

advantage that THE PRESENT-DAY EXPERIMENT IN WESTERN CIVILISATION

and ours, another act of the drama of history has been performed. So we
 I. Light from the Past: The Experiment in Hellenisation

know, for certain, what has happened in this act, whereas our predecessors
 The title of this set of lectures is a tell-tale one. Let me
 had to guess what was going to happen in it, and, being human, they
 imagine an archaeologist in the far distant future, rummaging among the
 guessed partly wrong - as we, in our turn, are likely to guess partly
 debris left by a third world war fought with atomic weapons. By an
 wrong about the acts that still lie hidden in the future in our time, one
 odd freak of chance, my imaginary future archaeologist finds my present
 of the nineteenth-century Western assumptions that has already been
 script. The date is not written on it. But, if the script is still legible,
 challenged by the course of events is that our Western Civilisation is
 the archaeologist will have dated it correctly by the time he has finished
 the only living civilisation which is worthy of the name. So the word
 reading the title. It is dated unmistakably by the two words "Western"
 "Western" in my title would have seemed to them superfluous. The one
 and "experiment". Neither word could have figured in the title if these
 word "Civilisation" would have been thought to be enough. The adjective
 lectures had been written in my grandfather's generation. This was the
 "Western" would have been held to be implied in the substantive
 generation of Darwin, Huxley, Carlyle, Tennyson, and that pleiad of New
 "Civilisation", so it would have been left out without any fear that
 England poets and philosophers whose graves are in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery,
 this might make the title ambiguous. Our grandfathers would also have
 Concord, Massachusetts. If any one of those eminent nineteenth-century
 rejected my word "experiment" as being needlessly and misleadingly
 predecessors of ours had been asked to give a course of lectures on
 tentative. They believed that they were witnessing, and taking part
 the future, his title would have been different from mine, and it would
 in, a movement that could not properly be called an experiment, considering
 have been shorter. It would have been just "The March of Civilisation".
 that it was already an unmistakable success. Nothing, they felt sure,

could now hinder this movement from reaching its objective. "The March
 The nineteenth century lecturer would, in fact, have made
 of civilisation", meaning "Western Civilisation", of course, was in
 several assumptions that seem hazardous, or even positively mistaken, today.
 their opinion irresistible. Its triumph was a foregone conclusion.
 In our generation we are able to see through these assumptions. We are not,

of course, any clearer-sighted or any wiser than our predecessors were

The nineteenth-century title of this set of lectures would,
 but, as historians, we have an advantage over them - the automatic
 then, have been short and simple. But, as I happen to have the

advantage that is given by the mere passage of time. Between their time and ours, another act of the drama of history has been performed. So we know, for certain, what has happened in this act, whereas our predecessors had to guess what was going to happen in it, and, being human, they guessed partly wrong - as we, in our turn, are likely to guess partly wrong about the acts that still lie hidden in the future in our time. One of the nineteenth-century Western assumptions that has already been challenged by the course of events is that our Western Civilisation is the only living civilisation which is worthy of the name. So the word "Western" in my title would have seemed to them superfluous. The one word "Civilisation" would have been thought to be enough. The adjective "Western" would have been held to be implied in the substantive "Civilisation", so it would have been left out without any fear that this might make the title ambiguous. Our grandfathers would also have rejected my word "experiment" as being needlessly and misleadingly tautotive. They believed that they were witnessing, and taking part in, a movement that could not properly be called an experiment, considering that it was already an unmistakeable success. Nothing, they felt sure, could now hinder this movement from reaching its objective. "The march of civilisation", meaning "Western Civilisation", of course, was in their opinion irresistible. Its triumph was a foregone conclusion.

The nineteenth-century title of this set of lectures would, then, have been short and simple. But, as I happen to have the

chronological advantage of living and lecturing in the twentieth century, I have been warned by the course of events to put in the two cautious words "experiment" and "Western". Each of these words is the equivalent of a question-mark. But the questions asked by the words "Western" and "experiment" are addressed to the future. So we can get no direct answer to these questions till what is now still the future has become the past. The future, so long as it remains the future, is a sheaf of alternative possibilities, most of them still unknown. The transformation of the future into the past is the process that fulfils a single one of these multiple possibilities and leaves all the rest of them in limbo. Till we have reached the end of the fifth act, we cannot know for certain what the denouement of the play is going to be. In fact, the future course of human affairs is not a field in which we can have the exact knowledge that is the ideal of the physical scientist - and of the humanist, too, when he is dealing with past human affairs.

If you were to ask a professor about the future, his proper professional answer would be: "Not my subject". But, unfortunately for the professor, or perhaps I should say really, fortunately for him, he cannot be a professor without also being a human being; and one of the characteristics of being human is that one makes plans. Planning is possible because it is concerned with the future. The future is still undetermined. So a human being who makes plans for the future has a chance of influencing the course of events - a chance of making things

turn out better, instead of worse, from his point of view. However, academic-minded a human being may be, he cannot afford not to make plans. We cannot afford this in our private lives, as each of us knows from his personal experience. And we certainly cannot afford it in public life, now that we have launched ourselves into the Atomic Age.

But how is it possible to make plans about a future which is unknown ex hypothesi? In planning, we make the assumption that the future will be like the past, at least to some extent, and that our experience of the past will therefore, at least to some extent, throw a light on the future that will make the future partially foreseeable. This assumption is made as a matter of course by people who are still in what we might call the "pre-civilisational" stage of culture. They take it for granted that their world and their ancestors' world are identical. Since the recent dawn of civilisation, those human societies that have ~~entered~~ entered on the process of civilisation have been changing faster and faster till nowadays, each successive generation of novices in the art of civilisation is inclined to believe that its own experience is unique and that nothing at all like this has ever happened before. Logically, this impression about our own generation's uniqueness ought to make us give up planning, on the ground that our predecessors' experience is irrelevant and that we have no other data on which we could base any forecasts. Actually, people in our stage of civilisation are far more dependent on planning than the primitive societies are. The primitives can afford to take no thought for the morrow, because they can count on

tomorrow's being a repetition of yesterday. On the other hand the process of civilisation does not spell itself out in recurring decimals. Accordingly, if we gave up planning, our civilisation would immediately run on the rocks. So, in practice, we have to act as if we believed, as implicitly ~~as~~ our primitive ancestors believed, in the relevance of the past to the future - though at the same time it is obvious that the utilisation of the past as a key to the future is a much more complicated and tricky operation in our circumstances than it was in theirs. Let us try, nevertheless, to apply a piece of past experience to the subject of this present set of lectures.

Mankind's present-day experiment in Western Civilisation may, in truth, be unique in some respects. For instance, this experiment is being conducted on a ^{liberally} world-wide scale, and, as far as we know, this is the first time that that has happened. Still, there have been other experiments with a range that has been nearly world-wide - nearly enough, at any rate, to make them relevant to a literally world-wide experiment. Take the experiment in alphabetic writing. This was initiated, about 3500 or 3000 years ago, in one tiny country, the present-day Lebanese Republic. Yet already the use of the Alphabet has spread to the ends of the earth. This script, which I prepared in the Old World and am delivering in the New World, is written in the Alphabet. And, if I had travelled in the opposite direction and had arrived, not in Montreal, but in Peking, I should have found a celebrated example of

alphabetic writing there. There will be people in this audience who, like me, have had the good fortune to have visited Peking and to have seen the Temple of Heaven there. You will remember the trilingual inscriptions on the Walls of that beautiful building. Two languages out of the three - namely the Manchu and the Mongol - are written in the Alphabet. Only one of the three, the Chinese, is written in a non-Alphabetic script. It is true that, today, the Chinese ideograms are still the script of China, Korea, and Japan, and that these three countries contain, between them, about a quarter of the population of the present-day world. It is also true that the Chinese people has been increasing in numbers, and has been extending the area that it occupies, ever since the dawn of history. A Chinese domination and colonisation of the entire surface of this planet is one of the possibilities that the future may hold in store for us. At the same time it is also possible, even probable, that the Chinese will have adopted the Alphabet in place of their own ideograms before they have spread very far beyond their present-day bounds, and in that event the use of the Alphabet would become literally world-wide.

The Alphabet was invented by the Canaanites. They also invented monotheism and discovered the Atlantic. Their surviving representatives are the Jews, and there is no other human society that has greater achievements to its credit. But the experiment in civilisation that throws the greatest light on our present-day Western one is not the Canaanite experiment, I believe. It is, I think, the parallel experiment that was made by the Canaanites' Greek contemporaries. The familiar name for this

civilisation is "Ancient Greek". But that name is a double misfit. The people who created this civilisation were really modern, not ancient, ^{✓ on} in the time-scale of the age of the human race; and they did not all of them speak Greek. Before the end of the story, they also included large numbers of Latin-speakers, for instance. So I prefer the label "Hellenic". Anyway, whether I say "Hellenic" or say "Greek", you will know ~~xxxx~~ now what I mean. For an historian's purposes, this "Ancient Greek" or "Hellenic" Civilisation has one great advantage over our present-day Western Civilisation. It is no longer a going concern, so, in this case, we do know the whole story.

I will plunge you into this Hellenic story by asking each of you to imagine himself to be a Greek business man, living and working in the city of Alexandria-on-Nile in or about the year 225 B.C.

In 225 B.C., this Alexandria was the commercial and cultural capital of the Hellenic World. The Greek dynasty that was then ruling Egypt, the Ptolemaic dynasty, had founded at Alexandria a royal academy, the Mæseum. And this temple of the Muses had enticed away from Athens at least two of the nine sisters : the muse of natural science and the muse of critical scholarship. As a commercial centre, Alexandria in 225 B.C. had a vast field of enterprise.

✓ Alexandria's immediate hinterland was Egypt, and Egypt in 225 B.C. was one of the two chief agricultural regions in the western half of the Old World. (The other was Babylonia, the ~~present~~ present-day Iraq. Alexandria's wider hinterland in 225 B.C. stretched south-eastward as far as India and north-westward as far as the British Isles. India had been brought into contact with the Hellenic World by Alexander the Great's raid on India - a hundred years back. The British Isles had been brought into contact with the Hellenic World by the enterprise of Massilia, the present Marseilles, a Greek colonist city-state on what is now the French Riviera. Massilia had been founded, about four hundred years back, by the Asian Greek city-state Phocaea. Alexandria lay at the mid point of this expanded, and still expanding, Hellenic World. It lay at the south-eastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea, which is a gulf of the Atlantic Ocean, and it had through - communications by water with the Red Sea, which is a gulf of the Indian Ocean.

From Alexandria you could travel in 225 B.C. up the westernmost branch of the Nile to the bend of the Delta, and from there by ship-canal to the head of the Gulf of Suez. Larger ships bound for South Arabia, East Africa, or the west coast of India, sailed from ports on Egypt's Red Sea coast. In whichever direction our imaginary Alexandrian business man might choose to travel, he would have been able, in 225 B.C. to do his business in the Greek language wherever he went. In the competitive opening-up of the western basin of the Mediterranean during the first half of the last millennium B.C., the Greeks had carried off the lion's

share of the spoils. The Greeks' Canaanite and Etruscan rivals had won only comparatively modest holdings in the ^{west} ~~war~~. In the east, Alexander had overthrown the Persian Empire, and had opened up its vast territories for Greek invaders, Greek colonists, and Greek culture.

Three hundred years ago, reckoning back from 225. B.C., the Persian Empire had annexed Egypt and had threatened to engulf the Hellenic World as well. In 225 B.C. the Persian Empire's former domain was an open field for Greek enterprise, and the native population was lying passive. ^{To} Greek eyes, in 225 B.C., this human material looked like so much wax writing to be moulded by Greek hands into an Hellenic shape. The Hellenic way of life was the only way that now counted anywhere in the Old World to the west of the River Indus. Greeks and non-Greeks agreed in taking it for granted that Hellenism was going to prevail, whether their policy, in anticipating this, was satisfaction or regret. It was assumed that, from the Indus to the British Isles, Hellenism would continue to be the dominant culture, and the Greeks continue to be the dominant people, except in so far as non-Greeks might qualify for becoming the Greeks' partners by adopting their language and their civilisation. In the city of Alexandria itself, the Jewish colony from the highland hinterland of Phoenicia seemed in 225. B.C. to be well on the way toward Hellenisation. The ancient and famous Phoenician Canaanite city-states themselves - Tyre, Sidon, Byblos, Aradus - were more or less Hellenised already. Even the barbarian inhabitants of remote Britain were now striking coins that were crude attempts at copies of those minted by Alexander's father, Philip of Macedon.

All this would make our Alexandrian Greek business man in 225 B.C. feel confident about the Hellenic Civilisation's future. But this civilisation also had its seamy side; and this was its political side. In the third century B.C. the Hellenic World was not only split up politically into a number of local states that were each sovereign and independent; the great Hellenic powers, and the smaller Hellenic states too, were constantly going to war with each other, and this bad habit dated back in the Hellenic World to the beginning of its recorded history.

Almost ceaseless fratricidal warfare had been the ruin of these Greek city-states around the Aegean Sea that had been the original ^{nucleus} ~~wardens~~ of the Hellenic World and the creators of the great civilisation that had been inherited from them by the vastly extended Hellenic World of the third century B.C. For a moment in the third quarter of the fourth century B.C. it had looked as if King Philip of Macedon had given political unity to the Greek states east of the Straits of Otranto. But Philip's son Alexander had expended the united forces of the Hellenic World on shattering the Persian Empire, which, for two centuries past, had given at least some measure of peace and order to the oldest seats of civilisation in the lands between the Nile and the Indus. The political configuration of the Hellenic World that had emerged from Alexander's meteoric career had been a replica of the previous configuration on a far larger scale and with a far more powerful drive behind it. Down to Philip's day the international anarchy of the Hellenic World had been kept within bounds by the

by the Carthaginian Empire on one side and the Persian Empire on the other. Since Alexander's day this anarchy had spread over the huge area that the Persian Empire had previously protected from it, and the economic resources of this area had been added to those of *Mulica* Greece and of Sicily to provide sinews for wars between Hellenic states. By 225 B.C. these fratricidal wars on the new grand scale had already cost the Hellenic World some ominous territorial losses. In the far north-east a nomad people from the Transcaspiian steppe had prised out of Greek hands the Iranian province of Parthia (the present-day Khorasan). On the far west the Greek states in Southern Italy and Sicily had lost their independence to a non-Greek power, Rome.

A contemporary Alexandrian Greek business man would not have liked contemplating these unpleasant political facts. He could not help knowing them, because Alexandria did a lively trade with Syracuse, the leading Greek state in the West, which had now become a satellite of Rome. But the Alexandrian observer in 225 B.C. would have refused to allow his optimism to be deflated. He would have pointed out, and this with justification, that, as a result of having conquered some fractions of Hellenism's huge domain, both the Romans and the nomad squatters in Parthia had become "Philhellenes", or, in other words, had become converts to the only civilisation that deserved to be called one. As for the inveterate Greek habit of fighting political wars, an Alexandrian Greek in 225 B.C. would probably just have shrugged

his shoulders. War, he would probably have said, was ingrained in human nature. Human beings had made wars since the beginning of time, and no doubt they would go on making them so long as the human race continued to inhabit the earth. Moreover, he might have added, the present-day Hellenic great powers could go to war with each other with impunity. Early Greek wars might have been the ruin of the old Greek city-states; but, unlike these, the new Greek monarchy had all the resources of Egypt and South-West Asia to play with. These non-Greek resources were theirs to squander if they chose. For the native populations, which produced this wealth by the sweat of their brows, were an economic asset but were not a political factor. In the words of a native poet who had seen the establishment of the Persian Empire "As a sheep before her shearers, the natives were 'dumb' ".

Well, this would, as I see it, have been an Alexandrian Greek business man's outlook in 225 B.C.; and if my sketch of this outlook is correct as far as it goes, it displays some unmistakeable points of likeness to, let us say, a London business man's outlook in the generation of our grandparents. The salient features of the picture repeat themselves one after another. In the nineteenth-century Western picture there is the same perpetual round of fratricidal wars, and these are taken in the same spirit. That is, they are taken for granted and are not taken tragically. There is the same exhilarating background of shattered Oriental empires - stretching away, in the

✓ nineteenth century world, across the whole breadth of Asia from Turkey to China. There are the ^{same} droves of apparently sheep-like natives, submitting with the same docility to being fleeced without attempting to turn and bite their shearers. The Japanese may be reacting rather differently, but Japan is the freakish exception which proves the general rule that natives do not bite. There is even the same slight loss of territory on one of the nineteenth-century Western World's fringes, a loss that is being far more than compensated by the partition of Africa. The heart of one Western country, Poland, has been torn out by a non-Western country, Russia. This is a shame, but, after all, Poland perhaps barely qualifies for being classed as a Western country, and anyway, Russia has already become semi-Westernised as a result of having annexed Congress Poland and the Baltic Provinces and Finland. In short, our grandparents were as optimistic about the prospects of the civilisation that was theirs and is now ours as my Alexandrian Greek business man will have been about the prospects of his civilisation in 225 B.C.

But now let us go back to our Hellenic history-book and turn a page. I am reckoning a hundred years to the page, so this next page will bring us to 125 B.C. and to the Hellenic World as seen by my first Alexandrian Greek business man's grandson. In one direction the Hellenic World has continued to expand in the course of the intervening century. Within the last sixty years, Hellenic war-lords from Bactria, north-west of the Hindu Kush, have re-invaded India in Alexandria's tracks and have gained a firmer footing there than Alexander himself had gained. The Alexandrian Greek business community have been alert in seizing upon this new opening for trade. They have been developing the sea-route from the Red Sea coast of Egypt to the Indus delta, and have begun to learn how to make a direct passage with the aid of the monsoon. But these minor entries on the credit side of the Hellenic Civilization's account with Destiny are far outweighed by two portentous new entries in the debit column.

One of these portentous events is the loss of political independence. West of Bactria and the Indus valley, all Greek states have now gone the same way as those in Italy and Sicily had already gone a hundred years back. The Kingdom of Macedon has disappeared from the map, and this is a portent indeed; for Macedon was the Greek state that had made history, two hundred years back, by temporarily uniting

Greece and permanently breaking-up the Persian Empire. Macedon is now a Roman province; Greek Egypt is a Roman protectorate; and all but a fragment of the once vast Seleucid Greek Empire in South-West Asia has been partitioned between Rome and Parthia. Rome has annexed Western Asia Minor; Parthia has annexed Babylonia, which is the equal of Egypt as a granary.

The second portentous event is, if possible, even more serious, It is the native revolt. The native peoples have turned and bitten after all, and they have done it with a vengeance. The Egyptian peasantry, the Palestinian Jewish highlanders, the gangs of Syrians who have been enslaved and been exported to Sicily to be worked to death there on the plantations - all these, and other oppressed and exploited populations too - for instance, some in Western Asia Minor - have taken up arms and have proved themselves formidable. The Jewish insurgents are religious fanatics who have been provoked by 'philhellene' Jewish faction's attempt to Hellenise the Jewish temple-state at Jerusalem in collusion with the paramount power, which was, but no longer is, the Seleucid Greek government at Antioch. The Egyptian peasantry has been made aware of its latent strength by the folly of the Ptolemaic Greek Government at Alexandria. In one of the chronic wars between the Ptolemaic and the Seleucid power in which the Ptolemaic power was being worsted, the government at Alexandria, in desperation, had recruited Egyptian peasants into its army

and had equipped and trained them in the Macedonian Greek way. This had been tried as a forlorn hope, but it had proved a brilliant success - to the surprise of all concerned, not least, of the Egyptian recruits themselves. The Egyptian phalanx had routed the Seleucid phalanx composed of seasoned soldiers of Macedonian Greek descent. Since then, the Egyptian peasantry had been out of hand. They had discovered, by a stimulating experience, that Greek troops were, after all, not automatically invincible. The military prestige of all Greek powers had been deflated by the Egyptian phalanx's triumph at the Battle of Raphia, before it had been annihilated by Rome's repeated victories over Macedon.

The parallel between the Alexandrian Greek business man's outlook in 125 B.C. and our own Western outlook in A.D. 1961 is so obvious that it seems unnecessary for me to underline it. So I will now turn two pages, which will bring us to the year A.D. 75. Hellenic history will still be serving as a mirror for Western history; but, from now onwards, as you will realise, it will be reflecting, not our past or our present, but one of those alternative possibilities that, today, are still lying hidden in the Womb of our future.

In A.D. 75 the outlook for the Hellenic World, as viewed from Alexandria, might seem at first sight to be rather less depressing than it had looked two hundred years back. In A.D. 75 Alexandria is still the commercial and cultural capital of the Hellenic World, but she is no

longer the political capital of a great power. She is now one of the cities of the Roman Empire, and, though she is recognised as being the second city of the Empire after Rome herself, this does not console her. Her feeling towards Rome is like Edinburgh's feeling towards London and Glasgow or Philadelphia's towards Washington and New York. All the same, business at Alexandria has perhaps never before been so good as it is to-day, and that is thanks to two changes for the better - a political change and a technological one.

On the political plane the Hellenic World's age-old international anarchy has at last been brought to an end. What Philip of Macedon achieved for a moment has been re-achieved by Augustus, and this time more durably, as well as on a larger scale. By A.D. 75 the entire Hellenic World, from the Indus valley to the European and Moroccan coast of the Atlantic, has been consolidated politically into the dominions of not more than three empires. The Roman Empire has united the whole perimeter of the Mediterranean sea. The Kushan Empire, bestriding the Hindu Kush, has united all the territories of the ephemeral Greek principalities between the Oxus River and the Jumna. The Parthian Empire holds Iran and 'Iraq. Not one of these three great powers is Greek. The Kushans, like the rulers of the Parthian Empire, ^{are} ~~were~~ descendants of nomads from Central Asia. But all three powers alike are 'philhellene'; each of them is keeping the peace more or less effectively within its own broad dominions; and, though Parthia is not on good terms with either of her neighbours, her wars with

them are neither frequent nor devastating. As for the Roman and the Kushan empires, they ^{are} ~~were~~ good friends with each other - as well they may be, since they have no common frontier to ^{guard} ~~guard~~ over, while they do have a common interest in the growing trade between them. The sea-passage between Egypt and the Indus delta has now become short and quick and cheap because the art of navigating by the monsoon has now been mastered.

Monsoon-navigation has been the great technological discovery of the age, and it is opening up new worlds in the South Seas for Alexandrian enterprise. Alexandrian Greek shipping is now reaching and rounding Ceylon and is making for the Straits of Malacca. In this direction Alexandria's horizon has been pushed far afield in the course of the last three hundred years. But the improvement in the economic and political situations has had effects on the religious plane. Now that politics have at last been put to sleep, the inhabitants of the Hellenic World are finding their spiritual treasure in religion instead - and not one of the religions that are profiting from this shift in the field of mankind's interest is a religion that is Hellenic in origin. The springs by which the new religious current is being fed are Egyptian, Jewish, Anatolian, Syrian, Iranian, and Indian. And this is a presage of things to come.

These coming things have arrived by the time we have turned the next two pages. This has brought us to A.D. 275. At this date the three

empires are all still in being, though the Roman Empire is only just recovering from a stormy half-century during which it had very nearly foundered. The insurrections of the under-world which had been a menace to the Hellenic Civilization in 125 B.C. have recurred. Rome's tremendous military and political power had repressed the under-world for four hundred years, but had not killed its will to revolt, because even the Augustan peace had done no more than just to take the edge off the under-world's sufferings and grievances. The revolts of natives and slaves that had broken out and been repressed in the last two centuries B.C. have recurred in the third century of the Christian Era in the form of revolts of peasants and soldiers; and order has been restored only at the price of appeasement. The urban middle class, which had been the carrier and the beneficiary of the Hellenic Civilization for at least five hundred years past, has now been ruined irretrievably. The proletariat is now in the saddle, and the Orientals and the barbarians have broken through the Roman Empire's frontier defences. European barbarians have sacked Athens; Zenobia, the queen, originally by Rome's leave, of the oasis-state of Palmyra, has momentarily made herself mistress of one third of the Roman Empire, as far west as Egypt and Anatolia inclusive. The invaders have now been chastised and the gaps torn in the frontier defences have been plugged. But the breaches, though now repaired, have demonstrated that the frontier is not impregnable.

These events on the military and political planes have been melodramatic, but the decisive plane of action has been the religious one. In each of the three once 'philhellene' empires, a religion of non-Hellenic origin is in the ascendant by A.D. 275: The Mahayana school of Buddhism in the Kushan Empire, Zoroastrianism in the Neo-Persian Empire that has superseded the Parthian Empire in Iran, and Christianity in the Roman Empire. In the Kushan Empire the relation between church and state is not a problem. The Mahayana is an Indian religion or philosophy, and live-and-let-live is the Indian practice in the religious sphere. In the Neo-Persian Empire, the reigning Sasanian dynasty has made Zoroastrianism the established religion of the state, and rival religions - for instance, Manichaeism and Christianity - have been persecuted. In the Roman Empire the Government has made several attempts, during the half-century of anarchy, to stamp Christianity out. How could the government expect the gods of Rome and Greece to rescue the Empire from the jaws of destruction if the government tolerated atheism? But the persecution of Christianity in the Roman Empire has had just the opposite effect to what the government had intended. The Christian Church's martyrs have won for the Church publicity, prestige, and converts. In the chaos of a dissolving civilization, the Christian Church has stood out as something solid and something worth-while. Its opponents' estimate of its prospects is revealed by their action. All the other religions and philosophies have now sunk their age-old differences and have

formed a united anti-Christian front. They cannot conceal from the Christians or from themselves that this closing of their ranks is a forlorn hope, and their pessimism will be borne out by the course of events.

Turn another couple of pages, and the picture as it presents itself in A.D. 475 will show that the omens of A.D. 275 have been fulfilled. What was once the Hellenic World can now carry that label no longer. It has dissolved into three new Worlds whose hall-marks are not secular but religious. The domain of the Kushan Empire, which had been the eastern extremity of the Hellenic World in 225 B.C., has now become a corridor along which the Mahayana, issuing out of India, has seeped into Central Asia and, from there, has peacefully penetrated China and Korea. Zoroastrianism has become the national religion of Iran and, in achieving this, has set political limits to its own expansion. Christianity has become the exclusive religion of the rest of the Old World westwards from Babylonia inclusive as far as the eastern shores of the Atlantic. The Roman government has capitulated to Christianity without having been cured, by this experience, of its belief in the efficacy of persecution; and in truth, on this second trial in reverse, the policy of persecution has proved a success. During the last twenty years of the fourth century of the Christian Era, the practice of non-Christian religions in the Roman Empire has been stamped out by systematic governmental action. The pre-Christian religions of the Mediterranean

basin are now represented only by a handful of single-minded devotees. These are idealists, but they are also cranks, so their faith will not succeed in moving mountains, though it is considerably larger than a grain of mustard-seed.

Hellenism as a comprehensive way of life is now dead, and the isolated elements of it that are still alive are those which the Mahayana and Christianity have found it convenient to appropriate. The Mahayana, in its passage through the Kushan Empire, has found in Hellenic art a vehicle for expressing itself visually. This Gandharan Graeco-Buddhist art will eventually carry its Hellenic imprint as far eastwards as Japan. Christianity's reception of Hellenism has been less superficial. Like the Mahayana, Christianity has drawn upon Hellenic art, and this common inspiration has impressed on Graeco-Christian and Graeco-Buddhist art an unmistakable family likeness. But, unlike the Mahayana, Christianity has also drawn upon Hellenic philosophy. The Mahayana now had no need to make use of this intellectual element in the Hellenic culture. Indian philosophy is self-sufficient, and Buddhism had started as a school of Indian philosophy before it had become a religion as well. Christianity, on the other hand, has found the adaption of Hellenic philosophy indispensable. Its missionaries' last and hardest task has been the conversion of the educated minority of the Hellenic Society.

This minority's education was philosophical; and if it was to be induced to swallow Christianity, the pill must be sugared with an Hellenic philosophical coating. Moreover, in this last chapter of the story, many of the Christian missionaries themselves were ex-Hellenes who had had an Hellenic philosophical training. By A.D. 475 the native Jewish and Galilaean tenets of the Christian faith have been transposed into an Hellenic philosophical notation. The victorious Christian Church has paid for its victory over Hellenism by saddling itself with the Creeds.

As for Zoroastrianism, it has set its face against Hellenism, and Judaism has turned its face away from it. The Hellenisation of the Jewish diaspora in the Hellenic World, which had seemed a foregone conclusion in 225 B.C., has, after all, miscarried. It has been blighted by a military and political conflict between the Palestinian Jewish highlanders and the Hellenic great powers: first the Seleucid Monarchy and then Rome, the Seleucid Monarchy's destroyer and supplanter. On the military and political plane, the Palestinian Jews have challenged overwhelming odds and have brought upon themselves a crushing and conclusive defeat. But the victorious Roman government has not been able to prevent the Palestinian Jews from retorting on the spiritual plane. They have retorted by repudiating the Hellenic culture, and they will succeed in constraining the diasporan Jews eventually to follow suit.