

II. PORTUGAL OVER SEAS

1.

Of the two nations into which the Iberian peninsula became finally constituted, Portugal was the first to come of age and attain complete independence and full organic development. Her beginnings were very humble indeed, for she started as a small county, with her seat in Portus Cale (Villa Nova de Gaia), on the left side of the mouth of the Douro river. "But from these obscure beginnings Portugal rose in four centuries to be the greatest maritime, commercial and colonial power in Europe. From 1499 to 1580 Portugal acquired an empire straddling from Brazil eastward to the Moluccas." (1) Spilhaus puts it in this way: "In the middle of the twelfth century," she says, "a small patch of Christian territory called Portugal emancipated itself from the overlordship of the Christian kingdom of Leon, and the patch increased steadily upon Arab land. Some one was opening a door. Not much more than a hand was visible, but the whole dramatic figure of Portugal was behind that door. Her time was not yet, but her destiny was tremendous." (2)

It was this diminutive nation of scarcely two million inhabitants which, through her maritime exploits over seas and lands

(1) Enc. Brit., 11th Edit., Portugal.

(2) Spilhaus, M. W., The Background of Geography, p. 98. Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Co., 1935

hitherto unknown to the Western world, was destined to write the most heroic epic to be found in the pages of modern history. It was through her that hidden worlds and mighty seas were brought to light, that all peoples of the earth were to join hands in mutual cooperation, that the seeds were sown from which should spring the marvels of our present civilization.

For milleniums the members of the human species had been drifting apart and overrunning all the regions and climates of the earth. During these weary pilgrimages they adapted themselves to new environments, differentiated into races, sowed the germs of all types of civilizations, and learned to conquer the forces of Nature. But in the longest Odyssey of the ages they lost contact with each other, forgot their Blood-relationship and became oblivious of the ties of brotherhood that made them members of a great single family. Such was the price men had to pay for the opportunity of multiplying their experiences, of enriching their stock of ideas, of diversifying the traits of their biological inheritance, things possible only through the wanderings of a million years long pilgrimage away from their primaeval home.

But it was not the intent of Nature that we should remain separated forever. On the contrary it was foreordained that we should all meet again at the end of our particular exploring expeditions, acquaint ourselves once more with our lost and long forgotten brothers, pool together our individual stores of acquired experiences, and build up a new order of things in harmony with our common interests, in mutual understanding, with a sincere feeling of universal brotherhood. To Portugal belongs the glory of having achieved the first victory in the prosecution of this goal, a goal pregnant with the most far reaching consequences in behalf of the whole of humanity.

Owing to false notions of racial superiority, or narrow conceptions of nationalistic pride, few historians are sufficiently broadminded to analyse and report on international events without subordinating them to their own peculiar biases and prejudices. Text-books, intended to impart knowledge to the young, are especially guilty of this perversion, the more to be lamented the less opportunity there is for every one to correct such errors later in life.

While this deleterious attitude has not been exclusive of any nation in particular, it has been perhaps more conspicuous on the part of the Anglo-Saxon countries in relation to other peoples, and has taken a rather extreme form in relation to the work of discovery, colonization and civilization performed by both Portugal and Spain. Ch. F. Lummis, in his book Spanish Pioneers, endeavours to rectify this distorted view of historical events. He says; "One nation practically had the glory of discovering and exploring America, of changing the whole world's ideas of geography, and making over knowledge and business all to herself for a century and a half. And Spain was that nation."⁽³⁾ Lummis could have explained that, without the pioneering work of Portugal, Spain would not have accomplished what she did.

In effect, at the close of the XIVth century all our geographical knowledge was confined to Europe and the districts of Africa and Asia bordering the Mediterranean Sea. All the rest was plunged in utter darkness, mystery and superstition. The Far East was only a mirage in the romantic pages of Marco Polo, or a Gulliver's nightmare in the apocalyptic ravings of Mandeville. Prester John

(3) Ch. F. Lummis, Spanish Pioneers, p. 19. Chicago, A. C. McClurg and Co., 1893.

had the seat of his semi-theocratic monarchy anywhere from Senegambia to the confines of Cathay and Tartary, and the stories then current about China and other regions of the Orient were so fantastic that even the most credulous would take them with a few grains of salt. Trade and commerce were carried on in miniature, on camel-back over thousands of miles through regions wild and unknown. Transactions or enterprises on a grand scale were an impossibility for "in the XVth century", says A. de Havesi, "the massed gold supply of Christendom—coined or otherwise—did not exceed twelve million dollars. And each year saw this meager hoard diminishing as greater purchases of spices, silks and jewelry entailed heavier shipments of gold in payment to the Orient." (4) Enlightenment—the synthesis of all experiences of mankind made accessible to all—could not become the reality we know of today under the conditions that prevailed at the close of the XIVth century.

The exploits of the Portuguese in the two centuries that followed changed completely the whole complexion of the entire world. America and Australia, the Pacific ocean and its myriad islands, the coasts of Africa and Asia, the lands of Prester John, of Cathay and Zipangu, were all revealed to, and brought into contact with, the peoples of the western world by the gigantic efforts of Prince Henry the Navigator. Bartholomew Diaz, Vasco da Gama, Cabral, Cartereal, Magellan, and Columbus are his most famous disciples or followers, while the achievements of Cortez, Pizarro, Balboa,

(4) Havesi, A. de. The Discoverer, p. 46.
New York, The McMillan Co., 1928

Valdivia, Quesada, Cabeza de Vaca, de Soto, Cabot, Raleigh, Vespucci, and others could never have taken place without the genius of Prince Henry. And thus, paraphrasing the statement of Lummis quoted above, it is no idle boast to say: Without Portugal, without Henry the Navigator, there would be no America as it stands today.

What were the net results of the titanic labors of the Portuguese navigators? The size of the known world increased tenfold. All races of men were brought into contact with each other for the first time in the long ages of their eventful history. The gold supply of the world was increased approximately seven thousandfold, and immeasurable wealth of many other kinds was bestowed upon mankind. The greatest of all known economic revolutions was, consequently, inaugurated, for better or for worse, among all peoples of the earth. The population of Europe increased fourfold, and homes for over two hundred million people of the white race were provided in new lands over seas. All the amazing progress of the age of electricity and radio, of automobiles and aeroplanes, of a thousand devices by which man was enabled to harness the forces of Nature; the age of industry, commerce, and trade; the age of science and knowledge available to every man, woman and child; all this, and many other elements that go into the composition of our present civilization, trace their beginnings primarily to the astonishing activity of the Portuguese navigators of the XVth and XVIth centuries.

2.

Portugal had just come out of the most serious crisis in her history. The direct line of her kings had terminated in 1382

with the death of King Ferdinand, and Spain laid claims to the Portuguese crown by virtue of a treaty negotiated between that weak and romantic monarch and the King of Spain. This highhanded manner of disposing of nations and peoples, as if they were any one's private property, though traditional and sanctioned by the laws of nations at that time, was not approved by the people who, after choosing their own king from among the illegitimate relatives of the defunct monarch, fought for and won their liberty on the plains of Aljubarrota in 1388.

The new monarch, John I, the chosen of the people, was well deserving, as no other had been before or after him, of the confidence that the nation had deposited in him. From his marriage with Felipa de Lancaster he had five sons, all renowned by deeds of great merit each one in his own sphere. By the nature and more universal interest of his exploits, the glory and fame of Prince Henry tower above those of all his illustrious brothers.

After the new dynasty was firmly established and enriched with the unusual treasure of five stalwart and exceptionally gifted sons, full of valor and martial enthusiasm, the monarch sought to obtain newer and fresher laurels.

It had been the particular mission of the Portuguese kings to fight their old foes, the followers of Islam, who had subjugated and held in servitude the peoples of the Spanish peninsula since 711. Expelled from Portugal, the sons of the Desert had established themselves too near Portugal's frontiers for her own comfort and, according to the notions of the time, it was a sacred duty to seek these exiles and offer them battle, and either convert them to the religion of the Cross or subject them to the rule of a Christian monarch.

It was in 1414 when King John decided to attack and capture Ceuta, the choicest Moorish fortress of Morocco, and make her the center of extensive operations against the old oppressors of the Spanish peninsula. The following year the Portuguese fleet, commanded by the king in person and three of his sons, set sail for the Mauretania of old, where it arrived unexpectedly, causing terror and consternation in the hearts of the followers of the Crescent. The attack started early in the morning and it was waged with great fury on both sides, but by noon of the same day the city of the seven hills was at the mercy of the Portuguese hosts, thanks especially to the valor and bravery of Prince Henry and of his brother Don Pedro. With the victory of the Portuguese arms Spain herself was brought much nearer her glorious career of maritime enterprise.

Although military glory is the least of Prince Henry's claims to fame, and was entirely alien to his peaceful and scholarly tastes, his fame must have been very exceptional in his day, for he was recognized as a great military leader, and not only the Pope of Rome, but both the kings of Spain and England, invited him to their courts to take command of the armies of their respective dominions.

However, it was not in this direction that the genius of the Navigator was bent. His calling was of a higher order and was to be directed to pursuits of more than personal interest and renown. Neither court life nor the battle field had any charms for his talent and genius. He was too absorbed in schemes of more enduring glory in continuous study, long meditations and deep thinking, to waste his time in the frivolous life of the court. He never even thought of marriage, for his soul had already been wedded to

the sea and his mind was wholly absorbed in finding the formula which was to solve its baffling mysteries. His days and nights were spent in shaping those grandiose schemes which were to give birth to a new world that had to be revealed and made accessible to all by his numerous posterity of heroes. Solitude, study and meditation, and the dreaming of dreams that only true genius can dream, were more attractive to him than all the glory attached to military exploits or the pleasures that result from social, court, or family life.

Prince Henry was one of the most brilliant scholars of his time and, according to Raymond Beasley, Professor of Modern History at Birmingham, England, his learning in the sciences of cosmography and mathematics was not surpassed by any of his contemporaries. Realizing, as no other had done before, how little was known then about the world and its inhabitants, he spared no effort to enlighten himself and the whole world on such an important subject.

When he found that his Moroccan adventure had opened for him sources of information wholly unavailable in the Christian centers of learning, instead of returning to the metropolis and being the recipient of the rewards of a grateful nation and the plaudits of the enthusiastic multitudes, he remained in the newly conquered territory for several years, in order to learn, from distinguished Moors and Jews, of the hidden things of Africa, and Arabia, and the East. It was in his voluntary exile that he acquired the first reliable information about the marvels of Timbuctu, and about the gold of the gold coast and the remarkable civilization of the peoples who lived on the southern fringe of the Sahara desert, from the Atlantic Ocean to the mighty Nile. It was there also where he heard all kinds of contradictory stories about the lands

and court of the legendary Prester John, and the glamorous accounts of rich and splendid cities and nations extending all the way from the Senegal and Niger rivers to the sacred Nile and Ganges, through Africa, Arabia, India, Cathay, and Zipangu.

The first impulse of Prince Henry was that of the crusader; his great schemes were conceived primarily in the sincere desire of effecting the conversion of the infidels and eventually regaining the Holy Land for Christendom. His plans, however, were not divorced from material interest, though he did not seek riches for himself personally but for the nation he loved and which he wished to place at the head of all others.

"While it is true," says M. André (5), "that many sea captains, adventurers and especially merchants desired to discover land only in order at the same time to find gold, precious stones, and spices, the initial movement and guiding thought behind these voyages (undertaken by Portugal) were of much higher order... Prince Henry combined in his own spirit all the aspirations that surged about him, material and religious, individual and national, coordinated them all without sacrificing one, and made them into a powerful and harmonious whole. He was able to do this because he was himself a savant and at the same time a thorough Christian, a man of action, a lucid calculator and prince. And being the living synthesis of his own people, he became the inspirer they awaited."

During the times of which we are speaking a dire and extreme poverty pervaded all the Western world. The diet of our ancestors was the most frugal and distasteful imaginable. For these reasons

(5) André, M. Columbus, P. 45.
New York, A. A. Knapp

the spices of the Orient were then considered the most valuable of all merchandise. Now, all the trade in spices was in the hands of Venice, the mistress of the Adriatic and the emporium of all commerce between East and West. Prince Henry conceived the idea of diverting it to the port of Lisbon through a route direct to India by sea. This change of route, however, could only be accomplished by doubling the southern end of the Dark continent. Here, then, is the reason and explanation of the Navigator's life work.

Of his motives, his work, and the results derived from it, not only in relation to Portugal but to the world at large, says Charles M. Andrews: "That which undermined the Levantine trade and destroyed the commercial supremacy of the cities of the Mediterranean was not Turkish oppression but Portuguese enterprise. The Portuguese, seeking religious conquest in northern Africa instead of the Holy Land, united the Medieval enthusiasm of the crusader with the secular ambitions of a young monarchy looking for territorial enlargement and opportunity for trade and profit."

"The leader of this new activity in the field of expansion was Prince Henry—who stood, as did Dante at the beginning of the Renaissance, a representative of the medieval spirit ushering in a new era in European progress. In his ardor for the advancement of the faith, Prince Henry, almost unwittingly, gave an impulse to forces that had been gathering for a century and paved the way for a great intellectual and commercial revolution. It has been well said that he appeared in an age when the European world was suffering from failure and exhaustion; that he rendered vital service to the civilization from which have sprung the

progressive states, the humanized and open-eyed intelligence of modern life." (6)

3.

After his return from Morocco, Prince Henry did not remain long at the court, but retired to the small village of Sagres, in the extreme southwest of Portugal, a high rock projecting into the stormy sea, overlooking Africa, whose mysterious secrets he had set out to reveal. Here he founded in 1418 the first nautical school of modern times and attracted to it the ablest cosmographers, mathematicians, and mapmakers of all nations, rewarding their services with liberal pay and royal gifts. All geographical knowledge that had accumulated since the remotest antiquity was brought together, studied, interpreted and corrected by every bit of new data available. Old maps were similarly corrected and new ones drawn up. The compass was studied and improved upon. New theories and hypotheses were devised and tested whenever possible. New ships were designed and built in great numbers for the discovery of new seas and lands, and a host of bold and intrepid sailors were in constant training in preparation for the arduous task ahead of them.

If we recall the weird beliefs and superstitious terrors which then prevailed, even among the best informed, regarding the mysteries of the seas, south of the west coast of Morocco, we can not fail to realize what tremendous courage and determination must have been necessary to brave them, attack them bulldoggedly, conquer them.

(6) Andrews, Ch. A. The Colonial Period of American History
I. The Settlements p. 6. New York, Yale Univ. Press, 1934

The ocean was something more than the great mysterious unknown where darkness prevailed. It was a kind of supernatural abode of gigantic and fearful monsters which no man could defy and still live. The furious storms and mountain-like waves of the sea were not the only agencies that might doom the ships to eternal oblivion the monsters of the deep could also swallow them without leaving a trace. The line of the equator was believed to have a deadly influence over persons and provisions. On the other hand it was thought that, on reaching the equator, or some other point quite far from land, the ships would fall in some huge abyss as if from the top of the world into depths unknown; or that the nails and other iron parts of those fragile vessels would be drawn out by the magnetic force of imaginary islands made up of solid loadstone, and lying in ambush somewhere at the edge of the Sea of Darkness (Mare Tenebrosum) which so mystified the popular imagination.

But the Navigator was far above these popular apprehensions and superstitions engendered in the long nightmare of the Dark ages. His genius and the courage and determination of his coworkers were soon to dispel the shadows of these fanciful terrors. Each year, following the establishment of the Portuguese school of navigation, saw a few leagues of the African coast added to the rising Portuguese empire and to the sum total of our geographical knowledge.

The first fruit of Prince Henry's labors was the discovery of Madaira in 1418 by Gonsalo Zarco. New islands and new fragments of the coast of Africa came to light each year as new caravels were sent without interruption by the indefatigable

dreamer of the rock of Sagres. In 1431 Gonçalo Cabral discovered the Azores; in 1433 Cape Bojador was rounded by Gil Eanes; Cape Verde and Senegal were reached in 1446, and in 1446 Alvaro Fernando passed Sierra Leone.

This was probably the farthest point reached by the Portuguese before 1480, the year in which the heroic Navigator sailed to the realm of eternal rest and immortal fame. But his spirit forever remained in the midst of his disciples and followers, who, with renewed vigor, carried on towards the goal to which he had dedicated all his wealth, life, and genius. Thus it came to pass that in 1482 Diogo Cão reached Congo, while Bartholomew Diaz, six years later, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, thus fulfilling the hopes of Prince Henry of reaching India by sea.

There is an interesting detail in the life of Prince Henry which shows most clearly how insincere and hypocritical have been some of the accusations hurled against the colonial policies and practices of Portugal and Spain. "After 1442," says Professor Andrews, "Prince Henry appealed to the other Christian nations for coöperation in his plans of discovery and conquest. But these entreaties met with no response... Except for the assistance of a few foreign seamen, who enlisted under his banner, Henry was compelled to pursue his task alone..." (7)

Lacking the vision, the fervor and the high ideals of the great Navigator, these Christian nations did not think of the work of Prince Henry except as the sterile and idle ravings of another Don Quixote. Such exploits were too risky, they thought, and offered no prospects of gain and easy wealth. But when they

(7) Andrews, Ch. A. The Colonial Period of American History. I. The Settlements, p. 6. New York, Yale University Press, 193

saw the galleons of Spain laden with gold and other wealth that her labor and industry had revealed, what did they do? Take to the sea to find and explore new lands, as the Hispanic peoples had done? No. It would be easier to lie in the hideouts of the Caribbean Sea and, armed to the teeth, fall upon the Hispanic galleons by surprise, murder the unsuspecting crews, and get away with the fruit of other men's labors.

Such were the exploits of Drake, Hawkins and other pirates performed against Spain and Portugal, both at peace with the sovereigns of these outlaws. Destruction, murder, robbery, not only of the ships but also of villages and cities along the Spanish Main! That was the gist of their maritime prowess; for which they were knighted and ennobled by good Queen Bess! Raleigh, on the other hand, went to the scaffold when he failed to bring gold from Guiana in 1595. Meanwhile Portugal had already settled in Brazil and explore the coasts of Africa and Asia, and the explorations and colonizations undertaken by Spain extended from Patagonia to Kansas and to the borders of Oregon.

4.

With the Key to the trade of the Orient, Portugal was now in a position to carry on to completion the maritime program so auspiciously inaugurated by Henry the Navigator.

In 1497-1499 Vasco da Gama made his memorable voyage to India, thus laying the foundation for the greatest economic and scientific revolution of all time. The coasts of Decan, Malacca, Siam and China; the archipelagos of Sunda, Philippines, Moluccas and Japan;

the islands of Madagascar, Ceylon, Formosa and Australia; and myriads of islands and new seas, all were brought to light one after another in rapid succession and made to yield their hoary secrets and unheard of wealth.

The amazing activity of Portugal of this period was not confined to the south and east of her narrow boundaries. In the north Atlantic Gaspar and Miguel Corteereal reached Greenland and Labrador in 1500, thus initiating a movement which was to last for centuries in the quest of a north-western route to India. In the same year Pedro Alvarez Cabral discovered Brazil, and in 1522 Magellan made his memorable voyage of circumnavigation by the strait that bears his name, thus proving the rotundity of the earth even to the most skeptical.

Bourne speaks of this extraordinary voyage and its author as follows: "There was none of the prophetic mysticism of Columbus in the make-up of the great Portuguese. Magellan was distinctly a man of action, instant, resolute, enduring. The first voyage across the Atlantic broke down the barriers of the ages and was a sublime act of faith; but the first navigation of the Straits of Magellan was a far more difficult problem of seamanship than crossing the Atlantic. More than half of the English and Dutch navigators who later attempted it towards the end of the sixteenth century gave it up and turned back. Columbus' voyage was over in thirty-five days; but Magellan's expedition had been gone a year and weathered a subarctic winter before its real task began—the voyage over a trackless waste of waters exactly three times as long as the first crossing of the Atlantic. For those and similar reasons it seems to be the mature judgment of the historians of the discoveries that Magellan is to be ranked as

the first navigator of ancient or modern times, and his voyage the greatest single human achievement on the sea." (8)

Some of the most important voyages, discoveries and explorations, made by the Portuguese in this age of extraordinary maritime activity, may be given in the following chronological table

- 1490 Pedro da Covilhã reaches Abyssinia.
- 1497 Vasco da Gama reaches India.
- 1500 Gaspar and Miguel Cortereal discover Labrador.
Pedro Alvarez Cabral discovers Brazil, and in
- 1501 establishes trading stations in Calicut and Cochin.
João da Nova discovers Ascension;
Cabral discovers Madagascar, and in
- 1502 St. Helena.
- 1506 Tristão da Cunha discovers the Archipelago which was
named after him.
Socotrã was occupied by the Portuguese.
Sofala, Mozambique, Kilwa, Brava, Mombassa, Malindi,
Magdishu, and other Mohamedan states of East Africa,
become subjects or allies of Portugal.
- Don Lourenço d'Almeida visits Ceylon.
- 1507 Tristão da Cunha explores Madagascar.
Mauricius is discovered by the Portuguese.
- 1510 Albuquerque conquers Goa, and in
- 1511 he conquers Malacca and sends Duarte Fernandes as envoy
to the Kingdom of Siam.

(8) Bourne, H. G. Spain in America, p. 127.
New York, Harper and Brothers, 1904

- 1512-14 Albuquerque dispatches four expeditions to the Moluccas, thus establishing the Portuguese dominion in the Malay Archipelago.
- 1515 Albuquerque sieges Hormuz in the Persian Gulf, and enters into diplomatic relations with Persia.
- 1517 Fernão Pires de Andrade visits Canton and opens trade with China.
- 1520 A Portuguese embassy arrives at the court of "Prester John", the Negus of Abyssinia.
- 1521 Andrade reaches Peking.
- 1522 One of the ships of Magellan completes the first voyage around the world.
- 1535 Martin Afonso de Sousa captures the fortress of Diu.
- 1540 A military force is sent to the Negus of Abyssinia to aid him in repelling a Mohamedan invasion.
- 1541 A fleet of Estevão da Gama reaches Suez.
- 1542 Japan is discovered by three Portuguese traders, one of whom was Fernão Mendes Pinto whose book of travels in China and other eastern countries rivals that of Marco Polo.
- 1557 For having destroyed the pirates that infested the Chinese waters the Portuguese were permitted to occupy Macao.

When we remember that the Portugal of the age of discovery had a population of only two million, employed for the most part in the pursuits of agriculture, the ubiquitousness of her mariners is truly amazing; and one can not but gasp at the extent of the

discoveries and conquests in all seas hitherto unknown; the continents and myriad islands they brought to light, the number of potentates of Africa and Asia they compelled to recognize her sovereignty and pay tribute to her monarchs. The great Brazilian nation, vaster than the United States, and no less rich in natural resources, was still a Portuguese colony at the time of the fall of Napoleon. Out of her maritime domain were carved the Dutch empire over-seas and much of those of England and France. The twenty odd nations of America and the dominions of Australia, South Africa, and others, owe their existence primarily to the work and genius of the great Portuguese Navigator and the heroic efforts of his disciples and followers.

8.

But the work of discovery and conquest was not the only one to engage the energy of the Portuguese. The exploration and civilization of the interior of the lands newly brought to light deserved their special attention. Let me mention only one instance or two.

After the discovery of the Congo river in the middle of the 15th century, and realizing its importance as a water-way between the coast and the interior of Darkest Africa, Portugal sent out an expedition which sailed and rowed up the mighty stream as far as the Falls of Yelald. "Here on a high rock cliff," says Sir Harry Johnston (9), "they described the facts regarding this expedition, an inscription which was only rediscovered a few years ago and which is a signal proof, amongst many others, that the Portugal

(9) Johnston, Sir. H. The Opening Up of Africa, p. 160.
H. Holt and Co., New York (no date).

of that period was a nation of heroes, achieving with very weak means things which would be barely within the power of the best equipped European expedition of the present day." And further on he adds: "Not content with thus getting access to the land which produced pepper and gold, the Portuguese, with boldness and conception that was really remarkable, dispatched more than one adventurous traveler, such as Pedro da Covilhã, to find a way through Egypt to India by the Red sea, and discover some means of cutting off the Venetian trade in spices with that country. Pedro da Covilhã after reaching India and visiting Arabic East Africa had landed on his return journey up the Red sea at Masawa and entered Abyssinia about the year 1487. Though detained here against his will, he sent back to his countrymen accounts of this remarkable kingdom, which, together with distorted legends of a Christian Khen in Tartary, created the legend of Prester John." Of their further influence in Abyssinia Sir Johnston says: "Some Portuguese Jesuit missionaries penetrated far south of Abyssinia into countries which have only been since revisited by Europeans within the last few years. Portuguese civilization distinctly left its mark on Abyssinia in architecture and in other ways. The very name which we apply to this modern Ethiopia is a Portuguese rendering of the Arab and Indian Cant term for 'negro'—Habesh—a word of uncertain origin." (10)

Another place which became the object of three distinct Portuguese expeditions was Timbuctu. This famous city, situated north of the upper bend of the mighty Niger, was then not only the emporium of a very extensive and diversified commerce between the

(10) Johnston, Sir H. The Colonization of Africa, p. 31. Cambridge Univ. Press, 1906.

East and the vast regions north of the Equator, but was also the center of a remarkable civilization extending from the upper Senegal and Gambia in the west to Darfur and the confines of Nubia in the East. The accounts of these expeditions, which took place in the last quarter of the 15th century, indicate a great degree of culture then possessed by this metropolis, a great development of certain domestic industries and a commerce which, by the extension of its markets and the abundance and variety of its products, was superior to those of most countries of Europe. That these expeditions were feats of considerable daring is proved by the fact that, in spite of the great interest and curiosity these reports about Timbuctu arose throughout Europe, four centuries were to pass before another European set foot in this mysterious city. (11)

The Christianization of the natives became a natural concern of the Portuguese rulers in this age of great faith and crusading spirit. Thus in 1485 some natives from Congo were brought to Portugal, instructed in the Christian doctrine, baptized and sent back some years later to their own country accompanied by a large number of friends. When this expedition arrived in 1491 it was received with great respect by one of the chiefs of the King of Congo. This chief "allowed himself to be at once converted to Christianity—a conversion which was sincere and durable" says Sir H. Johnston. (12) Soon after, the king, the queen and the crown prince were baptized, and Christianity made surprising progress amongst these fetish worshippers. The same zeal was shown towards

(11) Johnston, Sir H. The Colonization of Africa, p. 33. Cambridge Univ. Press, 1906.

(12) Idem, id., p. 38.

all other peoples of the Portuguese empire with varied success according to their race, religion, and cultural background.

In regard to one of the most valuable contributions made by the Portuguese to the material welfare of the African natives, I shall quote again from Sir Harry Johnston. "These wonderful old Conquistadores may have been relentless and cruel in imposing their rule on the African and in enslaving him or in Christianizing him, but they added enormously to his food-supply and his comfort. So early in the history of their African exploration that it is almost the first step they took, they brought from China, India and Malacca the orange tree, the lemon and the lime, which, besides introducing into Europe (and Europe had hitherto only known the sour wild orange brought by the Arabs), they planted in every part of East and West Africa where they touched. They likewise brought the sugar cane from the East Indies and introduced it into various parts of Brazil and West Africa, especially into the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe and the Congo and Angola countries. Madeira they had planted with vines in the 15th century; the Azores, the Cape Verde Islands and St. Helena with orange trees in the 16th century. From their great possession of Brazil—overrun and organized with astounding rapidity—they brought to East and West Africa the Muscovy duck, . . . chilli peppers, maize (now grown all over Africa . . .), tobacco, the tomato, yam, pine-apple, sweet potato, manioc (from which tapioca is made), ginger and other less widely known forms of vegetable food." (13)

Drawing a comparison between what Portugal and England did towards the food-supply of the African native, Sir Johnston adds:

(13) Johnston, Sir H. The Colonization of Africa, p. 39. Cambridge Univ. Press, 1908.

"The Englishman has brought with him the potato, and has introduced into most of his colonies the horse, and in places improved breeds of cattle, sheep, and goats, a good many European vegetables and fruit trees...But what are these introductions—almost entirely for his own use—compared in value to the vast bounty of Portugal? Take away from the African's diet of today a few of the products that the Portuguese brought to him from the far East and far West, and he will remain very insufficiently provided with necessities and simple luxuries." (14)

"Henry the Navigator", says Beazley, "is the Hero of Portugal, as well as of discovery, the chief figure in his country's history, as well as the first leader of the great European expansion.

"The meaning of the growth of the Portuguese power is not in its isolation, its stubbornly defended national distinction from all other powers, but in its central and as it were unifying position in modern history—as the guide of Europe and Christendom into that larger world which marks the real difference between the Middle Ages and our own day.

"If the industrial element rules modern development; if the philosophy of utility, as expressing this element, is now our guide in war and peace; and if the substitution of this for the military spirit is to be dated from that dominion in the Indian Seas which realized the designs of Henry — if this be so, the Portuguese become to us, through him, something like the founders of our commercial civilization, and of the European empire in Asia". (15)

(14) Johnston, Sir H. The Colonization of Africa, p. 39. Cambridge Univ. Press, 1905.

(15) Beazley, Ch. L., Prince Henry of Portugal, p. 223. New York, G. P. Putman and Sons, 1898.

The glory attached to the name of the great Navigator does not rest merely on the achievements performed during his own life time, but on the results that followed the impulse given by his genius and perseverance. The maritime exploration of more than half of the globe within one century and the great waterways from Europe to Asia both by East and West, are necessary consequences of Prince Henry's life's work. The discoveries of Columbus, Balboa, Magellan, and of a thousand others are part and parcel of the great epic of which the Portuguese Navigator is the central figure and primary inspiration.

"We find these results put down to the credit of others", says Beasley, "but if Columbus gave Castille and Leon a new world in 1492, if Da Gama reached India in 1498, if Dias rounded the Cape of Tempests, or of Good Hope, in 1486, if Magellan made the circuit of the globe in 1520-2, their teacher and master was none the less Henry the Navigator". (16)

"The discovery of America and all the subsequent ventures of the Cabots, of Amerigo Vespucci, of Cortés and Pizarro, De Soto and Raleigh and the Pilgrim Fathers, are not often connected in any way with the slow and painful beginnings of European expansion in Portugal of the fifteenth century, but it is a true and real connection all the same. The whole onward and outward movement of the great exploring age was set in motion by one man. It might have come to pass without him, but the fact is simply that through him it did, as a matter of history, result. 'And let him that did more than this, go before him!'. (17)

(16) Beasley, Ch. L. Prince Henry of Portugal, p. 147. New York, G. P. Putman and Sons, 1896.

(17) *Idem.*, *id.*, p. 323.