

A BRIEF HISTORY OF
ANCIENT TIMES

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ABRIDGED AND EDITED FROM THE
AUTHOR'S "ANCIENT TIMES"

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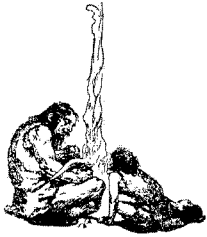


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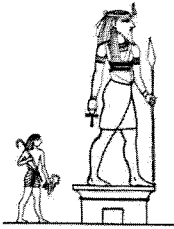
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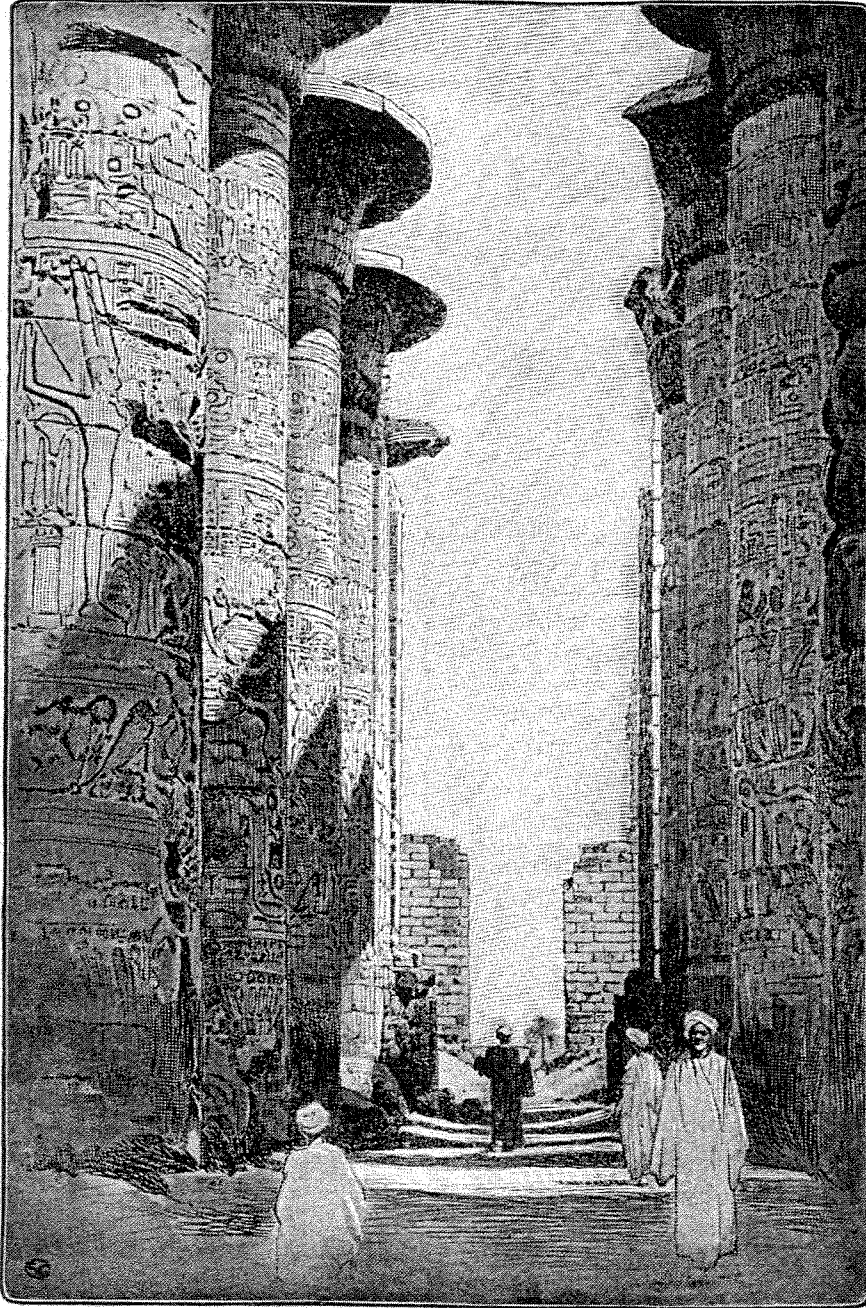
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COLUMNS IN THE GREAT HALL OF KARNAK

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PART I

EARLY MANKIND IN EUROPE

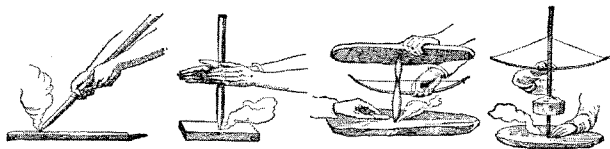
CHAPTER I

THE EARLY AND MIDDLE STONE AGES

1. FIRE

IF we go back far enough in the story of man, we reach a time when he had nothing whatever but his hands with which to protect himself, satisfy his hunger, and meet all his other needs. He must have been without speech and unable even to build a fire. There was no one to teach him anything. The earliest men had to learn everything for themselves by slow experience, and every tool, however simple, had to be invented. The earliest men of Europe made certain discoveries that enable us to learn something about them. We find that early in this progress man could kindle a fire, and later we find that he could make useful weapons and tools out of stone. When man learned to shape stone to suit his needs and thus to make a rough tool or weapon, he entered into what we now call the Stone Ages.

We learn about the Stone Ages in two ways: (1) by searching for things made by the Stone Age people, such as tools, weapons, and other articles shaped by their hands; (2) by studying the customs and habits of modern savage races, such as the native Tasmanians (now extinct), Australians, and New Zealanders who when they were first discovered by us, were still living a Stone Age kind of life and using Stone Age weapons and tools. By using these two methods of study together we can reach conclusions concerning early man and his mode of life in the Stone Ages many thousands of years ago.



METHODS OF FIRE LIGHTING

The first thing we find is that man had very early learned to control one of the most powerful forces in nature, namely *fire*. How do we know this? First in examining the places where Stone Age man had lived, we find clear traces of fire having been used, secondly, by studying the modern backward races we find not a single people without the use of fire. How, then, did the Stone Age men light their fires? The answer is that without doubt they used similar methods to those of modern backward people. The preceding diagram shows some of these methods.

In the sketch on the left of the picture we see fire being produced by holding a stick firmly in the hands and by moving the point of it back and forth in a groove shaped in a larger piece of wood. The second sketch shows a better way. A round stick is twirled round by moving the hands to and fro, and after a time the point of the stick causes enough heat at the pointed tip to make a spark. The third sketch shows a still better way, invented very much later. The stick that twirls round is held firmly in position by means of a piece of wood pressing on it from above. The turning movement is produced by moving the bow forward and backward with the right hand. The cleverest method of all is shown in the fourth sketch. It is the drill-borer, the idea of which is in use in workshops of the present day. Two thongs are attached to the bow. The ends are fastened to the top of the stick and the thongs are wound round the stick. It is necessary only to move the bow up and down to make the stick turn backward and forward.



MODERN AUSTRALIAN NATIVE
LIGHTING A FIRE

The illustration above gives us a view of one of the more simple methods of fire-making. Man having made this discovery of the control of fire could then cook his food, warm his body, and harden the tip of a wooden stick in the fire, thus making a useful spear.

The illustration above gives us a view of one of the more simple methods of fire-making. Man having made this discovery of the control of fire could then cook his food, warm his body, and harden the tip of a wooden stick in the fire, thus making a useful spear.

2. FLINT-WORKING

The Stone Ages are divided into three parts: the Early Stone Age, the Middle Stone Age, and the Late Stone Age. These divisions are made because each age shows some marked progress, especially in the way the Stone Age men prepared flints for use as weapons and tools. Let us look at the picture of North American Indians



NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS MAKING FLINT WEAPONS (After Holmes)

making flint weapons. The farthest Indian is loosening a large flint stone in the ground. This is taken by the middle Indian, who crashes it down upon a rock and breaks it into small pieces. One of these pieces is then taken by the nearest Indian, who holds it in his left hand while he strikes it with a stone in his right hand.

These blows chip off pieces of flint, and the Indian is so skilful that he can thus shape a flint hatchet. This process of shaping flint *by blows* was the earliest method used by man, and produced the roughest stone tools. In the course of thousands of years two improvements followed: chipping the edge by *pressure*, and sharpening the edge by *grinding*. It is this difference in making a sharp edge on the stone tools that helps us to divide the Stone Ages into the three parts given above. The Early Stone men used the blow method to produce an edged tool. The Middle Stone men used the pressure method, and the Late Stone men made their axe edges sharp by means of the grindstone.

3. THE FIST HATCHET

The fist hatchet is the earliest well-finished type of tool made by man, though rough flint flakes older than the fist hatchet have been found which show us man's earliest efforts at shaping stone.

The men of the Early Stone Age used the fist hatchet for almost everything. Either end might be used as a cutting edge, but it was usually held in the fist by the narrower part, and had no handle. It was from eight to ten inches long, and sharp enough for man to cut the roots and branches he wanted for food to shape his fire-making tools, and to hew out his heavy wooden club. These fist hatchets have been found in many places in Europe as well as in other parts of the world.



A FLINT FIST-HATCHET OF THE EARLY STONE AGE

We do not know much about the Early Stone Age man, but he must have slowly improved his rough stone hatchet, and he probably learned to make other tools of wood, though these have of course rotted away and perished, so that we know nothing of them.

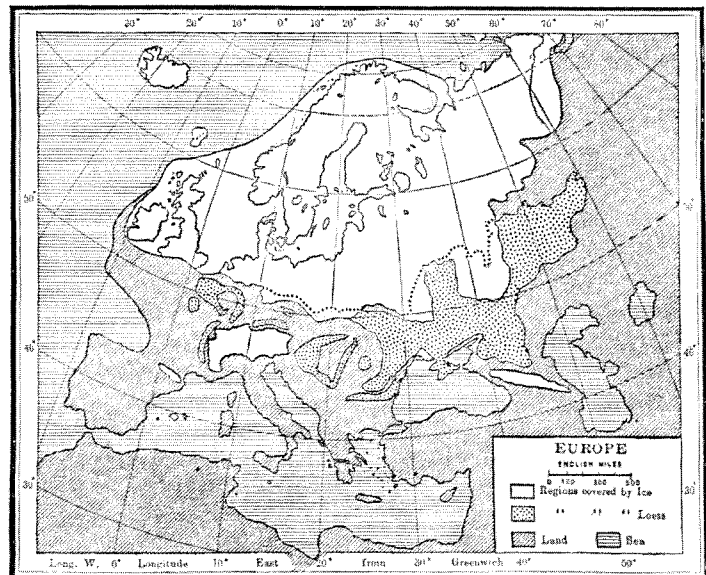
Single-handed he made war upon all animals. There was not a beast that was not his foe. There was as yet no dog, no sheep or fowl, to which he might stretch out a kindly hand. The ancestor of the modern dog was then either the jackal or the fierce wolf. The beasts which were

the ancestors of our modern domestic animals were either not yet in existence in Europe or, like the horse, wandered in the forests in a wild state.

4. THE MIDDLE STONE AGE

Towards the end of the Early Stone Age the climate in Europe became colder, and as time passed, the ice, which all the year round still overlies the region of the North Pole and the summits of the Alps, began to descend. The northern ice crept farther and farther southward until it covered England as far south as the Thames, and Europe almost to Switzerland. The glaciers of the Alps moved down the Rhone Valley as far as the spot where Lyons now stands. This great change ended the Early Stone Age. The map shows us how far the ice stretched over Europe.

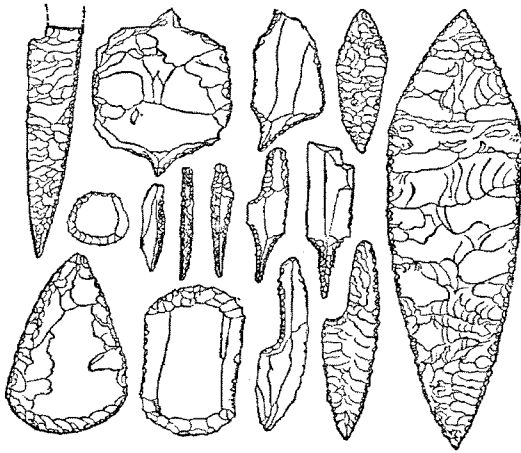
The coming of the ice brought with it a new period of progress, that of the Middle Stone Age. Unable to build himself a shelter from the cold of the Ice Age, the hunter took refuge in the limestone caves, where he and his descendants continued to live for thousands of years. We can imagine him at the door of his cave, carefully chipping off the edge of his flint tools. He has left the rude old flint hatchet far behind, for the hunter has now found a way of making a much sharper cutting edge than



by chipping with blows as was formerly done. The discovery enabled him to produce a great variety of flint tools, many of which can be seen in the next diagram. From right to left they include knives, spear and arrow points, scrapers, drills, and various edged tools.

These tools show great skill in the making. The fine edges have been produced by chipping off a line of flakes along the margin, seen especially in the long piece on the right of the picture. This chipping was done by *pressure*. Flint is so brittle that if a hard piece of bone is pressed firmly against a flint edge, a flake of flint, often reaching far back from the edge, will snap off. This was a great

improvement over the earlier method of producing an edge by the process of striking. With these new and better



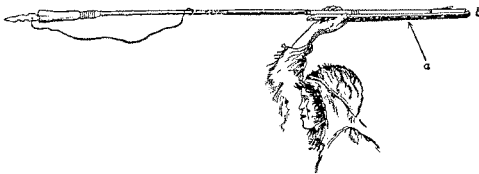
FLINT TOOLS AND WEAPONS OF THE MIDDLE STONE AGE

weapons the hunter of the Middle Stone Age was a much more dangerous foe of the wild creatures than were his ancestors of the Early Stone Age.

In a single cavern in Sicily there have been dug up the bones of no less than two thousand hippopotamuses which these Middle Stone Age hunters killed. In France one group of such men slew so many wild horses for food that the bones which they tossed about their camp fires gathered in masses, forming a layer in some places six feet thick and covering a space of fifty by two hundred feet.

5. BONE, IVORY, AND ART

The new pressure-chipped tools made by the Middle Stone Age men were sharp enough to cut and shape bone, ivory, and especially reindeer horn. With his new and sharper tools the hunter made barbed ivory spear-points, which he mounted on long wooden shafts. He also discovered how to make and use the bow and arrow, and he carried at his girdle a sharp flint dagger. For straightening his wooden spear-shafts and arrows he invented a shaft - straightener of reindeer horn. Another clever device of horn or ivory was his new throwing-stick, by means of which he could throw his long spear much farther and with greater power than he could



MODERN ESKIMO NATIVE HURLING A SPEAR WITH A THROWING-STICK

before. This device is used to-day by the Eskimo. The spear lies in a groove in the throwing-stick (a), which the hunter grasps at one end. At the outer end (b) of the throwing-stick is a hook against which the butt of the

spear lies, and as the hunter throws forward his arm, holding on to the throwing-stick in his hand and allowing the spear to go, the throwing-stick acts as though the arm were stretched out to a greater length, giving great sweep and power as the spear is thrown. Modern schoolboys would not find it hard to make and use such a throwing-stick.

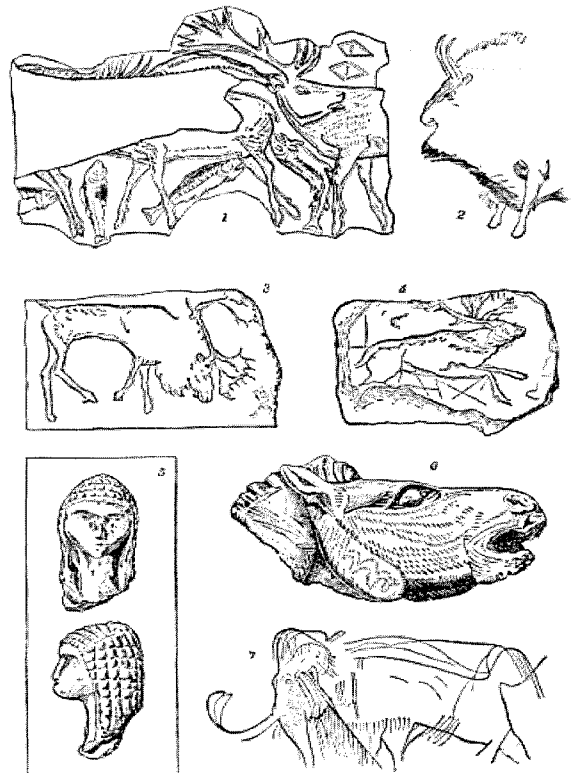
Some of the most interesting discoveries of this time are the fine ivory needles which are found still surviving in the rubbish in the French caverns where the wives of the prehistoric hunters lost them and failed to find them twenty thousand years ago. Their great importance to us



IVORY NEEDLE OF THE MIDDLE STONE AGE

is that they show that these women were already sewing together the skins of wild animals as clothing.

It is surprising to find that these Middle Stone Age hunters could carve, draw, and even paint with great skill. A Spanish nobleman exploring a cavern on his estate in northern Spain was at the time digging among the heap of rubbish on the floor of the cave, where he found flint and bone tools, when his little daughter, who was playing about in the gloom of the cavern, suddenly shouted, "Toros! Toros!" ("Bulls! Bulls!"). At the same time she pointed to the ceiling. The startled father, looking up, saw a wonderful sight. In a long line stretching far across the



CARVINGS IN IVORY (1 AND 3-7) AND IN STONE OF CAVERN WALLS (2), MADE BY THE HUNTERS OF THE MIDDLE STONE AGE

ceiling of the cavern was a huge procession of bison bulls painted in bright colors on the rock. For thousands of years no human eye had seen these cave paintings of a vanished race of prehistoric men, till the eye of a child rediscovered them.

The preceding diagram shows some examples of this art of the caves. Note how vigorously well done is the bison bull at bay and facing his enemy (No.2). Note also the difference in action between the grazing deer (No.3) and the running deer (No.4). See also how the artist has caught the tense expression of the wild horse's head as he neighs (No.6), and how the long hair of the mammoth is suggested by means of a few clever lines (No.7).

CHAPTER II

THE LATE STONE AGE

6. GRINDING AND POLISHING

WE now come to the Late Stone Age. The men of this period made the great discovery that the edge of a stone tool could be ground upon a whetstone just as we grind a steel tool at the present day. In certain old shell heaps of Denmark we find the earliest heavy stone axes with a ground edge. They made the man of the Late Stone Age much better able to control the world about him. His list of tools as he went about his work was almost as large as that of the modern carpenter. Besides the axe, he had chisels, knives, drills, saws, and whetstones, made mostly of flint, but sometimes of other hard stones. Our ancient worker has now learned to attach a wooden handle by lashings around the axe head, or even to bore a hole in the axe head and insert a handle. These tools as found today often show a polish due to the wear which they have had in the hands of the user.

It is a mistake to suppose that such stone tools were not very useful to man. A recent experiment in Denmark has shown that a modern worker with a stone axe was able to cut down in ten working hours, and make into logs twenty-six pine trees eight inches thick. Indeed the entire



LAKE VILLAGE (Restoration)

work of getting out the timber and building a house was done by one workman with stone tools in eighty-one days. It was therefore quite possible for the men of the Late Stone Age to build houses and to live a life much more comfortable than that of savages.

Many traces of the earliest wooden houses are to be found in Switzerland. Here the house-building people of the Late Stone Age, wishing to make themselves safer from attack from man and beast, built their villages out over the Swiss lakes. These lake-dwellers cut down trees with their stone axes and made them into piles some twenty feet long, sharpened at the lower end. These they drove several feet into the bottom of the lake in water eight or ten feet deep. On a platform supported by these piles they built their houses. The platform was connected with the shore by a bridge. A part of it could be removed at night for protection. The fish nets drying on the rail, the "dug-out" boat of the hunters who bring in the deer, and many other things have been found on the lake bottom in recent times in Switzerland.

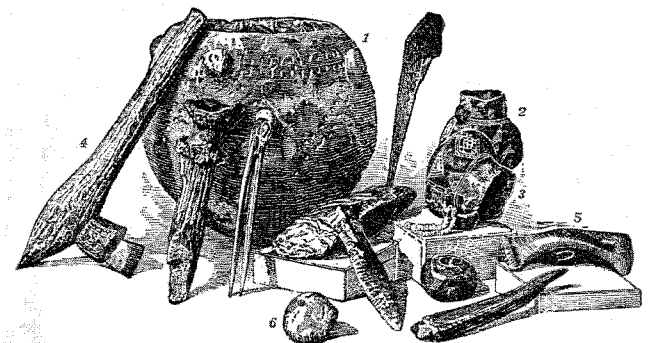


SURVIVING REMAINS OF A SWISS LAKE VILLAGE

At Wangen, in Switzerland, as many as fifty thousand piles were driven by the Late Stone Age builders into the bottom of the lake for the support of the village. The above illustration shows these remains, which were found after a very dry season when the Swiss lakes fell to a low level in 1854.

7. POTTERY AND SPINNING

These lake-dwellers seem to have lived a life of peace and prosperity. Their houses were comfortable shelters, and they were furnished with wooden furniture and implements, and with wooden pitchers and spoons. And they had some new things, such as dishes, bowls, and jars made of pottery. Although roughly made without the use of the potter's wheel, and unevenly baked without an oven, these pottery vessels were very useful, and such vessels have been used by man ever since.



LATE STONE AGE PROSPERITY

The picture above shows how much better things were made by the Late Stone Age men than was the rude stone hatchet of the Early Stone Age people. This group shows

three important inventions made or received by the men of the Late Stone Age: (1) Pottery jars, like Nos. 2 and 3, with rough decorations, the oldest baked clay in Europe, and (No. 1) a large kettle in which the lake-dwellers' food was cooked. (2) *Ground-edged* tools, like No. 4, a stone chisel with a ground edge mounted in a deer-horn handle like a hatchet. Also No. 5, a stone axe with a ground edge, and pierced with a hole for the axe handle. The lake houses were built with such tools. (3) Weaving, as shown by No.6, a spinning-whorl of baked clay, the earliest spinning-wheel. When hung by a rough thread of flax eighteen to twenty inches long it was given a whirl which made it spin in the air like a top, thus rapidly twisting the thread by which it was hanging. The thread when twisted enough was wound up, and another length of eighteen to twenty inches was drawn out of the unspun flax to be twisted in the same way. One of these earliest spinning-wheels has been found in the Swiss lakes with a reel of flaxen thread still attached.

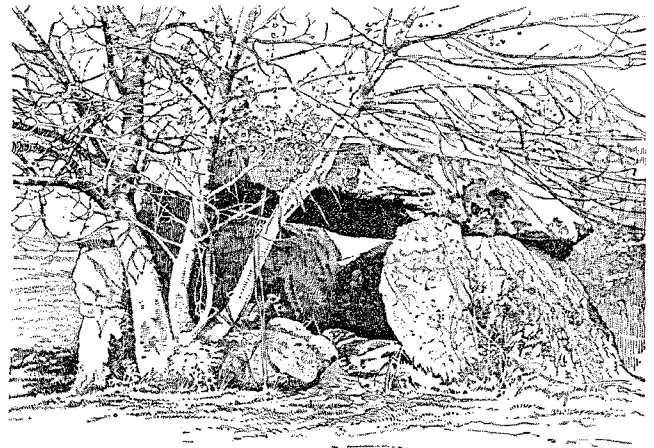
8. SEEDS AND ANIMALS

While not ceasing to be a hunter and a fisherman, the lake-dweller now discovered other ways of getting food. For thousands of years, while the men hunted, the women of these early ages had gathered the seeds of wild grasses to be crushed between two stones and made into rough cakes. They now gradually learned that they themselves could plant and grow these grasses on the margins of the forest and along the shores of the lake. When they had learned to do this, the women of these lake-dwellers were already farmers. The grains they planted were barley, wheat, and some millet. Oats and rye were still unknown and came into Europe much later. They had no trouble in growing plenty of these new foods; more than a hundred bushels of grain were found on the lake bottom under the vanished village of Wangen in Switzerland. And up the hill-side there stretched the lake-dwellers' little field of flax beside the growing grain.

Another important thing that the men of the Late Stone Age did was to tame some of the wild animals, especially the dog, the goat, the sheep, cattle, and, later on, the horse. This taming of animals, like the beginnings of farming, made a great difference in the way men lived and the things they did. The hunter had to spend more and more of his time as a farmer and a shepherd. Thus by the end of the Late Stone Age, though they had not completely given up their hunting, men had become either settlers with their fields, farms, and villages, or they had become shepherds and wanderers who followed a roving life, leading their flocks about and pasturing them where the grasslands were too poor for farming. Such shepherd people we call nomads, and they still exist to-day. Without any fixed dwelling-places, accompanied by their wives and children, they led a wandering life, driving their flocks from pasture to pasture. The nomad life always remained more rude and less civilized than that of the settlers, the farmers, and the villagers.

9. BUILDINGS AND TOWNS

The settlers of the Late Stone Age in time began to leave behind them bigger things than pottery and stone tools. In all Europe before this there had existed only frail houses and huts. But towards the close of the Late Stone Age the more powerful leaders of the people learned to erect great tombs, built of enormous blocks of stone. These tombs fringe the western coast of Europe from Spain to the south of Scandinavia. There are today no less than 3400 stone tombs of this age on the Danish island of Seeland alone. There are also very many in France and England.

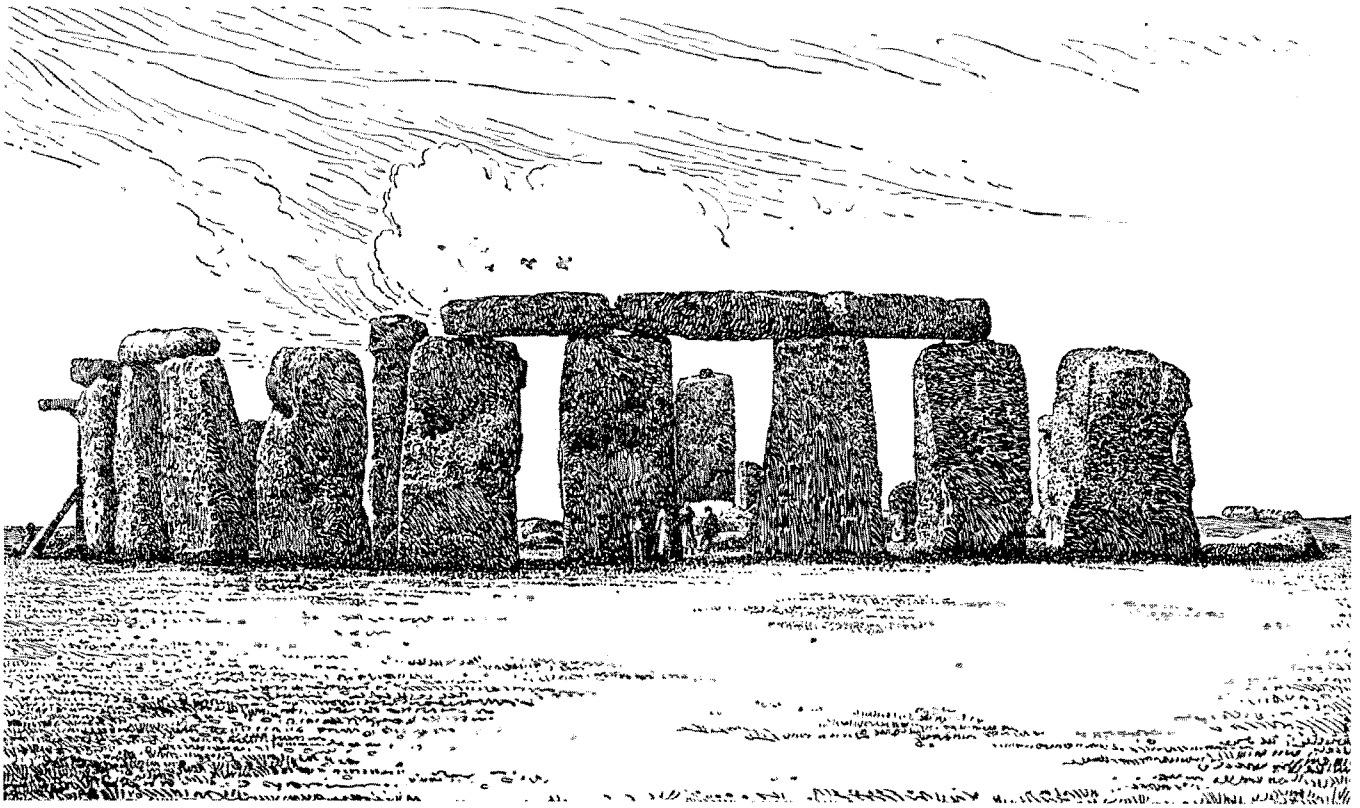


LATE STONE AGE TOMB IN FRANCE

It was in such tombs as this that the dead chiefs were buried. The stones, weighing even as much as forty tons each, were sometimes dragged many miles from the nearest quarry, but much heavier ones were also used. These blocks were not smoothed but left rough as they came from the mountain side.

Stonehenge is, perhaps, the greatest monument of the Late Stone Age that still exists. It is a large stone circle enclosing a tomb or group of tombs of the Late Stone Age chiefs. The circle is about one hundred feet across, and we can still trace a long avenue connecting it with a Stone Age town. Not far away is a Late Stone Age race-course nearly two miles long. Western Europe produced nothing more than this crude architecture in stone until the coming of the Romans.

Near every group of stone tombs there must have been a town where the people lived who built the tombs. The remains of some of these towns have been discovered, and they have been dug out from the earth covering them. Almost all traces of these have disappeared, but enough remains to show that they had been surrounded by walls of earth, with a ditch on the one side and probably with a wooden stockade along the top of the earth wall. They show us that men were learning to live together in considerable numbers and to work together on a large scale. It required a large number of men working under leaders to raise the earth walls of such a town, to drive



STONEHENGE

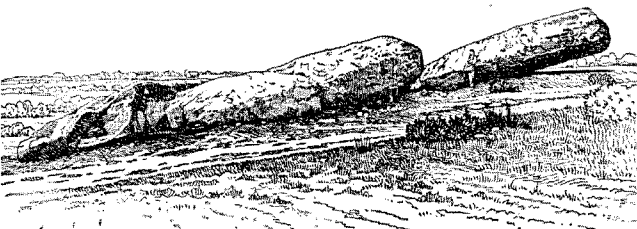
down the 50,000 piles supporting the lake settlement at Wengen (Switzerland), or to move the enormous blocks of stone for building the chieftain's tomb.

The memorial stone shown below is to be seen in northern France. The vast block once stood upright in one piece, having been erected by the men of the Late Stone Age as a tombstone. It is almost sixty-five feet long, and weighs some three hundred tons.

These towns and these works could not have been built unless men worked together under governors and had some kind of rules or laws. Many little states, each consisting of a fortified town with its surrounding fields and each under a chieftain, must have grown up in Late Stone Age Europe. Out of such beginnings nations were yet to grow.

10. THE NEXT STAGE

After thousands years or more of such progress carried



FALLEN MEMORIAL STONE OF THE LATE STONE AGE IN NORTHERN FRANCE

on by their own efforts, the men of Stone Age Europe seemed, about 3000 B.C., to have reached a point where they could advance no farther. They were still without *writing* for making records of business, government and other important matters; they were still without *metals* with which to make tools and develop trade; and they had no *sailing-ships* in which to carry on commerce. Without these things they could go no farther. All these and many other possessions of civilization came to early Europe from the nearer Orient.

The word Orient is used to-day to include Japan, China, and India. These lands make up a *farther* Orient. There is also a *nearer* Orient, consisting of the lands around the eastern end of the Mediterranean, that is, Egypt and Western Asia, including Asia Minor. We shall use the word "Orient" in this book as the name for the nearer Orient. In order to understand the further course of European history we must turn to the Orient, whence came these most necessary things—writing, metals, and sailing-ships—which made it possible for our European ancestors to gain the civilization *which has come down to us*.

Civilization as we know it in its higher form thus began in the Orient, and it is between five and six thousand years old. There it long flourished and produced great nations, while the men of Late Stone Age Europe continued to live without metals or writing. As they gradually gained these things, leadership in peace and war shifted slowly from the Orient to Europe.