

## SPECIAL INTRODUCTION

THE history of Western Civilization begins in a conflict with the Orient, a conflict of which it maybe the end is not yet. But the routes between East and West have been trodden by the caravans of trade more often even than by the feet of armies. The treasures of the East were long brought overland to Alexandria, or Constantinople, or the cities of the Levant, and thence distributed to Europe by the galleys of Genoa or of Venice. But when the Turk placed himself astride the Bosphorus, and made Egypt his feudatory, new routes had to be found. In the search for these were made the three greatest voyages in history, those of Columbus, of Vasco da Gama, and—greatest of all—of Magellan.

In his search for the riches of Cipangu Columbus stumbled upon America. The great Genoese lived and died under the illusion that he had reached the outmost verge of Asia; and though even in his lifetime men realized that what he had found was no less than a new world, America