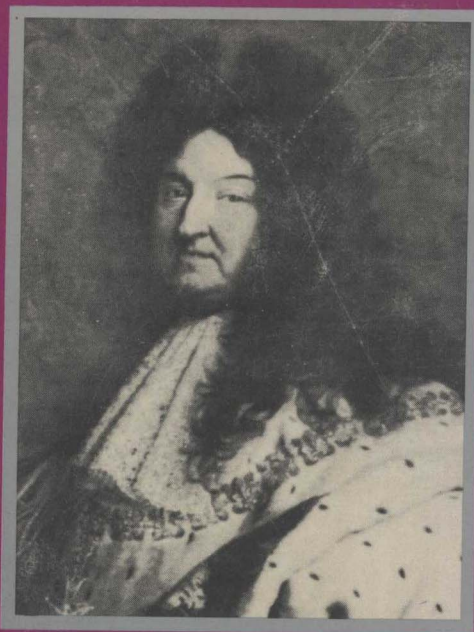


THE STORY OF CIVILIZATION
VIII

The Age of Louis XIV



WILL AND ARIEL
DURANT

*A History of European Civilization in the Period of
Pascal, Molière, Cromwell, Milton, Peter the Great,
Newton and Spinoza: 1648-1715*

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THE AGE OF LOUIS XIV

*A History of European Civilization in the Period
of Pascal, Molière, Cromwell, Milton,
Peter the Great, Newton, and Spinoza: 1648–1715*

by

Will and Ariel Durant



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BY WILL DURANT

The Story of Philosophy

Transition

The Pleasures of Philosophy

Adventures in Genius

THE STORY OF CIVILIZATION

BY WILL AND ARIEL DURANT

I. *Our Oriental Heritage*

II. *The Life of Greece*

III. *Caesar and Christ*

IV. *The Age of Faith*

V. *The Renaissance*

VI. *The Reformation*

VII. *The Age of Reason Begins*

VIII. *The Age of Louis XIV*

IX. *The Age of Voltaire*

X. *Rousseau and Revolution*

**TO OUR BELOVED
GRANDDAUGHTER
MONICA**

Dear Reader:

THIS volume is Part VIII in a history whose beginning has been forgotten, and whose end we shall never reach. The subject is civilization, which we define as social order promoting cultural creation; therefore it includes government, economy (agriculture, industry, commerce, finance), morality, manners, religion, art, literature, music, science, and philosophy. The aim is integral history—to cover all phases of a people's activity in one perspective and one unified narrative; that aim has been very imperfectly achieved. The scene is Europe. The time is from the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) to the death of Louis XIV, whose reign (1643–1715) dominated and named the age.

The pervading theme is the Great Debate between faith and reason. Faith was on the throne in this period, but reason was finding new voices in Hobbes, Locke, Newton, Bayle, Fontenelle, and Spinoza; this "Classical Age was throughout what it called itself at its close, the Age of Reason."* Almost a third of the book is devoted to the "Intellectual Adventure" out of superstition, obscurantism, and intolerance to scholarship, science, philosophy. An attempt is made to report the discussion fairly, despite the authors' evident prejudice; hence the extended and sympathetic treatment of such able defenders of the faith as Pascal, Bossuet, Fénelon, Berkeley, Malebranche, and Leibniz. Our children will live a new chapter in this conflict of ideals, where every victory must be repeatedly rewon.

We hope to present Part IX, *The Age of Voltaire*, in 1965, and Part X, *Rousseau and Revolution*, in 1968. Some difficulties have arisen, partly from the wealth of material offered by the eighteenth century, all demanding study and space. Meanwhile we shall rely on the Great Powers not to destroy our subject before it destroys us.

May, 1963

WILL AND ARIEL DURANT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

One of the associated publishers with whom we began this "word business" in 1926 has passed away; we shall never forget his bright spirit. The other is still our friend, always enthusiastic, generous, and forgiving, a publisher who remains a poet.

* Albert Guérard, *The Life and Death of an Ideal*, p. 18.

We trust that it will not be interpreted as "a lively sense of future favors" if we take this—which could be our last—chance to express our gratitude to the many critics who have won us an audience for these volumes. Without their help we should have been voices moaning in the wilderness.

We owe a substantial debt to our daughter Ethel for her devoted transformation of our not quite legible second draft into an almost perfect typescript, with wise emendations. And to our sisters and brother—Sarah, Flora, Mary, and Harry Kaufman—for their patient classification of some forty thousand notes under some twelve thousand headings. To Mrs. Anne Roberts of the Los Angeles Public Library, and Miss Dagny Williams of the Hollywood Regional Library, for their precious aid in securing rare books from all over America; these volumes could never have been written without our magnificent, open-handed libraries. And to Mrs. Vera Schneider, of the editorial staff of Simon and Schuster, for such scholarly editing of this and the preceding volume as probably few manuscripts have ever received.

NOTES ON THE USE OF THIS BOOK

1. Dates of birth or death have usually been omitted from the narrative, where they tend to be forgotten or lost; they will be found always available in the Index.

2. The value of coins in any age is subject to so many influences and variations that no reliable system can be set up for equating them with current currencies. The livre in this period sank in value to the level of a franc. Voltaire reported* a silk weaver of Lyon in 1768 supporting a wife and eight children on 45 sous daily, or (since he received nothing on Sundays or holidays) 639 livres per year. A similar family would need at least \$50 per week, or \$2,600 per year, in the United States of 1962; this would equate a livre with \$4.07. In the London of 1779 a worker with wife and children required about 19 shillings per week for rent, food, and common necessities;† this would make a shilling equal to \$2.50. From such comparisons we derive the following hazardous and loose equivalents:

crown, \$12.50	guilder, \$10.50	pound, \$50.00
ducat, \$12.50	gulden, \$10.50	reale, \$.50
écu, \$8.00	livre, \$2.50	ruble, \$10.00
florin, \$12.50	louis d'or, \$50.00	scudo, \$1.16
franc, \$2.50	mark, \$30.00	shilling, \$2.50
guinea, \$52.50	penny, \$.21	sou, \$.15
		thaler, \$8.00

3. The location of works of art, when not indicated in the text, will usually be found in the Notes. In allocating such works the name of the city will imply its leading gallery, as follows:

Amsterdam—Rijksmuseum	Detroit—Institute of Art
Berlin—Staatmuseum	Dresden—Gemälde-Galerie
Bologna—Accademia di Belle Arti	Dulwich—College Gallery
Brussels—Museum	Edinburgh—National Gallery
Budapest—Museum of Fine Arts	Ferrara—Galleria Estense
Cassel—Museum	Frankfurt—Städelsches Kunstinstitut
Chantilly—Musée Condé	Geneva—Musée d'Art et d'Histoire
Chatsworth—Duke of Devonshire Collection	Haarlem—Frans Hals Museum
Chicago—Art Institute	The Hague—Mauritshuis
Cincinnati—Art Institute	Kansas City—Nelson Gallery
Cleveland—Museum of Art	Leningrad—Hermitage
	Lisbon—National Museum

* Article "Feasts" in the *Philosophical Dictionary*.

† Dorothy George, *London in the XVIIIth Century* (London, 1925), p. 166.

London—National Gallery
Madrid—Prado
Milan—Brera
Minneapolis—Institute of Arts
Munich—Haus der Kunst
Naples—Museo Nazionale
New York—Metropolitan Museum of Art
Nuremberg—Germanisches Nationalmuseum
Philadelphia—Johnson Collection
Rouen—Musée Municipale

St. Louis—Art Museum
San Diego—Fine Arts Gallery
San Francisco—De Young Museum
San Marino, Calif.—Henry E. Huntington Art Gallery
Sarasota, Fla.—Ringling Museum of Art
Seville—Art Museum
Stockholm—National Museum
Vienna—Kunsthistorisches Museum
Washington—National Gallery

4. Reduced type has occasionally been used to indicate passages of only remote or special interest, or exceptionally dull.

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The authors wish to express their gratitude to the following organizations for certain illustrative materials used in this book:

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BOOK I
THE FRENCH ZENITH
1643-1715