

THE HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL EUROPE

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Revised Edition



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TO MY FATHER
REV. EDWARD ROBERT THORNDIKE, D.D.
AND MY MOTHER
ABBIE BREWSTER LADD THORNDIKE

PREFACE

THIS book aims to trace the development of Europe and its civilization, from the decline of the Roman Empire to the opening of the sixteenth century, for the benefit of the college student and the general reader. It is almost needless to say that such a work makes little claim to originality in method and still less in subject-matter, which it has shamelessly borrowed from numerous sources. Indeed, in a book of this sort it is more fitting to apologize for anything new that one says than for following in old and beaten tracks. The author, of course, hopes that without making too radical departures he has introduced some improvement in selection and presentation of material, and that he has made few mistakes of fact and interpretation.

The Table of Contents indicates the general plan of the volume, which is to treat medieval Europe as a whole and to hang the story upon a single thread, rather than to recount as distinct narratives the respective histories of France, England, Germany, Italy, and other countries of *modern* Europe. French or English history may be studied as such in courses and books so labeled. Moreover, the modern interest in the national state has usually been carried too far in the study of the Middle Ages. Local division, not national unity and central government, is surely the striking feature through most of the medieval centuries.

Nor should one be misled by the influence of the German historical seminar or by Bryce's brilliant essay into making the Holy Roman Empire the central thread of medieval history. Far more important in actual life than the ideal of one Roman Empire were the feudal state and the self-centered town, the diversity and vigor of local law and custom. But it would be difficult to overestimate the importance of the pope and the clergy as unifying forces in medieval civilization. Consequently several chapters are devoted to the

Christian Church, and some mention of it has to be made in almost every chapter.

Inasmuch as emigrants from all parts and from all races of Europe have long since been coming to the United States and becoming American citizens, it has seemed worth while to include the states and racial groups of central and eastern Europe, as well as the richer medieval history of those western European lands whose institutions and culture have thus far had the greatest influence upon our own.

In conformity with present tendencies in historical writing, economic and social conditions are given due attention, and many minor details of military and political history are omitted. In these days of tottering thrones I have even ventured to lay the axe at the root of absolutism and to dispense with genealogical tables. Contemporary events sadly remind us that the age of wars is not past; but they have also demonstrated that an intensive study of Cæsar's *Commentaries* and the tactics of Hastings and Crécy is of little use even to the modern military specialist; while they have further reminded us that in the art of the past there are precious models and inspirations, whose loss is almost irreparable. Since man is a reasoning and emotional being, it is unfair to the past actors and uninteresting to the present readers of history merely to chronicle events without some indication of the ideas and ideals behind them as well as of the personalities that produced them. But discussion of economic and intellectual influences should not be carried so far as to reduce the narrative of events in political history to a mere skeleton. If wars and politics are to be discussed at all, they should be treated with sufficient fullness to insure clearness and interest.

The background of physical geography is frequently referred to and described. In the maps the aim has been to omit confusing detail and to keep them in close accord with the text. As a rule all places mentioned in the text and no others are given in the accompanying maps. Considerable space has been devoted to the Roman Empire, its civilization, and its decline, and to the early history of the Chris-

tian Church. These matters are essential preliminaries to the study of the Middle Ages. I have also dealt frequently with the history of European law and with the chief medieval forms of government.

As an undergraduate the author received high grades in a course in English history without the thought occurring to him that the statements of the textbook or of the instructor concerning the Anglo-Saxon period rested on any less ample and solid foundation than did their accounts of the nineteenth century. History seemed a seamless robe instead of a worn garment full of holes and patches. True it is that a textbook or general history is chiefly intended to tell what we do know, and that its space does not permit detailed discussion of the sources. Yet one of the most important things for the student or reader of history to realize is the old lesson of Socrates that there are many things which we do not know and many more which we only half know. Therefore in the introductory chapter I have discussed history's task and obstacles, and throughout the volume have every now and then informed the reader briefly as to the quantity and quality of the source material.

But a stern effort has been made to avoid fine print and footnotes, which in this kind of a book are objectionable alike from the typographical, the literary, and the pedagogical standpoint. I hope that all quotations are so marked, but I have not felt it necessary to mention the name of the author in each case at the bottom of the page. In place of cross-references the teacher and student are referred to the unusually full index, which is intended to serve somewhat the same purpose that a vocabulary does in the teaching of a language. In the text I have rather made it a point to repeat the names of important men and places as often and in as many historical contexts as possible, in order that they may gradually grow familiar to the reader and in order that he may not forget them when he has once learned them. By reference to the index one can tell how many times the name or topic in question has already been mentioned or discussed. The index should also prove useful for topical reviews.

Ten years of experience in teaching medieval history to Freshman sections have convinced me that most students who enter our colleges are neither wide nor trained readers, and are at a loss, if thrown upon their own resources into a whole volume or even a whole chapter of the average historical work available for outside reading in addition to the textbook. It is advisable to give them brief specific readings to do, and specific questions to answer and problems to work out from such readings. No doubt each teacher will prefer for the most part to make his own selections and to ask his own questions on such reading. He may, however, find suggestive the listing of a few such specific readings and historical exercises, many of which have already been tried out in actual teaching. It is hoped that these exercises, listed at the end of the chapters, may prove still more welcome to the reader who has not the advantage of personal tuition, but who has access to a fair-sized library. Where a particular chapter or certain pages of a book are recommended, this does not imply that the rest of that volume is to be eschewed; it is simply advice where to begin. Moreover, these suggested readings are distinctly for the undergraduate and general reader, not for the advanced student, and consequently many important historical works are not mentioned. A brief list of books and periodicals where fuller bibliographical information may be found is appended at the close of this preface.

Of historical works and articles to which the present volume is indebted the list is too long to essay here. The attempt has been made — without yielding to new theories and hypotheses which have not yet been sufficiently tested — to embody the results of recent historical scholarship. Much use has been made of such works as Luchaire's six volumes on Innocent III, Beazley's *Dawn of Modern Geography*, Workman's *The Evolution of the Monastic Ideal*, and the two volumes of the *Cambridge Medieval History* which have thus far appeared. Some passages in this book are the result of my own study of the sources and will not be found covered in any other secondary work.

A textbook is a fitting place in which to remember one's own teachers. Of previous historical manuals I have been most influenced by the brief but admirable *History of Western Europe* of my former teacher, James Harvey Robinson, — a work which I have used for many years as a textbook. Before entering Professor Robinson's well-known course in the intellectual history of Europe, my interest in the history of literature and philosophy had been already aroused by C. T. Winchester and A. C. Armstrong. The parts of this volume dealing with the history of law owe much to the lectures of Munroe Smith. Some of the historical exercises were, in their inception at least, due to Henry E. Bourne, with whom I have worked in teaching the Freshman history course at the College for Women of Western Reserve University. Other colleagues, Professors H. N. Fowler, S. B. Platner, and J. L. Borgerhoff, have been so good as to read and criticize certain chapters falling within their respective special fields, and Miss Eleanor Ferris has very kindly read galley proof for the entire text. Professor J. T. Shotwell, under whose editorship the book is so fortunate as to appear and whom I also am happy to count as a former teacher, has read the text in manuscript, made a number of helpful suggestions, and in other ways aided me by his coöperation and encouragement. These scholars, however, should not be held responsible for any of the faults of the book, especially since in a few cases I have been so foolish as not to follow their advice. But I shall be fortunate, indeed, if others accord me as sympathetic a reading as theirs.

LYNN THORNDIKE.

PREFACE TO THE REVISED EDITION

DURING the years that have elapsed since its first publication, the sale and use of this book have steadily increased, indicating that in general it continues to be satisfactory to teachers and students. It has therefore not seemed advisable to make any marked change in its style or in the organization of the subject-matter. Not only the division into chapters and paragraphs and their headings, but also the pagination have been preserved as far as possible unchanged. But while thus preserving the general framework and appearance of the volume, so that those who have been using it will not have to accustom themselves to a new book, I have made a considerable number of changes and additions, affecting about 130 out of 640 pages.

The chapter on "The Barbarian Invasions" has been in large measure recast in order to satisfy criticisms which have been made as to its teachability. To the "Exercises and Readings" at the close of each chapter have been added the titles of recent books. Most of the other changes in the text have for their aim to keep the book abreast of the present and enlarged state of knowledge concerning medieval civilization. I wish to thank those friends who have taken the trouble to offer criticisms and corrections. I should also like to say something nice to all the past readers of the book, but I do not know how many of them will see this, so I will restrict myself to expression of the hope that the revision may attract as goodly a company.

LYNN THORNDIKE.

LIST OF GUIDES IN HISTORICAL READING

HANDBOOKS

- PAETOW, L. J., *Guide to the Study of Medieval History*, 1917
THOMPSON, J. W., *Reference Studies in Medieval History*, Chicago, 1924
ROBINSON, J. H., *Readings in European History*, vol. I, Boston, 1904
MOORE, M. F., *Two Select Bibliographies of Medieval Historical Study*, 1912
LANGLOIS, CH. V., *Manuel de bibliographie historique*, two parts, Paris, 1901 and 1904
EGIDI, P., *La Storia Medioevale*, Rome, 1922

ENCYCLOPÆDIAS

- PAULY-WISSOWA, *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertums-wissenschaft*, as yet only partially completed
Catholic Encyclopædia, New York, 1912
Encyclopædia Britannica, Eleventh edition
PALGRAVE, *Dictionary of Political Economy*, London, 1910
Jewish Encyclopædia, New York, 1901
WACE and PIERCY, *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, Boston, 1911
HUGHES, *Encyclopædia of Islam*, London, 1913

PERIODICALS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <i>American Historical Review</i> | <i>English Historical Review</i> |
| <i>The Historical Outlook</i> | <i>Historische Zeitschrift</i> |
| <i>Revue Historique</i> | <i>Neues Archiv</i> |
| <i>Le Moyen Âge</i> | <i>Revue des Questions Historiques</i> |
| <i>Giornale Storico Italiano</i> | <i>Speculum</i> |
| <i>Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes</i> (excellent bibliographies) | |

STANDARD HISTORICAL WORKS CONTAINING BIBLIOGRAPHIES

- GIBBON, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, edition by J. B. Bury, 1897-1900
Cambridge Medieval History; five volumes have appeared covering the period to 1250
LAVISSE, E., *Histoire de France*, 1900-1911
Histoire Littéraire de la France
Jahrbücher der deutschen Geschichte
HUNT and POOLE, *Political History of England*, 1905-1910
LOSERTH, J., *Geschichte des Späteren Mittelalters von 1197 bis 1492*, Munich and Berlin, 1903
DE WULF, M., *History of Medieval Philosophy*, 1909; new ed., 1925-1926
THORNDIKE, L., *History of Magic and Experimental Science*, 1923
DAVIS, H. W. C., *Mediæval England*, 1924

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

- 461-431 B.C. Age of Pericles
 451-449 B.C. Twelve Tables of Roman Law
 336-323 B.C. Reign of Alexander the Great
 31 B.C.-14 A.D. Reign of Augustus Cæsar and foundation of the Roman
 Empire
 A.D. 70 Destruction of Jerusalem
 98 *Germania* of Tacitus
 98-117 Reign of Trajan; Roman Empire at its greatest extent
 161-180 Reign of Marcus Aurelius; signs of decline
 227 Persian Kingdom replaces the Parthian
 251 Decius defeated and slain by the Goths
 284-305 Reign of Diocletian
 325 Council of Nicæa called by Constantine the Great
 378 Battle of Adrianople
 395 Death of Theodosius the Great
 410 Sack of Rome by Alaric
 413-426 *The City of God* of Augustine
 419 Kingdoms of West Goths and Burgundians in southwestern
 and southeastern Gaul
 438 *The Theodosian Code*
 439 Carthage captured by the Vandals
 440-461 Pope Leo the Great
 c. 450 Britain invaded by the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes
 451 Battle of the Catalaunian Fields or Châlons
 455 Valentinian III assassinated
 Rome sacked by the Vandals
 466-484 Reign of Euric, King of the West Goths; conquest of Spain
 begun
 476 Transition from the Roman to the Byzantine Empire
 481-511 Reign of Clovis, King of the Franks
 493-526 Reign of Theodoric, the East Goth, in Italy
 518-565 Reigns of Justin and Justinian
 529 *The Rule of St. Benedict*
 533 *The Digest* or *Pandects* of Justinian
 534 Byzantine conquest of North Africa from the Vandals
 Frankish conquest of the Burgundian Kingdom
 555 Byzantine conquest of Italy from the East Goths
 565 Mission of St. Columba to Iona, Scotland
 568 Lombards invade Italy
 Avars invade central Europe
 582 Fall of Sirmium
 590-604 Pope Gregory the Great

- 597 Mission of St. Augustine to Kent
- 610 Accession of Heraclius in the Byzantine Empire
- 615 Death of St. Columban in northern Italy
- 622 Hegira of Mohammed
- Etymologies* of Isidore
- 629-639 Frankish territories reunited under Dagobert
- 632-651 Mohammedan conquest of Syria, Egypt, Persia
- 661 Ommiad dynasty founded
- 664 Synod of Whitby
- 687 Battle of Testry
- 698 Carthage permanently captured by the Mohammedans
- 711-713 Mohammedan conquest of Spain
- 718 Mission of Boniface to Germany
- 726 Iconoclastic decree of Leo III, Byzantine Emperor
- 731 *Ecclesiastical History* of Bede
- 732 Battle of Tours
- 750 Abbassid dynasty founded
- 751 Ravenna captured by the Lombards
- Carolingian dynasty founded by Pepin
- 755 Ommiad Emirate of Cordova
- 768-814 Reign of Charlemagne
- 774 End of the Lombard Kingdom
- 787 Danish invasions begin in England
- 800 Imperial coronation of Charlemagne
- 827 Saracen invasion of Sicily begins
- 842 The Strassburg Oaths
- 843 The Treaty of Verdun
- c. 859 Rurik becomes Grand Prince of Russia
- 864 Conversion of Boris I of Bulgaria
- 869 Eighth Œcumenical Council at Constantinople
- 870 The Treaty of Mersen
- 871-900 Reign of Alfred the Great in England
- 885 Paris besieged by the Northmen
- 887 Deposition of the Emperor Charles
- c. 896 Invasions of the Magyars begin
- 904 Saloniki seized by the Saracens
- 909 Fatimite dynasty founded in North Africa
- 910 Abbey of Cluny founded
- 911-912 Origin of Normandy
- 929 Caliphate of Cordova founded by Abd-er-Rahman III
- 934 Kingdom of Arles begins
- 955 Battle of the Lechfeld
- 962 Otto the Great crowned Holy Roman Emperor
- 969 Egypt conquered by the Fatimites
- 975 Death of Edgar the Peaceful, King of England
- 980-1037 Avicenna
- 987 Hugh Capet founds the Capetian dynasty
- 997-1038 Reign of St. Stephen of Hungary
- 999-1003 Pope Sylvester II (Gerbert)

- c. 1000 Discovery of Vinland
 - Oldest manuscript of *Beowulf*
- 1002 Death of Almansor
- 1013 Danish kings in England
- 1015-1087 Constantinus Africanus
 - 1032 End of the Kingdom of Arles
 - 1036 End of the Caliphate of Cordova
- 1036-1067 Baldwin V, Count of Flanders
- 1039-1056 Henry III, Holy Roman Emperor
 - 1040 Death of Foulques Nerra, Count of Anjou
 - 1057 End of Macedonian dynasty in the Byzantine Empire
 - 1059 Robert Guiscard, Duke of Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily, as the Pope's vassal
- 1063-1118 Cathedral at Pisa built
 - 1066 Norman conquest of England
 - 1071 Battle of Manzikert
- 1073-1085 Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand)
 - 1078 Jerusalem captured by the Turks
- 1079-1142 Abelard
- 1081-1118 Reign of Alexius Comnenus, Byzantine Emperor
 - 1085 Toledo captured by Alfonso VI of Castile and Leon
 - 1086 Battle of Zalaca
- 1086-1127 William X, Duke of Aquitaine, first known troubadour
 - 1095 Pope Urban II proclaims the First Crusade
 - Foundation of Portugal
 - 1099 Jerusalem stormed by the crusaders
- 1108-1137 Reign of Louis VI, the Fat, King of France
 - Roman law taught by Irnerius at Bologna
 - Questions about Nature* of Adelard of Bath
 - 1122 Concordat of Worms
- 1126-1198 Averroës
 - 1137 Union of Aragon and Barcelona
 - 1143 Lübeck founded
 - 1144 Fall of Edessa
- c. 1150 *Decretum* of Gratian; *Sentences* of Peter Lombard
 - 1154 Henry II, King of England, founds the Plantagenet or Angevin dynasty with vast continental fiefs
 - End of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*
 - Geography* of Edrisi
 - 1163 Foundation-stone of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris laid by Pope Alexander III
 - 1170 Murder of Thomas Becket
 - 1171 Saladin overthrows the Fatimite dynasty in Egypt
 - 1176 Battle of Legnano
- 1180-1223 Reign of Philip II, Augustus, King of France
 - 1183 Peace of Constance
 - 1187 Jerusalem captured by Saladin
- 1198-1216 Pope Innocent III
 - 1204 Latin Empire of Constantinople established

- 1208 Albigensian Crusade
- 1210 Study of Aristotle's works on natural philosophy forbidden at
the University of Paris
- 1212 Battle of Navas de Tolosa
- Children's Crusade
- 1215 Fourth Lateran Council
- Magna Carta*
- 1220 Amiens Cathedral begun
- 1221 Death of St. Dominic
- 1226 Death of St. Francis
- 1226-1270 Reign of St. Louis in France
- 1228 Teutonic Knights called in to conquer East Prussia
- c. 1235 *The Romance of the Rose* begun by William of Lorris
- 1241 Mongol invasion of Europe
- Choir of Rheims Cathedral completed
- 1250 Death of Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor
- 1252-1284 Reign of Alfonso the Wise of Castile
- 1256-1273 Interregnum in the Holy Roman Empire
- 1258 Bagdad sacked by the Mongols
- Provisions of Oxford*
- 1260 Cathedral of Chartres consecrated
- 1261 Byzantine Empire restored
- 1265 Simon de Montfort's Parliament
- c. 1266 *Opus Maius* of Roger Bacon
- 1268 Hohenstaufen line extinct
- Charles of Anjou conquers Naples
- 1271-1295 Marco Polo in the Far East
- 1273 Rudolf of Hapsburg elected Holy Roman Emperor
- 1274 Death of Thomas Aquinas
- 1282 Sicilian Vespers
- 1284 Pisa defeated by Genoa
- First ducat coined at Venice
- 1285-1314 Reign of Philip IV, the Fair, King of France
- 1291 League of the Three Forest Cantons
- 1293 Noble families of Florence disqualified for office
- 1295 The Model Parliament of Edward I
- 1296 *Clericis laicos*
- 1297 Membership in the Grand Council of Venice becomes hereditary
- 1302 First meeting of the Estates General
- Battle of Courtrai
- Exile of Dante
- 1303 Humiliation of Pope Boniface VIII at Anagni
- Conciliator* of Peter of Abano
- 1308 Papacy at Avignon
- 1314 Battle of Bannockburn
- 1315 Battle of Morgarten
- 1321 Death of Dante
- 1324 *Defensor Pacis* of Marsiglio of Padua

- 1328 End of the direct Capetians
Battle of Cassel
- 1337 Opening of the Hundred Years War
Death of Giotto
- 1340 Battle of Sluys
- 1341 Petrarch crowned poet laureate at Rome by King Robert of
Naples
- 1345 Jacob Artevelde murdered
- 1346 Battle of Crécy
- 1348 The Black Death
- 1350-1355 War between Genoa and Venice
- 1351 *The Laurentian Portolano*
- 1353 The Ottoman Turks enter Europe
- 1356 *The Golden Bull*
Battle of Poitiers
- 1357 Revolutionary movement in Paris
- 1358 The Jacquerie
- 1360 Treaty of Bretigny
- 1363 Origin of the House of Burgundy
- 1367 War of the Hanseatic League against Denmark and Norway
- 1368-1370 Mongols are expelled from China
- 1369 Charles V, the Wise, King of France, renews the Hundred
Years War with success
- 1372 Battle of La Rochelle
- 1376 The Good Parliament
- 1378 The Great Schism begins
Uprising of the Ciompi in Florence
- 1378-1381 War between Genoa and Venice
- 1381 The Peasants' Revolt in England
- 1382 Disenfranchisement of the Ciompi
Battle of Roosebek
- 1384 Death of John Wyclif
- 1386 Union of Poland and Lithuania under the Jagellons
- 1389 Battle of Kosovo
- 1396 Battle of Nicopolis
- 1397 Union of Kalmar
- 1399 Richard II deposed; Lancastrian dynasty in England
- 1401-1429 Masaccio
- 1402 Battle of Angora
- 1405 Venice acquires Verona and Padua
- 1407 Louis of Orléans murdered by John, Duke of Burgundy
- 1409 Council of Pisa
- 1410 Battle of Tannenberg; Teutonic Knights defeated by the
Poles and Lithuanians
- 1414-1417 Council of Constance
- 1415 Battle of Agincourt
Ceuta captured by Portugal
- 1416 The *St. George* of Donatello
- 1419 Hussite Wars begin

- 1420 Treaty of Troyes
- 1429 Relief of Orléans by Joan of Arc
- 1431-1449 Council of Basel
- 1435 Death of Duke of Bedford
 - Duke of Burgundy abandons the English alliance
 - Cosimo de' Medici comes into power in Florence
- 1435-1442 Alfonso V of Aragon and Sicily wins the Kingdom of Naples
 - in a struggle with René of Anjou
- 1437 House of Hapsburg becomes practically hereditary in the Holy Roman Empire
- 1438 Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges
- 1438-1439 Council of Ferrara-Florence
- 1444 Battle of Varna
- c 1450 Invention of printing
- 1451 Francesco Sforza becomes despot of Milan
- 1452 Last coronation of a Holy Roman Emperor at Rome
- 1453 Fall of Constantinople
 - Close of the Hundred Years War
- 1455 Wars of the Roses begin
- 1460 Death of Prince Henry the Navigator
- 1465 League of the Public Welfare against Louis XI
- 1469 Marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile
- 1477 Death of Charles the Bold; marriage of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian
- 1478 Novgorod captured by Ivan III of Russia
 - About the same time Russia is freed from the Golden Horde
- 1485 Battle of Bosworth Field; Henry VII founds the Tudor dynasty
- 1486 Diaz rounds the Cape of Good Hope
- 1492 Discovery of America
 - Conquest of Granada
 - Death of Lorenzo de' Medici
- 1494 Charles VIII invades Italy
- 1498 Vasco da Gama reaches India
 - Execution of Savonarola
- 1505 Michelangelo called to Rome
- 1508 League of Cambray against Venice
 - Raphael comes to Rome
- 1513 *The Prince* of Machiavelli
- 1515 Battle of Marignano
- 1517 Luther posts his Ninety Five Theses
- 1519 Charles V elected Holy Roman Emperor
 - Death of Leonardo da Vinci

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