

THE ERA OF DISCOVERIES

BY

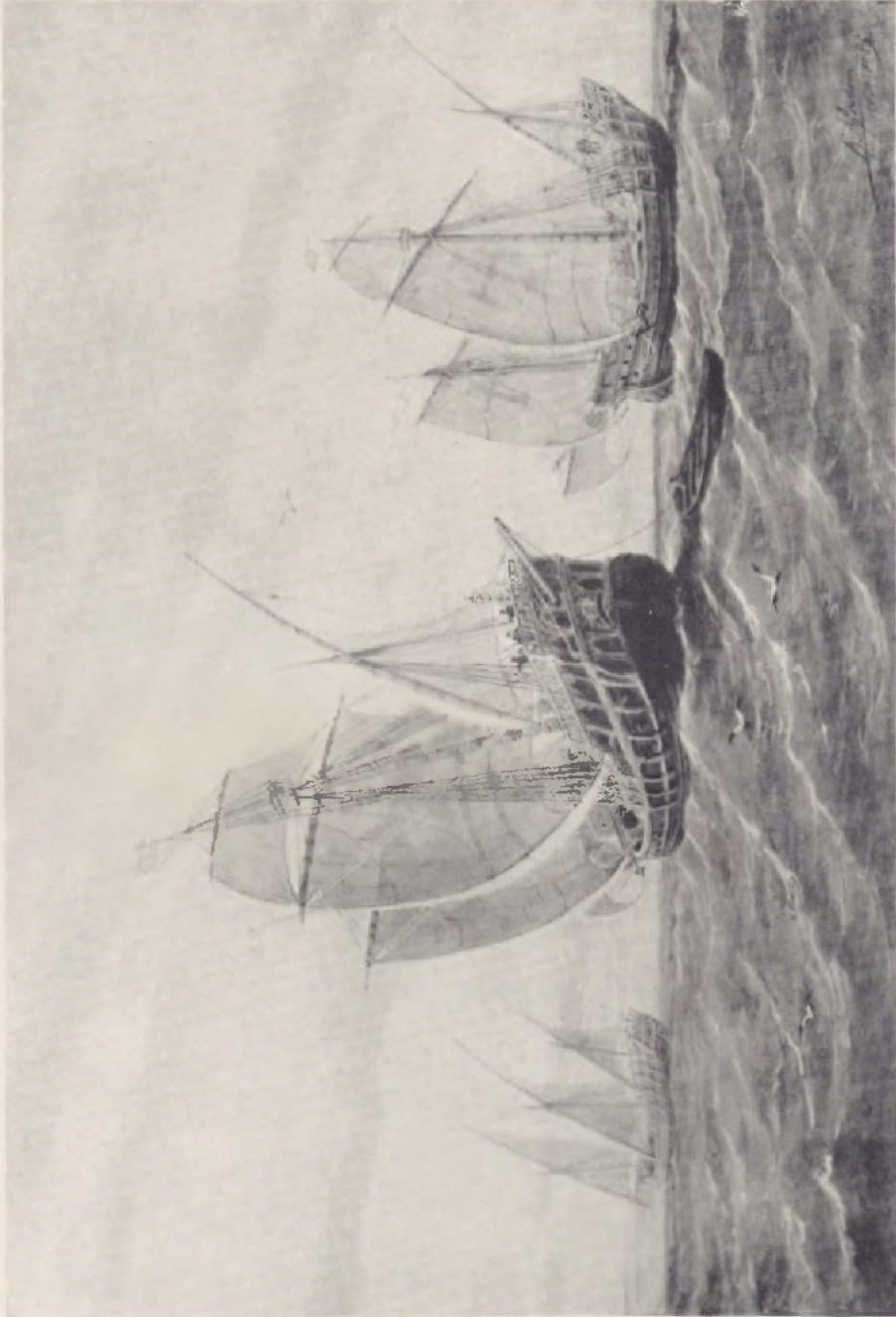
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Droit International*

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CARAVELS OF COLUMBUS

From the painting by Raphael Montecón y Torres, based upon notes and sketches prepared by Captain Cesáreo Fernández Duro.
In the Naval Museum, Madrid

Photograph, Manuel

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. . . Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.

TENNYSON'S *Ulysses*.

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THE KEY OF DISCOVERY?

PREFATORY NOTE

DISCOVERIES are as mileposts in the progress of humanity. From the unremembered days when man first learned the virtues of fire, to the latest findings of modern scientists and philosophers, human beings have sought unceasingly, and are still seeking, for new milestones. It is an endless quest, and the rewards, in terms of spiritual and material progress, grow steadily richer, while the path marked by future mileposts leads and must always lead to newer heights.

At no time in recorded history did humanity benefit by so many discoveries of far-reaching importance as in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The mental and physical horizons of the civilized world were pushed back to reveal the riches of the past and of the future—a future of which we of to-day, and in a special sense we of the Americas, are the heirs.

The purpose of the present pamphlet, consisting of an offprint of the first chapter of the two-volume work now in course of publication under the title of *The Spanish Origin of International Law*, is to examine the significance of these discoveries in relation to the development of international law and therefore of human relationships—for of what does law consist but of the rules of conduct which govern the relations of human beings in society, whether that society be small or as all-embracing as the international community?

The discoveries of to-day are annihilating the distances and the barriers between peoples.

May the discoveries of the proximate future usher in the universality of law when enlightened rules of conduct shall apply equally to all human beings, regardless of geography, race, or sex.

JAMES BROWN SCOTT

WASHINGTON, D.C.,
June 3rd, 1932.

THE ERA OF DISCOVERIES

We live in an age of anniversaries. We recognize that the present is but an outgrowth if it be not a mere prolongation of the past. The birth of States and nations, if we can compare their artificial creation to the natural process of creation, makes an especial appeal. Within the past few years, we of North America have rejoiced at the independence of the Latin American Republics, and representatives of our government have taken part in their various centenaries. On the 4th of July, 1926, we celebrated the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the independence of the United States.

The great men of other days belong to us in no uncertain sense, and their birth, the publication of their works, or the announcement of their discoveries are mileposts in the development of our civilization. To two of these more modest anniversaries I would invite your attention.

On the 17th or 18th of March, 1625, a treatise on the law of war and peace was exposed for sale at the Frankfort Fair. It was by one Huig de Groot, with the Latin form of whose name, Grotius, we are more familiar. In 1925, the third centenary of the publication of the volume was celebrated at The Hague and in many parts of the world. It was an international event of no mean importance.

On the 7th of September, 1526, a Dominican friar, one Francisco de Vitoria, was appointed Professor of Sacred Theology at the University of Salamanca. In the spring of 1926, four hundred years later, his appointment was celebrated at that most ancient and venerable of Spanish universities, in the presence, it is proper to say, of a delegation from Holland, the country of Grotius.

Now Grotius has had the good fortune to be looked upon by many as the father of the law of nations, although his title perhaps would be more secure as its first systematic expounder. In the year 1532 Vitoria prepared a series of readings on the relation of Spain to America, then recently discovered; many well-informed persons there are who look upon these readings as having founded the modern school of international law, of which Grotius was the most illustrious member, and his treatise the culmination of the Spanish school. The publication of the treatise and the appointment of Vitoria to Salamanca were but a century apart.

The Hollander undoubtedly felt that his name would be remembered, but hardly for the treatise on the law of war and peace, by which it appears he set no great store. As to the Spaniard, the thought that his name would survive surely never occurred to him, and he

would have been dumbfounded had any one suggested that he should be remembered. Yet, as I have said, the four-hundredth anniversary of his appointment as Professor was to be celebrated with pomp by the University of Salamanca, and in the presence of a committee of Grotius's countrymen. And there was a relation between the two which the Netherlanders recognized and finely observed: each laboured in the field of international relations, although one sowed in darkness, and the other reaped in light. After the lapse of centuries, he who scattered the seed is seen to be the 'Maestro' of him who garnered the harvest. Each was of his day; each was moved from without to do what he did; and what the Spaniard began, the Netherlander continued.

The flagship of Columbus bringing, we might say, the old and the new world together, drew the line between the Middle Ages in which Europe was a commonwealth based upon a system of rigid principles and modern times in which separate and equal States compete one with another. On that side of the line is unity and universality—on this side, diversity and nationality. An adequate law of nations was needed for the competing nations; with the advent of the New World new problems presented themselves, and the new conditions needed new rules of law. The modern school of international law therefore came into being, just as a more modern law of nations will arise in the future to meet and satisfy newer conditions. Life and law keep company and progress together.

The discovery of the New World was but one of the many discoveries which have made us intellectually and, in a certain respect, materially what we are. The earth was thought to be flat, and only a part of it was known and habitable. The discovery of Columbus showed that the unknown might be habitable, and that in any event the world was round. The discovery was soon to be followed by the announcement that the earth with the New World added was not even the centre of things, but that it revolved around the sun, and was small in comparison with the other planets. The spirit of adventure begotten by material discoveries heartened men of science to push into newer realms, to wrest as it were the very secrets from the heavens, and to explain the nature of things terrestrial and celestial. The world was to act upon my Lord Bacon's advice 'against the "Naught beyond" of the ancients raise your cry of "More beyond" Let the discovery of the new terrestrial world encourage you to expect the discovery of a new intellectual world, remembering the words of the prophet that "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be multiplied."'¹

Nothing is more trite than the remark that one discovery leads to another. There were therefore several discoveries, without which the

¹ G. C. Moore Smith, *New Atlantis by Francis Bacon* (1919), p. xvi.

great adventure of 1492 might not have taken place: gunpowder and artillery, which enabled the king to enlarge his domain and lay the foundations of the powerful modern State; the discovery of antiquity, which justified, indeed led to a desire for change; printing, which disseminated the new learning, creating everywhere a desire for the newer life; and the mariner's compass, which enabled the bolder seamen to put beyond charted routes with the expectation of finding their way home. Of these four or five discoveries antedating that of the New World, some were material and some intellectual; together they made a new world of the old. Some were of use on land, and some on unknown waters, such as the invention of gunpowder and artillery, and the mariner's compass. Of the first we shall do little but mention it in passing. Its importance cannot be overlooked, and much as we may deplore the fact, it still is a fact that wars have made and unmade nations. The employment of gunpowder not only 'altered the whole art of war', but, as a learned and accurate writer informs us, 'its influence gradually and indirectly permeated and affected the whole fabric of society'.¹

Gunpowder, however, was only an explosive. It was to become effective through cannon and small arms. Curiously enough, two monks, one a German, Berthold Schwartz by name, the other an Englishman, Friar Roger Bacon, are competitors for its discovery, or composition. The Germans naturally lean towards their countryman, and the English have a weakness for Bacon. Unprejudiced investigations seem to incline the scales towards the Englishman. About the middle of the thirteenth century, and therefore a hundred years in advance of his German competitor, Bacon thus gives the receipt for making gunpowder: 'Let the total weight of the ingredients be 30, however, of saltpetre . . . of sulphur; and with such a mixture you will produce a bright flash and a thundering noise, if you know the trick.' The pious Friar, great scientist and forerunner of experiment as the foundation of progress, added: 'You may find (by actual experiment) whether I am writing riddles to you or the plain truth.'²

The elder Bacon, however, does not seem to have known the use of gunpowder as a propellant. A hundred years after his time it began to be used as such in large and small weapons of warfare. In 1346, at Crécy, the English are said to have brought guns into the open field for the first time, and with disastrous results to their enemies. The new or unusual is apt to be looked upon with disfavour, especially if it be injurious to us. Thus, during the Wars of the Roses in England, the Yorkists were denounced as having 'traiterously ranged in bataill . . . their cartes with gones set before their batailles'.³ But thereafter,

¹ W. R. E. Hodgkinson, 'Gunpowder' in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. xii (11th ed., 1910), p. 723.

² *Ibid.*

³ Charles Francis Atkinson, 'Artillery' in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. ii (11th ed., 1910), p. 685.

princes and feudal barons, if they could but buy, beg, borrow, or purloin 'a few pieces of ordnance', could batter down the castles of their rebellious underlings. Thus in Europe the face of things was to be changed. And firearms were likewise to change the face of things beyond the confines of Europe. This we have on the authority of Montaigne, if authority is needed, who quaintly and feelingly describes in one of his essays the astonishment and fear of the American Indians inspired by 'the flashing-fire and thundring roare of shotte and Harguebuses; able to quell and daunt even *Caesar* himselfe, had he been so sodainely surprisid and as little experienced as they were'.¹

But the greatest instance of the use of artillery took place in the fifteenth century—a century to be gladdened by the discovery of a New World by Columbus, after being inexpressibly saddened by the fall of Constantinople and the Eastern Empire of ancient Rome under the guns of Turkish invaders. The historian Gibbon informs us that Mahomet II, who conquered Constantinople, had 'studied with peculiar care the recent and tremendous discovery of the Latins', and that 'his artillery surpassed whatever had yet appeared in the world'.²

It would seem that a Dane or Hungarian, who had served in the armies of the tottering Empire, 'deserted to the Moslems, and was liberally entertained by the Turkish sultan'. Mahomet asked the renegade if he could 'cast a cannon capable of throwing a ball or stone of sufficient size to batter the walls of Constantinople?' to which he replied, according to Gibbon, 'I am not ignorant of their strength, but, were they more solid than those of Babylon, I could oppose an engine of superior power'. The result was the fall of the city, and of the last outpost of Imperial Rome, through cannon manufactured for the purpose. Many of the refugees from the fallen city made their way to Italy and to other parts of the West, swelling the ranks of their countrymen who had preceded them; and through whose activity the Greek literature of other days had been imparted to an expectant and enthralled world. If the fugitives did not create the Renaissance, they added to the movement which lay between the Crusades and the final fall of Constantinople.

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With the fall of the Empire of the West in the last quarter of the fifth century, Italy did not cease to exist, nor did the ideas which had been prevalent in that part of the world, but they lost their prominence and, with a single exception, their attraction. That exception was the

¹ *The Essayes of Michael Lord of Montaigne*, translated by John Florio, vol. iii (Everyman ed., No. 442), p. 143.

² Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. vii (3rd ed., 1909), p. 169.

Christian Church, which had installed itself in the Eternal City—'eternal' largely because of the Church. The interest of the Church, however, was not in Italy or Rome as such, but in a doctrine—the doctrine of the Holy Land. The language, indeed, was of Rome, and so much of the older literature as was, in the opinion of the Church, suited to its purpose. In losing touch with classical literature, the language ceased to be classic, and the new literature was couched in a tongue which was losing, if it had not already lost, touch with the ancient world and its ideals. The sun of the Empire had indeed set, and its afterglow was the only light of the newer world. In one respect, however, the Old World persisted, for there never was a time, it would appear, when Roman law was wholly neglected on the peninsula; and its so-called revival in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries seems rather to have been an increased attention to the law, its sources and its possible application, than a sudden enthusiasm for a system of law recovered after a lapse of centuries.

The laymen had taken up the law which the Church had preserved, studied for its own purposes, and made the basis of its canon law; and later, from the law of Imperial Rome, and from the canon law of the Christian Church, the law of nations was to come into being. In view of these things, some say that sooner or later it was inevitable that the old Rome should attract the newer Italy, and that later, through Italy, the old Greece should be unveiled at the hands of the modern Greeks of Constantinople. The great discovery of the ancient world and its twofold civilization was to be made in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

It is generally dangerous to attribute a movement to a single event; and it is indeed rare that a movement can be summed up in the life of a single man. However, it is a pardonable exaggeration to say that the cause and the movement united in the person of Petrarch. The glory of the older Rome made an irresistible appeal to him, and his express mission was to bring into repute and ordinary use the Latin of classical Rome. Through his genius and devotion, and that of his friends and followers, he succeeded.

No scholar of the English-speaking world has a better right to be heard than the late Sir Richard C. Jebb, and the views which I have ventured to express being his, should at least be stated in part in his own words. The Latin of the early day was not to be taken bodily: 'the resemblance of a modern's work to his ancient model should not be that of a portrait to the original, but rather the family likeness of child to parent.' The study of the Classics was to be, as it were, 'the key to a larger mental life, . . . one which should educate and exercise men's highest faculties'. It was not, however, through the schoolmen of the Church that the revival of letters was to be hoped for; nor in the

universities, which at the time, and after, were hostile. It was only through the acknowledgement of the powerful and the wealthy that 'humanism' could make its way. Petrarch appealed to these classes, who thus became its open patrons.

This meant much; but Petrarch's services to the new learning were even greater. 'He stimulated an inner circle of disciples', said Professor Jebb. 'He was, in his own person, the first brilliant humanist; he was also the first effective propagator of humanism in the world at large; and he inspired chosen pupils who continued the tradition.'

What was the result of it all? We live in a century in which scholars have, through excavation, discovered and made known to us the material sites and cities of the ancient world. Petrarch, his friends and successors, had discovered and made known the intellectual world. However, his discovery was the civilization of Rome and of Italy; it was not of Greece and its civilization. This was not to be the task of Petrarch, although it was but another phase of the humanistic movement which he had inaugurated. 'I have not been so fortunate as to learn Greek', he said, and Greek was not to be learned through Latin or the Italian tongue. As Professor Jebb puts it, 'The rudiments of grammar and vocabulary could be acquired only from a Greek-speaking teacher.' Greek-speaking persons were only to be found in Constantinople, and among them only a few were familiar with ancient Greek and its literature. These would need to be induced to repair to Italy. Therefore, Professor Jebb says that 'the Italian revival of Greek in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was effected mainly by a small number of highly-accomplished Greeks, who were induced to settle as professors at Florence or other centres'.¹

Within the first fifty years of the fifteenth century Greek had become a living tongue, and the ancient Greece a living influence. What was the value of the accomplishment? It brought within the reach of gradually widening circles the culture and civilization of the Old World which Europe had just discovered.

New learning permeated all frontiers of thought, all branches of science; and the Church was not beyond its influence. Interesting, indeed fascinating in itself, and broadening the intellectual outlook, the new learning showed the people of the Middle Ages a different world, and the possibility of change in institutions as well as in thought. This possibility dawned upon them and, setting about to exchange the conditions with which they were confronted, the Middle Ages were transformed into the modern world. The world had indeed experienced a new birth.

Just as the origin of humanism centres around the name of Petrarch,

¹ *The Cambridge Modern History*, vol. i (1909), chap. xvi, 'The Classical Renaissance', pp. 539, 540, 541.

so its triumph is associated with the name of another man—Erasmus of Rotterdam. And in behalf of Erasmus, as previously in the case of Petrarch, I invoke the authority and I quote the very words of Professor Jebb: 'The attitude of Erasmus towards humanism had a general affinity with that of Petrarch and the other leaders of the Italian revival. . . . To Petrarch, as to the typical Italian humanist generally, the New Learning was above all things an instrument for the self-culture of the individual. To Erasmus, on the other hand, self-culture was, in itself—greatly though he valued it—a secondary object, subservient to a greater end.' What was this end? 'He regarded humanism as the most effectual weapon for combating that widespread ignorance which he considered to be the root of many evils that were around him.' The abuses of the Church, the untold misery due to the selfish aims of kings, the pedantries of the schoolmen, the low moral standards in public and private life, were to yield to 'the civilising influence of knowledge'. His aim was 'educational and ethical', and his purpose was that 'of a practical moralist, who hoped to leave human society better than he had found it'. Throughout his life there was unity of purpose, and his life-work culminated 'in his contributions to Biblical criticism and exegesis. The Scholastic Theology had been wont to use isolated texts, detached from their context, and artificially interpreted. The object of Erasmus was to let all men know what the Bible really said and meant.' His edition of the Greek Testament was the earliest in the field, and his desire was to see the Scriptures translated into every language and given to all. 'I long', he said, 'that the husbandman should sing them to himself as he follows the plough, that the weaver should hum them to the tune of his shuttle, that the traveller should beguile with them the weariness of his journey.'¹

We cannot estimate the influence of the new learning upon the people of the Middle Ages by any statement of the influence of the Classics upon the people of our day. We are the products of the new learning. It has entered into and made in large part our culture and our civilization. We are born into its atmosphere, and we find it difficult to conceive the joy everywhere created by the discovery of those things which to us seem commonplaces. Perhaps a figurative way of stating it is more illuminating than a comparison. The sun of the ancient world had set, and the people of the Middle Ages were living in its afterglow, as I have already said. Looking backward, it was as if they saw for the first time the moon and the stars, and the light of another world. Their mental horizon was enlarged by the freedom of thought, the freedom of expression; and the results of both became their heritage. It is often said that poets are our prophets. They are sometimes our historians. And nowhere can we find a statement

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 569, 570.

better calculated to express the soul of Europe than the few lines of Keats:

. . . like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific, and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise,
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

But the Renaissance would not have been what it was had it not been that it found at its disposal an agency to transmit the new learning and the new conception of things to all who had eyes to see the treasures and ears to hear the message of the older world. The printing-press, strange as it may seem, gave wings to thought and permanence to its expression.

This miracle, for such it is, was the result of a long process—inscriptions on the mountains, on temples, on monuments, and even stones, informing the passer-by of things to be remembered. They were stationary, and whatever information they conveyed had to be received on the spot. Writing, instead of inscriptions, came into vogue, and manuscripts brought knowledge to those who had the means to acquire them. They were costly because each was an original and written by hand. The material was heavy, such as papyrus, and the manuscript bulked large. Such was the state of affairs in the ancient world. A form of sheepskin specially treated, called vellum, came into use. It was permanent but expensive, and heavy. The problem was to find some way of making many copies of one and the same text by a single effort, on material so light that the separate sheets could be bound together and thus, in a handy volume, put in the hands of its possessor the wisdom of the ancients, contributions of different and sometimes widely separated countries, and often the novelties of the passing day. The first great step was taken when letters and words in reverse order were engraved upon blocks of wood, covered with an appropriate medium and impressions taken. But when the next and final stage in this process was reached—the letters engraved on small and movable blocks and combined in the order of the words sought to be reproduced—a method was at hand whereby everything could be reproduced which could be expressed in the twenty-six letters of the alphabet.

The next matter of moment was to find a suitable medium upon which the impression should be made and preserved. Many materials were tried—silk in China, cotton in Damascus, but in Spain of the thirteenth century native-grown hemp and flax replaced the cotton of Damascus and the silk of China, and produced the linen paper suitable to printer, publisher, and public. The movable type alone was needed, and it made its appearance in full flood of the Renaissance, on the eve of the fall of Constantinople, and, within a year after that event, the

first perfected fruits of the great discovery—a Papal brief and the Holy Bible. The paper was already at hand for the movable type, and within ten years from 1440 it came into use. If, as seems likely, it was the ‘discovery’ of one Lourens Coster, of Haarlem, it was improved by Johann Gutenberg, of Mainz; and, in any event, through him and his associates it became universally used. Within the fifteenth century it is estimated that from twenty-five to thirty thousand different books and editions had already been printed—one-third in Italy, an equal number in Germany, and the remainder in other countries. Three things were necessary: small type, so that much could be got within a small compass; a handy format, so that a companion might be made of the book; and a price which would enable those to purchase it who could not have acquired manuscripts. Aldus Manutius of Venice hit upon a small and acceptable type; the Elzevirs of Holland, the duodecimo volumes with which their name is identified, in the sixteenth century, and through the efforts of both, and their associates and competitors, a price was set which to us of to-day seems extraordinarily moderate. The cost of an Aldine volume ranged from about a shilling to half a crown; and many of the Elzevirs were published at eighteen pence to two shillings. Within the course of a century the masterpieces and even the lesser known writings of antiquity were to be at the disposal of those who had a mind to read them. The newer literature also was scattered abroad. In one year no less than twenty-four thousand copies of Erasmus’s *Colloquia* were struck off by one printing-press, and in 1527 a Spanish version of another of his writings could be found, it is said, in many country inns throughout Spain. The middle class could thus purchase books and, like the nobles and princes of a generation ago, possess private libraries. And not the least result of it all was the accuracy of the printed page. ‘The humble printer had indeed complied with the command of the Lord: ‘Write the vision, and make it plaine vpon tables, that he may runne that readeth it.’ The printing-press had made the fortune of the Renaissance, which found expression in different ways in all of the countries of western Europe. ‘The vigorous Iberian mind, with its strongly-marked individuality, showed the impetus given by the Renaissance in other forms than those of classical scholarship’, says Sir Richard Jebb. ‘It found expression in the romance of Cervantes, in the epic of Camoens, and in the dramas of Lope de Vega; or, not less characteristically, in the wistful ardour of exploration which animated Vasco da Gama and Colombo.’¹

But ‘wistfulness’ or ‘ardour’, if it put them to sea, would not bring them back. It was one thing to hug the coasts, but quite another to put boldly out to sea. Fortunately, the discovery of the mariner’s compass enabled them to do both. ‘Seven cities’, we are told, ‘warred

¹ *The Cambridge Modern History*, vol. i (1909), pp. 578-9.

for Homer being dead.' For the discovery of the mariner's compass there are no less than six contestants—the Chinese, the Arabs, the Greeks, the Etruscans, the Finns, and the Italians; and whatever may be the case with the birthplace of Homer, that of the mariner's compass is still undecided. By each of the claimants it was used, but the relation of each to the other, and the matter of priority, are mooted points. From an interesting article on the 'Compass' published in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, I lift here and there a passage. An Arab writer travelling from Tripoli to Alexandria in 1242 stated in his *Merchant's Treasure*, published some forty years later, that a magnetized needle was then used which 'floated on water by means of a splinter of wood or reed'. And he expressly adds: 'They say that the captains who navigate the Indian seas use, instead of the needle and splinter, a sort of fish made out of hollow iron, which, when thrown into the water, swims upon the surface, and points out the north and south with its head and tail.'¹

Coming now to Europe, it appears that the first definite statement of the use of the mariner's compass is to be found in a work of the twelfth century. The needle was placed on a pivot and allowed to make its own position of repose, so that the course was shown to the mariners when the polar star was hidden. In another work of the same author, Alexander Neckam, there is a further illuminating passage: 'Mariners at sea, when, through cloudy weather in the day which hides the sun, or through the darkness of the night, they lose the knowledge of the quarter of the world to which they are sailing, touch a needle with the magnet, which will turn round till, on its motion ceasing, its point will be directed towards the north.' All that is certain, the learned article informs us, is a knowledge of the nautical use of the magnet at the end of the thirteenth century.²

The first authentic description of a pivoted compass is of the same period, but it is still a matter of conjecture when the compass card was added. The wind-rose is older than the compass, and 'the north point', according to the article, 'indicated in some of the oldest compass cards with a broad arrow-head or a spear, as well as with a T for Tramontano, gradually developed by a combination of these, about 1492, into a *fleur de lis*, still universal'.³ This was the year of Columbus's famous discovery.

For many years, the invention of the mariner's compass was also attributed to the visionary doctor of Mallorca, Raimundo Lulio, who mentions in his *Félix de las maravillas del orbe* and in his *Astronomía* the characteristic of the magnet or loadstone to 'turn the needle towards the north', and also that of 'the northern star which with the magnet attracts iron'. In his *Arte de Navegar*, which is said to be the

¹ vol. vi (11th ed., 1910), p. 807.

² *Ibid.*, p. 808.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 809.

first work ever written on the subject, that very visionary spirit remarked that to the west of the Hispanic Peninsula there lay a continent of land, and in his *Cuestiones solubles por el Arte demostrativo*, that '*Terra et Mare sunt sphoericum corpus*'.¹

But something more than the compass was needed. It was found in the astrolabe, now superseded by the sextant, for taking the altitudes of the sun, moon, and stars, for calculating latitude, for determining the points of the compass, time, and the altitude of mountains. The mariner's astrolabe dates from 1480, and with tables of the sun's declination then available it was possible to calculate latitude by meridian altitudes. This was the instrument used by Columbus. Therefore, the mariner could safely put to sea and, with compass and astrolabe, have a fair chance of returning to the home port, escaping storms and the other dangers more greatly feared from the monsters with which the unknown seas were believed to be infested. Knowledge and skill, vision, and, above all, courage, were needed. Columbus had all of these and, in addition, faith.

In his excellent volume on *L'Exotisme américain dans la littérature française au XVI^e siècle*, Gilbert Chinard, Professor of French Literature at Johns Hopkins University, has an illuminating passage:

The men who were to discover America would carry with them a heavy load of myths and prejudices. Isidore of Seville, Lactantius and St. Augustine had declared belief in the antipodes to be absurd and heretical: the world was always separated into strictly defined zones of which ours alone was habitable; to wish to pass beyond its bounds was madness, and even worse, it was impious. Nevertheless, humanity, which until that time had always lived bound up in itself, felt arising within itself a spirit of adventure that impelled it to enlarge a horizon growing daily more confined. All of Europe was sorely oppressed by a need for change, a thirst for novelty. . . . The diffusion of ancient writings, thanks to the printing press, was to reveal the knowledge and political systems of antiquity. A vague aspiration toward happiness which craved immediate realization, was to bring about an outburst of pastoral poetry in Italy, in France and even in England. For a time there was a belief in the Renaissance, that is to say, in a real regeneration of the world, a spirit of liberty and emancipation which was to sweep over all Europe. And it was at this moment that there occurred in a rather unexpected way the discovery of Islands in the Ocean of a new world.²

To us of the present day it seems a simple matter to have sailed from the Canary Islands on a line due west until land was discovered; and it seemed so simple and natural to Columbus that he wondered why the great of the world would not start him upon his voyage. The world might be flat to the flat-minded, but to those who used their intelligence, the world was as round as the head above their shoulders. Therefore, a course due west from Spain was bound to reach Asia with its silks, its spices, and its treasures, which the people of that day wanted to obtain. There had been land-routes to Asia, but they were becoming

¹ *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*, M. Rivadeneyra, Editor, tomo lxx (Madrid, 1873). Discurso preliminar de Don Adolfo de Castro, p. xviii.

² (Paris, 1911), p. xv.

difficult because of the inroads of the Turks and the fall of Constantinople under their massive artillery. Then, too, the cities which had possessed themselves of the routes to the far east, such as Venice and Genoa, and from which they drew fabulous profits, were naturally satisfied with things as they were, and not inclined to seek a new highway which, if found, they would not be able to control. This Columbus learned, for Genoa, his native city, and Venice, were cold to his overtures. The two kingdoms of the Peninsula, Portugal and Spain, lying to the west, were shut out from traffic with Cathay. For many years Columbus had been a wanderer, much of the time in Portugal, and Spain was Portugal's neighbour. To the north of both was France, likewise looking to the west, and excluded from eastern routes; and to the north was also a small country which had not yet played a role in the world's affairs, but which was about to start on that career of discovery and conquest which has made of England more than the rival of the Roman Empire. It lay off Europe, watching, as it were, its opportunity; and like the countries to the south, its outlet was to the west. Therefore, Columbus made an appeal to each of these countries. Portugal was not likely to indulge in the western adventure; it found a route to Asia around Africa, by way of the Cape of Good Hope—a route which its steady navigators had discovered, making of Lisbon, within a few years, the acknowledged centre for the distribution of Eastern wares. France did not allow itself to be persuaded, and England was too late in taking up the Italian adventurer. He was already succeeding with Spain.

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On October 12th, 1929, I had the honour to deliver before the Institute of International Law, during its session at Briarcliff, New York, an address on 'The Discovery of America and Its Influence on International Law'. As certain passages in this address bear directly upon the present subject, it may not be inapposite to repeat them here.

'The Moors had spread as a flood from the Mediterranean to and beyond the Pyrenees. Slowly the waters of invasion subsided. On January 2, 1492, Boabdil, the last of the Moorish Kings, surrendered at Granada, to Ferdinand and Isabella. "We are Thine," he said to them, "powerful and exalted King. These are the keys of this paradise; receive this city, for such is the will of God."

'Spain had achieved territorial and spiritual unity, and its Golden Age was already in sight. Concentration within was to be accompanied by expansion without. The spirit of adventure which had expelled the Moor was to invade a distant and unknown world. The one and the other were of 1492.

'The domain beyond the seas was to be the gift of a foreigner in

the service of Spain. The doer of a great deed must be, we think, a great man. We are not content to take him for what he is. He must be of ancient lineage, although he need not be the head of the house. Indeed, it is more interesting if his immediate parents have seen better days, so that the youth has had to shift for himself and make his own way.

Therefore it is that Christopher Columbus was born in Genoa of gentle birth, although his father was a weaver. The son would thus be well connected and accorded the benefit of university training. He seems to have followed his father's trade. In any event, he was not a sailor by calling [if the views of recent authorities are to be accepted],¹ and his first venture upon the high seas appears to have taken place some three years before he made his way westward to Lisbon. Here he seems to have taken an interest in tales of the sea, and to have gone to sea himself. There is nothing strange in this, for Portugal was then rounding the western coast of Africa, and was soon to pass the Cape and make for the Indies in the East. Fortune was to have it that the Genoese, although not in the service of Portugal, was to put to sea and find a way to the West Indies.

He took an interest in navigation, in accounts of travellers, and he dabbled in matters scientific. Mingling with sea-faring men, he learned of vessels driven westward by storms and of lands which their crews had seen. He convinced himself that there were islands to the west, and that they could be reached if only he had a "patron". We are told that he unbosomed himself to the Portuguese who, furtively sailing westward but finding nothing, had no further use for the impecunious stranger in their midst.

Thereafter he turned to Spain, where he spent a number of years in searching for the "patron" who was to speed him westward. He was presented to their Catholic Majesties and spoke of the western venture. They naturally referred him to a committee of persons having their confidence. Columbus appeared before its members, but they reported against him. This was as was to be expected, if it be true as alleged that, mindful of his Portuguese experience, he spoke guardedly of the islands, giving little or no information about them; but insisting that he, and he alone, could find them.

This was no doubt discouraging to Columbus, but it assuredly implies neither ignorance nor bad faith on the part of the committee. Over-zealous biographers have accused their Majesties of putting off Columbus on one pretext or other, but they owed him nothing. Then, too, they were engaged in expelling the Moors and freeing Spain from foreign domination. When this was done, they would have time to

¹ Henry Vignaud, *Études critiques sur la vie de Colomb avant ses découvertes* (Paris, 1905), pp. 306, 365. *Vide also* Ramiro Guerra y Sanchez, *Historia de Cuba*, tomo i (2nd ed., Habana, 1922), p. 133.

think of other things. They thought of Columbus, who had somehow found patrons who possessed influence with the Court. It thus happened that within four months after the fall of Granada, Columbus had made his terms with their Majesties, or rather with Isabella, whose mind was more open to generous ideas than that of her royal consort, Ferdinand, King of Aragon. Within a further period of four months, Columbus was on his way westward, with three tiny ships and a motley crew, but with a stout heart and an unshakeable faith in his adventure.

'First to the south, and then to the west, farther to the west, always to the west. On October 12th, the intrepid Commander reached one of the Bahama Islands. Immediately, he took possession of it in behalf of Spain, but it is now British soil. Learning from the natives of a larger island to the south, he repaired thither. On October 28th, 1492, he landed upon Cuba, the first of the future American Republics to be touched by Columbus on the first of his western voyages.

'What were the immediate results? The ultimate consequences we shall never know. An historian has told us a part of the tale: "The world has increased in size; commerce and shipping will extend through the immensity of an ocean without shores. The ores of the New World will cause a revolution in finance, in property, in manufactures, in the mercantile spirit of nations, and the crusades against the Mohammedans will be replaced by crusades for the conversion of idolaters."¹

'I have quoted these few lines from Lafuente because they sum up admirably the influence of the discovery of America on the material world, implying, but not stating, that the new conditions would need different policies and other laws to regulate the conduct of nations. This would mean a modern law of nations. But this is not all. The quotation ends with a suggestion that Christianity, no longer in conflict with Islam, should extend its influence beyond the confines not only of Spain, but to the pagan peoples beyond the seas.

'The Spanish Church rose to the opportunity of well-doing; its servants crossed the waste of waters, carrying to the Indians but recently discovered the doctrines and practices of the Christian religion. And through the preaching of the Gospel the newer law of nations was to come into being and assume definite form and shape.'

No incident is more familiar than Columbus's discovery of America, and he knows little of history who does not know how Isabella of Spain is said to have pledged her jewels, that the Italian adventurer might sail into the west and bring back tidings of Cathay. To the west he sailed, and, returning, laid at her feet a gift more precious than any of which she had ever dreamed—a new world.

Why did Columbus discover America? There are several reasons. One is, he set out to discover it—that is, he sailed due west without

¹ In Knapp, *Modern Spanish Readings* (Boston, 1883), p. 112.

allowing himself to be diverted to the north or to the south of his chosen line, as others before him had done. Why did he take this line? He felt that it was the shortest and best line from his point of departure, and his judgement in this respect has been confirmed by the succeeding centuries. Had he taken a line to the north, the winds and the currents might have been unfavourable; and in like manner, the course to the south of the Canaries had disadvantages. He wanted the eastern wind to fill his sails and to carry him westward. It did. And on his return voyage from the West Indies (he died in the belief that he had discovered at least the island outposts of Asia), he did not follow the course which had led him westward; he turned to the north, taking the course to the Azores. Why did he go and return by different routes? Because he was the ablest sailor of his time. He had made a study of the winds and currents of the ocean, so that with all the opportunities of mistake before him, he chose the best course to the west, and the appropriate course by which to return. How was he able to do this? There need be no doubt upon this point *if we are to accept his own words as evidence*,¹ for he himself had given the reason, and it has been confirmed by Las Casas, admitted then and now to be an authority on things American: 'I went to sea very young,' he says in a letter of 1501, 'and have continued it to this day; and this art inclines those that follow it to be desirous to discover the secrets of this world; it is now forty years that I have been sailing to all those parts at present frequented; and I have dealt and conversed with wise people, as well clergy as laity, Latins, Greeks, Indians, and Moors, and many others of other sects; and our Lord has been favorable to this my inclination, and I have received of him the spirit of understanding. He has made me very skilful in navigation, . . .'² 'In the art of navigation,' in the opinion of Las Casas, 'Columbus exceeded, without any doubt, all others who lived in his day.'³ What did the 'spirit of understanding' which, he said, the Lord had given him, and his own seamanship enable him to accomplish? He navigated three little vessels across the Atlantic, putting to sea on Friday, the 3rd of August, 1492, and landing on one of the Bahama Islands on the morning of Friday, the 12th of October, 1492.

The expedition numbered eighty-eight persons in all. The largest of the vessels was the *Santa Maria*, commanded by Columbus, a decked ship of a hundred tons burthen, and a crew of fifty-two men. Next in size was the *Pinta*, under the command of Martin Pinzon. It was a vessel of fifty tons, with a crew of eighteen men. The *Niña*, of forty tons, had a crew of eighteen men, and was under Pinzon's brother, Vincente Yañez.⁴

¹ Vignaud, *op. cit.*, pp. 305 *et seq.*

² George E. Nunn, *The Geographical Conceptions of Columbus* (1924), p. 43.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 44 (note).

⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed.), p. 742.

If, as has been claimed, rumours of 'Antihla', an island to the west (reported by some storm-tossed vessels in the fifteenth century, and therefore put upon the map) entered into the calculations of Columbus, he had himself on October 28th, and on his very first voyage, the consolation of putting his foot upon the soil of Cuba, then and now the Pearl of the Antilles. The great navigator also discovered the island of Haiti, and on the 16th of January turned northward and east towards the Old World. He arrived in the harbour of Palos, from which he had sailed, exactly seven months and eleven days after his departure from that port. In the middle of April he presented himself in person before their Catholic Majesties and an astonished world.

The discovery of America eventually put an end to the Renaissance, for instead of contenting themselves with adventures to be found in books (of which a word later), succeeding generations sought adventure in the New World. Thus it was that, according to a witty French writer, D'Anville by name, 'the greatest of errors—the supposition that Asia extended eastward beyond the 180th degree of longitude—of Ptolemy's geography, led men to the greatest discovery of new lands'.¹

Another Frenchman has stated the material and spiritual results of the great 'error'.

An apparent accident, based perhaps on deep underlying causes, made the Renaissance coincide with two discoveries of the very greatest consequence: America revealed and the system of the universe envisaged. The discovery of America enlarged the habitable earth and offered to Europeans unlimited fortune in the future and world domination. At the same time the earth, dispossessed of the central place it was believed to hold in the universe, was no more than a point lost somewhere in unlimited space. These two new conceptions,—the world at once enlarged and diminished, opened to the spirit of conquest and enterprise, and in the eyes of philosophers, reduced to but a grain of dust in the infinite—overthrew in a remarkable manner the traditional proportion of things. They disposed the minds of men to a spirit of adventure, some pursuing fortune in the Islands, others, science and truth in the open and bold conceptions of a philosophy freed from the chains of authority.²

The process of discovering America is still going on. We have cut down the forests and cleaned away the brushwood. We have settled it from ocean to ocean, and made it a part of the world; but there is something more to do—a much greater and more difficult task lies before us: to discover ourselves, what we are, what we stand for, and, through introspection, to justify the physical discovery of America. The late Stuart Sherman called it "The Emotional Discovery of America".³ What it would mean for all of us to embark upon the great adventure he points out in his address under this heading delivered in 1926 (the

¹ Humboldt, *Examen critique de l'histoire de la géographie du nouveau continent*, vol. i (1836), p. 11.

² L. Petit de Julleville, *Histoire de la langue et de la littérature française*, vol. iii, pp. 13-14.

³ The title of his address delivered in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Printed in *Academy Publication No. 54* (1926), p. 144.

last year of his all too short life) before the American Academy of Arts and Letters, to which I would invite your attention and suggest that you read it at your earliest leisure.

* * *

The most inconspicuous of the events of the *annus mirabilis* of 1492 was the appearance—of all things!—of a grammar. But it was a grammar of the Castilian language.

Printing had come into Spain with the accession of Isabella to the throne of Castile. It was probably introduced into Salamanca by one Antonio de Lebrija, also known as Nebrija,¹ the author of the grammar in question—the first grammar of the Spanish language; the first grammar of a vulgar tongue to be published by any humanist,² and the first scientific grammar in any modern language. Under ordinary circumstances, the appearance of a grammar could not be considered a national, much less an international event, but the circumstances under which this first of modern grammars appeared made it both.

In 1481, but seven years after the accession of Isabella, Lebrija published at Salamanca his *Introductiones latinae*—a little book which, it is said, 'marks an epoch in the history of Spanish Humanism'.³ When it came to the attention of the Catholic Sovereign, she appears to have suggested in about 1485 that the Latin text of the *Introductiones* should be accompanied by a literal translation in Spanish, so that the nuns and 'devout ladies generally' might learn Latin 'without the intervention' of a masculine instructor.⁴ The desire of the Queen was to Lebrija as a command, but he was much perplexed, as it appeared to him a difficult, if not an impossible task, 'because of the lack of an adequate vocabulary in Spanish'.⁵ However, he discovered that it could be done and, as often happens, one discovery led to another and a greater. A grammar of the Spanish language was issued, with the result that one Christopher Columbus, sailing westward on his voyage of discovery, bore Castilian to America with him, where it was destined not only to survive him, but, indeed, to outlast the Imperial Domain of Spain in the New World, preserving a spiritual hegemony after the loss of its territorial possessions.

It is curious how great events are sometimes crowded within an inconceivably short space of time, and also curious how they meet and mingle. In the very year of 1486, in which Columbus had his first interview with Her Catholic Majesty in Salamanca, and the question of

¹ Vide Ig. González-Llubera, in his 'Introduction' to Nebrija's *Gramática de la lengua castellana* (Oxford University Press, 1926), p. xxiii, note (50).

² Vide Professor Foster Watson's *Luis Vives, El Gran Valenciano* (Hispanic Notes and Monographs, Oxford, 1922), Spanish Series, iv, p. 104, note 1.

³ González-Llubera, *op. cit.*, p. xxiv.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. xxv, xl-xli.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xli.

a voyage westward was discussed, the *Introducciones latinas . . . contra-puesto el romance al latin* seems to have been issued in Salamanca; and in Salamanca, where Columbus had received his first support, the grammar of the Castilian language appeared in the year of his first expedition.

First a word of Lebrija; next of the grammar and the reasons for its composition; then of its influence.

Antonio Martínez de Cala—ordinarily called ‘Antonio de Lebrija’, from the little town of that name lying within almost a stone’s throw from Seville—was born within the first half of the fifteenth century, some authorities preferring 1444,¹ or 1445,² another 1442,³ and still another 1441.⁴ After studying at Salamanca, he left Spain at the age of nineteen, it is said, to spend ten years (which some would reduce to seven)⁵ in Italy, then in the full flood of the Renaissance. He tells us why he went: not to obtain a stipend from the Church, nor to study civil or canon law, nor to engage in trade; but, upon his return, to reintroduce into Spain the knowledge of Latin authors who ‘had been, as it were, banished from Spain for many centuries’.⁶ His ambition was, as so often happens, twofold: personal, in the sense that he wished to win renown in the intellectual world and to establish a place for himself in the republic of letters, and, at the same time, ardent patriot that he was, to advance the interests of his country as he saw them, first, by eliminating barbarism through the introduction of the Renaissance, choosing Salamanca, as the Apostle Peter had chosen Rome, and St. Paul, Athens, as the stronghold from which he should proclaim the new doctrine.

So much for the years spent in Italy and the purposes which he had in mind. After returning and establishing himself in Salamanca, ‘as it were a fortress taken by storm’,⁷ from which to force the powers of darkness to surrender themselves, Lebrija presented to Her Catholic Majesty, in Salamanca, during her sojourn and that of her royal spouse in 1486–7, the specimens of Spanish grammar, which his success with the *Introducciones latinas*, arranged in parallel columns of Spanish and Latin, had encouraged him to undertake. With the encouragement of Isabella, he continued the work, completing it, apparently, in 1491, on the eve of the territorial unity of Spain, writing the preface after the surrender of Granada, because of which, and for the first time in centuries, Spain felt itself to be a territorial as well as a spiritual unity; and having it issue from the press on the 18th day of August, at the very

¹ González-Llubera, *op. cit.*, pp. xviii–xix.

² Vide Menéndez y Pelayo, *Bibliografía Hispano-Latina Clásica*, tomo i (Madrid, 1902), p. 843.

³ This is the date suggested, but also queried, by James Fitzmaurice-Kelly, *A New History of the Spanish Literature* (1926), p. 164.

⁴ Vide González-Llubera, *op. cit.*, pp. xviii–xix, note (22).

⁵ *Ibid.*, and pp. xxi–xxii. ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. xix, note (28).

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. xxiii, note (46).

time when Columbus was speeding westward, westward, for his territorial discovery. We have a photographic reproduction, made by a German scholar, of the *editio princeps* from the copy belonging to no less a person than Columbus's son¹—which we would like to think was the copy of the great navigator himself.

What were the purposes of Lebrija, Spanish patriot to the marrow of his bones, which caused the publication of the grammar of his native language? While Lebrija may not be said to have been an over-garrulous person, he graciously and generously took the reader, real or prospective, into his confidence, by giving items about himself² which enable us to construct the personality of one whom no less a judge than Menéndez y Pelayo has finely called 'the most brilliant literary personification of the Spain of the Catholic Sovereigns',³ and of whom a contemporary, Arias Barbosa, Hellenist and Portuguese, sang in Latin verse, that he had 'mixed the scattered waters of the Permessus with those of the Tormes'.⁴

How was this done? In the introduction to his epoch-making grammar, Lebrija would have us believe that it was the most natural thing in the world for him to have published his grammar in 1492. History, of which he seems to have been very fond, and of which he assuredly made great use, had informed him, and he informed Her Majesty, to whom he dedicated the grammar, that language was always the companion of Empire, and it always happened, that as they had jointly begun, so, conjointly, they grew, flourished, and finally perished from the earth. He illustrates this by the history of the children of Israel in Egypt and in the Holy Land; by the history of Greek and Latin; and, coming to his own country, speaking as of 1492, he said explicitly: 'What we have said of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages, we may illustrate much more clearly by the Castilian, which had its childhood in the times of the judges and kings of Castile and of León, and began to show its strength in the time of the very enlightened

¹ Antonio de Lebrija, *Gramatica Castellana. Reproduction phototypique de l'édition princeps (1492). Publié avec une préface par E. Walberg, Halle, 1909. Vide especially, p. v.*

² 'Fué aquella mi doctrina tan noble (decia el mismo Nebrija con justo aunque poco disimulado orgullo), que aun por testimonio de los envidiosos y confesión de mis enemigos, todo aquesto se me otorga: que yo fui el primero que abrí tienda de la lengua latina, y osé poser pendón para nuevos preceptos . . . y que ya casi de todo punto desarraigé de toda España los Doctrinales, . . . y otros no sé qué apostizos y contrahechos gramáticos, no merecedores de ser nombrados. Y que si cerca de los hombres de nuestra nación alguna cosa se habla de latin, todo aquello se ha de referir á mi. Es, por cierto tan grande el galardón deste mi trabajo, que en este género de letras orto mayor no se pueda pensar.' [Quoted by D. Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo, *ibid.*, from the preface of Lebrija's *Vocabulario*.]

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 845.

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Miscuit hic sacris Tormin Permessidos undis,
Barbaricum nostro repulit orbe genus:
Primus et in patriam Phoebum, doctasque sorores
Non ulli tacta detulit ante dia:
Pegasidumque ausus puro de fonte sacerdos
Nostra per Ausonios orgia ferre choras.

Reprinted by Menéndez y Pelayo, *op. cit.*, p. 843.

and worthy of perpetual remembrance, King Alphonso the Wise, by whose command were written the *Siete Partidas* and the *General Istoria*; and by whom many works from Latin and Arabic were translated into our Castilian tongue, the which later spread to Aragon and Navarre, and thence to Italy, following in the train of the Spanish Princes whom we sent to govern in those kingdoms. And thus there grew up even the peaceful monarchy which we enjoy, first by Divine bounty and Providence; secondly, by the labour, industry, and diligence of Your Royal Majesty, through whose felicitous fortune the members and fragments of Spain, scattered in many places, were reclaimed and put together into a body and a united kingdom, whose form and frame are so ordered that many centuries, injuries and tempests will be unable to break or to dis sever them.¹ To this, nothing need be added except that Alphonso X, the Wise, to whom Lebrija refers, and the Spanish sovereigns imposed Castilian as the legal language of their Spain, so that as their territory was increased, the territorial domain of Castilian was likewise enlarged.

'Therefore,' Lebrija continues, 'now that the Christian religion, by which we are friends of God and reconciled with Him, has been purified'—a reference to the recent conquest of Granada—'and since the enemies of our Faith have been conquered in war and by force of arms, wherefore we have received so many injuries and feared much greater . . . the time at length has come in which no care remains but that the arts of peace should flourish.'² Among the first of these arts is that which teaches us language. And on this point he says that Castilian, 'until the present age, has developed loosely and without rule, because of which it has changed very much in a few centuries, to such an extent, indeed, that if we should compare the language of to-day, with that of five hundred years ago, we would find a difference and divergence which could not be greater if we were dealing with two languages'.³ It was always his hope and desire, in his own words, 'to advance the welfare of our nation, to furnish my countrymen with books by which they could better employ their leisure than in reading novels and histories mixed up with a thousand lies and errors',⁴ and consequently he resolved to formulate artificial rules for his Castilian tongue, 'in order that what should be written in that language, now and in the future, might remain in a permanent form and endure throughout the times which are to come',⁵ as was the case with Greek and Latin, because they had been subjected to artificial discipline.

It was, in Lebrija's opinion, necessary that this be done, for if Castilian should not, like Latin and Greek, be given a permanent form and artistic quality, it would be in vain that the chroniclers and

¹ *Vide* Antonio de Nebrija, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

historians of his country should endeavour to hand down to posterity the glorious accomplishments of their land; they would have to be preserved, if at all, in a foreign language, because Spanish would not offer the guarantee of permanency; and his ambition was to be the first agent through which Spanish should become adequate to patriotic endeavour and achievement. He expressed the further hope that his labours should be like those of Zenodotus in Greek, and Crates in Latin, who, 'although surpassed by those who had written later than they, nevertheless had the glory which will be ours—that we have been the first to undertake a task as imperative'.¹ The present was the opportune moment, for 'our language has reached such maturity that there is more reason to fear its decline, than to hope for its ascent'.²

Moreover, Lebrija was proud of his discovery, in that it would enable those who did not know Latin and found it difficult, to learn it easily and quickly, through the experience had in studying his Spanish grammar.

But there was another and, for us, a weightier reason, which he thus narrates: 'When in Salamanca, I gave the sample of this undertaking to Your Royal Majesty, who asked me what useful purpose it would subserve. The Very Reverend Bishop of Ávila took over my reply, and in my behalf said that when Your Highness had placed under her yoke many barbarous peoples and nations of foreign languages, and when, as a result of their conquests, it should become necessary for them to receive the laws which the conqueror imposes on the conquered, and with those laws, our language; then, through my book, they might acquire a knowledge of Castilian, just as we ourselves now study the Latin grammar in order to learn Latin'.³ Thus Spanish would not merely be a means of enabling his countrymen to learn Latin, the universal language of his day, but, through his book, Castilian might, in a way, be universalized, for 'certain it is that not only the enemies of our Faith, who have the need of knowing the Castilian tongue, but the Basques, the Navarrines, the French, the Italians, and all others who have any intercourse and commerce with Spain and therefore the need of our language, unless they have learned it as children, through its use, may learn it most quickly by this, my work'.⁴

The greater use of Castilian which Lebrija sought to advance through his grammar has been vouchsafed his mother tongue in a more universal measure than he could have dared to hope, much less predict; for to-day it is not merely the language of Spain, his mother country, but that of eighteen American Republics, brought into the world by the adventure of Columbus. Castilian, as distinct from the dialects of Spain, was prescribed by the foresight of the Spanish sovereigns in the

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.² *Ibid.*³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.⁴ *Ibid.*

permission which they gave to the *conquistadores* to proceed to America and take possession of its vast tracts; and because of this foresight, it is spoken to-day by more than seventy millions of people, increasing more rapidly than the Germans of Germany, or the Russians of Russia—from the Rio Grande to the southernmost point of the American Continent. And there are at most but negligible differences in the Spanish of America, because the Castilian of Spain has been preserved. Its pronunciation is easy, because its spelling is phonetic, and to such an extent that it may one day become the international medium, if the rivalry of French and English should suggest an acceptable substitute.

It was as fortunate for Lebrija, as for us of America, that there was an Isabella. His discovery that Castilian could reproduce Latin, insignificant as it may have seemed to those of his day, may be looked upon as one of the most important discoveries of an era of discoveries, as calculated to perpetuate in a New World, 'Spain, the mother of nations, to which she has transmitted with the ferment of her blood, and the harmony of her language, an immortal inheritance'.¹

The philologist—for is he not a discoverer in the vast domain of language?—as well as the navigator, not to speak of their Catholic Majesties, has his reward. Strange as it may seem, the humble scholar of Spain may approach at a respectful distance the great Exile of Florence, for if Dante made the Tuscan dialect the language of Italy, Lebrija gave to the Romance tongue its grammatical structure and its permanent form.

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The spirit of adventure existed, and had existed for many years. The New World, opening as it did unexpected fields of adventure, whetted, as it were, the appetite for adventure in the Old World, and for the romance of chivalry. The greatest of these was *Amadis de Gaula*, printed in the last years of the fifteenth century. It is French in incident, Portuguese in origin, and Spanish in literary form. Of it M. Brunetière felt justified in saying: 'There was never a novel more romanesque, more chivalrous, and, in consequence, more Spanish.'² And the late Fitzmaurice-Kelly has spoken of this famous novel in such terms as to justify a quotation of his remarks in this connexion: 'No imaginative work has corresponded more closely to the ideals of a whole epoch. It satisfied to some extent the thirst for adventures awakened by the discovery of the New World, by the commerce with

¹ Ricardo Beltrán y Rózpide's 'Cristóbal Colón y la Fiesta de la Raza' (June 15th, 1918) *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, tomo lxxiii (Madrid, 1918), p. 200.

And if Spain be the mother of nations, Castile may properly be called, in the words of Miss Gwladys L. Williams, 'the very heart of Spain, and the mother of Spanish history'. From an unpublished doctoral thesis, 'The Persistence of Spanish Tradition in the works of Marquina, León and Martínez Sierra'.

² Translated from J. Fitzmaurice-Kelly, *A New History of Spanish Literature* (1926), p. 138.

strange races under strange stars, by the marvellous feats of the *conquistadores* long before Cortés saw the peak of Darien, or gazed in wonderment upon the golden cupolas of Mexico.¹ The impressions made by the vision of the city were ineffaceable, for Díaz del Castillo, one of the followers of Cortés, recalled in his old age the adventures of his youth. 'We remained astonished and said that it resembled the things of enchantment which they relate in the book of *Amadis*, by reason of the great turrets, temples, and edifices which they had within the water.'² But this was not all. *Las sergas de Esplandián*—which may be freely rendered 'Scenes from the Life of Esplandián'—is the first of the many sequels to the great masterpiece of chivalry. It is said to be from the pen of Montalvo, who is generally considered responsible for the Spanish version of *Amadis*. However that may be, the sequel has, as an eminent authority on Spanish literature has recently said, 'a curious interest to the American reader'. 'When the early explorers set foot in lower California,' Professor Northup continues, in his *Introduction to Spanish Literature*, 'they were reminded of an island of that name [California], "mentioned in *Las sergas de Esplandián*, on the right hand of the Indies, and very near to the Earthly Paradise.'" To us, California, the second largest State of the American Union, seems to be not merely 'very near' but to be the 'Earthly Paradise'. 'Such incidents,' he concludes, 'show how fiction influenced adventure during that age of high achievement.' And since he adds, 'The reverse was also true',³ I have felt justified in calling your attention to *Amadis* and *Las sergas de Esplandián*.

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The effect of the discovery of America upon the thought of the Old World cannot be accurately estimated, for who may hope to measure the final result of a movement which is still in progress? Only of its effect upon the legal profession may we say a word, and only of those who stand out as pre-eminent in the opinion of the world: Sir Thomas More, a Lord Chancellor of England; Erasmus, a humanist friend of More, who saw that law as well as life should be moral; Michel de Montaigne, a lawyer and Magistrate of France; and Sir Francis Bacon, a Lord Chancellor of England. In so doing I am but following *longo intervallo* in the footsteps of Mr. Edward John Payne, who, in order to show the influence of the great discovery upon the thought of the Old World, invoked the persuasive authority of More, of Montaigne, and of Bacon. I would like to have quoted his observations in their entirety; they are too long, however, and I may

¹ J. Fitzmaurice-Kelly, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

² George Tyler Northup, *An Introduction to Spanish Literature* (Chicago, 1925), p. 148.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 147, 148.

only refer you to his masterly chapters on "The Age of Discovery" and "The New World" in the first volume of *The Cambridge Modern History* (1909). The first of the four great men (for such, indeed, they were), Sir Thomas More, sought to redress the faults of the Old World by picturing what might be if mankind could start anew in a commonwealth free to make its own traditions; the second represents the triumph of the new learning; the third dwelt upon the social conditions of peoples unspoiled by Europe; and the fourth saw in the New World the development of science in the service of mankind. It is precisely on these lines that the New World has justified its discovery.

To More, America was the land of nowhere, or the beautiful land—Utopia. It has never been found, and it only existed in his fruitful mind, and his abounding heart. There man lived, not for himself, but for his fellow or, rather, each was a part of a whole, and the whole larger than all its parts. The individual was as nothing in himself, and he possessed nothing; lands and goods were in common for the benefit of all, and therefore of the individual, not as individual, but as part of the whole. Each produced his share of the total product, and it was but just that each should participate in the fruits of his mind or the labour of his body. But neither the one nor the other should be sacrificed in the process. All worked, men and women, and therefore they did not need to rise before the sun and toil after its setting. Six were the hours of labour: three in the morning, three in the afternoon, with two in between for food and recreation. Therefore, all were to have a chance to improve their minds, not merely those who elsewhere belonged to a preferred class; and happiness was to be the lot of all, not the privilege of the lucky few. Justice was the foundation of the society, and the common good the test of everything.

Let us look into some phases of the subject, and first of all let us see how Columbus's discovery of America led to More's discovery of Utopia. The model commonwealth of Sir Thomas More is frankly due to the discovery of the New World; it is a product of the new learning: a new picture on an old canvas, in a new frame—the background, indeed, of the past, the painting of a trained and practised hand, and the whole aglow with the inner light of a spiritual imagination.

In the summer of 1515 Sir Thomas More found himself in the Low Countries as Ambassador of England for the renewal of friendly relations between the Lowlands and the England of Henry VIII. The Lowlands were then Spanish provinces, and the King, Charles the First of Castile, as More called him, was within four years destined, as we already know, to become the most redoubtable of Holy Roman Emperors under the name of Charles V. More and his colleagues met at Bruges. After an exchange of views, the Spanish negotiators repaired to Brussels, the capital of the province, in order to confer with

the Government, and More to Antwerp, where he could be in touch with English merchants whose interests he represented in the negotiations. One Sunday, after hearing mass in the Church of Our Lady of Antwerp, he was attracted by a man of weather-beaten countenance and foreign aspect whom he took for a seaman. Peter Giles, a protégé of the great Erasmus, and therefore a friend of More, espied him, and, calling his attention to the stranger—a Portuguese by birth, and Raphael Hythlodaye by name—presented him as one who had accompanied on his voyage to the New World one Amerigo Vespucci, an Italian and later a naturalized Spaniard, as was indeed the great Columbus. From Giles's account of the stranger, it appears that Hythlodaye had taken part in 'the .iiii. last voyages of thoes .iiii., that be nowe in prynte and abrode in everye mans handes'.¹ And thereby hangs a tale of interest to us of the New World. The Florentine (for Amerigo was of that city of the Renaissance) had represented the Medicis in Portugal, and alleged with more or less reason that he had taken part in some four voyages to the New World, giving of them descriptions, which were printed in the little city of Saint-Dié by a group of scholars in the *Introduction to Cosmography* which they were issuing in 1507. Of the New World they made a map, and on it for the first time appears the name of America, which they were minded to give it after the shrewd adventurer who, taking the public into his confidence, received in return the name of a continent. In the fourth voyage the fortunate Amerigo left behind some twenty-four of his men in the New World, among whom was, according to More's informant, Hythlodaye, who, with five companions, set out to explore the neighbouring and far-off countries, discovering and passing five years in Utopia, and returning from the other side of the globe, antedating in fiction the circumnavigation of the world which Magellan, a Portuguese navigator in the service of Spain, actually accomplished a few years later. The stranger is invited to More's lodgings, and in the garden, seated on a bench, he tells the story of his travels to his eager listeners. Interrupted by the noon-day meal, they return to the garden in the afternoon, at which time and place Hythlodaye discourses of the manners and customs of Utopia.² 'A slight inspection of those four *Voyages*', says the most competent of More's editors and commentators, 'will show how attentively More had studied them, and how many

¹ J. H. Lupton's edition of *The Utopia of Sir Thomas More, in Latin from the Edition of March, 1518, and in English from the first Edition of Ralph Robynson's Translation in 1551* (Oxford, 1894), p. 27.

² More's remarkable skill in the use of dialogue is evidenced in many of his writings, but it is nowhere more apparent than in his *Utopia*. 'It is this dramatic temper which gives the *Utopia* its peculiar literary attraction, whilst at the same time it enables More, without committing himself, to put the case for and, more briefly, against Communism [*vide infra*, p. 27]; to state the dangers, and, on the other hand, the duty, of serving the king, at the time when he was himself hesitating whether he should enter Henry's service or no.' *Vide* Professor R. W. Chambers's learned introduction to Nicholas Harpsfield's 'The life and death of St Thomas Moore, knight, sometymes Lord high Chancellor of England, written in the tyme of Queene Marie', edited by Elsie Vaughan Hitchcock (London, 1932), p. clvii.

accessories for his picture he had borrowed from them.¹ For our purposes we do not need to dwell upon details of this kind or to show the relations between More's narrative and the *Dialogues* of Plato or St. Augustine's *City of God*. We need only point out some of the things which were not, and which, because they had not been and might not be, are called Utopian—the very name being the greatest tribute to More's imaginary commonwealth.

Utopia, conquered by one Utopus, some seventeen hundred years before Hythlodaye's visit, was originally called *Abraxa*, a peninsula. By him it was separated from the mainland, becoming an island to which the conqueror gave his own name. Wherever Utopia may have been, the island which More had in mind was just off the coast of Europe, and the channel of fifteen miles by which it was separated was none other than the English Channel. The island was composed of fifty-four States. At that time the number of shires of England was fifty-four. More considers them as free States, which taken together formed a confederation. Amaurote was the central city and capital, and each of the States sent representatives to the general council. Here More had in mind the Parliament of his own island, of which he had been member and was destined to be Speaker. In each State there was a city with its shire, and each of the cities was but a day's journey apart. In each city there were six thousand families, and in the shires adjoining the cities many living in farmsteads. The population is therefore of two classes, urban and agricultural. They were not to be separate and distinct. There was a third class consisting of bondsmen, unfortunates who had committed offences, because of which they had lost their freedom and were bound to service. It was a punishment rather than a status, and through good conduct they might become free of the State again. Each household of the farmstead consisted of forty persons. In addition, each had two bondsmen. At the head of the household stood 'the goodman and his wife'. The unit in the city was the family, consisting of children, not fewer than ten nor more than sixteen, of approximately fourteen years of age. They were usually children of the father and mother or of kindred. By transfer from one family to another the required number was obtained. The lines were not closely drawn between city and country, indeed a feature of the social organization was the transfer from one to the other. But the cities might become too large; in like manner there were transfers, or new cities were formed, a day's journey from one another. But the population of the commonwealth might become too numerous for the island, in which case the land of their neighbours was laid under contribution, peaceably if they could, forcibly if they must, for, in More's commonwealth, 'they counte this the moste iust cause of warre, when any

¹ J. H. Lupton, *op. cit.*, p. xxxviii.

people holdeth a piece of grounde voyde and vacaunt, to no good nor profitable vse'.¹

How were the families of the city, the city itself, and, indeed, the island, governed? Every thirty families were united under a 'hed baylyffe',² called a Phylarch, and every ten of these under a Chief Phylarch elected annually. There would be in all 200 Phylarchs. The inhabitants at large elected from each of the four quarters or wards into which the city was divided four persons, from whom the 200 Phylarchs chose the Ademus or mayor, who held office for life 'onles he be deposed or put downe for suspition of tirannye'.³ The governing body consisted of the thirty Chief Phylarchs under the presidency of the Ademus or mayor, meeting every third day, or oftener if need be, with two different Phylarchs summoned to each of the meetings. So much for the municipal government. The government of the island was vested in a national council composed of three representatives from each of the cities, meeting once a year at Amaurote, the capital. More's conception of a perfect commonwealth is thus a Republic with a democracy at its base, governed through officials directly or indirectly elected by the people. From this it is no long cry to a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Community of property was the basis of the social organization of Utopia. More, however, took exception to community of goods, saying:

But I am of a contrary opinion . . . for me thynketh that men shal neuer there lyue wealthele, where all thynges be commen. For how can there be abundaunce of gooddes, or of any thing, where euery man with draweth his hande from labour? whome the regarde of his owne gaines driueth not to woorke, and the hoope that he hath in other mens trauayles maketh hym slowthfull.⁴

To which Hythlodaye replied:

I maruell not . . . that you be of this opinion. For you conceaue in your mynde other none at all, or els a very false ymage and symylitude of thys thyng. But yf yow hadde bene wyth me in Vtopia, and hadde presently sene their fashions and lawes, as I dyd, whiche liued ther .v. yeares and moore, and wolde neuer haue commen thence, but only to make that new lande knowen here; then dowteles you wold graunt, that you neuer sawe people well ordered, but only there.⁵

The Utopians, indeed, lived in families and in houses, each of which had its plot and its garden. The thirty families under a Phylarch took their meals in a great hall in the official residence of the Phylarch and his wife. At the head table they sat, and on either side two of the 'anctientest and eldest', and at every table 'iiii. at a meesse' [mess].⁶ The food was simple, fresh, but adequate, obtained the very day by stewards from the common market. In More's conception, human life was sacred, and those unable to look after themselves were cared for. In this particular respect the best of the food, he says, was set aside for

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

² *Ibid.*, p. 121.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 109-10.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-11.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

the hospitals, each of the four wards having one outside the city walls. All of the Utopians worked, some in one way, others in another. Some there were who seemed to be fitted for intellectual pursuits, and these formed what we would call the learned class, from which ambassadors, public officers, and priests were chosen, by secret election of the Phylarchs upon recommendation of the priests. Faith was, however, to be justified by works. A member of the class who idled was put to manual labour, and on the other hand those among manual labourers who showed aptitude for learned pursuits were transferred. All were encouraged. In this new world the two classes intermingled and interchanged, not by election but on the principle of natural selection. Those who laboured with their hands worked but six hours, as I have already mentioned, but where the life of a community is simple and all work, they are not the slaves of toil. They had time for other things and their minds were open to the pleasures of life, for at eight of the evening all were abed, to be up with the lark at four in the morning, if that bird were there to be found and bound to the customs of the place. For in Utopia 'this ende is onlye and chiefly pretended and mynded, that what time maye possibly be spared from the necessary occupations and affayres of the commen wealthe, all that the cytizeins sholde withdrawe from the bodely service to the free liberty of the mind and garnisshing of the same'.¹ Even the women were human beings. They worked, they studied, they were educated. And More practised in his own household what he preached through the mouth of the traveller beyond the seas. Was not his daughter the learned and lovely Margaret Roper? In the England of More's day there was, we might say, no end to the hours of labour. We of the present century are living in an eight-hour world, and the social order of things conceived by Karl Marx was the six-hour day of Sir Thomas More.

The resort to arms did not find favour with More, and while Utopians, both men and women, trained themselves for war, they were opposed to it in principle and practice, preferring to sacrifice others than themselves, and to defend themselves by craft and cunning:

Warre or battel as a thinge very beastelye, and yet to no kynde-of beastes in so muche vse as it is to man, they do detest and abhorre; and, contrarye to the custome almost of all other natyons, they cownte nothinge so much against glorie, as glorie gotten in warre.²

And they never went to war except—

in the defence of their owne cowntreie, or to dryue owte of theyr frendes lande the enemyes that be comen in, or by their powre to deliuer from the yocke and bondage of tyrannye some people that be oppressed with tyrannye.³

The chief and principal purpose of the wars in which they found themselves engaged 'ys to obteyne that thyng whyche yf they had

¹ J. H. Lupton, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

² *Ibid.*, p. 243.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 243-4.

before obeyned, they wolde not haue moued battayle'.¹ They indulged in a practice which must indeed have seemed strange to the reader of More's day, promising 'greate rewardes to hym that will kyll their enemies prince; and sumwhat lesse gyftes, but them verye greate also, for euerye heade of them, whose names be in the sayde proclamacions contained'.² The reason was bluntly stated: 'bycause that by the death of a fewe offenders the lyues of a greate numbre of ynnocentes, as well of their own men as also of their enemies, be raunsomed and saued, which in fighting shoulde haue bene sleane'.³

But this means failing, they used mercenaries in preference to their own countrymen, and they spent freely of their gold and silver which they held for this purpose. In addition to the mercenaries:

they vse the soldiours of them whom they fight for. And then the help of their other frindes. And last of al they ioyne to their owne citizeins.⁴

But even these were volunteers:

For they thruste no man furthe into warre agaynste hys wyll; bycause they beleue, yf anny man be fearefull and faynte harted of nature, he wyll not onclye doo no manfull and hardye act him selfe, but also by occasion of cowardenes to hys fellowes.⁵

And the conduct of war must also have seemed strange to the kings and princes of his day. For More's informant had said:

They do not waste nor destroy there enemies lande with forraginges, nor they burne not vp theire corne. Yea, they saue it as muche as maye be from beinge ouerrune and troden downe, other with men or horses; thynkyng that it groweth for theire owne vse and proffyt. They hurt no man that is vnarmed, onles he be an espiall. All cities that be yelded vnto them, they defende. And suche as they wyne by force of assaute they nother dispoyle nor sacke; but them that withstode and dyswaded the yeldyng vpon of the same they put to death; the other souldiours they punnysh with bondage. All the weake multitude they leaue vntouched. If they knowe that anye cytezeins counselled to yelde and rendre vpon the citie, to them they gyue parte of the condempned mens goodes. The resydewe they distribute and gyue frely amonge them, whose helpe they had in the same warre. For none of them selves takeh anye portion of the praye.⁶

Within the island the Utopians were a law-abiding people, apparently for the reason that they had few laws and no lawyers, statements probably to be taken as a jest from one who was at the very moment a leader of the Bar, and destined a few years later as Lord High Chancellor to become titular head of the Bench and the Bar. They were, however, sceptical as to the observance of law and of promises between nations. They never made leagues because leagues between princes were 'wont to be kept and obserued very slenderly'.⁷ It was different in his part of the world, More informs us, with that irony which often rendered it difficult for members of his own household to know when he was speaking seriously or in jest, although

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 255.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

Socrates would have understood him, as one of his commentators intimates.¹

For here in Europa, and especiallye in thies partes, where the faythe and religion of Christe reygnoth, the maestic of leagues is euerye where esteemed holly and inuiolable; partlye through the iustice and goodness of princes, and partlye through the reuerence of great byshoppes. Whyche, lyke as they make no promysse themselves, but they doo verrye religiouslye performe the same, so they exhorte all prynces in any wyse to abyde by theyre promisses; and them that refuse or denye so to do, by their pontificall power and aucthoritye they compell thereto. And surely they thynke well that it myght seme a verrye reprochiefull thyng, yf in the leagues of them, whyche by a peculiere name be called faythfull, faythe shoulde haue no place.²

This is not all, for 'the mo and holier cerymonies the league is knytte vp with, the soner it is broken, by some cauillation founde in the woordes'.³ There seemed therefore to be two kinds of justice:

the one mete for the inferioure sorte of the people, goinge a fote and crepyng by lowe on the grounde, and bounde downe on euery side with many bandes, because it shall not run at rouers: the other a pryncely vertue, which lyke as it is of muche hygher maestic then the other poore iustice, so also it is of muche more lybertie, as to the which nothinge is vlawfull that it lusteth after.⁴

It was the way of the princes with whom they came into contact which caused the Utopians to avoid leagues, but More causes his traveller to say that they 'woulde chaunge their mynde if they lyued here'.⁵ The Utopians, however, are represented as of the opinion that leagues should not be entered into, even if they were to be kept:

For this causeth men (as though nations which be separate a sondre by the space of a litle hyl or a ryuer, were coupled together by no societe or bonde of nature), to thynke them selves borne aduersaryes and enemyes one to an other; and that it is lawfull for the one to seke the death and destruction of the other, if leagues were not.⁶

It was the opinion of the Utopians:

that no man ought to be counted an enemy, wlyche hath done no iniury; and that the felowshyppe of nature is a stronge league; and that men be better and more surely knitte togethers by loue and beneuolence, then by couenauntes of leagues; by bartie affection of minde, then by woordes.⁷

Few laws, the absence of lawycers, the selection of judges before whom the claimant appeared in person and argued his case, preserved peace and order within the island, and indeed made it a source of envy to the neighbours, who took 'magistrates of them, some for a yeare, and some for fyue yeares space'.⁸

And their practice in religious matters, introduced by Utopus, put an end to civil commotion and enabled them to live in peace. There were many forms of religion in the island, and indeed in the cities, and even, it would seem, in parts of the cities, but all agreed with the wisest among them 'in beleuyinge that there is one chiefe and pryncipall

¹ J. Churton Collins, *Sir Thomas More's Utopia* (Oxford, 1904), p. xxix.

² J. H. Lupton, *op. cit.*, pp. 238-9.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 241-2.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 236.