Possibly in Australia today the interest of the student in the history of his country is greater than it has ever been. This applies especially in Queensland, the frontier State, where our young people—and oldsters too—who have been fed on a heady diet of the American wild west, served up by TV films and pulp magazines—many of the latter published in Australia and written by Australian local authors who have not been further west than King’s Cross—are gradually coming to realise the historic heritage of our own wild west—and our wilder north! Few Australian authors have yet factually dramatised the saga of the adventurers, many of them unbelievably fabulous characters, that roamed our own pioneer trails. Here is an unlimited, almost untouched field for the adventurer in history. Geoff Bolton’s history of north Queensland “A Thousand Miles Away” and Jean Farnfield’s biography of Dalrymple “Frontiersman” suggest some of the rich veins of Queensland’s own history, and historians—and would-be historians—are paying increasing attention to the eras of the overlanders and the gold-seekers, the pathfinders of jungle and mountain range, right up to the “eighties of last century, when the north was still largely an untamed savage frontier . . .”

**COLOURFUL FIGURES**

Christie Palmerston, Nat Buchanan, Alexander Kennedy, ‘Doc’ Hamilton, of the Palmer, and a legion of others, including Wentworth D’Arcy Uhr, the expert horseman, mining prospector, cattle drover, who fought his enemies, not with pistols, but with a stockwhip, which he used with lightning speed, are figures in Queensland history, whose stories have come down to us in the folk-lore of innumerable camp-

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fire yarns. And the much-publicised “cattle rustlers” of the American west were small-time pikers compared with Harry Redford, the Queensland “cattle duffer” who “lifted” 1,000 head of Bowen Downs cattle with the help of four of his mates—and got clean away with the steal! It would be a poor show if all we could boast about was the over-rated, over-sentimentalised ruffian Ned Kelly, and his fellow bush-rangers.

**TURBULENT AND ROMANTIC**

All these episodes of our turbulent and romantic past are part and parcel of a great historic heritage which Australian historical societies, and not the least of them, the Royal Historical Society of Queensland, are gleaning and recording and interpreting. Today, there are more than 800 members throughout Queensland, and in other States, and 40 Junior members. Its Journal has achieved national recognition for the high standard of its papers, and apart from Australian universities and learned societies, it has found a place in the libraries of overseas universities, in Britain, Russia and the United States, and the New York Public Library. Each month sees an increase in the membership figure, often as many as thirty in a single month.

Apart from the delivery of papers from qualified lecturers on a wide variety of historical subjects, covering not only Queensland and other Australian States, but also New Guinea and the Pacific Islands, the Society’s Historical Museum at Newstead House attracts many visitors during week-days and Sundays, and its Library, with many valuable and irreplaceable works, is of course, a priceless and prideful resort of the researcher and of book-lovers in general.

**THE SOCIETY’S LIBRARY**

The Society began collecting books almost from the outset; one of the prized possessions is a typed copy of the autobiography of John Watts, a pioneer settler of the Darling Downs, presented by the first President, Sir Arthur Morgan. An almost complete issue of the *Week*, published from 1876 to 1934 was obtained from the Telegraph Newspaper Company. Photographs, maps, and press cutting books were added to the collection. The greatest impetus to the formation of a suitable library occurred when the Welsby collection was acquired. The late Mr. Thomas Welsby, a foundation member of the Society, Council member, Vice-President, and President, made many gifts to the Society of letters, newspaper cuttings, documents, scrap books, and
copies of his published books, but his most generous gift was the bequest of his library of more than 2,000 volumes. The existing library was amalgamated with the Welsby collection and opened as the Welsby Library on 15 March 1947.

THIRD IN SENIORITY

In point of time, the Royal Historical Society of Queensland is the third in seniority in Australia, the inaugural meeting being held on 21 August 1913. The Society was created a body corporate by Letters Patent issued on 20 February 1936, under *The Religious, Educational and Charitable Institutions Act of 1861*. Presidents of the Society have been: Sir Arthur Morgan, 1913-20 December 1916; F. W. S. Cumbrae-Stewart, 1917-1924; Inigo Jones, 1930-1935; Sir Raphael Cilento, 1935-1936; Thomas Welsby, 1936-25 May 1937; Fergus McMaster, 25 May 1937-1940; M. P. Campbell, 1940-41; Geoffrey Ward, 1941-1943; Sir Raphael Cilento, 1943-1945; Professor Henry Alcock, 1945-26 April 1948; Allan A. Morrison, 1948-1953; Sir Raphael Cilento, 1953-September 1968; Norman S. Pixley, September 1968-. The Society was given the use of the whole of Newstead House in February 1940, when the Newstead House Trust was established. The trustees appointed were the holders of the offices of Treasurer of Queensland (Chairman), President of the Society, and the Lord Mayor of Brisbane. Subsequently, the Under Secretary, Treasury Department, replaced the Treasurer as Chairman. In 1968, the Newstead House Trust was transferred to the Premier's Department, and the then Under Secretary of the Premier's Department, Mr. C. H. Curtis, became Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Members of the board in 1972 are the Lord Mayor, Ald. Clem Jones, the Under Secretary of the Premier's Department, Mr. Keith Spann, and the President of the Society, Mr. Norman Pixley.

OBJECTIVES AND DEVELOPMENT

Valuable information on the objectives and development of the Society was given in a paper by the late Mr. C. G. Austin, then Hon. Librarian, read at a meeting of the Society on 26 June 1958, which appears in the Special Journal of the Society, published in September 1959 to mark the Centenary of Queensland. The Society took full possession of a historic house, which had been the residence of Captain Wickham, R.N., the Government Resident. The area now known as Queensland was then, of course, the Moreton Bay district of New South Wales. When the Second
World War broke out, the Society gave up possession of Newstead House to the United States Army in February 1942. Mr. Austin recalled that the old house had had many tenants, but none perhaps as strange as the photographic unit which occupied “Newstead” until March 1945; the ghost of Captain Wickham may have stirred when American soldiers played football on the lawn adjacent to Newstead House. It is only fitting that the first American War Memorial erected in Australia, should stand on Newstead Point, at the mouth of Breakfast Creek, almost on the spot where Lieut. John Oxley camped for breakfast on 2 December 1823, on his voyage of discovery of the Brisbane River.

The first paper read to the Society at its inaugural meeting on 18 August 1913, was by a lecturer at the University, Mr. (later Dr. and Associate Professor) A. C. V. Melbourne. It was on “Methods of Historical Research”, and as Mr. Austin points out, its first paragraph and the rest of the paper can be regarded as the gospel the Society should follow. The first paragraph read:

*It has been well said that the care which a nation devotes to the preservation of the monuments of its past may serve as a true measure of the degree of civilisation to which it has attained.*

**MEMORABLE PAPERS**

Many memorable papers, adding valuable information and insight to the historical records and background of Queensland, have been delivered to the Society. These have been made wide use of by students of history and research workers in general, and constant inquiry on a variety of subjects is being made by letter and telephone to the Hon. Secretary of the Society and the Research Officer. An outline follows of a few of the more important papers of historical value given over the years which are included in the review given by Mr. Austin. A paper by F. W. S. Cumbrae-Stewart, on 17 April 1914, under the title *Notes on the Registers and Memorials of St. John’s Cathedral, Brisbane*, gave information on hitherto unpublished records and copious notes added to its value. Previous to 21 May 1839, when the Imperial Penal Settlement at Moreton Bay was closed down, there had been a chaplain, but no church. The only chaplain of whom Cumbrae-Stewart could find any record was the Reverend John Vincent, appointed by Governor Darling on 18 September 1828. The chaplain’s residence was on or near the site now occupied by the Executive Building, between William and George Streets.
THE FIRST CHURCH

Captain John Clements Wickham, appointed Police Mag­istrate for the district of Moreton Bay, arrived in Brisbane by the steamer Shamrock in January 1843. On the same vessel was the Rev. John Gregor, who had been appointed Chaplain at Moreton Bay. Mr. Gregor held the licence of the Bishop of Australia (Broughton) whose diocese had been carved out of the Diocese of Calcutta. As there was no other building available for a church, a carpenter’s shop and store, built upon the land marked “lumber yard” in Colonel Barney’s map of 1839, was used for church pur­poses. The spot at the time the paper was given, 1914, was then occupied by West’s Pictures. West’s Pictures was still there in the early 'twenties, when I arrived in Brisbane. It now forms part of the space occupied by the Prudential Assurance Building. The first Cathedral Church of the diocese was consecrated in 1854, and was not pulled down until 1904. Its site is now marked by a white marble slab let into the pavement in the Queen’s Gardens in front of the Execu­tive Building in George Street. The foundation stone of the present Cathedral was laid on 24 May 1901, by H.R.H. the Duke of Cornwall and York, later King George V. As can be well understood, the entries in the church register and on memorial tablets depict events which are part of the history of Moreton Bay and Queensland.

NATIVES OF MORETON BAY

The first of Thomas Welsby’s many contributions to the Society is found in Vol. 1 No. 3 when he gave a paper on Recollections of the Natives of Moreton Bay. A list of native names of fishes, birds, trees, etc., common to Moreton Bay in the Noonnuckle (Stradbroke Island) dialect was given as an appendix.

The question of coloured labour in Queensland has had, and still has, many researchers, and books have been published on the subject. A paper on this question appeared early in the Society’s journals when B. H. Molesworth on 6 July 1916, read a paper on Kanaka Labour in Queensland, covering the period 1863 to 1871.

WRECK OF THE BRIG MARIA

A combination of personal experiences helped to make Cumbrae-Stewart’s next paper a memorable one. His First Attempts At Settlement in New Guinea, was read on 3 May 1916, and covered some of the attempts at colonising New
Guinea, leading up to the formation, at Sydney, in 1871, of the New Guinea Prospecting Association. This association chartered the ill-fated brig Maria, which was wrecked on Bramble Reef, 30 miles from Cardwell on 26 February 1872. Out of a complement of 75 persons, 35 were either drowned or killed by aborigines.

Mr. Thomas Ingham, one of the survivors, attended this meeting and related his personal experiences, describing his rescue by H.M.S. Basilisk. Captain W. C. Thomson, who presided at this meeting, gave, in his customary blunt fashion, a picturesque commentary on the Maria:

She first appeared in these waters under the name Drucut. She traded from San Francisco. In 1852, she had as the mate a man named Cottier. On the death of her captain, Cottier married his widow and got the brig.

In January 1872, I was in Sydney, and hearing that the Maria needed a captain, I went on board... I was told they needed men, not boys. However, I was determined to try again, and went on board and as I did so caught hold of the backstay and pulled it down. That was enough for me. Someone asked me what I wanted, and I said, “Nothing, thanks: your ship’s too rotten! Good-day!”

**SAILING SHIP PIONEERS**

Other notable authors of papers were the late Alfred G. Davies, then hon. secretary of the Society, a world-wide authority on sailing ships, who had served before the mast, and as shipping reporter on the Sydney Morning Herald for many years, visited every ship which dropped anchor in Sydney Harbour, and the late Firmin M’Kinnon, a former editor of the Brisbane Courier and the Courier-Mail, who gave papers on Early Pioneers of the Wide Bay and Burnett, The Early Days of Maryborough, The Halcyon Days of Cleveland, the late E. V. Stevens, an indefatigable researcher, gave valuable papers to the Society on the Fortitude Immigrants, Blackbirding, The Port of Brisbane, Stephen Simpson, and Early Brighton and Sandgate.

**ESCAPEES FROM NEW CALEDONIA**

Amongst other papers mentioned in Mr. Austin’s survey was Clem Lack’s well-referenced paper on The Problem of the French Escapees from New Caledonia, discussing what was once a pressing problem in Queensland. Papers on defence by Commander Norman S. Pixley, now President of the Society, were The Queensland Marine Defence Force
and Queensland: One Hundred Years of Defence; Captain R. G. Ledley’s information on A Notable Shipwreck of Torres Strait, which included unpublished material drawn from the author’s private collection.

DISTRICT HISTORY

The late J. W. Collinson, an authority on the history of Cairns and district, gave his first paper on The Origin and Growth of the Sugar Industry in the Cairns District. His other papers included Cardwell, Innisfail, and Building the Cairns Railway. The late Arthur Laurie, senior vice-president, gave many papers. The first published was The Shearers and Bush Workers’ Strike of 1891, to be followed by a series on the Brisbane City Council and others on The History of the Isis Scrub, Gin Gin and Blaxland, and The Hornetbank Massacre. The association of Mr. Allan Morrison, as President, resulted in a series of papers written by university graduates, on varying topics. In addition, members, on occasions, were presented with symposia, prepared by honours students in history. Members of the Society appreciated the work of young probing minds on subjects such as the squatter influence, to cite one of many.

WILLIAM COOTE’S WORK

Mr. Allan Morrison, in one of the many papers published by the Society, gave a valuable paper, including much unpublished material, on William Coote, read on 28 June 1956. Mr. Morrison told the story of Coote’s life, presenting the picture of a man of considerable intellect and energy, with a vigorous interest in all the major questions of his time. As Mr. Austin pointed out, the author’s original purpose in the study of William Coote was to try to discover some evidence of the second volume of Coote’s History of Queensland, which was not published as a book, and which so far had eluded all searchers. The published volume covered the period up to Separation.

The author related that by “a lucky accident” when examining the files of the Queensland Evangelical Standard, he discovered an advertisement that the History of Queensland by William Coote would commence in the Week in the issue of 8 April 1876. The Week of 8 April 1876 carried the first instalment of the history as promised, and the instalment of 5 August 1876 began with the heading “Book II, after Separation.” Seven long instalments gave a very detailed and interesting account of the early development of
Queensland with the issue of 30 September 1876, bringing the story up to the middle of 1861—but there they came to an end. And so, commented the late Mr. Austin, the first known information on Coote’s Vol. II on the History of Queensland, was published, with all credit to the discoverer.

ALL HISTORICAL MATERIAL FILED

The Royal Historical Society of Queensland unquestionably justifies the claim made by Mr. Austin in his valuable paper, that it has preserved all historical material which has come into its possession, and this material is being filed in such a way as to permit of easy access. Because of lack of funds it has not published historical documents and early records, except insofar as extracts are published in its Journal and monthly Bulletin. Some work has been done on the identification and marking of places of historical interest and their preservation for posterity. Periodical bus tours are organised to regions and places of historic interest.

The then President, Sir Raphael Cilento, in reviewing the progress of the Society in his Presidential Address at the annual meeting of the Society on 28 September 1967, said with justifiable pride that its work had been recognised and supported by subsidies from the Commonwealth, the State, and Local Authority: its Journal was read with appreciation and kept by many learned societies and libraries: it had seen the Oxley Memorial Library, the Place Names Committee, the Queensland Women’s Historical Association, and other bodies originate from its initiative and bud off from it, as the parent stem, to develop their own progressive activities individually.

VARIED INTERESTS; EXPANSION

Its membership had never previously been so high, nor its interests so varied: it had entertained royal guests and lecturers and visitors of distinction, and it had created its own recognised Fellowship holders. It was expanding mutually advantageous relationships with other bodies having similar objectives, for example, the National Trust of Queensland, and with the Wild Life Preservation Society, or Australian Conservation Foundation, of which the last-named seeks to protect, conserve, and popularise Australian flora and fauna. The National Trust aims at the preservation or restoration of historic monuments and sites: the Royal Historical Society of Queensland is, as Sir Raphael emphasised, the recording body and the repository of documents, photos and papers of all kinds, as well as being a museum of historical
significance. "As we sweep along on the great current of Time towards a future unknown but always charged with the exhilaration of adventure, the present is slipping back under our feet to remind us that today will be the unchangeable past tomorrow." As Goethe's couplet reminds us: *Arrow-swift the present flieth: leaden-footed comes the future: and motionless forever stands the past.*

**MASTER STUDY OF HUMANITY**

History is the master study of humanity and progress. It embraces all other studies. Carlyle spoke with prescience when he said that History, as it lies at the root of all Science, is also the first distinct product of man's spiritual nature: his earliest expression of what can be called Thought. *It is a looking both before and after; as indeed the coming Time already waits, unseen, yet definitely shaped, predetermined, and inevitable, in the Time come; and only by the combination of both is the meaning of either completed.* Clio, in Greek mythology, was the Muse of History and Epic Poetry. She was aptly represented as sitting with a half-opened scroll in her hand, and a casket for holding manuscripts at her feet.

It has been truly said that the nation which is not interested in its Past will have no Future. As each hour passes, we are all of us together working our way into History. To live at all is to live through and in history. Tennyson describes, in a line in his *Ulysses*, the very sum and pith of all that history, anthropology, archaeology, and the other humanistic sciences have for us when he cried:

*I am a part of all that I have met.*

Whether we realise it or not, all of us are precisely that. Arnold Toynbee, probably the greatest of the modern historians, has said:

"*History grew out of mythology. It has been said of the Iliad that anyone who starts reading it as history will find that it is full of fiction, but, equally, anyone who starts reading it as fiction will find that it is full of history.*"

**THE STUDY OF HISTORY**

History is the branch of knowledge which investigates and describes the past of mankind and the natural and physical conditions which have influenced human life, and is closely linked with such other subjects as geology and geography. The study of history is valuable in defining the relation of
human action to the changing conditions which beset him; and the philosophical historian seeks to probe the causes of events and to elaborate a general theory of historical evolution. He must not only collect facts; he must also sift evidence and draw reasonable conclusions.

In an era when modern man is probing the awful immensity of the universe, when he is scanning with giant telescopes the immeasurable distances of space in terms of light-years; when his rockets and his space-ships have already landed man on the moon, when astronauts are already scheming the conquest of the galaxies of outer space; and inevitably at some future time will penetrate to galaxies on the furthest side of the abyss of time and space, he is showing greater interest than at any time in recorded history in his past on his own planet. From China to Peru, from Asia Minor to Polynesia, archaeologists are everywhere plumbing the long-lost secrets of ancient and vanished peoples and empires, using for their search all the resources of modern technology, and expanding to new frontiers historical geography. Long demolished walls are yielding their faint outlines to the all-seeing eye of the aerial camera; forgotten fortifications are being revealed by the magic magnetometer; and microscopic pieces of carbon are being measured to establish dates in vanished time beyond any cuneiform or pictographic script of the ancient world of recorded history. The story of great empires and high civilisations that rose and fell long before "the grandeur that was Greece" is being told by the archaeologist, the anthropologist, and the historian.

Scattered like chaff into the bin of Time,
Each with its feuds and empire of a day;
And John the Third, or Charles the Tenth we say;
Thotmes the Great, Lorenzo the Sublime.
But dead, more dead than snatches of lost rhyme,
The purple council room, the steeled array
Of sentinels, the courtier's plumed display;
Black conflagrations, wars, and shrouded crime.
Against the night skies of the years they burn;
Whole constellations which in slow decline
Sink with a drift of flickering baleful stars
Beyond that western verge whence none return,
While the blow ashes of the helot's line
Whirl with the dust of moguls, dukes, and czars.
THE UNITY OF HISTORY

The great Victorian historian, Edward Augustus Freeman, who was Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford from 1884 until his death in 1892, stated his belief that in all our studies of history and language we must cast away all distinctions of “ancient” and “modern”, of “dead” and “living”, and must boldly grapple with the great fact of the unity of history. No language, no period of history, can be understood in its fulness; none can be clothed with its highest interest and its highest profit if it be looked at wholly in itself, without reference to its bearing on other languages and other periods of history.

DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN CIVILISATION

I believe that statement enshrines a profound truth. History nowadays is not concerned with the record of wars and of the reigns of kings primarily, but with the organised knowledge of the development of human civilisation. A modern example will suffice to demonstrate the truth of this. Much attention in recent years has been paid by scholars to the relatively little known Hittite civilisation, and Hittite studies are now a part of Oriental studies in many oversea universities and institutes. Benjamin Lee Wharf, an American anthropologist, who has done much valuable work in deciphering the linguistic portion of the Maya hieroglyphs, has emphasised that the decipherment of Hittite has proved to be far more important for the light it has thrown on the development of the Indo-European languages than for all the accounts of Hittite reigns and conquests. *The battles and politics of the Hittites are as dead as a nail in Hector’s coffin, but their verb forms and pronouns and common words are matters of live interest in American universities since the accurate facts of the Hittite language revealed by careful decipherment are completely revolutionising our concept of Indo-European linguistics.*

THE LOST ARTS OF MANKIND

Wendell Phillips, the great American orator, in 1838 gave a celebrated lecture on *The Lost Arts*. Thereafter, for 45 years he gave the same lecture repeatedly, over 2,000 times in all, his biographer states: “to fascinated crowds, until it netted him $150,000, the largest sum ever earned by a similar production.”

Wendell Phillips, taking a look at the achievements of man in the civilisation of his day, which, although not so
great as those of our own day, were, nevertheless, considerable, observed with a fine satire, that Man had a “pitying estimate, a tender compassion, for the narrowness, ignorance, and darkness of the bygone ages.”

MODERN MAN IS A BORROWER

He went on to point out, by illustration, how much the modern man, who thinks he is heir to the genius of the ages, owes to the ages which have gone before. He asserted, and proved by example, that in every matter that relates to invention, to use, or beauty, or form, modern man is a borrower. He pointed out, in this connection, that in the great museum of Naples, which holds the remains of the domestic life of the Romans, there was not one of the modern forms of art or beauty in use that was not anticipated there.

_We have hardly added one single line of beauty to the antique._ “Cinderella and her slipper is older than all history, like half a dozen other baby legends. The annals of the world do not go back far enough to tell us their origin.”

All the boys’ games, like everything that amuses the child in the open air, are Asiatic. Sir Henry Rawlinson, the great Orientalist, who, among other achievements in the deciphering of Persian cuneiform inscriptions, made a translation of Darius’ famous Behistun inscription, cut upon the side of a rock rising almost perpendicularly to a height of 1,700 feet, shows us that these boys’ games came somewhere from the banks of the Ganges or the suburbs of Damascus. Sir Henry Lytton, Lord Dalling and Bulwer, borrowed the incidents of his Roman stories from legends of a thousand years before. It has been said that in the nations of modern Europe there have been up to 300 distinct stories, at least 200 of which can be traced before Christianity, to the other side of the Black Sea.

IRISH JOKES ARE ANCIENT

In this connection, Wendell Phillips pointed out that even newspaper jokes enjoyed a very respectable old age. He cited as example Maria Edgeworth’s essay on Irish “bulls.” The tale which either Maria Edgeworth or her father thought the best was the famous story of a man writing a letter as follows: “My dear friend, I would write you in detail, more minutely, if there was not an impudent fellow looking over my shoulder, reading every word.” (“No, you lie; I’ve not read a word you have written!”). This is an Irish bull, but it is a very old one. Wendell Phillips points out that it is only 250 years older than the New Testament!
Horace Walpole, the English author and virtuoso, the collector and connoisseur, dabbling lightly in familiar verse and *jeux d'esprit*, dissented from Richard Lovell Edgeworth, the English author who was very fond of mechanical experiments and invented a system of telegraphy and a kind of velocipede. Walpole thought another Irish bull was better—the man who said, “I would have been a very handsome man, but they changed me in the cradle.”

**JOKE CAME FROM DON QUIXOTE**

That joke, Wendell Phillips points out, came from Don Quixote, “the knight of the sorrowful countenance”, and is Spanish. But Cervantes borrowed it from the Greek in the 4th century B.C., and the Greek stole it from the Egyptian hundreds of years earlier.

Wendell Phillips also recalled a story which Washington is said to have related, of a man who went into an inn, and asked for a glass of wine from the landlord. The landlord pushed forward a wine-glass about half the usual size. The landlord said casually, “That glass out of which you are drinking is forty years old!”

“Well”, said the thirsty traveller, contemplating its diminutive proportions, “I think it’s the smallest thing of its age I ever saw!”

But, Wendell Phillips reminds us, that story was told in Athens 375 years before Christ was born. He recalled that he had heard that nothing had been observed in ancient times that could be called by the name of glass, and that there had been merely attempts to imitate it. But, in Pompeii, twelve miles south of Naples, which was covered with ashes by Vesuvius more than 2,000 years ago, they broke into a room full of glass; there was ground glass, window-glass, cut-glass, and coloured glass of every variety. It was undoubtedly a glassmaker’s factory!

“So”, commented Wendell Phillips, “the lie and the refutation came face to face. It was like a pamphlet printed in London, in 1836, by Dr. Lardner, which proved conclusively that a steamboat could not cross the ocean. And the book came to the United States in the first steamboat to cross the Atlantic!”

**AN ASTONISHING PREDICTION**

Dionysius Lardner (1793-1859), was the publisher and editor of *Lardner’s Encyclopaedia*. He was the son of a Dublin solicitor. Having been appointed to the chair of
Natural Philosophy and Astronomy in London University, he began the *Cyclopaedia*, which was finished in 1849. He himself wrote the chief mathematical articles. Between 1845 and 1849, he made large sums of money by lecturing in the United States. He made the astonishing prediction that ocean steam navigation would be found impossible!

Three hundred years ago, the letters of Catholic priests who entered China were published in France. They were shown a glass, transparent and colourless, which was filled with a liquor made by the Chinese, that was shown to the observers, and appeared to be colourless like water. This liquor was poured into the glass, and then looking through it, it seemed to be filled with fishes. They turned this out, and repeated the experiment, and again it was filled with fishes. The Chinese confessed that they did not make them; that they were the plunder of some foreign conquest.

**IMITATIONS AND LEGENDS**

Wendell Phillips commented that the imitation of gems had deceived not only the ordinary people, but the connoisseurs. Some of these imitations in later years had been discovered. The celebrated vase of the Genoa Cathedral was considered a solid emerald. The legend was that it was one of the treasures that the Queen of Sheba gave to Solomon, and that it was the identical cup out of which the Saviour drank at the Last Supper. Columbus must have admired it. When Napoleon besieged Genoa, the Jews offered to loan the Senate three million dollars on that single article as security. Napoleon seized it and carried it to France, and gave it to the Institute of France, the Academy founded in 1635 by Cardinal Richelieu. Reluctantly the learned men said: "It is not a stone; we hardly know what it is!"

**MICROSCOPIC ILIAD**

Another of Wendell Phillips’s observations was that he had seen the entire *Iliad*, Homer’s poem, which is as large as the New Testament, written on a skin so thin that it could be rolled up in the compass of a nut-shell. This was imperceptible to the ordinary eye. The Declaration of Independence has been written in the compass of a quarter of a dollar, written with glasses. Wendell Phillips said he had a paper at home, as long as half his hand, on which was photographed the entire contents of a London newspaper. It was put under a dove’s wing, and sent into Paris when it was enlarged so that the news could be read. The copy of the *Iliad*, must have been made by some similar process.
NERO'S OPERA GLASS

In the Roman theatre—the Coliseum, which could seat 100,000 people—the exterior length of the building was 620 feet and its breadth 518 feet. It was pierced with 80 openings, or *vomitoria*, in the ground story, over which were superimposed three other stories, the entire structure rising perpendicularly to a height of 160 feet. It rose from the arena by 80 tiers of seats, and could contain 80,000 spectators. The emperor's box, raised to the highest tier, looked down on the centre of a six-acre expanse. Pliny tells us that Nero the tyrant had a ring with a gem in it, which he looked through, as today we would look through a telescope or binoculars, and watched the sword-play of the gladiators—men who killed each other to amuse the people—more clearly than with the naked eye. In effect, Nero had an opera glass!

Mauritius the Sicilian stood on the promontory of his island, and could sweep over the entire sea to the coast of Africa with his *nauscopite*, which is a word derived from two Greek words, meaning *to see a ship*. So Mauritius, who was a pirate, had a marine telescope!

DID ANCIENTS HAVE MICROSCOPES?

Sir Austen Layard, the famous English archaeologist, in 1846 and 1847 made remarkable excavations and discoveries in the ruins of Nimrud, the site of Nineveh, the capital of ancient Assyria, which stood on the left bank of the river Tigris, opposite the modern town of Mosul. He said he was unable to read the engravings at Nineveh without using strong spectacles, because of the extreme smallness of the inscriptions.

Sir Henry Rawlinson, the great Orientalist, brought back from his excavations in Persia a stone about 20 inches long and 10 inches wide, which contained a complete treatise on mathematics. It was illegible without wearing glasses. Did the man who engraved it thousands of years ago have very strong spectacles? Assuming he did, the microscope, instead of dating from the end of the 16th century, might have been known in ancient times!

SURPRISES IN FORBIDDEN CITY

Wendell Phillips recalled one of the surprises European artists received, when British troops plundered the summer palace of the Emperor of China in the war of 1860, after Peking, the Forbidden City, was captured. Kublai, grand-
son of Genghis Khan, had made Peking his capital in 1280 A.D. There he was found by Marco Polo, the Venetian traveller, who styled the city, "standing like the capitals of the ancient Roman and Byzantine empires, upon the debris of centuries of buildings", Khan-baligh, "the city of the Khan", a name frequently corrupted in old narratives into Cambaluc and Cambalu. British troops found in the summer palace curiously wrought metal vessels of every kind, far exceeding all the boasted skill of the artisans of Europe.

**DAMASCUS BLADES OF CRUSADES**

Wendell Phillips recorded that a journalist named Colton, of the *Boston Journal*, found during the first week he landed in Asia that his watch was out of order, the steel of the works having become rusted. The *London Medical and Surgical Journal* advised surgeons not to venture to carry any lancets to Calcutta, and suggested that they should be gilded, because English steel could not bear the atmosphere of India. Yet, Wendell Phillips points out, the Damascus blades of the Crusades were not gilded, and they are as perfect as they were nine centuries ago! He recalled that there was a Damascus blade at the London Exhibition, the point of which could be made to touch the hilt, and which could be put into a scabbard like a corkscrew and bent every way without breaking. Perfect steel is a marvel of science. The first needle ever made in England was made in the time of Henry VIII, and made by a negro! When he died, the art died with him.

**STRENGTH AND MAGIC SHARPNESS**

Poets have celebrated the perfection of the Oriental steel. Moore, Byron, Scott, Southey and many others extolled its quality. Sir Walter Scott in one of his novels, the *Talisman*, I think, describes a meeting between Richard Coeur de Lion and Saladin. Saladin asks Richard to show him the wonderful strength for which he is famous, and the Norman monarch responds by severing a bar of iron which lies on the floor of his tent. Saladin says: "I cannot do that!"; but he takes an eider-down pillow from the sofa, and drawing his keen blade across it, it falls in two pieces. Richard exclaims: "This is the black art; it is magic! It is the devil! You cannot cut that which has no resistance!" Saladin, to show him that such is not the case, takes a scarf from his shoulders. It is so light that it almost floats in the air, and tossing it up, he severs it before it can descend. A traveller in India told Wendell Phillips that he saw a man in Calcutta
throw a handful of silk into the air, and a Hindu severed it into pieces with a sabre! Westerners could produce no wonders like this!

ENGINEERING FEAT WITH OBELISK

Domenico Fontana, an eminent Italian engineer and architect, born in 1543 at Mili, on Lake Como, became the Papal Architect in Rome, and was employed on many important public works including the Lateran Palace and the Vatican Library. His greatest engineering feat was to set up the Egyptian obelisk at Rome on end, in the Papacy of Sixtus V! It was a wonderful feat, but even more wonderful was the achievement of the ancient Egyptians who quarried the stone and carried it 150 miles, and the Romans brought it 750 miles!

AN ANCIENT LOCK PATTERN

We are told that the builders of ancient times dressed and joined their stones so closely that, in buildings thousands of years old, only the thin blade of a penknife could be forced between them. The railroad dates back to ancient Egypt! Dominique Francois Arago, a French physicist (1786-1853), who distinguished himself by his researches in the polarization of light, galvanism, magnetism, and astronomy, claimed that the ancient Egyptians had a knowledge of steam. An ancient painting was discovered, showing a ship full of machinery, and a French engineer asserted that the arrangement of the machinery could only be accounted for by supposing that the motive power was steam. Joseph Bramah (1749-1814), the inventor of the Bramah lock and the Bramah press, admitted that he got the idea of his celebrated lock from an ancient Egyptian pattern.

When Gibbon completed his monumental history of *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* after the labours of seven years and with infinite fastidiousness in its composition, he exclaimed: "We have iron and fire; the hand can never go back on the dial of Time!" He made this boast as he stood, at night, amid the ruins of the Corsani palace, looking out on the churches where the monks were chanting their orisons.

"It was at Rome", he tells us, "on the 15th of October 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the bare-footed friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started into my mind . . ."
WHAT IF HISTORY REPEATED ITSELF?

But, as Wendell Phillips justly asks, what is to prevent history from repeating itself? "Why," he asks, "should our arts not be lost—our temples of Jupiter not fall—our Rome not decline? Will our possession of iron and fire preserve them? Before Rome was peopled, nations rose and fell with iron in one hand and fire in the other! Any civilisation that is exclusive, any arts that are secret and individual, must perish!"

Iron and fire may rain from the sky again. Man never learns completely, but must re-learn again and again, with blood and tears, that empires so built have within them the seeds of their own corruption and destruction. Until Man learns this there will be more Napoleons, and Hitlers, more throwbacks to the jungle of hate and racial and national intolerance, more psychopaths and paranoics like the house painter of Munich.

BISMARCK'S TERRIBLE PHRASE

Bismarck, Germany's Iron Chancellor, said that the conquered should be left with nothing but their eyes to weep with. Not only his native land but the victor nations knew the terrible finality of that searing, soul-shrivelling phrase. Will there be another world holocaust before Man learns the truth that Love not Hate is the moving and unifying Force of world history and key to the future well-being of Mankind? Stephen Spender, in his *European Witness*, exposed the Nazi myth when he said that the only thing that was genuine in Nazism was a fanatical belief in extremism for its own sake, and faith in their own destiny, whether it led to triumph or to disaster.

COMRADES IN EVIL

It was a comradeship of Evil which enabled the Nazis to feel that all their actions were, as Spender puts it, "purified in the blood of their martyrs and in the purgative strength of their emotions."

"Nazi propaganda was a conscious and deliberate deception, practised by people who said, 'We are now going to deceive ourselves!'; people who saw the label 'poison' on the bottle. Anyone who 'took' Nazi propaganda must have been as conscious of drugging himself as anyone who takes opium."

Or, to use a modern phrase in this drug-ridden, permissive age "takes a trip." Permissive Age, for what? EVIL, and
its harvest of death? The decline and fall of civilisation itself?

**ONLY HOPE IN PATHS OF LIGHT**

When we study the lives and careers of these terrible men, we should be convinced that only if our human society walks in paths of light is there any hope for the future of the human race. Stephen Spender sums it up when he says in his last chapter on BERLIN: *As human beings, they were at the centre of their own social actions, and in a universe which, if it does not include the idea of heaven, at least includes the idea of hell; they damned and destroyed themselves and a great part of the world with them!*''

_In them Satan was incarnated, and the pieces of Hitler's desk which Stephen Spender says he carried away with him, had a significance which makes them unholy relics in exactly the same way as other relics are holy._