught them the use of metals. The bronze sword never appeared in Crete at all until Late Minoan I. ‘The daggers of the earlier periods,’ writes Prof. Burrows in *Discoveries of Crete* (1908), ‘grow naturally into the short swords and long swords of Late Minoan I.’¹ As we shall see in the next Chapter, the final evolution of the dagger corresponds with a general degeneration of Cretan art. The religious beliefs of the Cretans are still somewhat obscure, but what evidence there is points in the same direction. Mr. H. R. Hall in *Ægean Archæology* speaks of Velchanos (the Cretan Zeus) as the ‘warrior god of Crete.’ But he only appears armed in Late Minoan III. Cretan society was undoubtedly matriarchal for a much longer period than it was in Egypt, and Zeus

¹ Compare with pp. 140-1.

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appears on an inferior footing to the Great Mother Goddess part consort and part son. Zeus, again, is represented as dying on the island, and so corresponds with the Egyptian Osiris and the Babylonian Tammuz, gods of peace, blessings and fruitfulness. Their death was mourned by kindred ceremonies in all the countries of their nativity. But there is no doubt that Zeus gradually displaced his mother-wife as the supreme Cretan deity and became the sun-god, just as Hathor-Isis became a mere satellite of the Egyptian sun-god. The symbol of the Double Axe, the Winged Disk of Crete, was transferred from Rhea to Zeus. By the time that Mycenæ caught up the decaying culture of Late Minoan Crete, the war-gods were arriving from the north, and Minos, the Child of the Sun, was deposed and became the ruler of the underworld.

In Chapter III, I have already described the peacefulness of early dynastic Egypt, and the sun-god Ré was not transformed into a war-god until the Theban rule, after the expulsion of the Hyksos or Semitic Shepherd Kings in 1588 B.C., and the rise of the predatory Emperor-Pharaohs, conquering and ruling from North Syria to the Fourth Cataract of the Nile. Osiris, with whose son, Horus, the earlier Pharaohs were identified, is invariably described in the ancient annals as a peaceful colonizer. 'He was not for war,' writes Diodorus (Book I), 'nor came to fight battles and to decide controversies by the sword, every country receiving him for his merits and virtues as a god.' The Egyptian period between the Third and the Sixth Dynasties (2980-2475) was the fattest soil for the blossoming of the arts - 'arts and mechanics,' writes Prof. Breasted, 'reached a level of unprecedented excellence never before surpassed, while government and administration had never before been so highly developed.' We know now that when Ruskin said that war and art couched together, like Ares and Aphrodite, Ruskin on that occasion was a fool. Prosperity in war means

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penury in art; they do not breathe the same air, and the art that Ruskin talked about so grandiosely was a bastard and a parasite. We are in the period when one Egyptian workman drilling out a stone vessel says to another – ‘This is a beautiful vessel,’ and his charming fellow replies, ‘It is indeed.’

In Babylonia, the fertility god, Tammuz, whose attributes resembled those of Osiris and rites those of Adonis, one of the Asiatic fertility gods also linked with Osiris, was deposed by the war-god, Shamash. In Assyria, an offshoot of Babylonia, and the hardest, coarsest and most belligerent of all the Oriental kingdoms, the bestial war-god, Asshur, reigned supreme. I do not want to make a brief of the war-case. The evidence is too good to spoil by straining it. Undoubtedly, serious warfare developed in Mesopotamia much earlier than in Egypt. The first military empire in world-history was that of Sargon of Akkad (2872 B.C.), so that war became an institution in Babylonia at the very least fifteen hundred years earlier than it did in Crete, which remained peaceful until close upon the Dorian invasion. Once the near Asiatic states took to war, their civilization first walked and then ran downhill, until they became the Barbarians of Grecian history. But the mainspring of Hellenism was not the invasion of the Dorians but the peace of Crete,¹ the only surviving lamp of civilization when Egypt herself followed the Asiatic example and became a predatory Empire. The debt that the Babylonians and Assyrians *alone* bequeathed to the world was so small that it is hardly worthy of consideration. And what they did bequeath to us was none of their doing, for those exceedingly rare elements of Asiatic influence we can trace in the diffusion of culture to the West were carried from the Ægean.

With the Aryan invasion of India, the Aryan war-god Indra swallowed up the Dravidian sun-god, Varuna, the

¹ See next Chapter.

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child of Aditi, the Indian Hathor. A study of C. F. Oldham's *The Sun and the Serpent* reveals a number of extraordinarily close parallels between the mythology of the Aryan relationship to the original Dravidian colonists of India and that of the Celtic relationship to the 'Fomorians' and 'Fir-Bolg' of ancient Ireland. Prof. Rhys, again, has pointed out a large number of parallels between Indra and the Celtic sun-heroes, Gwydion and Ogmios (the Celtic Hercules), and, like them, he thrust aside the heads of the older pantheons and appropriated their symbols. At the same time the Mahabharata declares that 'the first of all wielders of weapons' in India was Karna, the son of the Sun by a royal virgin. Here we are at the sun-god end of the story, and just as there are solar vestiges in the war-god, so there are martial portents in the sun-god. Turn to Prof. Langdon in *Tammuz and Ishtar* and he describes the malign influence that men believed to emanate from 'the light that streamed from the heavenly bodies.'¹ Lucifer fell because he stumbled, and when he stumbled he was thrust from heaven. It is simply the old dragon-story over again. Or go back four chapters still further, and once more it is the same story. It is the dagger of the early Bronze Age lengthening into the sword and javelin of the late. In other words, the embryo of warfare lay wrapped in the institutions of the archaic civilization, until, like Athene, it sprang full-armed from the head of Zeus.

For the rest of this tour, I shall rely almost exclusively upon Mr. Perry's chapter 'The Coming of the Warriors' in the *Children of the Sun*, the very best authority available, not merely because of the writer's genius for research and power of clear-eyed generalization from it, but because his Chapter summarizes the investigations of first-hand anthro-

¹ 'The stars in their courses fought against Sisera' - here we have the destructive element emanating from on high so well developed that the heavenly bodies take sides in human warfare, like the Olympians in the Trojan War.

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pologists in the countries traversed. The Khmer civilization of Cambodia (Dravidian) was smashed by the barbarian Tai-Shan, a people, like the Celts and the Hebrews, in the pastoral-nomadic stage of culture, and from every aspect inferior to the Cambodians.

Mr. A. M. Hocart, whom I have quoted in other parts of the book, says that Oceania was occupied by a peaceful and highly civilized people with a theory of kingship akin to the Egyptian. They were pushed east by various nomadic people of a lower culture 'who were . . . constantly fighting and killing.' The Tongans learned warfare from the Fijians, themselves originally peaceful, while quarrels among priests broke up the peaceful agricultural communities of Tahiti. The great pyramidal building or *maræ* at Opoa in Raiatea, an island near Tahiti, was (I quote Perry)

'the great meeting-place for the whole of the Eastern Pacific, to which came at regular intervals, the chiefs from the island groups thousands of miles distant, with banners flying, to join in festivities.'

When war came they stayed at home. The Maories probably found a peaceful and advanced civilization in New Zealand before them, as the Hebrews did in Canaan. Mr. A. Shand in *The Moriori People of the Chatham Islands*, whence Dr. Elliot Smith identified an Ancient Mariner's skull, says: 'The ancient kingdoms broke up into small communities of bold incendiaries and robbers and the national character ended by becoming more and more bloodthirsty, revengeful and cruel.' Before that the islands were large states, subject to a common head ruling from a religious centre like our Avebury. It was their period of greatest prosperity and highest achievement in workmanship. All over the Pacific, the rise of warfare coincided with the degeneration of cultures and the arts, and in all the countries

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I have named the sun-god reigned over the earlier communities, the war-god over their nomad conquerors.

Melanesia and Polynesia still possess traces of a former sun-cult, dispossessed by a war-cult. The Children of the Sun were exterminated or fled back to the sky (viz., home) and gods and dynasties underwent an identical change. In Eastern Polynesia, Tangaroa the sun-god retired before Rongo the war-god. Pre-Columbian America tells the same tale. The Mayans of Central America were, by all accounts, an entirely peaceful people, but a branch of them in Yucatan were harsher, crueller, more tyrannical and warlike. The supreme deity of North America was the sun-god, but in Mexico he was replaced by the Aztec war-god, Huitzilopochtli, the conqueror of the Toltec sun-god. Warfare was the life of the state, and the Aztecs stood to the Toltecs as the Assyrians stood to the Sumerians. Perry quotes Schoolcraft to the effect that 'the non-sanguinary, sun-worshipping tribes of Indians were conquered by the ancestors of the post-Columbian Indians,' while the military freebooters of the Pawnee abandoned their sun-god for a war-god. Perry, again, says that the conduct of the Zuni Indians of the Pueblo region marched with that of their gods, and here again the sun was muffled and lost in the war-clouds.

In every case where the people were governed by war-gods, by military aristocracies, that is to say, they had lost the arts of irrigation and stone-working.

I am so nervous of wearying the reader that I have left out a large number of further examples. But is this catalogue as irritating to him as a list of items in a bill he cannot pay? If so, his experience is the contrary of mine, for the absolute uniformity of these data, ranging through country after country from the lands of Lud and Cúchulainn to Cotopaxi and Chimborazo, is to me nothing less than astounding – a convulsion awful beyond the imaginative scope of all the poets. The Fall of Lucifer set the world-wide forest of men's

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habitations into flame, and the arts, the splendours, the loves, the happiness, the aspirations of all civilized mankind were hurled into the universal bone-fire.

‘The sunshine shall wax dark, nor shall any summer follow, and all the winds shall turn to blight; the sea shall rise in tempest against the very heaven and cover the land, and the sky shall be rent, and out of it shall come snow-storms and mighty winds.’¹

In another part of Norse literature, Swart, ‘the Black One,’ sets fire to the world, and the flames play against the canopy of heaven.

The monotony of this indescribable wastage, repeated in nation after nation, and always in the same terms of loss, debasement and decay, always by the conjunction of war and the collapse of civilized life, may dull the apprehension of it. But that is not to rob the Fall of Lucifer of its terrors in the verities of history.

Neither are its terrors emasculated to a stage thunder, because the tale of Lucifer is so old that we read it in the warm and deceiving glow of a poetic fable. It is no fable, for its shadow encompasses the world to the present day. The savage races of Asia and America, and particularly of Africa, with their cruel and bloodthirsty rites and their thralldom to a baleful magic, they, like the Celts of the Heroic Age, are the jetsam of the archaic civilization in its fall. The Fall of Lucifer was their fall, and from it they have never again risen. ‘Evolutionary’ theories of to-day regard them as ‘primitives.’ But they are not primitives, for their folk-lore and the still more speaking witnesses of megalithic monuments and other seats of the Ancient Mariners in their territories betray their status for what it is – the status of a civilization degraded into savagery. I suggest that your

¹ Obviously the Norse version of the Egyptian and Babylonian stories of the Deluge and the Destruction of Mankind.

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nomadic warrior, so far from being a simple and strenuous child of nature, suckled upon the elemental virtues, was a degenerate shoot from the civilized parent stem by which it was parricidally strangled.

And are not we, the highly civilized, branded with the same mark? Our social life and our human values are threatened with the same cataclysm that overwhelmed the ancient world. But its results will by inexorable logic produce a heavier crop of mischief, terror, and savagery than befell the first civilizations – in the proportion to the extent we have elaborated and perfected the science of warfare. The wars of the Celts differed from the wars of modern Europe in three particulars. The men who made them fought them: they were not conducted to anything like the same degree of barbarism that the invention not merely of explosives and gases but the technique of hand-to-hand bayonet-fighting has made possible; and, since the Celtic wars were waged by a warrior caste and its initiates, they did not involve the participation of whole populations in their carnage.

PART II

The Begetting of the War-God

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§ I. THE ABANDONMENT OF THE MINES

I should content myself in this portion of the Chapter with illustrating certain causes and effects of the Great Change.

I have frequently referred in this book to the wonderful civilization of the Rhodesian gold and copper mines. Let me ply my canoe once more to the Zimbabwes. In the golden

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land of Havilah, an extraordinary thing happened. The mines that had been so toilsomely exploited for hundreds of years and whose riches had borne a harvest of mighty buildings scattered over 500 miles between the Limpopo and the Zambesi – were suddenly abandoned.

Centuries of hum and bustle, centuries of silence, and between them the thin partition of a single night. For when Hall and Bent traversed once more those deserted gold-fields, they found the cakes of gold still resting in their crucibles; the crushing-stones with small piles of quartz beside them; dumps of gold and the tools lying as they had been dropped by the miners at the bottom of the workings. One night, the miners left their work, they paid their evening devotions and returned to their dreadful slave-pits. But to the mines they never came back any more.

In the gold-lands of Siberia, along the river Yenisei, mile upon mile of the barrens are studded with megalithic monuments. Within them the priests and the princes and the nobles live out their forlorn immortality, for their fellows have gone – and upon them too the blow fell, as suddenly and crushingly as in the torrid bush of Mashonaland, in the Deccan, in New Guinea, within the walls of our own Dolebury. Who has visited Dolebury since the Ancient Mariners fled from their smelting-pits or died within the stone battlements powerless to defend them against the sling-stone and the iron spear? The antiquary, the warrener, the naturalist of the ruminant rather than the feral order of vertebrates, for the Romans, though they delved Mendip for lead, left untouched the dumps of ochre and hæmatite, the debris of smelted ore that seem to tell the storm-tale of the Zambesi and the Yenisei.

However that may be, the voyagers of old hurriedly evacuated their mine-workings in too many places for the interpreter to fail to see in this dramatic hap a cataclysm that wrote *Finis* to the epic of their colonies. The next day

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ushered the age of the nomad warrior, to whom cattle were more than corn and cities, the treasures than the digging for them,¹ and war than all. The first part of my Chapter has stressed the kinship between the pastoral nomad and the agricultural miner; we are now confronted with a sudden, indeed an instantaneous break between civilization and savagery, in which the barbarians swoop upon the lands and the wealth of the civilized and live a parasitic life upon the fruits and settlements of their labours.

How are we to reconcile these apparently conflicting phenomena? That has been done already by Prof. H. M. Chadwick's *The Heroic Age*, in which he maintains that the age of the warrior was not developed from a primitive society, but from the contact with civilization on the circumference of its distribution outwards. Peace opened the corolla of civilization and war attacked its petals at their edges and rolled them up again in withered folds towards the centre. Without metaphor, portions of the archaic civilization at its periphery split off under ambitious or discontented chieftains during the Bronze Age, built up new dynasties (under transformed gods) in the wilds and then fell upon the settled communities. Abraham, for instance, came from Ur, a civilized city of Chaldea, and established himself in the agricultural and dolmen-built areas of Canaan. The miners of the Yenisei were overwhelmed by a people with an Assyrian kinship; our own Bronze Age civilization by tribes carrying with them the sediments of Ægean culture.

§ 2. THE FALL OF THE DIVINE KINGS

The princes or nobles who broke away from the archaic civilization to found warrior aristocracies must, in the

¹ I do not forget that the Celts were iron-workers, but except for iron-mining for weapons, the old metallurgical skill and intensity were undoubtedly lost in the Heroic Age.

THE FALL OF THE DIVINE KINGS

nature of things, have belonged to a party hostile to the reigning monarch and his adherents. In Egypt, for instance, at the close of the Fifth Dynasty the nobles made head against the king, and their offices hereditary, so that a period of turmoil followed. In the colonies of the archaic civilization abroad, the same kind of thing happened, and the ambitions of the nobles were probably the prime cause of the formation of the military aristocracies. It is very interesting, therefore, to find this weakening of the kingly power by forces more violent and acquisitive reflected in the political vicissitudes of Celtic Britain. The reverberations of what happened in Egypt were echoed among the tribal Celts of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

To hear them we have but to put our ear to the ground. There is a double reason why the nether-world is so prominent in Celtic myth, and one of them surely is the rule of the nobles as distinguished from the rule of the kings in the preceding period. For the solar cult was purely monarchical in origin, and when it became the state-religion in Egypt, it only obliterated the older Osirian cult for a while. Osiris ruled the underworld, and when the nobles became feudatories and ushered in the Feudal Age (see next Chapter), he re-emerged and the underworld with him. So when the military aristocracies were formed, and the Children of the Sun were destroyed, the nether-world came into fashion again. But, as we shall see, a great change in the character of the kingdom of Osiris had happened, and the nether-world began to take on the rôle of a genuine hell, just as the gods the rôles of demons. The 'moral' corresponded with the political change, and the trinity of Osiris, Isis and Horus ceased to be a beatified reflection of earthly ties and loves. For Osiris once ruled the Egyptians by their affections, as later gods ruled them by their fears. He was the friend of man, and shed his blessings upon the warm and personal emotions of his daily life, while he wakened both king and

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peasant alike from the shadow of death, to live with him in an hereafter of fruitfulness and peace.¹

The earlier Celtic tribes were undoubtedly ruled by petty kings, the descendants of the nobles or princes of the archaic civilization. But it was an unstable kingship, and, exactly as in Egypt, exactly as among other Aryan peoples in different parts of Europe and Asia, the chiefs (I quote Prof. Rhys's *Celtic Britain*) 'subordinate to the king seized his power.' The result was an oligarchical despotism, such as superseded the older kingships of Gaul before the arrival of Cæsar, or a succession of kings, of little Macbeths who achieved power by armed strength and superior generalship against the foe. The bulk of the population was undoubtedly more oppressed under these irresponsible tyrannies than it was under the earlier warrior kings, who themselves were descended from the more ambitious and egotistical types of the archaic civilization, so that the process of deterioration did not end with the break-up of the latter.

§ 3. THE SURVIVAL OF THE PRIESTHOOD

What happened to the priesthood in the rape of the ancient settlements? The traditional view is that the 'Druids' were priests of the sacred grove and builders of the stone circle, the repositories of ancient wisdom, science and letters. I believe this view is essentially right, as the views of common humanity as opposed to those of academic specialists so often are. Where I think that the popular idea goes off the rails is in linking the Druids with the Celts, a natural error all the same, since Druidism overlapped into the Celtic period. For surely the last thing that military barbarians were likely to take with them on swift and warlike migrations was a sedentary priesthood, which was not

¹ See Prof. Breasted, *The Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* (1912).

THE SURVIVAL OF THE PRIESTHOOD

merely a priesthood but a kind of university of the arts and sciences, as exclusive as Oxford and Cambridge. The arch-druid of Goidelic (viz., Gaelic) legend in Ireland, besides, was Simon Magus, and he was one of the Fir-Bolg, tonsured, according to Gildas, like the Egyptian priests.

In searching for evidence for and against this view, I was happy to find that both Siret and Prof. Rhys, authorities who had no contact and pursued their investigations by entirely different methods, fully supported it. The Celts, says the once Professor of Celtic in our modern Druid college of orthodoxy, 'found Druidism here (in Britain) as the common religion of the aborigines from the Baltic to Gibraltar.' For 'aborigines' read the archaic civilization and you have the whole thing. Siret is even more explicit and advances a series of very formidable arguments for his contention that the Druids were Phœnician¹ priests, and so non-Celtic and non-Aryan in their origin. He scouts the notion that the Druids were invented by *une aristocratie guerrier*, to whom long swords were more than long thoughts.

'Il est invraisemblable qu'il ait suffi de quelques siècles à une tribu de Barbares pour créer la magie et l'astronomie, doctrines des Druides qui sont tout le contraire de conquérants par les armes.'

The argument is the stronger from the fact that the British Celts, as I have already mentioned, lost the complex astronomical system of the ancients, and retained the old ideas about the immortality of the soul only in the vaguest and crudest way. Magic, astronomy, immortality, human sacrifice and the train of ideas that generated these phenomena, were far too elaborate to have been *invented* by barbarians. Siret points out that the Druidical faith and science were purely Oriental in substance and were quite unknown

¹ What Siret calls Phœnician is, as I have said over and over again, much more distinctively Ægean.

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over the greater part of the Celtic dominions. Trees – wells – stones, I have already written enough to persuade some readers (I hope) that the religion of these was not Celtic in origin.

Now turn to Britain. The Celtic people who showed the clearest traces of Druidism were the Goidels or Gaels, the earliest Celtic invaders of Britain, whose descendants live to-day in Ireland, the Isle of Man and North Scotland. The Brythons, who followed them and ultimately inhabited Brittany, Gaul, Wales and Cornwall, were less familiar with Druidism,¹ and the same is true of the Belgæ. Prof. Rhys, indeed, contends that the Goidels were not wholly Celtic-Aryans and were far more closely associated with the non-Aryan 'Ivernians' (viz., the Iberians) than Brythons or Belgæ, partly as the conquerors of the Fir-Bolg and partly because they were driven into the haunts of the Fir-Bolg refugees by the Brythons.

I submit that the views of Siret and Rhys on Druidism not merely square exactly with the evidence given in the rest of this Chapter and with the general lines of our theme, but sharply illustrate the transition between the last stages of the archaic civilization and the formation of nomad and military aristocracies from it. Why did not the Goidels destroy the Druids, as they did the Children of the Sun? Because their magical practices and spells and exorcisms meant something to them, and they meant something to them because their ancestors knew all about Druidism as the priestly craft of the Ancient Mariners, whereas the Brythons were one step

¹ Prof. Rhys says flatly that the Brythons knew nothing of Druidism, but, though 'Druid' is a Goidelic not a Brythonic word, that is going too far. The Goidels appear to have shared something of the lively humour of the Fir-Bolg whose gaiety of spirit resembled the character of the ancient Egyptians, in spite of all their funerary monuments, but still more so of the Cretans, the dancers, the feasters, the gay sea-dogs of the Mediterranean. The Goidelic period was also far richer in mythic imagination than was the Brythonic or Belgic.

THE SURVIVAL OF THE PRIESTHOOD

further removed from the archaic civilization. Thus Druidism, from the fear it inspired and as an agent of that demonism to which the archaic civilization had declined, survived in a degraded form, and was probably in the main responsible for keeping the backs of the Celtic warriors still clothed with the rags and tatters of the solar cult.

§ 4. SLAVERY AND WAR

Power, wealth and demon-worship account in part for the growth of warfare. Slavery and human sacrifice, two of the witches stirring the cauldron, were other institutions of the ancient peoples which stimulated (in Mr. Perry's excellent phrase) their 'education in warfare,' a condition of mind, that is to say, favourable to that grossness of perception, corruption of power, and indifference to human values without which warfare is impossible.¹ In actual effect, slavery and human sacrifice² go together, if the biological and religious element proper to the latter be left out. In the East, that is to say, one of the causes of warfare was the organization of raids to capture slaves for sacrifice and for labour in the mines. Unhappily, evidence of the growth of slavery is very meagre and it is impossible as yet to fix a date for its first appearance in human society. The mighty works of the Egyptians in the Pyramid ages were not apparently constructed by slave-labour, but by indentured native workmen who turned to stone-building in the yearly season when the inundation of the Nile put a stop to agriculture. The distinction between the Pyramid workman and the slave may have been largely a matter of terms, but the earlier Pharaohs were certainly not Oriental despots of the Persian stamp and Diodorus declares that the first kings of Egypt did not have slaves for their servants. Justice was a

¹ In the *Hastings Encyclopædia* (Vol. 5), Mr. J. L. Gerig gives an account of the cruelties practised by the warlike Gauls.

² For a discussion of this institution, see the next Chapter.

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reality in their period and not altogether a system of legalizing the powers of the rulers. The labourer had his rights.¹

Though, indeed, the evidence for the progressive increase of slavery is scanty, what there is of it strongly supports the theme of our later Chapters. If we consult Westermarck's Chapter on Slavery in the *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas* (1906), we find him persistently associating slavery with war. 'We have reason to believe that the earliest source of slavery was war and conquest.' In the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties of Egypt, the slaves were prisoners of war, and the same system prevailed among the Hebrews and the Aztecs, both in the warrior-aristocracy phase. He adds that the Book of the Dead (compiled during the Empire period of Egypt) suggests that the treatment of slaves was milder than in Greece and Rome. The Romans greatly extended the slave-system, and, according to Mommsen, 'established a regular commerce in slaves, which was based on the systematically prosecuted hunting of men in foreign lands.' The Romans certainly worked England for slaves. The lot of the Roman slave, in contradistinction to that of the Egyptian, was 'extremely hard,' and 'cases of shocking cruelty' were very frequent. All this is exactly what we should expect, and enables us to see more and more clearly that the opposition to the Degeneration theme is based, not on the evidence, but neo-Darwinian theory.

The Phœnicians became notorious for slave-raiding and kidnapping, and the Phœnicians do not appear on the Western stage until the great name of Crete is in ashes. Kenrick thinks that the slave-system was introduced into the Spanish mines by Carthage, the Tyrian colony which inherited the Phœnician power in the West by methods as savage and cruel as those of the Phœnicians were vulgar and cunning. The slave-gangs 'remained in the Spanish mines night and day – never seeing the sun but living and dying

¹ Even in later times, the penalty for the murder of a slave in Egypt was death.

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in the murky and fetid atmosphere of the deep excavations.' Siret, again, declares in many parts of his great work that the 'Neolithic' colonists of Spain did not interfere with the Spanish natives, happy folk who did not value metals, while Diodorus (Book V) says that the Spanish mines were not originally worked by slave-labour. The slave-pits of Rhodesia belonged to the later periods, and the Arabs who succeeded the ancients there have generally been accomplished slave-raiders.

As for megalithic England, we have no evidence to go upon either way. But we can be certain that slavery was fully developed during the 'Heroic Age.' Siret remarks that during the Celtic domination of the Peninsula, the privileges fell to the Druids and the Chevaliers (the military chiefs), while slavery was the lot of the rest of the population. Strabo says of Celtic Britain that slaves were exported thence with corn, cattle, gold, silver and iron, and the system was, of course, continued during the Roman occupation. In Gaelic legend and romance, the Fir-Bolg appear both as the powers of darkness and as thralls, while the last we hear of their leaders is as succumbing to the sun-heroes.

The life, the liberty, the status of men sank as low as their culture, and he that pulled them down to his own nether-world of barbarism and misery was the once ruler of the starry gardens – the fallen Lucifer, Bringer of Light.

PART III

The Martyrdom of Man

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§ I. WAR, THE PARENT OF CIVILIZATION

In 1924, the Rationalist Press Association published a second edition of a book of genius which had mouldered in

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second-hand bookshops for nearly sixty years – Winwood Reade's *The Martyrdom of Man*. When it was first published, it got into very bad odour with the Press, at that time dominated by orthodox Anglicanism. For it not only professed to give a history of civilization and so of the successive pagan religions from which Christianity was derived, an unpardonable offence, but it presented a witty, terse and Jesuitical account of the personality and doctrines of Jesus from the point of view of the current rationalism of the sixties, which set a great many people beside the Anglican clergy by the ears.

It is indeed a dangerous book because, though rhetorical, it is very well written, abounding in sardonic humour and massed pictorial effects and of an intellectual capacity for synthesis and the organization of a crowded but elusive material which should have entitled the writer to the leadership of Jesuitry in its palmyest days. For that is what Reade really was, a Jesuit in his thought, a Rationalist in his conclusions, an artist in his expression.

Observe the change of fashion. In the sixties, the book was bitterly reviled for being anti-Christian; nowadays it is honoured, apart from its literary qualities, as an introduction to universal history of sure guidance, and receives a commendation from H. G. Wells, while a modern preface gently corrects it for not beginning with Babylonia¹ instead of

¹ The proof that Babylonia was not the original source and carrier of archaic civilization comes from their embalming practices, the origin of which were unquestionably Egyptian. (See Elliot Smith's 'Distribution of Mummification' in *The Migrations of Early Culture*, p. 65: 'There can, I think, be no doubt whatever as to the origin of these instances of embalming in Babylonia.') Embalming was both late and sporadic there, and recent investigations by Dr. Blackman (*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Vol. 10) have revealed the presence of the important ceremony of the 'Opening of the Mouth,' which not the very Die-hards of anthropology can deny was Egyptian in origin. But the final proof that Babylonia was not the home of civilization was that the Babylonians were builders in brick not stone. I repeat this damn-

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Egypt as 'the cradle of civilization.' Judged by the revolution in 'universal history' begun by Rivers, Elliot Smith and Perry, it is a world-history even topsier and turvier than its reputation. One-third of the book is occupied with a Chapter on 'War' from the point of view that 'war is the chief agent of civilization in the period [early dynastic Egypt] I have attempted to portray.' War, like Bude, is 'so bracing' that it jabbed the early populations of the world out of a stagnant struggle for the needs of existence, and when the world had been thoroughly roused by fire and the sword, its 'conquests were preserved by Religion.'

Winwood Reade finally arrives at the conclusion that the 'Unknown God' has so ordained that though 'famine, pestilence and war are no longer essential [the Unknown God appears to have miscalculated, since wars still go merrily on] for the advancement of the human race,' the generations of men must now undergo *mental* tortures 'that their children may profit by their woes.' [They appear to profit by them so well and are so convinced of their efficacy that for *their* children's sake they continue the tradition.] 'Our own prosperity is founded on the agonies of the past. Is it therefore unjust that we also should suffer for the benefit of those who are to come?' Winwood Reade was a thoroughly honest thinker; his grotesque and most dismal summing-up is reached because there is indeed no escape from nor alternative to it, if you write history upside-down. There is not one ray of light in it anywhere, for presumably 'those who are to come' will, when they arrive, find the benefits are still to come too, and so the treatment will be continued for their descendants to the end of the world. 'I am not attempting to dispute the author's actual brief; that questioning is implicit in every word of this book. The conclusion is the thing, and

ing fact because the experts of the Babylonian school never mention it. Yet it really is a proof, because stone monuments are the identity marks of the archaic civilization wherever it went.

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if the present school of accepted, evolutionary anthropology hesitates to face it, Winwood Reade has logically done it for them.

The great advantage of rewriting history according to data rather than theory is that it is not a protest against this horrible creed of 'Evil, be thou our children's good,' but pure history. And it shows clearly and inevitably that the Assyrian custom of impaling and flaying their war-captives alive arose, not, as Reade puts it, in spite of the Assyrian State having developed from the Babylonian, as the Babylonian from the Sumerian, but because Assyria, a pure war-machine, represented a degradation from Babylonia and Sumer. When Darius took Babylon he crucified 3,000 of its inhabitants, and the annals of the Oriental Empires are thick with such incidents, with the homicidal insanities of such despots as Cambyses, with the atrocities of the war-god Jehovah and his chosen people, with the egomania of men less brilliant than but as barbarous as Alexander, with rapacity, massacres, perfidy, ruin and a meretricious glitter. Did not war destroy every one of the Eastern Empires, as it did Greece and Rome?

That is my plea for Avebury, that its civilization was a cutting taken from the Egypto-Cretan stem before it had forfeited the primitive and natural peaceableness of the entire human race, before it had exhausted the creative energies its civilization drew from the latent powers of primitive mankind, partly drew and partly forced out of them, before the quest for 'givers of life' had grown up or rather down into greedier ambitions, before its institutions had become dehumanized and before the dominion of a class, highly privileged for the discoveries that made civilization possible, had fomented a love of power for its own sake, a love of power that coveted the powers of others, and in so doing 'educated' its subjects to 'warlike habits' in direct opposition to their pacific instincts.

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When that education was complete, there followed the Heroic Age in Europe, and the 'archaic civilization,' through invasion from without occasioned by disruption from within, went down before it. It is nonsense to maintain that these pacific instincts were only preserved among the earlier peoples because of geographical conditions and the lack of any opportunity for change. It was not the discovery of metals nor of agriculture and the growth of populations that followed it that altered the nature with the new circumstances of man. The geographical argument makes mankind the pawn of its material environment, and the amazing adventures of the Ancient Mariners and their heroic indifference to all the adversities they must have suffered, to the defiances of heat and cold, mountain, sea and desert, fully discharge the races of men from bondage to the physical world. Metals did indeed sharpen the mind of man, but it was the mind of man that sharpened the metals.

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Thus Winwood Reade's contention has to be reversed. War was never the agent of civilization but of barbarism; it was civilization which was the agent of war. War has never served either the needs or the progress of mankind, but has poisoned its well-being, brutalized its soul, impoverished its culture, and debased its understanding. The warlike temper was superimposed upon, and not planted in the soul of man. What a civilization, a miracle of beauty and freedom and joy might we not have achieved to-day but for the Fall of Lucifer! Such speculations are vain, as vain, perhaps, as these commonplace conclusions I have drawn. That war is the child of corruption and the parent of destitution in all the gifts of heaven and earth demands no argument. It is a truism in harmony with our feelings as it commends itself to our reason. But an amazing illusion, a gigantic fallacy based

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upon a false reading of the past, reigns in its stead. It is that man was born a criminal and that only by extended and organized criminality has he been able to progress beyond the primitive condition. So say the most honest. But there are others, even more powerful, who argue that war is not criminal, or, at any rate, is an unfortunate means towards desirable ends; partly because man has a criminal nature and partly because a crime, involving nations rather than individuals and performed by the State, is not really a crime at all but a virtue.

But the moral aspect of war I leave to others better qualified to discuss it – and our study has been singularly barren if it has failed to suggest that what is done in the name of Morality (with a capital M) is often so heinous that a letter of such credit is indispensable to it. The fallacy that desirable ends can be or ever have been achieved by war – ends, that is to say, that benefit the community as a whole – is an issue closer to our theme, because we are confronted with the truth that war was the universal destroyer of the civilization that created it.

There remain to us two problems. The first is – what was the nature of the degeneration that produced the barbarism of the war-god's subjects? That we shall now consider. The second asks whether man really is the feral animal, the instinctive Cain that the most varied opinion assumes him to be, since the peacefulness of the archaic civilization, in its early stages at home and in its expansion abroad, is incomprehensible without some understanding of the primitive psychology that made it possible.

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The decadence of the archaic civilization. The errors of neo-Darwinian theory and the widespread harm they have caused. They are the result not of observation and historical data but of theory. The decay in art and workmanship. Architectural degeneration. Rudeness of the Celts and Saxons and the irrelevance of the racial theory. The decadence of Egypt throws a strong light upon the meaning of degeneration. The growth of fear and the destructive spirit. The change in the intellectual idea of magic due to the multiplication of demons. The growth of formalism, the paralysis it caused and its relation to war. The decadence of Cretan culture. The black magic of the Celts. The cult of fear. Causes of the recovery of civilization in Greece and mediæval England. The theory of human sacrifice. Its intensification with the decadence. Egyptian origin of the institution. The relation of human sacrifice to demonism, the cult of fear and the change from white to black magic. Human sacrifice one of the causes of war. Illustrations of parallel developments in England. Human sacrifice once an institution supported by Church, State and Morality. Its significance for ourselves.

'It would be a valuable contribution to the study of civilization to have the action of decline and fall investigated on a wider and more exact basis of evidence than has yet been attempted. It may perhaps give no unfair idea to compare degeneration of culture, both in its kind of operation and in its immense extent, to denudation in the geological history of the earth.'

E. B. TYLOR, *Primitive Culture*

'An honest god is the noblest work of man.'

INGERSOLL

'Sculptured figures abound, and the ruins of forts, palaces, baths, aqueducts and temples can be everywhere traced. . . . One is overwhelmed by the contemplation of these innumerable sculptures, worked with delicacy and artistic feeling in a hard, intractable, trachytic rock, and all found in one tropical island. What could have been the state of society, what the amount of population, what the means of subsistence which rendered such gigantic works possible, will, perhaps, ever remain a mystery: and it is a wonderful example of the power of religious ideas in social life, that in the very country where, 500 years ago, these grand works were being yearly executed, the inhabitants now only build rude houses of bamboo and thatch, and look upon these relics of their forefathers with ignorant amazement, as the undoubted production of giants or demons. . . . The traveller . . . is struck by the solemnity and picturesque beauty of the scene, and is led to ponder on the strange law of progress, which looks so like retrogression, and which in so many distant parts of the world has exterminated or driven out a highly artistic and constructive race to make room for one which, so far as we can judge, is very far its inferior.

A. R. WALLACE, *The Malay Archipelago*

CHAPTER TEN: DEGENERATION

PART I

The Meaning of Degeneration

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§ I. THE DECADENCE OF MATERIAL CULTURE

THE reader who has not succumbed to fatigue and impatience at this stage of our journey along the faint trackways of prehistory and among the ruins of archaic life, will need no introduction to the subject of this Chapter. It has been implicit in our theme from the beginning, and as we toiled onwards though not upwards, it has thrust itself ever more insistently upon our notice. We have watched the decline of civilization in its expansion from a common source, first operating in the Mediterranean kingdoms where its creative vitality fails to reach the summit of the Egyptian and Cretan cultures, and travelling further downhill upon the wider circumference of Asia, Europe and Africa. A further stage of decay is registered by the two phases of the megalithic civilization in England, erroneously called the 'Neolithic' and the 'Bronze' Ages, and a much steeper descent takes place with the arrival on our shores of the warlike aristocracies of the Celts, while with the Saxons we are at the very bottom of the hill of civilization, which is carved by a connected series of terraces, one above the other, differing in the lengths of the balks and degrees of abruptness, and representing a series of cultural planes in the record of human progress.¹

¹ The Celts of the Iron Age stand to the Bronze Age a little as the Georgian stands to the Victorian period. The Celts reaped the fruits of the archaic institutions; we are reaping the fruits of Victorian ideas about progress.

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The story of the Fall of Lucifer has also taught us that the degeneration of material cultures is accompanied by certain changes in human behaviour. It is mirrored in the development of organized warfare and its psychological reactions of insensitiveness to the finer values, disrespect for human life, and the like, in the growth of the spirit of destruction and in a deterioration of the character of the gods. We are thus entitled to the verdict that the principle of degeneration is not really a principle or inevitable law at all. Cultural decadence is conditioned by the status and valuations of human society and them only.

We thus find ourselves in radical opposition to the articles of the modern 'evolutionary' creed, which assumes the development of civilization to have taken place in a direction exactly the reverse of that revealed by evidence and observation. And it formulates its dogmas, not a whit less inhuman and stereotyped than those of Egyptian sacerdotalism during the decadence, upon the hypothesis that there is some such exterior principle of evolution which governs human society in its ascent, along independent lines, from savagery to civilization. Into this arbitrary frame the history of the past has been forcibly squeezed, while the uniform elements of ancient cultures have been explained by the magic formula of 'the similarity of the workings of the human mind,' a factor, besides, which ignores the local divergencies of such cultures.

The position, then, is as follows. A material degradation took place in the constructive energies of the archaic civilization culminating at different periods of time in exhaustion and barbarism: a 'moral' deterioration coincided with it. So what we have to do now is to try and clarify the term 'degeneration,' particularly from its ethical side, and illustrate to what extent its two aspects are interrelated.

I hardly think it necessary to recapitulate at any length the story of the material and architectural decline of our own

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civilization between the Ægean and the Saxon occupations. We are going downhill all the way just as we leave the Downs for the valley from the monuments of the first to the monuments of the last. Avebury (some of whose stones I believe to have been shaped¹) shrank into a toy Stonehenge; Silbury and the long barrows associated with the first megalithic phase declined into the cists and round barrows associated with the second. The round barrow then took up the running and steadily grew smaller until we come to the anthills of the Saxons. By the time of the Celtic Bronze Age (1000 B.C.), stone building meant no more than a cairn and the Iron Age dawned without it. Even the Normans² built their first castles of wood before they learned stone masonry.

It must be understood, of course, that I am now speaking in round and simplified terms. Some of the smaller round barrows are undoubtedly contemporary with larger, just as there are long barrows varying from 200 to nearly 400 feet long. But such apparent confusions to the sequence of our text are involved in questions of geographical distribution and the importance or the reverse of local settlements, questions I have already scanned. The general drift towards a less skilled, painstaking, durable and monumental construction, towards a decline both in the scale and workmanship of architecture, is not disputable. Only very small barrows, for instance, contain the war-chariot, a Celtic importation, while J. R. Mortimer remarks that *all* the Yorkshire barrows which contain primary interments of the Iron Age are 'very small compared with the barrows of the stone and bronze periods.' And there are more remains of the Iron Age in his district (East Yorkshire) than anywhere else

¹ See Chapter I. Mr. A. D. Passmore, (*Man*, 1920) maintains that some of the stones of the Uffington Chambered Long Barrow near Avebury, known as 'Wayland Smith's Forge,' had their surfaces artificially smoothed and pounded.

² For the Romans see later.

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in England. I have given abundant evidence to show how extensive was the parasitism of the Celtic warriors upon the archaic civilization and their general disinclination towards constructive works is well illustrated by the frequency of secondary and tertiary interments accompanied by bronze and iron weapons of war in the barrows of the megalithic ages. This process was carried still further by the Saxons, who built very few barrows of their own at all, and those very small and low and mostly of an oblong shape, if shaped they can be called.

Siret, indeed, speaks of the post-megalithic period in Western Europe in unequivocal terms:

‘Les Celts . . . étaient ce que les anciens appelaient des Barbares: cela signifie qu’ils n’avaient aucune des qualités qui font le raffinement des peuples orientaux; qu’ils étaient tout particulièrement ennemis des arts, gravure, sculpture, peinture, écriture. Aussi leur apparition dans la Péninsule [Spain] amena-t-elle la décadence complète de l’art.’

According to Prof. Rhys, the tools of the Aryan-speaking people were usually rude, and though there certainly are fine examples of Celtic craftsmanship in England (particularly in enamels), it cannot be claimed that as a whole Celtic implements compare in artistry with those of the ‘Neolithic’ and early Bronze Ages. A powerful illustration is given by comparing the differences in quality of workmanship between the beaker of the late ‘Neolithic’ and early Bronze Ages and the cinerary urn of the Celtic Bronze Age. In the Catalogue of the Stourhead Collection of Wiltshire Antiquities (Devizes Museum, 1896), the urn is described as of ‘very rough thick pottery imperfectly tempered and burnt and with a considerable admixture of broken flint or chalk in the clay. Ornament is commonly confined to the deep, overhanging rim.’ The beaker, on the other hand, is ‘of

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finer, thinner clay and better fired than the cinerary urns. The whole surface is usually covered with ornament.' The decline is even truer of the English Saxons, who deposited unworked lumps of amber¹ in the shallow mounds of their dead and whose workmanship was coarse and rough. We must not confuse a greater facility in the use of metals bequeathed by previous inventions with the artistic capacity revealed in the manipulation of less tractable material.²

§ 2. THE TRIVIALITY OF THE RACIAL PROBLEM

In order not to overweigh this Chapter with data, I have gathered into an appendix to it some parallel examples of material degeneration abroad. There is not room for them all, for the process was universal, as universal as the transformation, of which it was a symptom, from sun-god to war-god. I will therefore conclude this portion of our theme with the obvious reflection that the study of early civilization here, as elsewhere, is a cultural and in no sense a racial problem. This truism has become a paradox because of the modern obsession with racial problems, culminating in the dangerous fallacies of the Nordic school, with its cant of racial superiority. If the Anglo-Saxon 'race' be indeed superior to other 'races,' the reason lies in the quality of its cultural environment and not in the shape of the head, the colour of the hair and the length of the limbs.

So, on the other hand, the Saxons were not predatory

¹ The amber of the megalith-builders is cut with precision and delicacy.

² The beautiful gold lunulæ or collars of prehistoric Ireland are not Celtic at all: 'Dublin Museum with its unparalleled wealth of gold ornaments from prehistoric Ireland has no more than two which are of Celtic design' and 'the great bulk of gold used after the Celtic invasion was not native gold' (Mrs. Greene). But that of megalithic Ireland was, and the fact speaks for itself. Mr. R. E. M. Wheeler, in 'Prehistoric and Roman Wales' (1926), places the lunulæ in the early Bronze Age and points their kinship with the Ægean 'horns of consecration.'

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barbarians because they were Saxons,¹ but because they were so unfortunate as to inherit the sediment of the archaic civilization in the form of debased institutions which had ceased to express human values or vitality. The fathers have eaten sour grapes. . . . The Saxon invaders of England were not inherently more savage and less intelligent than the Mediterranean peoples: their energies were directed into unfruitful paths, paths leading to savagery and stupidity, because the stock of ideas they received piloted them thither.

This is not speculation but history, for the customs and institutions of the Saxons betray the same evidences, some further degrees removed, of cultural parasitism as those of the Celts. How then came the Saxons of England, or rather that congeries of peoples represented by the Saxon and Celtic invasions and the successive Mediterranean colonizations, to achieve the civilization of the Middle Ages? Why did not the process of barbarization continue until the inhabitants of England had reached the bottom of cultural stagnation of which the African Bantu and indeed all the savage tribes of the world, who can be shown (as they can be shown) to be the debris of the archaic civilization, are examples? Why are we not beating tom-toms and waving assegais to-day? I must reserve the answer to a later portion of this Chapter.

§ 3. THE DECADENCE OF EGYPT

The story of the decadence of Egypt, the creator of the archaic civilization, can be read in Prof. Breasted's *The Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* (1912).

¹ A good example of the delusiveness of the racial and reality of the cultural test is afforded by the long barrows of England and Northern Europe. The latter contain burials of a broad-headed, the former of a long-headed race, and long barrows, as we have seen, represent a perfectly distinctive cultural environment.

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He takes us from the Pyramid Ages of the Old Kingdom, which ended with the establishment of the solar cult as the official religion in the Sixth Dynasty, through the Middle Kingdom or Feudal Age at the opening of the second millennium, the period responsible by way of the Ægean for our 'Neolithic' Age, and so on to the earlier centuries of the Empire which developed from the expulsion of the foreign Hyksos in 1588 B.C. Him we will take for a while as our running text for the good reason that it helps us to detect the interaction between material retrogression and the denudation of the mind and the soul, and so to define the significance of the latter a little more precisely.

Before the political revolution of the Heliopolitans (the triumph of the solar cult), the Osirian religion, mingled with solar elements, retained its power. Prof. Breasted calls it a 'religion of the people,' which offered to all men, irrespective of rank, a share in the felicitous labours of the subterranean kingdom of Osiris. Up to the days of the Empire, the Egyptians were always a people of concrete ideas,¹ who expressed their art in graphic and pictorial forms, and who, upon the negative side, developed so amazingly literal a conception of immortality and of the life after death.

In the Middle Kingdom, when the solar cult had long become the state religion, had triumphed over the popular faith (see Breasted) and excluded the commonalty from the enjoyment of the sky-world after death, we witness a new departure of thought. The kingly idea has become hard-set and the solar rays grow more and more malignant. Abstract moral ideas have become crystallized and a period of disillusionment has set in. The attempt to scale the sky-world up a stone staircase is seen to be illusion and something of the discontent fomented by the more and more rigid division of classes has made its appearance. We have

¹ 'The Egyptian thought not of theft but a thief, not of love but of a lover, not of poverty but of a poor man.'

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'The Dialogue of a Misanthrope with his own Soul,' a poem of the Twelfth Dynasty, which condemns the corruptions and injustices of society upon the theme that 'the gentle man perishes,' 'the bold-faced goes everywhere.' It owes its origin, says the Professor, 'to the individual experiences through which the men of this time were really passing.' To practically the same period belong the sombre meditations of a Heliopolitan priest under Sesostris II (1906-1887) and 'many of his reflections might find an appropriate place in the mouth of a morally sensitive observer of our own times.' We have the tale of the friendless and forlorn figure of the despoiled peasant, and of the 'Admonitions of Ipuwer' with their refrain of 'the joy and prosperity of the land in a happier age.' How strange to think that the lord who lies buried in the West Kennet Long Barrow was perhaps aware of these literary discontents! The Middle Kingdom, then, represents a period of scepticism at 'the conventional virtues of the official class.' It also coincided with an added respect for the Old Kingdom (partly formal and conservative, no doubt, but partly real) and of the re-emergence of the Osirian faith in a new guise.

In a new guise, because the Osirian kingdom of the nether-world has now become a hereafter 'full of ordeals and dangers.' From now onwards the omnipresence of magic as a preservative *against* the potencies of dark forces in the living and the unseen worlds has become a predominant element. What Prof. Breasted calls the 'Coffin Texts' of the Middle Kingdom clearly reflect this preoccupation, but it has become much more manifest in the *Book of the Dead*¹ of the sixteenth century, the day of the rise of the military Empire. In this age occurred 'a great elaboration of magical

¹ Any reader of the British Museum text of the *Book of the Dead* (1920) can see for himself that the gods were really powerless against this throng of evil spirits. Even Ré the supreme only preserved himself by the possession of a secret name.

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devices,' to correspond with the multiplication and greater assiduity of the powers of evil. Everywhere lurked these spirits to menace the health, the happiness and daily functions of the living and to harass the disembodied dead upon their thorny road to the kingdom of Osiris. And with this intensification of sorcery and enchantment collapses the old peasant vision of the hereafter as a common labouring in the happy fields. We are in an age of wealth and luxury and the dead lord takes with him the wooden figures of his servants into a new world as privileged for him as the old. Again has this tendency strengthened between the Coffin Texts and the *Book of the Dead*. Writes the Professor:

'While the *Book of the Dead* discloses to us more fully than ever before in the history of Egypt the character of the moral judgment in the hereafter, and the reality with which the Egyptian clothed his conception of moral responsibility, it is likewise a revelation of ethical decadence. In so far as the *Book of the Dead* had become a magical agency for securing moral vindication in the hereafter, irrespective of character, it had become a positive force for evil.'

It is indeed perfectly obvious that the old conception of 'givers of life,'¹ round which grew the nucleus of magic, has been almost totally subverted. Magic has now become an exorcism reflected in the forces of destruction, threatening at every hap, pressing in on every side, muddying the stream of life, souring and contorting the human contact with the world and obscuring the light of reality. But scan the Pyramid Texts, earlier than both the *Book of the Dead* and the Coffin Texts, and fear, whether of gods or devils, is quite absent. Their whole stress is upon the desirableness and perpetuation of life, and Mr. Bertrand Russell's statement

¹ See close of Chapter VI.

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in *What I Believe* (1925), that fear is the *source* of religion, is flatly contradicted by them.

I need hardly remind the reader how closely this account of Prof. Breasted's tallies with what I have already written concerning the transformation of the gods into demons¹ and the passing of the old kindly and creative influences. The growth of magic is simply the obverse of the growth of the destructive principle.

Then, during the expansion of Egypt's military imperialism in the fourteenth century, rose the solitary figure of Akhnaton, upon whom the modern Press has thought it worth while to vent its censure. Prof. Breasted describes him as 'the first individual in history,' and 'the world's first revolutionist,' the man who broke the mould of the old forms, ignored convention, ceremony, myth and tradition, and for two miraculous years overthrew the whole vast pantechnicon of magical formulæ and ecclesiasticism. In social life, he was the champion of the distressed; in politics he was hostile to imperial aggrandisement in Asia; and in religion he made the desperate attempt to restore the individual into personal relation with the godhead. He tried to do for Egypt, in fact, what Christ failed to do for the Jews and Buddha succeeded in doing for the Burmese. He made an extraordinarily gallant and devoted attempt to arrest the downward progress of mankind, and, before the flood rolled over him, he actually seems to have dammed the tide so that it reflected the light of creation.

A few years later we find him referred to as the 'criminal of Akhetaton,' and from that time forward Egypt never looked back. 'A deadly and indifferent inertia fell like a stupor upon the once vigorous life of the nation,' and 'the development which now ensued was purely institutional and involved no progress in thought.' Life was submerged in

¹ Breasted justly quotes Ingersoll's remarks that 'an honest god is the noblest work of man.'

THE DECADENCE OF EGYPT

forms, 'the creative age of inner development' was stunted, and Egypt, 'dwelling fondly and wistfully on her far-away youth, rapidly degenerated into a sacerdotal state,' to such an extent that when Herodotus peeps in with his notebook upon the stage, he calls the Egyptian religion 'one of innumerable external observances and mechanical usages,' carried out with such punctiliousness that the inner life had disappeared altogether.

What are we to gather from this tragic story of the mother of civilization, of by far the greatest nation of antiquity? A nation which up to historical times excelled all other nations not merely in material achievement but in taste, in humanity, in intellectual quality and in graciousness of spirit, closed her epic as the handmaiden of the Persians, the legatees of Oriental civilization whom the Greeks so truly styled barbarians. We can gather a whole field of inferences, but they will all, I think, be varieties of the same genus. In some way, the decadence of Egypt corresponded with the development of sacerdotalism, of magical rites, of organized warfare, of imperial ambitions, of forms and institutions isolated from human values, of the disappearance of the individual in the State machine, of the loss of the concrete in the abstract, due in the long run to the primary absence of the abstract in the concrete, and of the slipping of man's hold upon reality.

These are really all aspects of one and the same thing, and fit in with loss of power and originality in art. If we look to humanity, we find that the old sense of commonalty was dissipated in the rigidity of caste and the idolatry of the State. If we turn to the arts, we perceive that mortuary art became more and more debased into faithful reproduction, while the portrait statue became identified with the mummy itself. In the earlier ages, the sculptors were not bound so inexorably to conventional forms as they were in the later periods. Or if we attend once more to the warrior, we

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become aware that drill and discipline are the necessary accompaniments of the military state of mind. Represented in art as a demented fury, it takes formality as its proper mate. In every department of Egyptian life, the formula smothered and replaced the power of self-expression. And as we look down the slope of that mountain of human endeavour which was ancient Egypt, in which material culture so faithfully embodies the life of the spirit, expanding with its flow and declining with its ebb,¹ we cannot fail to be struck by the truth and wisdom of William Morris's faith in the essential unity between the arts and the humanities.

§ 4. THE COLLAPSE OF CRETE

Crete tells the same story. The evidence from Crete has to rely mainly upon the condition of the arts, since her historical records are still buried in obscurity. A careful reading of Burrows, Hall and Evans, reveals a high plateau of artistic power broken by two or three sudden dips. But when we reach the Late Minoan period, signs of decadence accumulate and these correspond with the appearance of the bronze sword in Crete itself, and the more manifest beginnings of a warlike attitude in the mainland settlements of Mycenæ and Tiryns. As the Late Minoan Age unfolds, artistic deterioration drops at a steeper angle. There is a more literal and servile imitation of Egyptian models; the wonderfully rich polychrome art disappears, and the pottery becomes coarse and ill-made with a badly finished surface and inferior glaze. The conventionalization of Cretan motives on the mainland stiffens into more and more formal and stereotyped designs, while the architecture is meaner

¹ The art of Tutankhamen's time was very magnificent, but it strikes one as being an insecure and sumptuary art. Thereafter, indeed, it declined with inevitable rapidity.

THE COLLAPSE OF CRETE

in conception and shoddier in execution. The tendency towards the rococo becomes more marked, and with it an obsession with goblins, and grotesque fetish figures of stalagmite for the beautiful porcelain of the earlier periods.

After the sack of Knossos in Late Minoan III, there is in Prof. Burrows's words, a sudden recrudescence of more primitive forms and an abrupt lowering of artistic values. There never was a Late Minoan IV, and Crete sank into that inertia of her vital force from which she has never recovered. The four horsemen, death, formalism, war and greed, rode over her, and the bronze sword she herself had forged put out her life. The last we hear of the Cretans and their flowering spirit epitomizes for us the last chapter of the archaic civilization in a single crushing term. They became – the Philistines.

§ 5. THE CELTIC TWILIGHT

Back to the Celts. It has, I hope, become fairly clear that degeneration, manifested both materially and in the heart of man, is the keynote of the Celtic period in Britain. The Celts and the Saxons are just labels for the last phase of the archaic civilization in these islands, a lesser, a meaner, a more barbarous phase than that which preceded it, and the fruit not of any inexorable law of retrogression, but of the development of certain institutions in the structure of the archaic civilization itself, the most prominent of which was war and the congealed customs and attitudes allied to it. And we have seen again and again that the reason why this purely historical position of ours, is heretical is because ethnology has misapplied certain doctrines of evolution to human affairs and has invented a canon to square with its fanatical creed – the further man goes back into the past, the more beastly and pugnacious he is. Thus the story of civilized mankind has been misread, and this has

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resulted not merely in an elaborate corpus of error but has reacted disastrously upon modern life to the obscuring of its true values and the sanctification of forces injurious to its well-being.

When we examine the monuments of the warlike peoples who inhabited England subsequently to the megalithic ages, which lasted for something under a thousand years between the second and the first millennia B.C., we realize that, in spite of the greater antiquity of their predecessors, they have left nothing like so many and visible inscriptions upon our land. The megalithic peoples positively altered the landscape of the hills; but the marks of the Celtic, the Saxon and even the Roman seals are faint and puny. Why was it that the creative spirit burned so low in them? Why were they content merely to live upon the past, when that past had become a purely academic and so lifeless survival? I attempted to give the answer in the last Chapter, but since it failed to consider the psychological atmosphere in which warfare flourishes, it was only a partial one. But I hope that our run down the slope of the Egyptian decadence will help to make it more complete.

We observed the great proliferation of magical practices that synchronized with the rise of the Egyptian Empire and that the older conception of 'givers of life' that originated the belief in magic had been superseded. White magic became black magic. Magic was no longer life-giving; it was a protection against the avid forces that sought to hurt and destroy life, and I take it that it was the growth of those destructive forces which was responsible for the change in the character of magical beliefs and for the extent of their development. Be sure that the supernatural world kept the register of what was happening to men's minds and institutions.

Now no mental traveller can explore the jungle of Celtic mythology and supernaturalism without realizing that the

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unhappy Celts were completely befuddled with magic. And to wander those thicketed glades that mottle or exclude the beams of reality, is to discern that the Celtic attitude to magic is really the same as, if rather cruder than, that of the Egyptians of the Empire. Prof. Rhys puts his finger on a cardinal truth when he tells us that the Celtic lands were peopled with 'an indefinite number of hurtful and malevolent spirits, goblins and ogresses of all kinds,' and in a forcible phrase he describes the Celtic religion as 'the cult of terror.' We can trace that cult very clearly in the Celtic hatred and terror of the ancestor lords of the archaic civilization, who took their revenge for the loss of their kingdom in haunting the usurpers. The Fomorians were 'demon-bringers of pestilence, gods of monstrosity, of death and night and storm' (Mrs. Greene).

We should find it delightful and amusing to go hunting in Goblin Wood for traces of the archaic civilization, but it is certain that the Celtic reaction to the phenomena of these spirits was a very different one. To understand what it was we have to think of the natives of West Africa, whose lives are one long nightmare, one long despairing bitter strife from the cradle to *beyond* the grave against the hosts of darkness. Or, to seek a parallel nearer home, we get it quick enough in the monstrous theories of the psycho-analysts concerning the demoniac possession of the subconscious. Do I not know what the Celts must have suffered, when my own mind is sometimes filled with phantasmagoric fears, with self-created delusions that make acrid the sweetness of reality? But the Celtic 'cult of terror' was institutionalized; it was a curse which wove fetters out of their whole social and political consciousness. To make the Celts responsible for megalithic England as it once was — what a fairy tale! What force can paralyse the mind and poison the feelings more effectively than the 'cult of terror'? 'Oh, what can ail thee, knight-at-arms, Alone and palely loitering?' The

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trouble with the knight-at-arms was his sword and his armour, for the decay of the archaic civilization meant the growth of war and the growth of war meant the predominance of the forces of destruction, and *their* predominance meant the prosperity of abracadabra. And I am convinced that the glorification of warfare was only made possible by the growth of this capacity for delusion, by the loss of contact with reality of which the new demonism was at once the cause and the effect. Lastly, in Celtic times and those immediately preceding theirs, gods not men are the immortals.¹ This is a change of profound significance. In the early Egyptian, Cretan and Babylonian religions, gods were no more immortal than men. Both had to be reanimated by magical rites. The Cretan Zeus, for instance, was born, bred and buried in the island; Babylonian Tammuz was mourned, not resurrected, and ritual rebirth was the essence of Osiris worship. Immortality, for the early Egyptians, on the other hand, was a common possibility, not a priestly and aristocratic privilege, as it became with the solar cult. Then, there was no clear-cut distinction between gods and mortals, or, in other words, between men and their institutions. But the gods gained what men lost, and men trembled before the celestial machinery they had themselves originally created in their own image.

§ 6. THE RECOVERY OF GREECE

We are now brought up sharp against the absorbing problem, which I have already introduced earlier in the Chapter—how are we to account for the Hellenic and mediæval civilizations? This is a book about the archaic civilization of England, so that (fortunately) it is not my province to answer so very difficult a question except

¹ When Eve ate of the life-giving Tree, 'her "sin" consisted in aspiring to attain the immortality which was the exclusive privilege of the gods' (Elliot Smith, *The Evolution of the Dragon*, p. 159).

THE RECOVERY OF GREECE

cursorily and by way of illustrating our theme. Hellenic civilization and Celtic barbarism are not separable phenomena for a number of reasons. The homeland of the Celts was much closer to Greece than to Gaul or Britain; Celtic and Grecian mythologies are plainly allied and the Dorians who destroyed Crete and its mainland grafting, Mycenæ, somewhere between 1200-1000 B.C., were one of the heterogeneous Celtic tribes. The Hellenes, moreover, inherited the archaic civilization even more directly than did the Celts. Yes, but not parasitically, for, though the Greeks were warlike, commercially greedy and slave-owning, we cannot deny their claim to a genuine civilization. A part reason for so surprising an escape from the common drift into degeneracy was no doubt the geographical position of Greece. She lay, that is to say, within close range of the Ægean culture of Crete, a culture that remained comparatively peaceful throughout its history, preserved the refinements of its Egyptian source, while the near Asiatic kingdoms were rattling into barbarism, and at the same time developed a fresh and vigorous life of its own. It is a safe verdict that without Crete there would have been no classical Greece.

Safe indeed! Where but in the brain of an historian, bemused with credos and abstractions, could have been hatched the fantasy that the savage Dorians could ever have evolved an art of their own? We do not need to finger the stuff of Greek mythology to detect the Cretan warp and woof, to point to the continuity of Cretan and Hellenic religion at Delphi, or to perceive a direct descendant of the earliest Greek temple in the Mycænæan Megaron. Whose golden lyre stilled the shouting of the northern chieftains and woke the sleeping woods to the bright processions of Dionysus¹ but the Phæacian, the mariner, the bringer of

¹ The Greek Osiris. 'The ceremonies and rites of Osiris,' writes Diodorus, 'agree in everything with those of Bacchus.' The ivy was sacred to them both;

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beauty, the feaster and the dancer from desolated Crete? Before the Grecian Urn was the Harvester's Vase from Hagia Triada, whereon the rollicking boys of the Harvest Home troll a folk-ballad that was heard in Avebury and is so loud with life that we can hear it even now. That Vase is to me the secret of the Cretan Isle where art was Blake's exuberance, where the Great Mother dwelt with peace and abundance so much longer than elsewhere, and whose delights the formalist with his commands and frowns was slow to break.

But that is not the whole story. The parallels between the Celts and the Hellenes show that the ones failed where the others succeeded. The Greeks broke the mould of the old forms and reset them to new patterns; they returned to the concrete and got a new grip upon reality. It is plain that the attitude of the Greeks to their gods and spirits was quite different from that of the Celts. The gods retain their humanity, so to speak, and the sceptical, pictorial, tolerant, human and even companionly spirit in which the Greeks regarded them has little trace of the 'cult of terror.' Their goddesses were beautiful courtesans, comely matrons or fleet-limbed girls; they were certainly not hags nor pouncers upon the shuddering soul of humanity. Yet the Greeks only partially recovered the poetry of the actual; their life was a sudden flame rather than a light and the warlike mentality which they received from the Dorians and the decaying institutions of the archaic civilization quickly put an end to them.

§ 7. THE NEW LIFE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

But what of our own Middle Ages, with its superb stonework, its ghastly superstitions and cruelties, and its concrete both were lords of the underworld. The limbs of Dionysus were scattered abroad and collected by Ceres as the bones of Osiris were by Isis. Osiris, like Dionysus, diffused the culture of the vine.

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imaginative unity? I think the answer is much the same. Of one thing we may be certain. It was not the Romans, deriving their culture from the Greeks and the megalithic Etruscans, who civilized the Celts and the Iberians of barbarian England. Nearly two millennia after the Ægean mariners had set up the dolmens of Cornwall and the stones of Avebury, the Romans came, they tramped along their dull straight roads, taut as will-power, direct as Oliver Cromwell, determined as a hero in Miss Ethel Dell's novels, and undeviating as a gigantic yard-measure; they took out of the country its wealth in men and things, and they went, leaving what? According to Sir Lawrence Gomme (*Village Community*) little of any value at all, but, according to Professor Haverfield (*The Roman Occupation of Britain*), nothing. But we hardly need the testimony of such august authorities to realize a very simple fact. Were the mixed peoples of England who saw the last Roman galleys hoisting their sails any more civilized than the mixed peoples who saw the first ones reefing them? It is incontrovertible knowledge that they were not. It cannot seriously be contested that the Saxon freebooters were harrying a civilized England. Where are its monuments?

Therefore, the only possible conclusion is that we owe the Middle Ages to the Christian missionaries, to yet another peaceful penetration from the Mediterranean, the fount of civilization. A new and brighter stream gushed from those ancient springs and irrigated a soil parched ever since its second tide had receded. The new voyagers came with no arms in their hands except the invisible hammer that had once more broken the mould of the old forms. They came preaching the gospel of peace and light, releasing men from the deadly grip of institutional fears and barbarities, bringing them back to their senses, removing the encumbrances to the spouting of the life within them. I think it could be shown that every one of these great movements of emancipation,

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from Akhnaton to St. Augustine, was simply a process of restoring the human being to himself. But once more it was incomplete, and the church within the earthwork tells a very long story. The Christian teachers elaborated the mysteries of their religion upon the basis of the old faiths, and we are soon confronted with Christian imps for Pagan goblins. But when the missionaries came into contact with the at once rude and outworn cults of Saxon and Celtiberian England, the new faith was yet in its innocence, and that faith was a reinterpretation of the gospel of life, which has had so many disciples and so many martyrs. Upon its sacred site grew the cathedrals of the Middle Ages.

PART II

Human Sacrifice

*

§ I. THE ORIGIN OF HUMAN SACRIFICE

How strange, how ironical are the human creases on the aged face of Salisbury Plain! Here at Avebury, the country wears the tranquil impress of a society as yet peaceful and harmonious. Nature in her subtle way has blest its works, painted them with her meditative brush, folded them in the quietude of time. Foreign they may be, but not to her, who has Englished them so lovingly and strewn them with the myriad twinkling little flowers that deck them. She has dealt gently with them, and spared them and blended them with her enduring works:

How different when we travel southward towards Stonehenge and see on every rise and abutment of the Avon valley the modern camps of the military, protruding like Pistol's

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whelks and bubukles out of the landscape. These hutments, an index to man's violation of himself, have an air of forcible intrusion upon the countryside, an unwelcome imposition. They are not of the accepted of nature, but a warty excrescence upon the curves and folds of her country face, and disfigure it to 'a sneer of cold command,' such as remained upon the crumbled visage of Ozymandias in the desert. Even the sky, which does more for the flowers than their mother and uses the whole earth for an open sheet whereon to write the riches of its meditations, condemns them. Its shades frown on them and light ridicules them. We feel as we look at them that Nature's Wiltshire only bides its time, contains its patience, until it effaces them for ever and leaves not a scar behind.

Meanwhile, we have arrived at Stonehenge, that in relation to the barbed wire and military encampments hustling it round looks like a super-shell dump. We mark a number of circular and equidistant incisions in the turf at the foot of the miniature earthwork surrounding the outer circle. In these, recent excavation discovered an equal number of human remains, and there can be little doubt from their position within the precincts of the temple that they were the victims of formal sacrifice.¹ Nobody dreams of connecting them with the military hutments that thrust themselves upon the sight in every direction. But, alas, they are connected, and in the relation of father to son, no matter how many centuries separate them, for out of the first, in slow and logical sequence, grew the last. And to stand by Stonehenge, looking out over the near distances, is to roll up the centuries 'into one ball,' as Marvell says, and gazing into its crystal, to see unfolded there the tragic history of mankind.

I have chosen the institution of Human Sacrifice to cover the second half of this Chapter because it affords us a lumin-

¹ I do not mean to imply that these interments are contemporary with Stonehenge itself.

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ous commentary upon the meaning of degeneration. Within the scope of so sharply defined a practice, how peculiar was the thought of the archaic civilization, and how complex were its inter-relations! The institution of human sacrifice sets out in dramatic form the cause of its downfall, the relationship of so formal a piety to the development of warfare, the effects of the dominance of the destructive spirit upon civilized communities, and the incalculable power of social institutions to alter human feeling and conduct. But before considering the philosophy of human sacrifice, let us glance at its historical perspective.

The 'evolutionary' ethnologists associate its original practice with what they call primitive savagery. They have to, or there would be very little left of such doctrines as misapplied to human society. As, however, its relation to agriculture is that of the circulation of the blood to the beating of the heart, we need not delay our journey over such pseudo-scientific obstacles. It can be proved and indeed has been proved that not a single genuinely *primitive* society ever dreamed of sacrificing human beings to guarantee a good harvest for non-existent crops.

The testimony of the historians is that human sacrifice, with the possible exception of the Sed festival, only practised on the confines of Egypt, was rare in Egypt until the Eighteenth Dynasty. For human the Egyptians substituted animal sacrifice, and in the later periods, when the idea of supplying a dead lord with a retinue had developed, the ushabti-figure took the place of family and servants. Just as magic was originally concerned not with the destructive but the creative forces of life, so was human sacrifice with fertility. When Osiris was deified he became the Nile; he embodied the principle of water that made the desert blossom and the bread of life to rustle in the fields. Early kings in Egypt were identified with Osiris in the hereafter, and so they too represented the principle of

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fruitfulness. The vigour of the crops and the virility of the king came to mean two necessities in one.¹ Therefore, the Egyptians argued, the king must not grow old, or we shall have, so to speak, a senile harvest. So they sacrificed him, and this practice, which Dr. Elliot Smith has forcibly stressed, is undoubtedly the true reading of the origin of sacrifice. In the early days of civilization, sacrifice meant not atonement but at-one-ment. But, of course, it is inconvenient to kill your king in a monarchical state, and thus the practice of substitution arose. But, as I have said, and by so saying merely follow every Egyptologist, human sacrifice was abandoned in Egypt. A sacred animal substitute took the place of the king. The Egyptians were a concrete but not a sufficiently logical people. Even as an act of state piety they were too humane to stomach human sacrifice. In its worst decadence, Egypt never achieved the coarseness and brutality of the Asiatic Empires, whose education in violence became so much more complete. In Crete, the story of Theseus and the Minotaur is surely direct evidence for the sacrifice of human victims. Such a story is obviously based upon conditions in the Late Minoan period, and though there are plenty of indications of the sacrifice of animals in the earlier periods, there is none of human sacrifice. The Cretans used figurines for human victims, but at Mycenæ, human have been found mingled with animal bones at the entrances of the rock-tombs.² That is a significant example of degeneration. When we turn to Nubia, whose colonization by Egypt and

¹ I observe the same idea surviving among the Celts. A Celtic king must be perfect in strength and physique, for 'when the rightful king recovers his power, the seasons become tranquil, the cows give milk in abundance, the earth is fruitful, the rivers teem with fish and the trees bend heavy-laden under their crop of fruit' (Rhys, *Celtic Britain*, 2nd Ed., 1884). When Nuada of the Silver Hand, one of the Goidelic war-gods, lost his hand in war, he also lost his crown. But he is not sacrificed. Of the vegetation and kingship fertility idea, part survives and part has been lost.

² See Prof. Glotz, *The Ægean Civilization* (1925).

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degeneration under a military aristocracy are described in the Appendix to this Chapter, we find, not that the portrait statues replace the living, but that the dead chief's family was buried alive with him.

§ 2. DEMONISM AND THE GROWTH OF HUMAN SACRIFICE

In studying the early civilization of the East, we can watch the dragon crawling downhill and the fire from his nostrils burning ever more fiercely as he reaches the lower slopes. We can see the forms of Hathor and Isis change from maternity and fruitfulness to the serpent and the lioness-goddess, Sekhmet; Hercules¹ to Moloch; sun-god to war-god; divinity to demonism. Likewise shall we watch the intensification of human sacrifice with time. Consult Westermarck² and he comments that 'we meet with human sacrifice in the past history of every so-called Aryan race.' 'The practice cannot be regarded as a characteristic of savage [he means primitive] races. On the contrary it is found much more frequently among barbarians and semi-civilized peoples.' He gives a list of these nations, the Fijians, the Carthaginians, the Aztecs and others, nations governed by the military aristocracies who broke away from the archaic civilization and overturned its government.

The Aztecs used to sacrifice 60,000 human victims at their great festivals, and they tried not to kill but to capture the Spaniards to furnish their altars with fresh streams of blood. Says Prescott of the cannibalism of the Mexicans (*Conquest of Mexico*):

'human remains were served at banquets teeming with delicious beverages and delicate viands, prepared with art and attended by both sexes, who . . . conducted themselves

¹ In Asia - Melkarth, the 'king of the city.'

² *Moral Ideas*, Vol. I.

DEMONISM AND HUMAN SACRIFICE

with all the decorum of civilized life. Surely never were refinement and the extreme of barbarism brought so closely in contact with each other.'

One has only to mention Carthage, the decadent offshoot of Tyre (see Appendix), to smell the altars of Baal and Moloch. When Agathocles, tyrant of Syracuse, besieged Carthage, 200 children of the best families were rolled into the furnaces from the arms of the bronze Moloch. Kenrick and others of the Phœnician historians all testify to the growth of the savage, destroying element in the Phœnician solar gods and their later association with the earthquake, the storm and the pestilence. When children were offered them, it was the national pride, the social piety, the political worthiness of their mothers never to shed a tear. The fanatical rites associated with Baal-worship, when Bedlam was let loose and the priests howled and cut themselves with knives, this is history not prehistory. Human sacrifice has obviously become a kind of amulet or charm to assuage the malice and blood-hunger of these demons, and it is interesting, therefore, to note Mr. Perry's statement that 'incantations, imprecations, magic and common sorcery' were part of the sacrificial dues to the Kali-Hathor of India, where ceremonial murder was held in particular esteem. Magic and human sacrifice followed arm-in-arm the same course downhill.

§ 3. THE CHANGE IN THE THEORY OF HUMAN SACRIFICE

Even so brief a survey, taken, however, over widely parted regions of the world, suggests that human sacrifice followed the same line of descent as other elements of degeneration. In later, more moral times, it became inseparable from the 'cult of terror,' and grew more intense with the transformation of gods into goblins. Before, there-

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fore, tracing its former presence in England, let us, by other methods of approach, see whether these lines of historical sequence can be drawn closer. For an apparent difficulty confronts us – the very close association between human sacrifice and agriculture, and so with the cults of Osiris and the Great Mother. Now the warlike aristocracies who swept over the megalithic and agricultural communities of Europe were pastoral nomads rather than tillers of the soil. How then are we to account for the intensification of human sacrifice in the decadent phases of the archaic civilization, when its original associations had thus become semi-detached? The answer is that agriculture did survive among the Celtic cattle-heroes, though on a much diminished scale; that the rites of Osiris survived in the mystery cult of Celtic Druidism; that the Great Mother survived in the forms of Ceridwen, Danu, and other goddesses of the Celtic world; that sun-worship, with which the human sacrifice of the Phœnicians was bound up, survived in academic forms, even though the Children of the Sun were no more. In this decadence we are witnessing a series of transformations, not of endings and beginnings; we are not reading new books but new chapters in one and the same book. In other words, the *theory* of human sacrifice changed with the theory of magic, and in exactly the same direction.

The middle period of the archaic civilization, that of the Children of the Sun and the dominance of the solar deities, falls more or less into line with the middle age both of the dragon and the gods. It is the half-way house between the City of Creation and the Camp of Destruction. I have already quoted Prof. Langdon's remark in *Tammuz and Ishtar* that the Great Mother tends to become malevolent 'as soon as she becomes associated with the light that streams from the heavenly bodies.' The Egyptian story of the Destruction of Mankind, in which Hathor vents her fury upon mankind, is a solar myth, and subsequent to the dis-

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placement of Osiris-worship by Ré-worship. And it is, I take it, in this period that the original theory of human sacrifice becomes modified.

How easy is the transition, even though the accent is now on calamity rather than on bounty! First of all, you kill a human being to guarantee a good harvest; you then kill one to avert the possibilities, the increasing possibilities of a bad one. And all the evidence I have been able to gather of human sacrifice in the later phases of the archaic civilization points to this conclusion. Westermarck says that sacrifice was 'to avert perils'; sacrifice was most rampant in Carthage during sieges and pestilences. The Gauls, the Greeks, the Romans and the Jews sacrificed human victims before battle. And the greater and more frequent the calamities, the more numerous the victims. I do not for one moment wish to claim that the propitiatory element is exhaustive of the sacrificial motive. But I think it is clear that human sacrifice was not propitiatory at all in its origins, and I do claim that, like magic, it became more and more definitely linked with the forces of destruction which mankind was unchaining and which so sorely afflicted it in the dark ages of barbarism which followed the archaic civilization.

Thus, though human sacrifice died out, at least in its stereotyped forms, and war did not, the twain are necessarily allied. The same twist or perversion of idea which bids the State sacrifice its people's lives for the sake of some abstract good is implicit in them both, as is the odd marriage between violence and formality. Both, as institutions, played a momentous part in transforming natural human kindness into virtuous and artificial cruelty. Both were implicit in the constitution of the archaic civilization and both came to a head in its decline. It seems, however, that their association is even closer. Mr. Perry, in *The Children of the Sun*, says:

'The widespread existence of human sacrifice throughout

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the region [the Pacific], and its direct association with the head-hunting of Indonesia and elsewhere, suggests that the earliest form of warfare was bound up with the killing of victims for human sacrifice.'

In other words, sacrificial victims were not always sufficiently magnanimous and patriotic to make voluntary offering of their lives for the good of the State. They therefore had to be constrained to such benevolence on the behalf of their fellow-men, and so, in Assyria, Mexico and elsewhere, the principal victims were captives of war. When the king himself was sacrificed, 'it is hard to see,' as Mr. Perry remarks, 'what warlike developments could take place.' That is further evidence of the peacefulness of the archaic civilization before the decline.

And now let us turn our course for the last time to England.

§ 4. HUMAN SACRIFICE IN BRITAIN

There is not the shadow of a doubt that human sacrifice was once practised in pre-Roman and probably even post-Roman Britain. The references to it in folk-lore and tradition are very numerous. I propose to give a few examples chosen at haphazard from many others and without ulterior motive, because it was not until I had collected them – for their picturesqueness, one might say – that I perceived they led to a definite conclusion.

Both Suetonius and Tacitus speak of the bloody sacrificial rites which the Romans suppressed in the Island of Mona (Anglesea) when they cut down the Druidical groves. The blood of prisoners of war was spilt upon the altars and the will of the gods explored in the entrails of men. The bel-fires and 'Beltane' feasts of legend were also sacrificial. The suggestive little book, *The Hill and the Circle*, referred to in

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my Chapter on the earthworks, summarizes the evidence as to the observance of these eldritch rites in the south-west. Many places both in Cornwall and Devon – Honiton, Lostwithiel, Holne, a village on Dartmoor, Scilly and others – retain to this day, or did until yesterday, traditions of human sacrifice and the choosing of a substitute or temporary king, which, as we know from the example of Egypt, was the source of the custom. May Day was the usual choice for the festival, as it naturally would be, since the success of the crops depended upon the vitality of the Pharaoh, and the pouring of the blood of the victim or victims into the ground was an insurance for the exuberance of the harvest to be. The granite pile of Roughtor on Bodmin Moor (tin, gold and megaliths) was known in the last century as the Slaughter House, and the tradition was that both men and animals as substitutes for the Izaaks lapsed were offered up there. At Holne, a ram used to be sacrificed, its blood poured into the earth and its flesh ceremoniously eaten on May morning at a menhir in the middle of a field. Johnson, in *Folk Memory*, says that 'struggles took place for slices of the animal, which were treasured as amulets and mascots. The festival, which lasted till midnight, was prolonged with dancing, wrestling and drinking.' Here the two motives of fertility and preventive magic are mingled.

In *Ancient Man in Britain* (1912), Mr. Donald Mackenzie mentions the pagan god called 'Cenn Cruach' or 'Cromm Cruach,' whose stone statue was adorned with gold and silver and surrounded by twelve other statues (menhirs in a circle) decked with bronze ornaments. The statue was called 'the king idol of Erin' and to it were offered 'the firstlings of every issue and the chief scions in every clan,' a quotation which carries us back to the siege of Phœnician Carthage by Agathocles. The sacrifices of children to Cromm are described in *The Book of Leinster*:

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'The figure of Cromm was made of gold . . .
There was worshipping of stones
Until the coming of good Patrick of Macha.'

The description points to these sacrifices as occurring in times of famine, and they were made for milk and corn. Thus the agricultural and propitiatory types of sacrifice were again combined.

I have gleaned another example not of human sacrifice itself but of a harmless shadow cast by its receding presence from Borlase's *Age of the Saints*. That is the queer custom of hanging rags on thorns in the neighbourhood of megalithic monuments or other sacred sites. In Britain and Ireland, the ceremony was practised in the Orkneys, at Balmano in Scotland, at Kerry, and no doubt in other places where the record of it has been popped over for ever. How world-wide it once was may be gathered from the fact that the identical rite was practised on the Persian border, in Turkey, throughout Eastern Asia, in Southern Siberia, in Kamschatka, on the coast of the Caspian and among the Shintoists of Japan. It was a form of votive offering to the Sidhe among the Irish, and so a worship of, or rather an appeasement or peace-offering to, the spirits of the dead.

'The connection of the usage,' says Borlase, 'with the series of monuments known as megalithic in Britain, in Western Europe and in the heart of Asia, is sufficient to show that it was of other than Christian origin.' That it was performed just before dawn both in the Far East and in Britain shows that it was also a legacy of sun-worship; and that these rags were rags indeed of ancient sacrificial customs is revealed by their votive and intercessionary nature. Where men used to be sacrificed, strips were torn off the garments of the pleaders and presented as a sacrifice; where beasts, skins were hung upon the sacred boughs. Thus from a rag fluttering in the wind we may read characters singular

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enough to have cost Sir Thomas Browne a meal in meditation and significant enough for us to beckon into our presence the disintegrated thoughts of the dead who lose another life as each century passes. One is that the substitution of harmless for deadly rites and ceremonies implies not the evolutionary ascent of man from savagery to humanity, but the dislike of the common stuff of human kind for the diabolisms foisted upon it, and its reversion when possible to a milder ceremonial symbolizing the same reality to it as the crueller.

Perry gives examples of the dislike of the lower peoples, the common herd, for their lords' introduction of human sacrifice into their midst and the substitution of a bloodless ritual when the force of public opinion got the chance. This usually occurred in places where the archaic civilization had a frailer hold, he says, but I think that in Western Europe the influence of the missionaries was probably in the main responsible.

The same process is illustrated by a May Day custom at Penzance. The company, assembled at a stone circle in the neighbourhood, had a jollification, and ended it with the eating of clotted milk and cake, which, as Mr. Courtney justly observes, were substitutes for an animal.¹ I quote another example from Johnson:

'The hundred court of Stone (Somerset) was held in the early morning at a standing stone on a hill. The stone was hollow and the practice was to pour into the cavity a bottle of port wine. We may be sure that the liquid originally employed in prehistoric days was of a more sinister nature.'

¹ An interesting thing about this Penzance custom is that it was signalled by the blowing of horns, a substitute for the conch-shell of the ancient mariners which summoned the deities into the stones. The conch-shell idea was certainly diffused from the Ægean. We have the 'blowing stone' of Uffington, and the labourers of Anglesea are still summoned to their meals by conch-shells.

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The Ampleforth sword-dance, revived by the English Folk-dance Society, contains elements which point, among other heterogeneous survivals, to a mingling of human sacrifice with the mystery rites of the death and rebirth of Osiris, and so we probably owe not their origin but their preservation to the Druids. There are no megaliths at Ampleforth (in Yorkshire), but there is an earthwork, and that, as I have tried to show in a previous Chapter, very often served as a substitute open-air theatre. Apart, again, from the interments by the vallum at Stonehenge, there is the sacrificial stone – the Slaughter Stone – outside the circles. It is not the only one, and Mr. Courtney suggests that they were placed outside the circles of which they were an architectural part because of the traditional sacredness of the enclosure itself. Bloodshed within it spelt desecration. Many of these menhirs are still known as stones of sacrifice, while the round barrow and stone circle of Boleit in Cornwall are known as the House of Slaughter. Lastly, the authorities who have discussed the matter say that the practice of enclosing human victims in the wicker-limbs of giants was Celtic.

I suggest that these examples are on the whole corroborative of the story I have been trying to tell through so many pages. In their confusion of elements we can trace the same process of continuity and transformation which I hold to be the key to the study of the archaic civilization both in its prime and in its decay. Purely agricultural rites are blended with those of propitiation, and Ægean influences (which I take to be more humane and Egyptian than any other pre-Christian historical phenomena) are jumbled with Phœnician and Celtic. At the same time, it is perfectly obvious that the institution of human sacrifice in our own country is inseparably allied to our megalithic civilization. What was the nature of the bond?

The relation of human sacrifice to the megalithic ages was,

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I believe, precisely the same as that of war and demonism. The megalithic ages sowed the seed and the Celtic ages reaped the fruit. It is certain that the Druids practised human sacrifice and almost certain that they did so on a large scale, but I have not been able to find a single example of sacrificial association with the long barrows. It is always the round.¹ But that, of course, is not conclusive, because the traditional associations may have been lost, and I do not pretend that my survey has been exhaustive. Let us then consider the archæological evidence. In the barrows, for instance, which tradition links with human sacrifice, the bodies, whether primary or secondary interments, are always cremated. The flint or bronze dagger, again, with which the deed was done, was, in example after example, found to be calcined. Even whetstones have been discovered in association with round barrows, fired sacrificial knives and cremated bodies, and Mr. Courtney's *The Hill and the Circle*, Borlase (*Dolmens of Ireland*), Troutbeck, Johnson and other authorities, all incline towards postdating the prevalence of human sacrifice to the middle and late Bronze Ages.

But surely our best evidence is the British Museum *Guide to the Antiquities of the Bronze Age* (1920), where pure evidence, unadulterated with neo-Darwinian doctrine, is concerned:

'There is sufficient evidence to show that cremation was not generally practised before 1000 B.C. though it appeared earlier in the south of Europe than in the north, and was also characteristic of the Aryan peoples.'²

¹ The burials at the Belas Knap Long Barrow in the Cotswolds (see O. G. S. Crawford's *The Long Barrows of the Cotswolds*) may be an exception to this generalization.

² Borlase (*Nænia Cornubiæ*, 1872) goes so far as to say: 'It is extremely doubtful whether cremation was practised in Britain anterior to the contact of that nation (the Celts) with the Roman world.'

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This will not be new to the reader, who will remember that in the division of periods attempted in an earlier Chapter, I assigned the late Bronze Age to the first Celtic invasion. But on a later page we read:

'The custom of sacrificing animals and human victims in honour of the dead may explain the traces of more than one human skeleton, and of bones of the ox, pig, goat or sheep, horse and dog in cremated burials.'

I very much doubt that in 'honour of the dead,' for we have seen from Nubia that the practice of sacrificing a lord's family to accompany him in the hereafter was a symptom of the decadence, while the great increase of maleficent forces at the same period produced the theory that the souls of the dead, unless magically barred, eluded or appeased, returned to haunt and vex the living.

This idea in itself is a very illuminating comment on degeneration. A perusal of the Pyramid Texts reveals no hint that the dead were regarded as a menace to the living. 'I would like to emphasize the fact,' writes Dr. Elliot Smith in the *Evolution of the Dragon* (p. 74), 'that my protest was directed against the claim that the custom of offering food and drink to the dead was inspired originally to prevent them from troubling the living. Its original purpose was to sustain and reanimate the dead.' In the Hastings *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* (p. 23), Dr. Alan Gardiner remarks: 'Nothing could be further from the truth than that the funerary rites and practices of the Egyptians were in the main precautionary measures serving to protect the living from the dead.' It is indeed obvious that if practically the whole early Egyptian religion revolved round the reanimation of the dead (as it did), the Egyptians were not afraid of them. The propitiatory element came in with the growth of black from white magic and the preoccupation of civilized mankind

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with the destructive powers of his own institutions, the gods and evil spirits.

But that is a minor point: the major is the prevalence of human sacrifice during the Celtic period. The experience of being at one with authority I find, when it occurs, to be particularly agreeable. I do not mean to imply that human sacrifice was wanting in the megalithic ages proper, and it seems to me certain that it did occur at any rate during the solar phase. But the evidence points to its intensification during the Celtic decadence, and if it be urged that megaliths and stone circles which the Celt did not build play a large part in its localization, the answer is contained in the argument which has occupied much space in the second half of the book — namely, their parasitism upon the civilization from which they came.

§ 5. THE OFFICIAL MORALITY OF HUMAN SACRIFICE

The signal advantage to our theme of the institution of human sacrifice is that it is no longer susceptible to those moral rationalizations which continue to buttress others, equally in conflict with human values. Except among the Nagas of Assam, there are no apologists for human sacrifice to-day. True, its principle still exists in disguised forms,¹ but it is no longer an act of ethical piety or State necessity to thwart the plots and stay the thirst of the gods with human blood. We are thus enabled to observe the reactions of an institution now obsolete upon human nature and conduct without drawing the fire of that very numerous class of people to whom the one is a great deal more sacred than the other. We see that there *is* a division between institutions and human nature and that the former has not universally operated to the benefit and enlightenment of the latter. An

¹ Viz., as when mothers 'gave' their sons to the war in the spirit of Carthaginian stoicism.

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institution sometimes assumes the beard and sickle of death reaping in the fields of life. It sometimes assumes the character of those demons who, themselves descended from the gods, often acquired a longer and stronger lease of power than their originals.

Yet even human sacrifice, which had broken many lives, was itself broken in the end. It would be hard to say how, since it had behind it science (was not the identification of water with fruitfulness and kingly virility a biological idea?), national security (the Aztecs believed that unless they sacrificed a human victim daily to the sun, it would never rise), State policy, official Morality, the divine blessing and the food supply, a sufficiently formidable confederation. It would be hard to say how human sacrifice was broken at all if the spirit of life were not somehow stronger than the forms of death. As we gaze back over the wide landscape we have traversed 'with painful steps and slow,' we are led to ask two questions – where is the natural home (or one of them) of that spirit, closer and more sublime than all the gods – in the institutions or in the heart of man? And why was it that the earlier phases of the archaic civilization were so demonstrably superior, superior in all the offices of life, to the later? The potential answers must await the next Chapter.

APPENDIX

EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL DEGRADATION FROM THE ARCHAIC CIVILIZATION OUTSIDE THE BRITISH ISLES

I have already given a number of these in my Chapter – 'The Descent into War,' for the pregnant fact is that cultural degradation corresponds with the conquest of peaceful by warlike communities. I quote from C. F. Oldham (*The Sun and the Serpent*):

EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL DEGRADATION

'It would seem indeed as if the Asuras (pre-Aryan Dravidians of India) had reached a higher degree of civilization than their Aryan rivals. Some of their cities were places of considerable importance. And in addition to this, wealth and luxury, the use of magic, superior architectural skill and ability to restore the dead to life were ascribed to the Asuras by Brahminical writings.'

The magnificent temple of Angkor Wat in Cambodia, richly carved and built of unmortared limestone blocks fitted with beautiful precision by a people 'expressing a tremendous energy and a passionate love of art,' survives in ruins among a population of ruined and rudest culture. The Cambodians never recovered from the invasion of the Tai-Shan, a warrior aristocracy in the same cultural stage as the Celts.

Nubia, whose cultural degradation was worked out by Reisner and others, is a country which reveals the drama of Egyptian penetration more clearly than elsewhere.

The Egyptians went into Nubia for the gold-mines. They took miners, masons and artisans of various crafts with them and established a Nubian civilization which was Egyptian in everything but place. Then we find that the Nubian brand of civilization is lagging behind the home brand, until after two centuries it becomes entirely Nubian, all traces of Egypt are lost, and even the racial type becomes Ethiopian or negroid. In the end the capital was removed to Kerma; or, in other words, a portion of the ruling class broke away and founded a military aristocracy, associated with sacrificial and cannibalistic rites on a generous scale.

The culture of the House of Atreus, so far from having been the illustrious dawn of the refinement of Hellas, was a derivative, barbaric and decadent phase of the Mycenæan culture, derived from the Late Minoan civilization, itself a cutting from the lotus of Egypt. Those savage young cubs, Achilles, Odysseus, Agamemnon and the rest, baptized

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and glorified by literature, as Anatole France's penguins by the bewildered angels, were the rude inheritors of something greater than anything they had to show, greater but unsung. So Abraham and his nomadic tribesmen inherited and destroyed the grander culture of Canaan.

The degeneration of Phœnicia, herself a pseudo-Egypt, is brilliantly reflected in the social conditions and material culture of Carthage, her African colony. In their later phases, culminating in the dry-rot both of the arts and the humanities at Carthage, the Phœnicians certainly made an impression on the world. They did so by the bloodiness of their rites, the coarseness of their ideas, the ferocity of their temper, and the parasitic achievement of their Empire which was the work of their mercenaries. R. B. Smith in *Carthage and the Carthaginians* (1878) remarks that Carthage became a closer and more tyrannical oligarchy than ever Tyre was, and what has Carthage left the world except that masterpiece of dullness, Flaubert's *Salammbô*? Such literary testimonies receive no degrees in the halls of science, but the professors forget that Flaubert's theory of literature was verisimilitude, and that no great genius could have accomplished such a miracle of tedium unless it had been founded on what documentary evidence was available. Granted the inadequacy of that evidence, granted Roman political and commercial malice, still *Salammbô* probably gives us a fair idea of what Carthage was like, the true city of a Moloch whom the Tyrian Melkarth would hardly have recognized as himself. And Carthaginian art and architecture were never more than bastard Hellenic and Syrian.

Or take Ur of the Chaldees, the city of Abraham. The Leonard Woolley Expedition has recently revealed that when the House of Nannor, the Moon-God, was destroyed in the time of Abraham as a result of the disastrous wars with Elam, its subsequent rulers accomplished little more than a shoddy patching of the ancient ruins of the city. The

EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL DEGRADATION

Herbert Weld and Field Museum Expedition to Kish (1925) 'furnishes an entirely new idea of the magnificence of early Sumerian architecture before 3000 B.C. The palace was built entirely without stone and in a grand style, worthy of the mighty line of kings who ruled here from the most remote period of human history. Certainly nothing like it in grandeur, age and extent has ever been excavated in Mesopotamia.' — (Prof. S. Langdon, the head of the Expedition, in *The Times*.)

Siret's account of the decadence of the Bronze Age in Spain in comparison with the 'Neolithic' tells the same story as do Hall's and Bent's accounts of the Zimbabwes of Rhodesia. I have described the parallels between Britain and Rhodesia in the desertion of the early round for the later rectangular styles and the coincidence in their respective declines from great to small, from the elaborate to the rude and from superior to inferior workmanship. The Mashonaland natives who live in the neighbourhood of the ruins are iron-workers and in much the same cultural stage, further gone in decay, as were the Celts and the Saxons.

The same reversion occurred in New Zealand and Java. What Wallace has to say in that noble book, *The Malay Archipelago*, I have put as a heading to this Chapter.

Mr. Perry has collected so many examples of the fate of Ozymandias in the Pacific and in America that I need only refer the reader to the earlier Chapters of his *Children of the Sun*. There is no doubt whatever that the earliest civilization of America, the peaceful Mayans', far excelled any of the others in material culture. 'Their æsthetic art,' says an authority on the Mayans, 'was blotted out by some potent social change.' And I will conclude this Appendix with the mound-builders of Ohio, whose earthen monuments shrank like the wild ass's skin of Balzac, the dolmens of Brittany and India, and the barrows and earthworks of our own England.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: PEACE ON EARTH

The peace of the primitives. The raw material of the spirit of man. The harmonious lives of primitive peoples. The evidence. They are not mystics or doctrinaires. Nature's gift to man. Modern primitives are the living representatives of the men of the Old Stone Age. The 'weapons' of the Old Stone Age. The distinction between the primitive and the savage. Nansen and the Greenland Eskimo. Egypt and Greenland. The Eskimo of Alaska. Their ancient contact with the megalith-builders. Change in their habits. The Australians and the Andamanese. Their system of feuds. Where they got it from. The head-hunters and their convention. Modern and primitive life. The problem of the social institution. Has civilization altered the fundamental nature of man? Civilization should be the expression of human nature. The example of the Burmese. The teaching of Buddha not the whole secret of their civilization. How the archaic civilization came to Burma. What it left behind.

‘They loved one another without knowing that to do so was Benevolence; they were honest and leal-hearted without knowing it was Loyalty; they employed the services of one another without thinking they were receiving or conferring any gift. Therefore their actions left no trace, and there was no record of their affairs.’

LAO-TZE ON THE GOLDEN AGE

‘I have lived with communities of savages in South America and in the East. . . . In such a community, all are nearly equal. There are none of those wide distinctions of education and ignorance, wealth and poverty, master and servant, which are the product of our civilization; there is none of that widespread division of labour, which, while it increases wealth, produces also conflicting interests; there is not that severe competition and struggle for existence, or for wealth, which the dense population of civilized countries inevitably creates. . . . We should now clearly recognize the fact that the wealth and knowledge and culture of the few do not constitute civilization, and do not of themselves advance us towards the ‘perfect social state.’ Our vast manufacturing system, our gigantic commerce, our crowded towns and cities, support and continually renew a mass of human misery and crime absolutely greater than has ever existed before. . . . This is the lesson I have been taught by my observations of uncivilized man.’

A. R. WALLACE, ‘THE MALAY ARCHIPELAGO’

CHAPTER ELEVEN: PEACE ON EARTH

PART I

The 'Combative Instinct'

I HAVE tried to show why the last ages of the first civilization were barbarous and warlike, and so have been compelled to ask why the first ages of that civilization were peaceful and constructive. Since I have been continuously writing history upside-down, it fits in with the scheme of things that I should turn from the ages of barbarism or deteriorated civilization to the ages of absolute peace or of primitive mankind. In order to understand one aspect of Avebury, we have had to go behind its back to the East; in order to understand another, we have to go behind its back to the hunting communities that the men of Avebury presumably found in England when they got here. It seems to me plain that there are two reasons why the Ancient Mariners were peaceful colonists; they were descended from men to whom the habit of peace was as natural as waking up in the morning and they encountered such men upon their expeditions. Who were these men? They were the primitives of the Old Stone Age.

Now if you read the books dealing with Primitive Man, you will find outlined in the most of them, especially the more learned and distinguished, an hypothesis of his social behaviour which I may call 'The Old Man Theory.' According to this theory, early man lived in hunting communities dominated by a horrid old man who appropriated its wives to his own uses. In time, the young men of the tribe or community grow up; they leave the patriarchal herd, pluck up their courage by magical rites, return, kill and eat the old man and share out his wives. This was the beginning of civilization. If you pause to ask how these writers have

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obtained their information, you will be calling attention to something so irrelevant that it is never mentioned. For this theory is an invention pure and simple, and because it squares with orthodox evolutionary ideas, it has come to be repeated so many times that everybody accepts it as a scientific axiom, as firmly based on truth as that of the revolution of the earth round the sun.

Consequently it is the learned fashion nowadays to deride Voltaire's and Rousseau's 'noble savage' as the materialization of the former's indignant and the latter's hypertrophied imagination. The 'evolutionists' were aware that the 'noble savage' would not do to be true, and so he was found to be untrue. But it is evident from a reading of Rousseau's pages on social inequality that his primitive was not a theoretic hallucination or a Robot wound up to vent his maker's outlaw spite upon society. Rousseau believed him to be true because the French colonists brought home accounts of the Indians they met in Canada. It has taken a hundred and twenty years for that wayside seed to burst its envelope and become a sapling.

The masterly research by which Mr. Perry has established 'man's first innocence' as a new factor in anthropology has been summarized by Dr. Elliot Smith as follows (*Primitive Man*, 1921):

'The careful analysis of all the available evidence seems to point clearly to the conclusion that until the invention of the methods of agriculture and irrigation on the large scale practised in Egypt and Babylonia, the world really enjoyed some such Golden Age of peace as Hesiod has described. Man was not driven into warfare by his instinct of pugnacity but by the greed for wealth and power which the development of civilization was itself responsible for creating.'

If there be any truth in this, it follows, as I remarked at

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the end of the last Chapter, that the theory (theory once more) of man as a combative animal only restrained from crime by law and government has to go the way of a good many other theories based on theory. The trouble seems to be not with the men but the machines, not so much with the spirit of man itself as what has been made of it by the men-created gods, the gods that are still gods though we call them by different names.

A few years ago, we should have had to weigh the visions of the poets against the dogmas of the biologists and ethnologists, fact against fancy, love against truth, and we should have had to admit that there was something in the contention of the truth-seekers and the fact-delvers as to the survival value of the combative instinct. I am not speaking of actual warfare alone, but of all that congeries of possessive, predatory and competitive habits of mind which at once bind and eat away the fabric of modern civilization and which, with certain cruel illusions added, we now know to have been the true parent of warfare as an institution.

This is what Elliot Smith has to say about the theory of the combative instinct in man:

'The coincidence in the geographical distribution of habits of warfare and certain elements of culture has been erroneously interpreted by many writers as evidence that certain peoples were more highly endowed with the instinct of pugnacity, in virtue of which they were able to overcome their more peaceful neighbours and attain a higher stage of civilization by surmounting difficulties. But the large assumptions involved in such speculations can be proved to be wholly unwarranted.'

Now, in fact, that these ex-scientific idols have been so rudely overturned, we may grant a fair field to the poets. The poet has his own ideas about the 'spirit of man,' in

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which he ignores, as he well might, the findings of these dispossessed ethnologists and their kin. The historical method swims into their empty ken and within the last few years the historical method has come to different conclusions about the spirit of man. Do they in any way correspond with the poetic rendering of it?

PART II

The Primitive

Of recent years explorers have collected a large body of evidence as to the habits of still existing hunting or what Perry calls 'food-gathering' as distinguished from food-producing peoples¹ in all parts of the world. This evidence was compressed and summarized by Perry in a paper in the *Hibbert Journal* – 'The Peaceable Habits of Primitive Communities' – published in the middle of the War.² The very odd thing about these peoples is that though they live in

¹ The following is a list of these peoples. It must be understood that though they are all technically primitives (viz., they do not practise agriculture) they are not all equally exempt from modern or ancient civilized influences. What I may call these semi-primitives will be dealt with in a later part of the Chapter.

The Negritos of the Congo.	The Kubu of Sumatra.
The Bushmen of South Africa.	The Punan of Borneo.
The Veddas of Ceylon.	The Andamanese.
The Pre-Dravidian Tribes of Southern India.	The Philippine Negritos.
The Semang and Sakai of the Malay Peninsula.	The New Guinea Negritos.
One Tribe of the Aru Islands.	The Australians and Tasmanians (last extinct).
The Lapps, Samoyedes, Ostiaks and Eskimo of the Arctic.	The Northern Ojibway.
The Salish.	The Dene of the Mackenzie Basin (extinct).
The Boethuk of Newfoundland (extinct).	The Paiute of Nevada.
	The Californian Indians.
	The Tierra del Fuegians.

² See also Mr. Perry's article in the *Monist* (January, 1921).

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latitudes remotely apart and under geographical conditions as different as they can be, speak different languages and belong to different physical types and races, they might, so far as their mental, moral and cultural habits go, be re-shuffled from their various habitats without the psychological traveller being a penny the wiser. Their oddity lies in their uniformity of nature, and if the Semang were transplanted from Malay to Siberia and the Samoyedes were to take their place, if the Ostiak of the bitter steppes were to swap territories with the Punan of the steaming jungle, physical characters and their attendant recognition marks would be almost the only aids to identification. What is true of the Punan of Borneo, whose property is communal, who have no social classes, who live peaceful, cheerful and harmonious lives, is true of them all.¹ None of them till the soil, nor build in stone, nor value metals, nor polish their implements, nor domesticate animals, nor practise totemism, nor make war on other tribes, nor are habituated to violence. Neither in death will they be divided, for all are destined to share the same doom. The Tasmanians and the Boethuk of Newfoundland have already gone, for the modern white man has had a somewhat brusquer way with the natives he has discovered than had the ancient Egyptian with his finds. I have no room here to particularize the private manners and social customs of these tribes, but if we eliminate from Utopia everything but the essential human nature that must be its raw material, then these lowliest of primitives are Utopians, and the end, as Aristotle said, is in the beginning.

Mr. Perry summarizes the published evidence as to the freedom and gentleness of these tribes in another article in the *Hibbert Journal* ('The Relation of Class Divisions to Social Conduct,' April, 1922):

'Inside the family group of these food-gatherers the

¹ Viz., the primitives untouched by civilization.

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mode of behaviour is such as we look upon as the highest that can be desired. There is complete harmony, absence of violence or cruelty, complete communism and mutual help. . . . Authority does not exist, and decisions are taken by mutual consent. That is to say, under the family organization, a definite type of behaviour is exhibited that is so uniform everywhere that it can be associated with that organization. If that conclusion be accepted, it follows that any deviations from this standard type of behaviour are to be ascribed to the influences of social institutions. For, seeing that these deviations do not form part of the behaviour of the food-gatherers, they could not have given rise to the institutions, and therefore must be a product of them.'

This statement is so complete a *bouleversement* of the postulates, equally assumed as accepted, of modern ethnology, that I will dwell on it for a page or two. It was once objected to me that the normal conduct of primitives had neither historical nor psychological value because it was not founded upon a conscious morality. No, it is not; these primitives are not Platonists, nor are their rules of virtue compiled by wise men and stored in a hut set apart as a public library. Their conduct is a 'goodness' that is natural and spontaneous to them all, and not the result of any system of education elaborated by the tribal College of Morality, whose principles are imbibed by students to whom complacency, honour, emulation, prudence, desire to conform or fear of the consequences in refusing to, may be a more potent incentive to virtue than is the virtue itself towards acquiring it.

Nor is it a virtue reached by the travails of revolt and individual exploration. The primitive is neither mystic nor doctrinaire; right living is to him a quality of being, an exercise as joyful as embracing his wife, as singing is to the goldfinch. He lives virtuously as trees grow and squirrels

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whisk among their branches. Blest state of man's first innocence indeed, that sought no devil to arm him with inhibitions, shames, taboos by which to keep the armourer out. *Fais ce que voudras* was all the text they conned. Importunate might be the temptation to idealize these rude sons of mother earth — by this schoolmaster-ridden generation, taught, as Shaw says in the Preface to *Methuselah*, 'the morality of feudalism corrupted by commercialism and to hold up the military conqueror, the robber baron and the profiteer as models of the illustrious and the successful.' But virtue as naturally outbreathed as the soft dews of night can dispense with being bottled as champagne.

Secondly, I take it that Mr. Perry, in describing this 'uniform type of behaviour' as 'associated with the organization of the family,' does not mean us to accept the latter as exclusively responsible for the former. The early history of civilization is that of a power-invested family group dominating and superimposed by a process of growth and expansion into all parts of the earth upon the family grouping of primitive society. Since the institution of the family thus produced results directly opposite to one another, we have no justification in concluding that we owe the unconscious moral graces of the primitive to that, or indeed any other formal or informal organization whatever. In other words, sociological theory cannot penetrate these deeper strata of the human spirit. Such graces were the birthright of nature to man, gifts which she owed him when he willed to rise out of the beast and to become himself. Thereafter she stood aside, leaving him to travel his own long journey and work out his own salvation. The family, being equally attached to the class system and the communal, cannot be held to have been responsible for either, any more than it can be held responsible for the growth of populations, for which the invention of agriculture is an amply sufficing reason.

The really valuable conclusions to be drawn from the

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family grouping of primitives are, I think, two. In the first place, there is no such thing as a 'herd instinct,' upon which so many ponderous tomes have been written. In other words, there are perhaps only three instincts fundamental to man — matchood, the will to live, and peacefulness. They were the three gifts of his fairy godmother. Secondly, to form family unions was the result rather than the cause of these instincts. But as Mr. Perry is writing an important book upon primitive psychology and the reactions of social institutions upon human conduct, I will leave such matters to his abler and more experienced hands.

Have we not found in the primitives the matrix of humanity? The earth where they live, barren of those material riches which could excite the hopes, the mental energy, the flashing spirit and the cupidity of men once like themselves, has lavished upon these humble ones, living so close to her bosom, a different kind of wealth. The travellers who have revealed what these tribes are like, the anthropologist who has accumulated, sifted and weighed what they had to declare, have done nothing less than to pull the Golden Age out of the moon of legend and tradition and bequeath it as a living truth for the wonder of mankind.

Can it be doubted that these primitive tribes, still living in the world to confound, for all their simplicity, our learned and orthodox, represent vestigial relics of the whole of mankind during the thousands of years between the Old Stone Age and the New, between primitive and civilized man? The key to these tribes is their changelessness; wave after wave of civilization has left them high and dry. And that they are indeed the descendants in human nature as well as in fact of 'Palæolithic' man is shown by the tools he used. These modern tribes make the same type of implement as their Palæolithic forbears, by the same methods and of the same material. Archæologists talk very loosely of the 'weapons' of early man, when they really mean his tools, just

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as we use warlike terms of speech to describe the most peaceful of ideas. There is, in fact, but one dubious exception – and I am aware that one must speak with strict caution and precision – to the general and total absence of weapons throughout the complete cycle of the Old Stone Age from Java man to Downland man both in distance and in time. The possible exception is the Solutrean blade, of which the finest examples were manufactured in Egypt.¹ But I believe that it has never been pointed out in this relation that these blades closely resemble a pattern of flint-knife used by the Eskimo for hunting purposes and for domestic use in cutting up the meat. The first technically genuine weapon was the flint or bronze dagger that lengthened into the bronze sword of the Celts, which a visit to the Dorchester and Pitt-Rivers (at Oxford) Museums will convince the impartial to be as different a thing from the ‘Neolithic’ and Palæolithic tools as a cactus from a plum tree.

Another indication of the changelessness of these tribes, a sign that they are trickles out of the great underground reservoir of humanity, is the vital distinction between them and the savage. The orthodox archæologist has been inclined to scoff at native tradition, so zealously preserved from generation to generation, but he has ignored the fact that while the savage possesses to this day the ‘wonderful stranger’ tradition, the tales in one form and another of how demi-gods came to them out of the sky or the sun and founded their lines of chiefs, the true primitive to a great extent lacks them, as he does the social organization and the theology bound up with them. Not one but a thousand savage tribes witness the sombre truth of the deterioration of their ancient culture and of the ruin and seeming futility of that dazzling exfoliation of the human spirit which raised works that have not shared in its own corruption. But for war and the immeasurable havoc it has wrought, but for the twist in

¹ Where they were used not as weapons but as knives and scrapers.

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the character of the institutions that made it possible and their maladjustment to the human heart, we should not read to-day of the Kurumbas of the Nilgiri slopes, one of the most despised and fallen of Indian peoples, who still erect megalithic monuments – of pebbles. The reason for the changelessness of the genuine primitive is that he has never had any ruling class to change him.

Yet there is room to doubt whether the primitives who were actually dominated by the archaic civilization were so much changed after all even when they were trained to imitating 'the actions of the tiger' by the warlike aristocracies that succeeded the first agricultural phase. They were the pawns in the game and submitted to the passive rôle of being moved hither and thither on this new board of historical progress. They were not courting trouble for the sake of its romance. If Tom and Dick took up arms for the local fire-eater, we may be sure that their reason was lest worse befell. The psychologist, McDougall, opines that what made many hill-tribes warlike was the bracing air; the bracing language of the district Tamberlaine we may reckon more suggestive than any amount of air, even with hail in it. The real lesson of history is not the ferocity but the patience and docility of man. It is a very striking fact that when a military aristocracy was killed off or disappeared for any other reason, its subject-people at once reverted (as in Mongolia) to their hereditarily peaceful habits, or, to put it more briefly, to human nature.¹

If I seem to have jumped a long way from Avebury and its subject-matter, that is only appearance. Avebury was the first civilization of Britain, and the men who founded it were nearer to us than they were to the people they found there, whose way of life, at once beautiful and fatally inert and

¹ The dislike of the lower people for human sacrifice also led, where the hold of the archaic civilization was not so strong, to the practice of a milder ceremonial. See preceding Chapter.

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childish, was nearer to that of the Punan than of the lords who governed them. Avebury is a convenient junction of trackways that lead from Wiltshire to Japan, and from the Old Stone Age to to-morrow.

PART III

The Primitive a Little Damaged

We began with considering the primitive as God made him, the raw human product fresh from the tree of life and still on the right (or the wrong, as you please) side of the factory. We took the lowest common denominator of human culture and morals and arrived at a common standard or type of human behaviour operating without the slightest regard for racial and geographical factors and for the professors who make the moulding force of such factors their special business. Of these sucklings confounding the wise we took the Punan of Borneo as an example, simply because they have been un beholden to civilized influences ever since there were any Punan, while the Punan, so far as the zero of culture and conduct is concerned, are another name for the Paiute of Nevada, the Eastern Algonquians, the Boethuk of Newfoundland (exterminated), the Lapps, the Samoyedes and the Ostiak of the North. These are, or were, the surviving, uncut nuggets of primitive humanity.

A. THE FINGER-TIP OF CIVILIZATION

We now move on to the second class of primitives, the primitives that at some period of their unhistory have felt the contact of civilization without forfeiting their scientific title of primitiveness. I choose the Greenland Eskimo to begin with for four reasons. A first-rate account of them exists; civilization laid a finger on their ancestors at its own

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very earliest stage, long before, that is to say, any development of warlike habits; they afford us a definite link with the men of the Old Stone Age, the ancestors of us all – and an illuminating contrast with their kinsfolk, the Alaskan Eskimo.

Thirty-one years ago, a very remarkable book called *Eskimo Life* was written by the famous Nansen. The picture he has given of these primitive hunters, before the traders and missionaries spoiled them, is of extraordinary value not merely to anthropologists but to our general conception of the nature of man it is their mission to unfold. Why that value can be so extended I will try and explain after extracting from the book a few representative and indispensable quotations.

‘The Greenlander is of all God’s creatures gifted with the best disposition. Good-humour, peaceableness and evenness of temper are the most prominent features in his character. He is eager to stand on as good a footing as possible with his fellow-men, and therefore refrains from offending them and much more from using coarse terms of abuse. . . . His peaceableness even goes so far that when anything is stolen from him, which seldom happens, he does not as a rule reclaim it even if he knows who has taken it. “Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again” ’ (p. 100).

‘Fighting and brutalities of that sort, as before mentioned, are unknown among them, and murder is very rare. They hold it atrocious to kill a fellow-creature; therefore war is in their eyes incomprehensible and repulsive, a thing for which their language has no word; and soldiers and officers brought up to the trade of killing, they regard as mere butchers’ (p. 162).

‘In several respects the morality of the heathen Eskimos

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stands considerably higher than that which we generally find in Christian communities. As I have already pointed this out, I will here only remind the reader of their self-sacrificing love of their neighbour and their mutual helpfulness, to which, indeed, we find no parallel in European society. These virtues, however, are not infrequently to be found among primitive peoples, and are probably in the main due to the simpler structure of society. A more developed and consequently more complicated social order leads to the decline of many of the natural virtues of humanity' (p. 177).

'The primitive morality of the Eskimo stands in many respects close to that of ideal Christianity and is even in one way superior to it; for the Greenlanders know nothing either of a God or a devil, believe neither in punishment nor in reward after this life, and yet they live virtuously none the less. Many people will, no doubt, think it astonishing that we should find so highly developed a morality among a race so uncultivated, and so unclean in their outward habits. Others will perhaps find it more surprising that this morality should have been developed among a people who have no religion, or at any rate, a very imperfect one. Such facts are inconsistent with the theory which is still held in many quarters that morality and religion are inseparable. A study of the Eskimo community shows pretty clearly, I think, that morality to a great extent springs from and rests upon natural law' (p. 185).¹

Morality, at least in its normally accepted sense, is hardly the right word to use at all. For the Eskimo has or had no laws, no tribunals, no government; no organized social order, no administration, no ruling class, no Income Tax, no civilization and no institutions. The ordering of his life was a

¹ Nansen's account is corroborated by Boas, Hawker, Rae, Rink, and Nordenskiöld.

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matter of private arrangement. The Eskimo is or was not a moral being; he was an anarchist, a communist and a heathen Christian, in the only just sense in which such designations (entirely meaningless in modern parlance) can be used. The outward life of this lovable people, 'inevitably destined either to pass utterly away or to decline into the shadow of what it once was' (through the attentions of the aforesaid traders and horrified missionaries), was hard enough. But the peace within endowed them with that freedom and happiness which were the price we had to pay for civilization. The Eskimo was the child of humanity and natural law, that agreed so well together that they made a love-match of it, positively without the sanction of the clerical or civil powers.

One swallow does not make a summer. But I should scarcely have quoted Nansen's book so copiously, had the Greenlander been a 'sport,' an aberrant curiosity, drifted up an alley off the main stem of human progress, just as the gorilla wandered off the main stem that led to man two or three million years ago. It would be the greatest mistake to assume that the Eskimo is like he is because he inhabits the most northerly regions of the earth. The reason that he has not changed for thousands of years is not because his powers of progression have been encased in everlasting ice. His was not a Utopia because it was frozen, nor (if you prefer to put it in this way) a condition of stagnation because the climate had congealed his mind. The Eskimo is not a lay Christian because he is a fool, but for the simple reason that he has never been civilized. Civilization had never up to the nineteenth century come his way. We know that he himself has been a migrant from a warmer climate, and it is certain that if he had not migrated, he would have changed, since if he had stayed where he originally was, the migrant civilizations that created Avebury and Stonehenge and Carnac and New Grange would have come to him.

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Yet, though the Greenlander was a genuine primitive, and so has the archaic civilization between him and the *savage*, he possessed certain fairy-tales rather than beliefs which at once suggest a very remote contact with ancient Egypt. Before they were officially Christianized, the Greenlanders believed in a sky-world and an underworld; that the dog guided the hunter's soul to heaven and, like the Incas of Peru, that the sun had an incestuous union with the moon, his sister. We may be quite sure that that moon never rose out of the Arctic, that it was only the simulacrum of a moon, a rind-peeling from the Moon-Original of Egypt whose Isis (Hathor, the Great Mother, identified with the moon) and Osiris made an immortal investment in heaven of the marriage-customs of the Pharaohs. The idea that the soul was the breath of the body and that a dead man must be carried by a circuitous route to burial to prevent him from returning to vex the living can be ultimately derived from the same source.

But this sixpennyworth of myth was all the Greenlander got from the archaic civilization: he did not possess a trace of those elements of culture and belief which England exhales from every mound and megalith of her Downs – givers of life, the sun-cult, the wonderful stranger tradition, immortality, the god-king complex, the dual organization,¹ exogamy, totemism, mother-right, sacred stones, the quest of the earthly paradise, giants and dragons, human sacrifice, agriculture and mining – they meant about as much to him as they do to an English archæologist. The Greenlander, therefore, was only very superficially influenced by the archaic civilization, and what he learned he mostly forgot. He missed or escaped civilization, whichever way we like to put it, and in both ways lies truth. The archaic civilization made as little impression upon his fundamentals as

¹ See my *Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum* for survivals of this Egyptian political dichotomy in English folk-lore.

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apparently did the Icelandic culture of the Northmen centuries later.

Yet, like the tramp who picks up a cigarette end, he did get *something*, and where, we should like to know, did he get it from? *Ancient Hunters and their Modern Representatives* is a book properly held in great esteem not only for its interest and reliability but for its prescient conviction in a wilderness of the contrary theory that the various cultures of the ancient world could not have originated independently. In it, W. J. Sollas marks out a branch of the race living in the caves of the Dordogne and elsewhere between the Aurignacian and Magdalenian periods of the Old Stone Age, the people we too loosely dub the Cro-Magnons, as the ancestral stem of the modern Eskimo who migrated northward. The anatomical kinship between the skulls of the Eskimo and those of the Chancellade type of the Magdalenian culture is too remarkably close for honest doubt to wedge a way between them and crow: it is as close as the family likeness between the 'Neolithic' peoples of Britain and the Egyptians of to-day and yesterday, and between the slender, hairless, wiry, short Egyptian Brunet and the slender, hairless, wiry, short Iberian Brunet of megalithic Britain, there was not even a step. Not only the skulls of Eskimo and Cro-Magnon but the tools are similar.

Now the bone harpoons used by the Magdalenians in France are also identical with those used on the banks of the Nile, whose palæolithic remains are superior in workmanship to those found in any other part of the world. As harpoons seem to be in no way essential to peoples living in the Pyrenees and the interior of France; as the Solutrean and Magdalenian phases of primitive culture were missed out in other parts of Europe, and the Aurignacian which preceded them was succeeded in those districts by the agricultural or 'Neolithic' phase, the probable inference has been made that the chert and flint-cultures of the Upper Palæolithic Age in Europe, comprising these three periods, were

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imported from predynastic Egypt.¹ What it all comes to is this. The Eskimo owe their industries, their myths and folk-lore via the 'Cro-Magnons' to the *predynastic* Egyptians, and their character to themselves and common human nature. Since the industries, the pursuits and the cultures of the 'Cro-Magnons,' the predynastic Egyptians and the Eskimos correspond with one another, it is permissible to assume that they all drew their natures too from a common fund. If the Egyptians had not discovered agriculture and learned how to work metals, the whole world might well have stagnated in primitive and Christian habits to the present day.

With real vision, then, did Nansen, writing at a time when the modern school of ethnology was yet unborn, declare of the Greenlanders that 'these virtues are not infrequently to be found among primitive peoples, and are probably in the main due to the simpler structure of society,' for his amazing story of what the Eskimo were like is no freak narrative luckily put into his hands by an accident of geographical conditions. The Eskimo was essentially a primitive, and did not practise agriculture, which is or ought to be the scientific test of civilization. What Nansen did was to write the industrial history of the Upper Palæolithic or, as Elliot Smith prefers to call it, Neolithic stage of mankind, and the psychological history of the whole of primitive mankind over untold thousands of years. He was the chronicler of the Cave-Man, or shall I say, the biographer of the bogey-man?

B. THE HAND OF CIVILIZATION

In the Eskimo of Greenland we can faintly trace the archaic civilization at a stage of progress at least fifteen

¹ Certain cowries found in Aurignacian cave-burials in France were a species whose nearest habitat was the Red Sea. Figurines of the Great Mother and Magdalenian women's head-dresses also point to Egyptian influence.

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hundred years earlier than its first colonization of England.¹ But when we come to the Eskimo of Alaska, the Australians, the Bushmen of South Africa and the Andamanese, all of whom betray the precise and definite imprint of the Ancient Mariners' culture *without* the agriculture of actual colonization, it is quite certain that these people's experience of the archaic civilization came at a period centuries later than Avebury. Such tests of influence are not nearly so complicated as they sound. It is a case of the finger-tip of the very earliest period of civilization (the Greenland Eskimo), the hand of civilization in its later phases, because of the great distance from the centre (the Alaskan Eskimo, Australians, etc.),² and the whole body of the archaic civilization in its middle period (Avebury). These far-distant tribes brushed the fringes of the Ancient Mariners' colonial posts in their extension over the mining districts of the world. And at once we can detect a change in their conduct.

The Alaskan Eskimo came into contact with the archaic travellers and their menagerie of semi-scientific beliefs and semi-religious data owing to the presence of gold-mines on the borders of his territory. Precisely what attracted the ancients to Cornwall lured them to brave the rigours of Alaska. The ruins of stone-works on the Yukon, for instance, attest the remote energies of gold-washers and pearl-fishers. But their hold upon this inhospitable region was temporary and slight; Alaska, like Australia, was only an

¹ It is as yet impossible to say whether the Mediterranean influence upon the Cro-Magnon culture of France preceded or postdated the opening of civilization in Egypt. The dynastic period of Egypt began in 3400 B.C., but it is not known when kingship and agriculture actually began there. For the predynastic period of Egypt embraces both its primitive and earlier civilized eras and Osiris was king of an agricultural Egypt before the dawn of the dynastic periods.

² Draw a ring representing the cultural influence of the archaic civilization round the earth, and it will be found that the majority of the food-gatherers' lands lie just outside it.

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outpost of their far-flung settlements and the archaic civilization touched but did not grasp the frozen lands. When the modern Europeans reached Greenland, the Eskimo art of making and managing the kaiak, the frail craft on which their whole livelihood depended, declined, along, in Nansen's words, 'with everything else.' During the last thirty years, the Greenland Eskimo has been acquiring a kind of mongrel culture in which the incompatibles of modern civilization and ancient primitiveness have run their dyes into one another to the loss of the best elements in both. But the European hold upon the Greenlander is a steadily tightening one, whereas that of the antique explorers upon the Alaskan Eskimo was certainly not tenacious, while on the outbreak of serious warfare the outposts of civilization fell back.

Yet the impression left on Alaska was not only one of architectural ruins; a dint was left upon the workings of the Alaskan mind. In attacking the theory of man's primeval 'pacifism,' writers have pointed out that some of the Eskimo used overlapping plate armour and conducted a system of feuds in which a relative of the murdered man kills the murderer. Now this armour was only worn by the Alaskan Eskimo and their descendants who are known to have migrated from Alaska. Nor have these writers referred to the fact that armour of the same design was used all over Central and Eastern Asia and is familiar in pictures of ancient Japanese warriors. That, apart from the ruins, is a positive indication that these Alaskan Eskimo were once in direct or indirect association with the Ancient Mariners. Not only was plate armour unknown among the Eskimo of Greenland, but murder itself was, according to Nansen, extremely rare. But even when it did occur, it by no means followed that the relations of the murderer took their revenge. Nansen relates how they have been known to entertain the murderer and entreat him kindly partly on

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the ground that hospitality is a sacred thing and partly out of abhorrence for shedding human blood.

But the Australians and Andamanese are much clearer examples of peoples who have been partially influenced by the archaic civilization, and yet have retained their primitive culture. Take Australia. We know that the Ancient Mariners reached Torres Straits in the quest for pearls and pearl-shell, because the islanders imitated the elaborate technique of Twenty-first Dynasty mummification; and we know that they reached New Guinea, where there are megalithic monuments, in search of gold. In Australia, megaliths are absent, and so is agriculture. But mummification¹ is not, and that is the most important clue. The Australians, too, used, and perhaps still use, polished stone implements, and primitive peoples, corresponding in culture with the Old Stone Age, do not polish their tools. Totemism, again, a system equally unknown among purely primitive peoples, is practised by them, and they show a very definite dual organization.² Lastly they possess a system of tribal chieftainship, and in purely primitive societies social divisions between classes are non-existent. We may conclude, therefore, that the mariners prospected Australia for gold, but that they soon retired owing, likely enough, to the outbreak of war in the Pacific.³

¹ Viz., in Queensland.

² The Australians also associated magic with givers of life and had traditions of culture-heroes. E. W. P. Chinnery (*Stone-work and Goldfields in British New Guinea*) even claims that they once had stone circles.

³ An amusing example of 'evolutionist' reasoning occurs in a review of Dr. Basedow's book, *The Australian Aboriginal* (1922). The writer explains that his backward condition is due to the geographical isolation of Australia from the rest of the world, for 'they [the Australian natives] have lacked those incentives to progress which competition with rivals begets in the keen struggle for existence.' The simple answer to such brain-spun theories is that the aboriginals were *not* isolated, but that the voyager remained for too short a time to civilize them more than superficially.

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Now, though even the 'evolutionists' could hardly call the Australian natives warriors; though, as Mr. Perry tells me, 'sporadic violence hardly exists at all,' they are not so peaceful as the Veddas, the Punan, the Sakai and other Eastern primitives. A definite system of feuds and petty fights 'very rigidly determined by marriage rules (exogamy) and the dual organization' (I quote Mr. Perry's letter to me) exists among them. A system, that indeed is the eloquent word. The Australian does not fight out of instinctive pugnacity, but for the very same reason that army officers vote Conservative, that captains of industry believe in economic determinism, and that the public schoolmaster believes the world begins and ends in Latin, Greek and cricket. The Australian deviates from the norm of primitive conduct because he has been taught not by his natural humanity but his institutional environment to do so.

I cannot go into the evidence for the presence of the archaic civilization in the Andaman Islands. But I may refer to Kayan head-hunting as a modification of the civilized custom of human sacrifice, and the head-hunters do not do their work out of malice, hatred or combativeness, but out of routine. They take heads because it is 'good form' to do so, just as it is 'good form' to hunt hares at Eton. It is part of a convention, of a rite associated with the worship of the dead.

Tribawarfare betrays the imprint of the dual organization in exactly the same way. People on one side of the street play Montagus to the Capulets on the other side, or half a tribe makes war on the other half or on another half of another tribe.¹

Another and speaking inference emerges of its own accord from the head-hunting of certain Bornean tribes, of which the most familiar example are the Kayan. The Kayan, as Hose and McDougall have explained (*The Pagan Tribes of Borneo*), make war to take heads, and they take heads because

¹ See C. Hose and W. McDougall, *The Pagan Tribes of Borneo* (1912).

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they are necessary to the funeral ceremonial of their chiefs. No chiefs, that is to say, no heads, and no heads, no war. The Punan of Borneo do not take heads because they have no chiefs, and, lacking chiefs, they also lack the ritualistic observances bound up with the burials of chiefs and demanding the acquisition of heads as an integral part of such rites.¹ In other words, warfare and the class system are inseparably one, and the term 'military aristocracy' to describe the social condition of the 'Heroic Age' when the archaic civilization broke up is no ill-chosen one.

That we are really approaching the underground seams of natural human conduct containing the ores of 'human nature,' before they were worked into the arbitrary shapes and forms we all recognize, is revealed by the researches of the Austrian ethnologist, Father P. W. Schmidt. He has shown conclusively that the pygmy folk of the earth, Negritos, Bushmen, Andamanese and others, had originally no weapons for hand-to-hand combat. Their only weapons were the bow and arrow, which, as he rightly argues, were used not against men, but their food, as its four legs or two wings carried it away from them. He speaks without equivocation of the entirely peaceful habits and disposition of all the pygmy tribes. What other conceivable factor but foreign influence could have established the convention of the feud among primitive men? It is not the insistency of human nature we need worry about, but the authority established to 'tame' and to 'control' it. It is man's social institutions which are the stickers, and with their stubbornness break so many heads and hearts.

C. THE SYSTEM AND THE HUMAN BEING

The reader may complain that he is hearing little enough of the people who inhabited England before the gods came

¹ See Mr. Perry's article 'Pugnacity' in the *Monist* of January, 1923, for a closer examination of Kayan warfare.

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winging over the sea to nest in stones and mounds. What of the men who graved animals on bones at Cresswell Crags in Derbyshire, who chipped their implements at Brandon and other flint and chert regions of England, and lit their fires within the limestone caves of Somerset? I reply that I began to tell him something about them in the first quarter of this Chapter, and if I have called them the Eskimo, that was only for convenience.

But there is more in it than that. When we went on to talk about the primitives who became a little bruised from the impact of civilization, were we not in oblique fashion writing a history of our own times and unconsciously bringing into our survey the men of London and Newcastle and Manchester? Modern life is so infinitely complicated that we positively need a faithful record (as yet imperfectly told, until Mr. Perry's book is written) of primitive society, to examine the springs of our own social mechanism, to explain the correspondence between certain institutions in our midst and certain ways of thinking and acting among the groups that run or are run by them. We have to ask to what extent our actions are voluntary or prescribed by our social environment. We have to inspect a very large number of our ready-made generalizations (among which neo-Darwinism is only one) upon politics, ethics and other phenomena of social life, and subject them to new tests of value. We have not to assume that an institution is sacrosanct simply because it is an institution, but to probe to its heart and see if it has got one.

We have to enquire into the original idea which a particular institution embodies and crystallizes, to discuss not only whether the idea was good in itself but whether it has been lost or expressed in its material presentment. We have to look on the one side to our human nature and on the other to our gods, and try to understand the relations between them. And in addressing ourselves to these appallingly

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difficult problems we have three great tests of valuation. There is, supremely first, life itself which is God, and reality which is its expression; there is, secondly, the norm of human life represented as a raw material in the primitive, and there are the deviations from it represented by civilization. And thirdly, there is the history of the past.

Let us, therefore, try to carry this Chapter one step further in the consciousness that it is not the theme itself but the execution which falls so lamentably short of the beauty and the grandeur implicit in it.

PART IV

The Primitive Civilized

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A. THE HERITAGE OF CIVILIZATION

In *The Evolution of Man*, Dr. Elliot Smith writes 'the spirit of man has ever been the same.' From what has gone before we may fairly carry his words beyond their immediate context and assume that, however susceptible man has been to the social environments imposed upon him by a superior culture, his primitive, hereditary and instinctive nature remains the same. Man is capable both of extraordinary change and extraordinary stability. What moved men four thousand years ago moves them to-day, and yet the fundamentals of existence are utterly different from what they were six thousand years ago. But the immense complication of life since then by no means implies a radical change in the nature of man. The biologist is always telling us that acquired characters are not transmissible through the germ-plasm, that the past lives on in the present, and that in spite of all the policing and safeguards of civilization, the primitive beast-man, the cave monster with dilated

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nostrils, fingers curved like talons and foam at the lips, is ready, aye ready, to spring out of our civilized souls and gnash his teeth. Well, we say to the biologists – I hope you may be right and that something of the bogey-man still survives in us. We may hope that the extreme plasticity of mankind, his readiness to take impressions, has not affected the deeper core of his being and that civilization in certain aspects of it with which we are too familiar has not tampered with the subterranean springs of human nature.

Civilization is not, indeed, very likely to have done so, since, in Elliot Smith's words, it is 'alien to the instinctive tendencies of human beings.' How prehensile and obstinate are the primitive 'characters' of man we may measure from a study of his structural evolution. It was not by the shedding but the retention of these characters that mankind achieved the mental superiority which entitled him to the name of 'Man.' The trouble with Neanderthal man, the Java and Piltdown men and the various forms of anthropoid ape which diverged from the main stem, making forward to manhood, was that they sacrificed their primitive or generalized characters for specialized ones by which they adapted themselves the more comfortably to the peculiar circumstances of their habitat and environment. The analogy is a useful one, though it must not be carried too far.

Now it is plain that the new historical data make hay of the belief that civilization is a natural, graduated and altogether beneficial process of growth out of undesirable savagery. They tell us in fact what we can see for ourselves without the binoculars of anthropology. Neither the civilized nor the primitive conditions of society will play up to this circus theory. Civilization has not been a slow flowering from within outwards, but a sudden and arbitrary imposition. It was imported not spontaneous, and so far from broadening down from precedent to precedent, it grew

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not up but down from the climax of its efflorescence. Into the primitive constitution it introduced many toxins none the healthier for being administered by personages in official dress and called by sounding names.

But the acknowledgment of conclusions which cut right across unconscious modes of thought no less than cherished convictions, beliefs no less than prejudices, neither needs nor does preclude the student of human affairs from recognizing the gains we to this day owe to the unique experiment of the antique travellers. The primitive took life as he found it, and the middles of things as they came. But the first theologies of civilized man attempted to see their beginnings and their ends, their causes and their effects, and so to unify and rationalize the phenomena of the universe. He was a man only indirectly of religion or poetry, more directly of science and philosophy, and his ritual was the medium by which he sought to solve the problems of life suggested to him by direct experience. Therefore, we owe to him the whole cosmos of modern thought and its due expression, while from his miscalculation that water engendered life because the Nile flood awoke the sleeping plants, has sprung the freedom of the mind which goes in quest not of gold and pearls for their factitious properties but of the 'cause of causes, end of ends.'

Indeed, the benefits that have accrued to us from the first instalments of civilization speak for themselves with so loud a voice that it is superfluous to stress them, and I only do so here that the reader may not assume that I ignore them. But civilization is like the Drage Way; we have our furniture delivered, and then some time afterwards we discover that we have to pay for it. That we owe the finer qualities of human nature to it, or even the artistic capacities of the human race and their correlatives, is certainly untrue. The study of primitive society reveals the former abundantly and the latter partially thwarted from self-expression by the more

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pressing claims of the food-supply. The cave-art of the Cro-Magnons confutes the argument that primitive man lacks the power of self-expression. Civilization has offered mankind a potential release from his struggle with his physical environment by all those inventions and discoveries which ease it, and added unto him the priceless boon of leisure for cultivating his affections, his sympathies, and his understanding.

Hardly have we reaped the first swathes of the harvest. The material needs of life press upon us more cruelly than ever; the equitable distribution of the food-supply which the proto-dynastic Egyptians achieved seems as much out of our control as the overgrowth of our urban populations; leisure, the more imperative since we have so utterly failed to make work creative and agreeable, is further off than ever, and that ugliness that warps the soul is omnipresent. The spear has become the bomb, the bronze dagger the bayonet, while the savage feud has progressed onwards and upwards to the shock of lacerated millions. So far from the individual unfolding from bud to flower, he has been drowned in the mass-mind, and only by accepting isolation from and maladjustment to it, can he snatch a tenuous reality. What civilization has done for us is to open up a crowded paradise of possibilities for the perfect society and the 'good life' of each member of it. What we have done with our heritage is to crystallize those primary¹ flaws of machinery and adjustment that accompanied its distribution. When civilization was carried over the world, it was imposed from above twice over, first the culture itself and then the class whose

¹ A very good example of this is furnished by the Egypt of the Third Dynasty. Practically every art and craft was invented before it. But the absorption of human energy in building enormous pyramids for one small ruling class prevented the invention of any fresh ones, while the struggles between the two groups of this class ruined the country for centuries (see Perry, *Children of the Sun*, p. 497).

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monopoly it was. Those were the times when gods walked the earth. They still do nowadays, only we call them generals, bankers, archbishops, managing directors and Commissaries of the Proletariat.

I take it then that 'certain generalized aptitudes of mind and temperament,' achieved in the course of man's structural evolution, have been overlaid rather than eroded by the imposition of alien cultures upon them. The natural self of man has largely failed to find its due expression, and has remained much as the raw material of the mines under the surface of St. Austell's Moor in Cornwall. They were untapped by the ancient miners, because they were screened by a layer of China clay. But the metal was there all the time, and gleamed upon the private bed of night. May we not call a true civilization the pick and shovel of the miner? The art of civilizing the primitive is to get it out and work it up, not to spread a layer of some foreign substance over it. Once an institution has ceased to be expressive and representative, not of the herd mind but of natural humanity in spontaneous association and articulate need, it but cumpers the earth. It loses contact with reality, it feeds upon general terms and is supported by that mass-homage which yielded to the decayed gods of ancient civilization the flattery and fear commingled that turned them into demons.

Or we may take another similitude from the ancients. In their monoliths resided living spirits, but nobody attempted to chip away the incommunicative surface and reveal them, only to keep them going by conjuring tricks from without. That, surely, is the task of civilization — to remove the encumbrances from the living spirit of man, prisoned in its block, to mature the substance in the form; or, to put it in another way, to lend a helping hand to the block, so that in a loud voice it may cry — 'Man.'

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B. THE HERITAGE OF THE PRIMITIVE

I will give an example of what I mean by quoting some extracts from yet another book, Fielding Hall's *The Soul of a People*, written more than twenty years ago, and will supplement them by relating them to the general argument. The book is a study of the Burmese from the first-hand observations of a country magistrate of many years' residence, and if it be not a true but an idealized picture, the accents of sincerity in every line of the book have completely misled me. The quotations should be compared with those given from Nansen's book, not merely to illustrate the likenesses between two peoples, separated by barriers of race, culture and environment and divided from each other by extremes of opposite latitudes, but an essential difference which has nothing to do with these factors.

'We know what religion can do. We have seen how it can preach war and resistance, and can organize that war and resistance. We know what ten thousand priests preaching in ten thousand hamlets can effect in making a people almost unconquerable, in directing their armies, in strengthening their determination. We remember La Vendée, we remember our Puritans, and we have had recent experience in the Soudan. We know what Christianity has done again and again; what Judaism, what Mohammedanism, what many kinds of paganism have done. To those coming to Burma in those days fresh from the teachings of Europe, remembering fresh events in history, ignorant of what Buddhism means, there was nothing more surprising than the fact that in this war (the British invasion of Burma) religion had no place. The explanation is that the teachings of the Buddha forbid war. All killing is wrong, all war is hateful; nothing is more terrible than this destroying of your fellow-men. There is absolutely no getting free of this commandment.

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The teaching of the Buddha is that you must strive to make your own soul perfect. This is the first of all things and comes before any other consideration.'

A somewhat different point of view from that of the Archbishop of Canterbury, when he blesses the trooping of the colours. Then, speaking of the conquest of Burma by the British, Hall writes:

'No soldier could be a fervent Buddhist; no nation of Buddhists could be good soldiers; for not only does Buddhism not inculcate bravery, but it does not inculcate obedience. Each man is the ruler of his life, but the very essence of good fighting is discipline, and discipline, subjection, is unknown to Buddhism. Therefore the inherent courage of the Burmans could have no assistance from their faith in any way, but the very contrary: it fought against them.'

'His religion tells him that the first of all gifts is sympathy; it is the first step towards wisdom, and he holds it true. After that, all shall be added unto you. He believes that happiness is the first of all things. We think differently. We are content with cheerless days, with an absence of love, of beauty, of all that is valuable to the heart if we can but put away a little money, if we can enlarge our business, if we can make a bigger figure in the world.'

'And so I do not think he will ever make what we call a great nation. He will never try to be a conqueror of other peoples, either with the sword, with trade or with religion. He will never care to have a great voice in the management of the world. He does not care to interfere with other people: he never believes that interference can do other than harm to both sides. He will never be very rich, very powerful,

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very advanced in science, perhaps not even in art, though I am not sure about that. It may be he will be very great in literature and art. But however that may be, in his own idea his will be always the greatest nation in the world, because it is the happiest.'

I may mention here that Sir J. G. Scott, in his recent history of Burma, writes: 'The people of Burma have long been the most literate in the Indian Empire.' And this is what P. L. Narasau has to say in *The Essence of Buddhism*:

'A tangible way in which a religion manifests its actual influence upon civilization is art. The great glory of Buddhism is that it has always ministered to the satisfaction of æsthetic aspirations. Wherever Buddhism has prevailed, artistic pagodas, vast viharas, beautiful stupas have come into existence. The finest buildings in Japan are the Buddhist temples. The beauty and charm of the frescoes of Ajanta caves serve as monumental proofs of the wonderful inspiration which the religion of the Tathagata imparted to art. . . . All sciences and arts were studied in the centres of Buddhist civilization, such as the great Buddhist monastery of Nalanda. . . . 'The very bloom of the intellectual life of India . . . was contemporaneous with the period in which Buddhism flourished.'

But let me get on with Fielding Hall:

'And as Buddhism was, so it is, so it will remain. By its very nature it abhors all semblance of authority. It has proved that, under temptation such as no other religion has felt and resisted. It is a religion of each man's own soul, not of governments and powers.'

'Now we are a greater people, our justice is better, our

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prisons are better, our morality is inconceivably better, than Imperial Rome ever dreamt of. And so with these people when their time shall come, when they shall have grown out of childhood into manhood, when they shall have the wisdom and strength and experience to put in force the convictions that are in their hearts, it seems to me they will bring out of these convictions something more wonderful than we to-day have dreamt of.'

In our own lives here in England, we do meet with people who love beauty and peace and the face of nature, who do not walk in the ways of the world, who have no professed religion, but whose presence is a benediction. Free in mind themselves, they seek in no way to restrict the liberties of others, while their only form of criticism is to follow their own grassy paths, serene and undismayed. They are like quiet places through which the city pavements do not run, and when we meet them, we love and envy them all in one breath, and sometimes with a passion which may vex and torture us all our lives. And we shall be angry with them and vilify them, and impute to them meannesses and ambitions and false motives which we know to be untrue. But when the noise and silliness going on in the world and our own spirits cease to plague us, we turn to them and their warmth and truth as to something that holds fast in the hustle of illusions that hurt us far more than real things can do. But that a whole people, a nation, should resemble those blest few, or promise so to do, that is something unique in our experience. Of such, if books be not liars, were the Burmese, and since they are extremely passionate by nature, no demigods immune from storm.

What is the reason for this? Is it, in the first place, that Buddhism is superior to all other religions? But Buddhism is not a monopoly of the Burmese, nor are other peoples that practise it like them. In one respect, indeed, and a very

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important one, Christianity is superior to Buddhism. It accepts life in the present, whatever the fanaticism of its ascetics, and a future life (however crudely set forth by its disciples) in more abundance and intensity. The Buddhist ultimately rejects life as a shadow that frets the eternal peace. He turns his back upon the life-force. A last quotation from *The Soul of a People* will illustrate my meaning:

“Love is strong as death; many waters cannot quench love.” Not any dogmas of any religion, not any philosophy, nothing in this world, nothing in the next, shall prevent him who loves from the certainty of regaining some time the soul he loves. Nothing can kill this hope. It comes up and up, twisting theories of life, scorning the wisdom of the wise and the folly of the foolish, sweeping everything aside, until it reaches its unquenchable desire, reunion of lover with lover. It is unconquerable, eternal, as God Himself. But no Buddhist would admit this for a moment.’

The text of Christianity has been so garbled, it has been so confused with Jehovahism and intermingled with a dying paganism, it has split into so many jarring sects, all preaching against one another, and it has become so firmly rooted in institutions, that it is very difficult to know what it does mean and to separate the essentials from the accretions. But I doubt whether bedrock Christianity would deny such a belief. At any rate, the Burman here parted company with the faith which in this respect contradicted the promptings of his soul. He believed in such a love as ‘swallowing up all life and death and eternity,’ and it is necessary to underline his capacity for such emotions, because it was not by the suppression of his natural feelings that he achieved a joyful and loving society.

But in every other respect the influence of Buddhism has

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been not to break but to unlock the chains that bound the spirit of man. The teaching of Buddha himself was the reverse of repressive or authoritarian. He did much more than reject the caste system, and by teaching men to rely on themselves, by insisting on the value of the individual soul, he struck the heaviest blow but one ever delivered at that institutionalism which is not necessarily coextensive with civilization. A prince himself, he taught men that it is not the ivy which is the growth of the tree. He advised men never to delegate the authority of their own souls to any institution, and that the real difference between men lies in the degrees of zeal they have devoted to the cultivation of the spirit within them. His counsels to men can be so readily equated to the sayings of Christ, Shelley, Blake, and other men who have possessed the divine vision and express much the same gospel, that there is no great need to dwell on them or to seek in Buddhism alone the explanation of this extraordinary variation of the Burmese people from the very different criteria of thought and conduct that rule in other civilized countries.

Where Buddhism recedes from the illuminations we are more familiar with in the West is in its emphasis upon the hypothesis that men are unhappy because they are alive. Our Western feeling is that they are unhappy because they are not. Is it not a strange thing that the people who embrace Buddhism with greater fervour than any other should be the happiest people in the world? And I take it that they are so partly because the influence of this most humane and enlightened faith has been to restore the human being to himself, and so to make him and his fellows very much alive indeed. They have joyfully discovered that separateness is a condition of unity, and that the quarrel between the individual and the community only occurs when the former gives up using his wings and becomes a bee-swarm which is another being altogether.

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Is the real reason, then, that the Burmese are primitives¹ like the Eskimo, with the difference that they have had the luck to enjoy the wisdom of one of the greatest teachers in the history of man? But the Burmese are *not* primitives. Though the Indians and the Burmese they despise have quite a different conception and practice of life, the 'archaic civilization' came to them both. The gold and tin mines of the Irrawaddy basin summoned the colonists thither as urgently as elsewhere, while the presence of polished stone implements, identical in type with those found in Britain, the gold-province of Pahang in the Malay Peninsula and in New Guinea, reveals their settlements. There is good evidence to show that this particular movement had its base in India, and that it was responsible for founding the kingdom of Pegu. Even Sir J. G. Scott (*Burma*, 1924), who belongs to the robust old school that scouts so far as it deigns to notice the new reading of history at all, derives the first civilization of Burma from the Dravidian Nagas and Asuras of India, whose culture and traditions were soaked in Egypt. The tale goes that the two sons of a Dravidian king set out with their families and followers to Pegu. Its inhabitants were certainly primitive 'food-gatherers' like the pre-Dravidian tribes of India, and the pre-Aveburians.

Thus was Burma civilized in common with other countries of the East, as they are technically civilized to-day, since they practise agriculture, build substantial dwellings, understand the use of metals, domesticate their animals, and possess or rather possessed a native though not indigenous kingship. And so their example establishes two principles which we can safely apply. One is that the evils and cruelties of civilization are not inseparable from it, an inevitable and crushing tax upon the benefits it confers, as an angry reader

¹ It must be remembered that I am writing of the Burmese as they were when Hall wrote. I have no knowledge of their present psychology and conditions.

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of this book might conclude I meant. The other is that the first civilizations were all more or less uniform to begin with and obtained their diversities as the gift, Danaan or otherwise, of time from his pedlar's pack of new ideas, isolation, new streams of influence, loss of contact with the home-land and other knick-knacks picked up on a stroll through the centuries. The Burmans, indeed, had every opportunity to become a great nation like the Romans or the Incas, of whom W. H. Hudson has written:

'The Inca system of government was founded on that most iniquitous and disastrous doctrine that the individual bears the same relation to the State as a child to its parent, that its life from the cradle to the grave must be regulated for it by a Power it is taught to regard as omniscient. What wonder that a system so unspeakably repugnant to a being who feels that his will is a divinity working within him fell to pieces at the first touch of foreign invasion. . . . For the whole State was, so to speak, putrid even before dissolution, and when it fell it mingled with the dust and was forgotten.'

For, on the one hand, civilized Burma was founded by an Indian extension of the archaic civilization, notorious just before the Aryan invasions for its dark and bloody rites, its lust for human sacrifice, and the malevolent forms assumed by the Dravidian variant of Hathor. On the other, it was assailed from the north by the warrior aristocracy of the Tai-Shan, whose ferocity depopulated large tracts of southern Asia.

With justice, then, Sir J. G. Scott writes of the Burmese that 'their national history is as baffling as they are themselves.' For since none of the histories of Burma regard its civilization as a card out of a single pack, and the people that do know who held the hand have been too occupied in

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going round the world in eighty pages to devote an intensive study to so unique a people, we are left very much in the dark as to the actual historical process which enabled Buddha to cultivate his garden in the heart of a whole nation, and saved him from the gallows, the block or the prison-cell.

All I can do is to hop off my Post of Ignorance and pick up a couple of crumbs. Sir J. G. Scott continues: 'It (their national history) is concerned with nothing but the kings, and a very great number of them were not worth the trouble.' That suggests that the kings of Burma and the Burmese were by no means the same thing, and that here were a happy people that had no history. And this is confirmed by Fielding Hall's Chapter upon their government. Before Burma was annexed to the British Crown, the country was nominally ruled by a king who appointed the governors of the provinces, who were his puppets. But between the king and his ministers and the body of the people, who lived in village communities under the advice rather than the authority of village headmen, there was a great gulf, just space, since the Buddhist monks took no part neither in state nor local government. The Burmese had no ruling class. The central royal government was quite villainously bad: but its great advantage was that it did not govern. It left the people alone to look after themselves; they minded their business, and their government fortunately failed to mind its business. It fussed over court affairs, and the conclusion we come to is that not only did the Burmese lack government but that nobody was a penny the worse for it.

Naturally we expect a whole nation to have gone to the dogs. We find instead the most enlightened land laws in the world, marriage customs which put our property system to shame, a justice that does not degrade the evil-doer, nor exile him from nature and his kindly fellow-men, nor revenge itself on him in the name of society, nor brand him for the rest of his life as a deterrent, nor advertise him as

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an excitement for the mob.¹ We find an equality between men and women and neighbour and neighbour as Buddha preached and which is rarely infringed. We find a respect and compassion combined for animal life which, were they practised in Europe, would throw the staffs of every Protection and Prevention Society on the streets. The problems of reconciling individual liberty with social harmony which rack our reformers they settled with a smile. Historically considered, their civilization roughly approximated to that of our own Middle Ages, but by the test of values rather than standards, they were a community of equals, in a sense that has probably never been known before.

These findings, however, merely intensified my dilemma. If Fielding Hall's observations were accurate, the mystery of how the Burmese, racially akin to and subject to the same influences as the Indians, had wrought out an entirely different concept of civilization, remained unsolved. We have seen, too, how the Burmese, though fervent Buddhists, implicitly rejected the Buddhistic rejection of life by their own warm and natural enjoyment of it. Could the explanation be, then, that Fielding Hall had dressed up the facts and added to their stature? In order to answer this question, I looked up the reviews of the first edition of the book. But though the philosophy of the book was as severely handled as I expected it to be, and great play was made of the imperfections of Buddhism, I found not a sentence which impugned the verisimilitude of his portrait of the Burmese people. I was more heavily bogged than ever, for the conclusion that the Burmese were (Nordic-fashion) a stock superior to the rest of mankind did not commend itself to me for a moment. The secret must lie in the historical origins of their pre-Buddhistic civilization,² since to attribute

¹ Are not our murder trials a modern variant of the Roman bread and circuses?

² There are, for instance, no megaliths in Burma.

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their national conditions to Buddhism alone ignored not only their psychological predisposition to accept it, but their instinctive repudiation of one of its fundamental and despairful tenets.

Thus, we cannot understand this flowering of the human spirit without a guide-book to human botany, without realizing the nature of the seed and the conditions favourable to its growth. The failure to correlate the social temper of the Burmese with the general history of mankind, primitive and civilized, is to render the former meaningless, the blaze of a wandering comet. As it is, this is a story of one of the rooms in the house of humanity, and we have strolled into it from four other rooms leading out of one another in the same house – Egypt, Avebury, Greenland and our own England of to-day.

CHAPTER TWELVE: THE END OF THE STORY

The study of prehistory no longer an archæological preserve. Its challenge to modern Darwinism. Mr. Bernard Shaw's single-handed offensive against it. Its imperviousness both to argument and indignation, and universal acceptance. Its real St. George is the historical method, the sword facts. It is by showing that as a social philosophy it has no claim to scientific verity that it can be prevented from destroying modern civilization. The relevance to modern life of the study of the archaic civilization. It enables us to understand the nature of social institutions and of their reactions upon human life by revealing their origins, causes and effects. Ancient institutions as dragons and the modern dragon dressed up as economic determinism. The divorce of institutions from human needs and realities the cause of the decline of the archaic civilization. How history is repeating itself. The stone that the builders rejected.

'As compared to the open-eyed intelligent wanting and trying of Lamarck, the Darwinian process may be described as a chapter of accidents. As such, it seems simple, because you do not at first realize all that it involves. But when its whole significance dawns on you, your heart sinks into a heap of sand within you. There is a hideous fatalism about it, a ghastly and damnable reduction of beauty and intelligence, of strength and purpose, of honour and aspiration, to such casually picturesque changes as an avalanche may make in a mountain landscape, or a railway accident in a human figure. To call this Natural Selection is a blasphemy, possible to many to whom Nature is nothing but a casual aggregation of inert and dead matter, but eternally impossible to the spirits and souls of the righteous. If it be no blasphemy, but a truth of science, then the stars of heaven, the showers and dew, the winter and summer, the fire and heat, the mountains and hills, may no longer be called to exalt the Lord with us by praise: their work is to modify all things by blindly starving and murdering everything that is not lucky enough to survive in the universal struggle for hogwash.'

BERNARD SHAW, PREFACE TO 'BACK TO METHUSELAH'

CHAPTER TWELVE: THE END OF THE STORY

§ I. ANCIENT AND MODERN

OF course, it is not really the end of the story, only the end of its beginning. It is a story that must go on so long as man endures. For prehistory can no longer remain an antiquarian pastime, having no contact with reality and no application to life as it is lived to-day. The voyages of the Ancient Mariners continue, neither, as their ships plough the stormy centuries, has their cargo of ideas been yet exhausted. The latent implications in the study of the archaic civilization which bear reference to our own times would fill ten volumes the length of this one. As I am neither psychologist, politician nor philosopher, I will confine myself to two only of those implications.

It has long been patent to the reader that the tale of ancient civilization as distributed from a common source offers a direct challenge to 'spontaneous evolution' misapplied to the history of *Homo sapiens*. The most volcanic demolition of its articles of faith that will ever be written issued from the brain of Mr. Bernard Shaw five years ago. Its main doctrine of violence coupled with accident he accused of having been closely responsible for a European catastrophe of a magnitude so appalling and a scope so unpredictable that it is still far from certain whether civilization will survive it. It is, he says, a theory of the innocence of devilry, because, as the shambles of the survival of the fittest and the struggle for existence are without purpose or design, no responsibility for the havoc they have caused can be attached to them. But of what avail is Mr. Shaw's or any individual genius against a doctrine that has saturated public opinion as has the 'Darwinism' misapplied to human society, and by its adherence to fatalism as the only motive force in

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the universe, paralyses the arm that would strike it? Mr. Shaw may cast his lightnings against what he calls 'its blind coarseness, its shallow logic and sickening inhumanity,' but the monster is preserved by its very automatism.

When this pseudo-Darwinism is the philosophy of the industrial system, the credo of opportunist politics, the justification of the predatory and aggressive elements in modern society; when it is the gospel of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald for socialism, of Mr. H. G. Wells for his world-government, of Dean Inge for the Nordic apotheosis of the Eton boy, you are not going to get rid of it by argument, still less by the revolt of the soul against it. There is only one weapon sharp enough to pierce its hide – that of the historical method. To accuse its misfitting social philosophy of banishing mind from the universe, as Samuel Butler accused it, of offering a grotesque insult to human nature, and of nailing the skull and cross-bones to the mast-head, is futile because such charges are what its doctrine virtually admits. But it does not admit that there is no concrete basis of ascertained fact behind its gimcrack structure. That is the strength of the historical method – to reveal by scientific evidence and verifiable data the absurdity of the 'evolutionary' claim to interpret the history of mankind by its two great watchwords of accident and violence.

It is clear that civilization was not a process of evolution fired by struggle or the hazards of geographical circumstance into which the human will entered not at all. It was planted by men who had definite aims and purposes and settled in definite places to gratify them. These men were not impeded by snow or equatorial heat, by waters or by forests, or by the great distances they traversed. So far from having taken shape from the collision of blind forces, civilization has itself been the parent of that savagery of which it is called the happy ending, and which is not the less savagery by dressing up in uniform.

ANCIENT AND MODERN

The predatory forces that survived did not make civilization: they destroyed it. Mechanical 'evolution' misapplied to human life has triumphed because it flattered commercialism by its canons of survival through rapacious conflict in the first place, and because it sanctified institutionalism by picturing man as a raging beast only to be restrained by rules, taboos and formulæ in the second. That was natural and inevitable. These phenomena could not do without a philosophy, and the history of civilization is a series of such intellectual ideas, given social form and ratified by custom. But the pretensions of this particular philosophy to set free the spirit of man and to give a scientific explanation of his historical development are no more valid than was the assumption that the blood of human beings was a necessity for good crops. The enemy of this philosophy as a social doctrine is no longer the infallibility of the Bible, but that very loss of contact with reality which was the disease of the archaic civilization in its decline. And it says a good deal for the soundness of the historical method that it shows a front hardly more comfortable to that veteran adversary than to its conqueror of sixty years ago.

§ 2. THE RETURN TO HUMAN NATURE

The great psychologist, Rivers, used to maintain that all branches of the study of man are essential and interrelated parts of one whole, bearing results of cardinal importance for the welfare of modern civilized communities. He became a Labour candidate as the natural consequence of his Melanesian researches. He was a pioneer in the school of thought, at present almost boycotted, which declares that social institutions can only be truly understood and so modified to express the needs of humanity by an enquiry into their origins, their historical background and the record of their causes and effects.

How, for instance, is it possible to get rid of war, until

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its biography is written and its associations are laid bare? Warfare is still as perfectly respectable an institution as was its milder forerunner, human sacrifice. Its reputation survives because it is forgotten that it had a past. How can we understand why the class that holds the powers of government, industry and social prestige is so cut off from the rest of the community, unless the reactions of social institutions upon human attitudes are detected, until it is perceived that the education of school, university and 'home influence' have combined to segregate the human being controlled by them as successfully as the old kings were segregated in their sky-world? The industrial system has induced the belief that man is only impelled to labour by the stimuli of fear and the crudest self-interest. How are we to correct this fallacy without an historical retrospect of the effects of other systems upon human nature, of how fear was born into the world and what man was like before he had any institutions? Are institutions sacrosanct in themselves because their beginnings and transformations are hidden by antiquity?

One of the more binding articles in the 'evolutionary' faith is determinism, to which its invention of a mechanical principle of evolutionary progress, working independently of man's will or desire, logically impels it. Are not economic determinism and all the other fatalisms accepted as inevitable, as demonic visitations, one might say, because we are unable to have a good look all round them? They lack a setting and we lack a focus for them. We can't get them against the light.

It seems to me that the advantage of a study of the archaic civilization is that it means reality but reads like a fairy-tale. We can bring to it a perfectly unbiassed judgment. We see things as they really are because we see them through the media of dream and enchantment. We have been talking in terms of sun-gods and dragons which are no longer real to us: we are, that is to say, endowing the institutions of the

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ancients with a fictional and dramatic value. The fantasy is preserved intact because it is isolated and so viewed in a true perspective. As a means, then, to clear perception, the social environment of the archaic civilization is of far greater value to us than the social environment of our own civilization. We get to know the old 'uns better than we know ourselves. Both civilizations have their social environment, but it would be a difficult thing to make a fairy-tale of ours. Economic determinism makes a very flat and unconvincing dragon. But that is because he lives with us and exacts a sufficiently heavy toll for his keep. It is by transposing the terms in which these two civilizations have expressed their institutions that we are enabled to clothe our own social conditions in that measure of illusion which is a means to revealing their true nature. For the gods and demons of the archaic civilization were in very truth their institutions.

Let me take one or two examples. This is a characteristic extract from the Press: 'By the merciless operation of the law of supply and demand, about 750,000 ex-Service men are out of work.' By the merciless operation . . ., obviously 'the law of supply and demand' is an inexorable demon who demands his quota of human misery exactly like the Moloch of the Tyrians and Carthaginians. But as Moloch was a mind-created figment representing the fears, unhappiness and conflict of his times, so is 'the law of supply and demand.' They are both quite unreal; they have both got out of hand, out of human control, out of touch with human values. And when the high-priest blows his conch, down we go on our faces and sacrifice to the destroying gods enthroned upon our own fears and delusions.

In the archaic civilization, men were punished for laughing at animals, because the souls of ancestral lords made hotels of them on their way to godship. There was a case in the papers of a man who was fined £10 for putting a dog into a box that was not properly ventilated. About the same time,

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the story was published of a huntsman who set on fire a fox taken refuge up a chimney after a fifteen miles' run. Was he punished? No, because fox-hunting is a social institution sanctified by the souls of dead ancestors. And so we could go the round of the pantheon of social institutions from the State-cum-war-god downwards—and write another fairy-tale.

The story of the decadence of the archaic civilization as a whole is, as I have tried to show, that of the steady distancing of institutions from the fundamental human needs and realities their function is to embody. This story squares precisely with the analysis, made possible by Mr. Perry's investigations, of what human nature really is in its quintessence and unmodified by the social environment of civilization. For as these institutions drift out of reach of human valuations, they become more and more cruel and unreal, until the cause of the human being and the cause of the institution become definitely opposed conceptions. In our own times, we are fed from childhood with such phrases as 'for the good of the school,' 'for the good of the Empire,' 'for the good of the State,' 'for the sake of business, morality,' and all the rest of it. But when we come to examine the implications of these phrases, we cannot help seeing that the good of an institution almost invariably means the evil of the individuals controlled and affected by it, just as it was for the good of the Carthaginian State that its citizens should be cast into the furnaces of Baal and Moloch. It is an abstraction that hurts everybody, even its wirepullers, except itself — and itself has no self apart from expressing human values and in relation to the human beings it exists to represent.¹

¹ It seems to me, for instance, that very many of the private tragedies of human life are due to a false beginning and that the pressure of some system or particular social environment is responsible for the false beginning. And as the false beginning becomes a still falser middle and end, so the pressure becomes inexorably tighter, until there is no escape. Then we call it destiny.

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In other words, the good of the institution and the good of the individuals that compose it become definitely opposed conceptions. History, say the wiseacres, never repeats itself, but that is just what history is always doing. It gets a new suit but it still speaks with the old voice.

Human institutions become spectres that frighten us to death with their boos and their goose-steps when they cease to be human. For the Sabbath was made for man. That is a simple end to come to after so long a story, but one for which many great men have had to die or suffer grievously. The story of the archaic civilization is of true value to us, because it presents a solid historical basis for the revelations of the prophets, the poets and the teachers of humanity. Many have felt in their hearts that they were right and that the triumphs of their persecutors were a foolishness. The time is coming when it will be proved that they were right, that all imposition defeats its own ends, and that the human being, the stone that the builders rejected, has become the headstone of the building.

Cæsar (puzzled). What do you mean by my way?

Cleopatra. Without punishment. Without revenge. Without judgment.

Cæsar. Ay: that is the right way, the great way, the only possible way in the end.'

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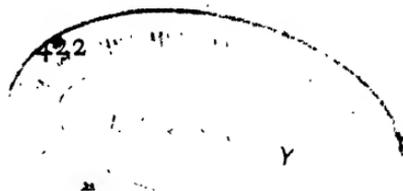
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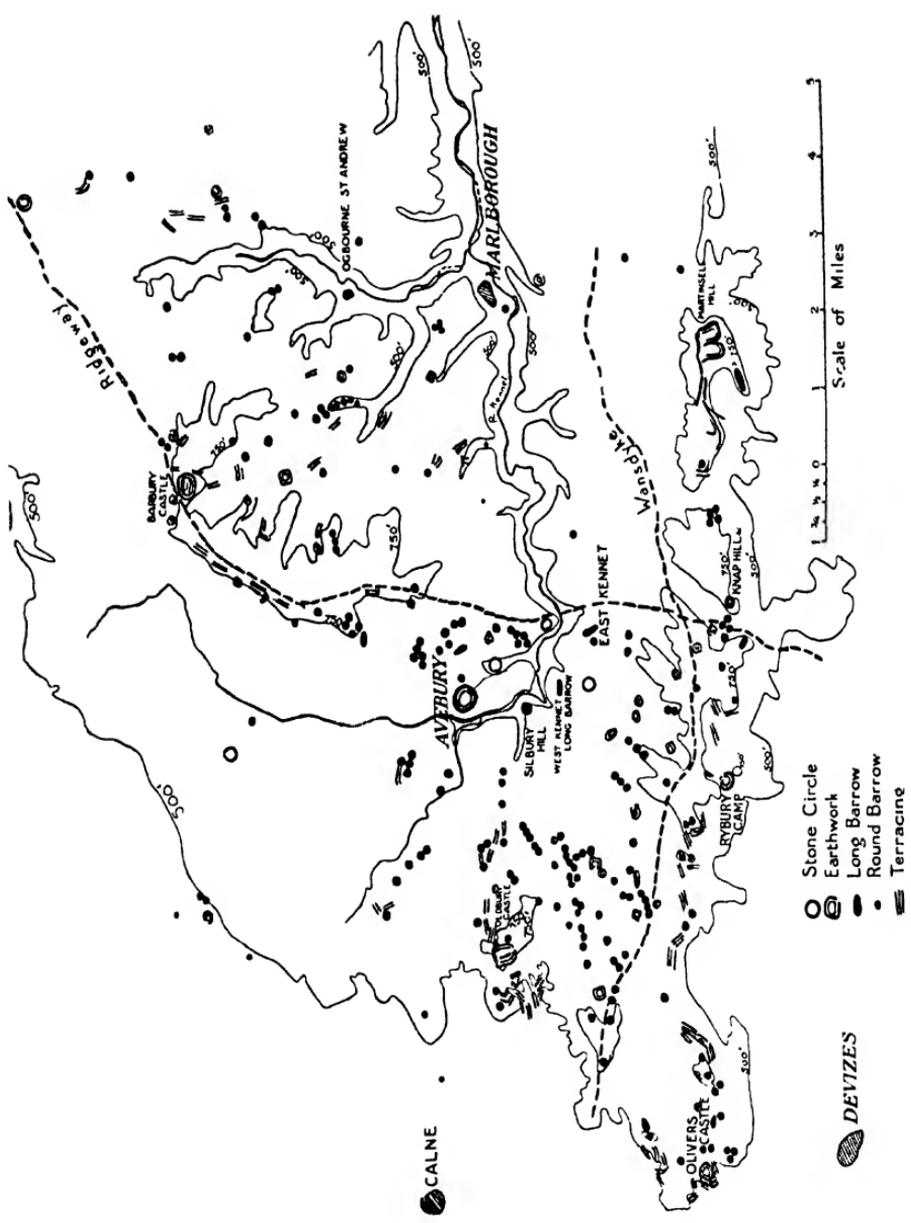
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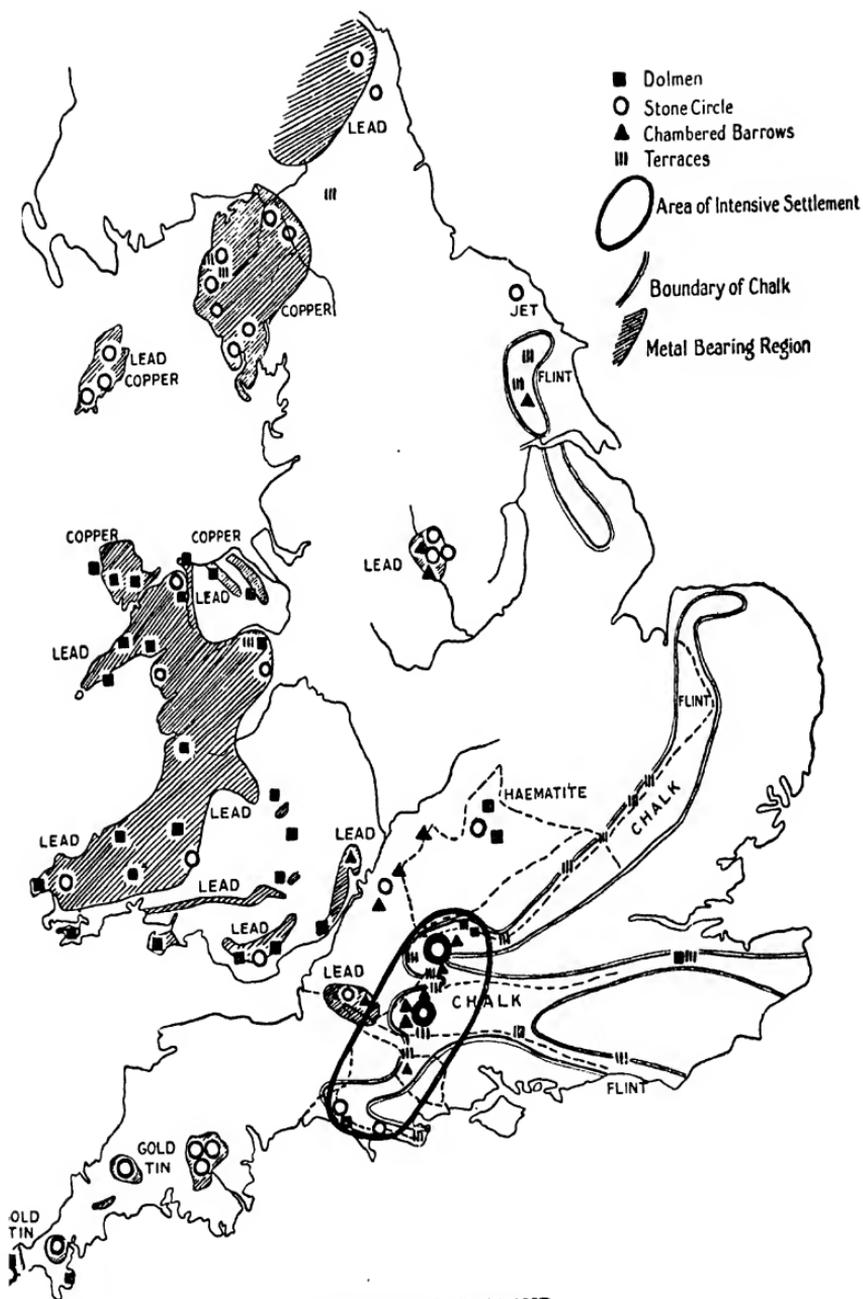




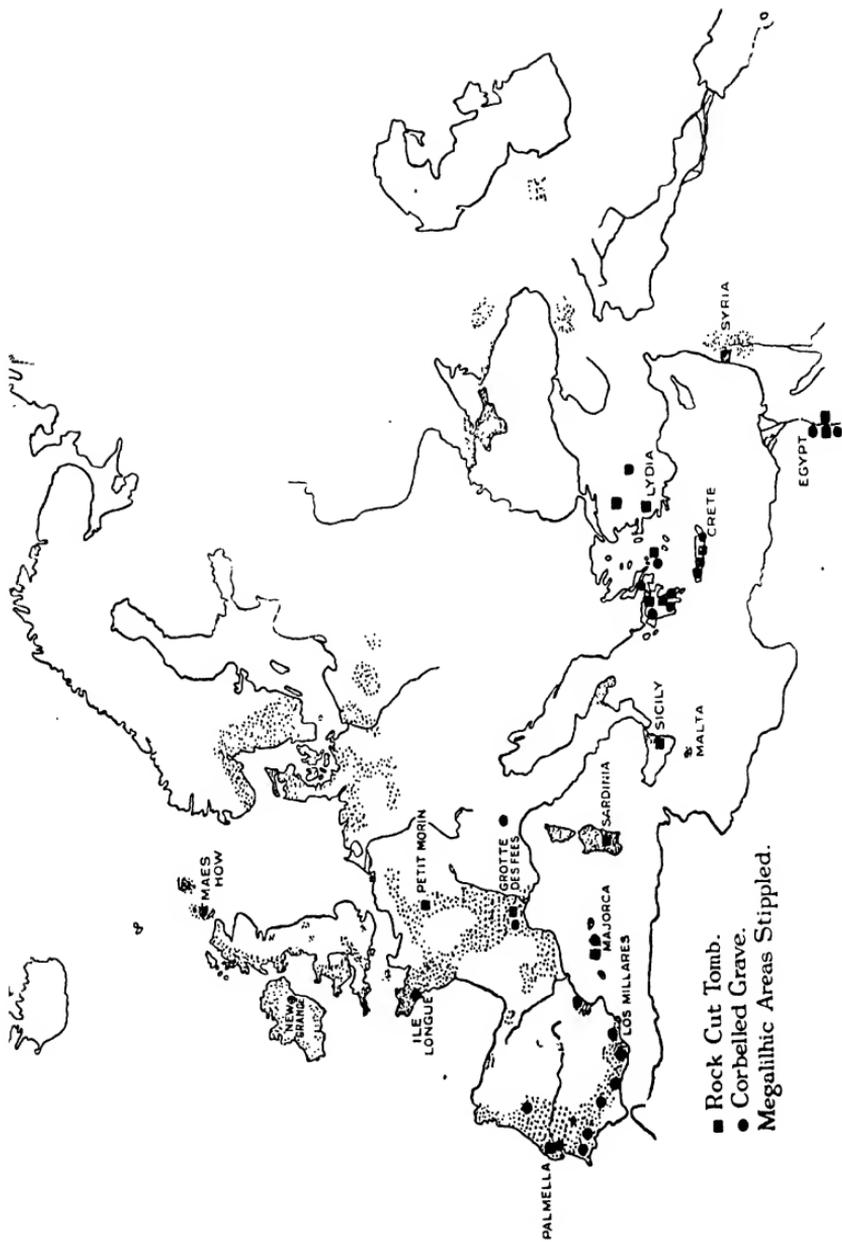
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