

An Hour with the Editor

THE ROMAN EMPERORS

After the death of Aurelian, Rome was without an emperor for eight months. The ancient republic was, in point of fact, restored, although the Senate did not seem to be conscious of the fact, or, being conscious of it, did not feel equal to the responsibilities of government. Disuse of the powers of self-government begets unfitness to exercise it. More than three centuries had passed since Julius Caesar had made himself supreme in Rome, and in ten generations the whole character of a people may become changed. Conquest after conquest had added to the wealth of the Roman people; luxury had debased the Roman character; a succession of tyrants had almost exterminated the idea of personal liberty; the conception of a citizen soldiery had given place to one of hired mercenaries, and thousands of barbarians were performing for money what at one time had been regarded as the obligations of patriotism. The time was auspicious for the reassertion of senatorial supremacy. The very fact that the army was composed of nearly half a million mercenaries made the situation easier to be dealt with. These men, recruited largely from the newer provinces, or from beyond the confines of the Empire, were imbued with a sense of the majesty of the Senate, and would readily have acquiesced in whatever that body might decide upon. Indeed, events showed this to be the case. The army petitioned the senators to appoint an emperor; the timorous Senate declined, and asked the army to name a man; and so matters went on for the period mentioned above. At length the need of some authority, whom the various generals throughout the provinces would recognize as supreme, became so evident that the Senate was constrained to act. At a meeting held for that purpose Tacitus, a descendant of the great historian of that name, was mentioned for the high office, but he, on hearing of it, retired to his estates to avoid being chosen. Listening to the persuasions of his friends that he should return to Rome and aid in the selection, Tacitus unwillingly came. When the time arrived for him to address the Senate, he had no sooner stood up than he was hailed on every side as Emperor. In vain he protested that his advanced years—he was then seventy-five—precluded him from sharing with the army the perils and exposures of the camp. His objections were of no avail, and he was forced, against his own good judgment, to accept the supreme power.

Tacitus proved himself to be an exceedingly capable ruler, although he assumed the responsibilities of Emperor at an age when most men seek repose. He set out immediately for the eastern frontier, and was received by the army with every demonstration of loyalty. Meanwhile by the assent of the new Emperor, the Senate was reinvested with practically all of its more important functions. Indeed, if Rome had not become hopelessly degenerate, her greatest glory might have been restored and she might have continued to exist as a free state, setting an example to mankind of the principles of popular government. But the restoration was only temporary. It was lost within a few years. Tacitus displayed great activity in the field. He suppressed a rebellion, which to some extent was an invasion of the Alani, a tribe of whom little is known, except that they had become settled in some of the eastern provinces. He drove out the Sythians and restored peace to Asia Minor and Scythia. But his fears for his own strength proved only too well founded. On April 12, 276, he died at a town in Cappadocia from an illness resulting from exposure, and just two hundred days after he had been elevated to the imperial throne.

Florianus, brother of the deceased emperor, at once assumed the purple. He did not wait for the sanction either of the Senate or the army, and his act aroused the greatest indignation. This feeling found expression in the action of Probus, a distinguished general, who was commanding in the East. He asserted the authority of the Senate against Florianus, whose troops revolted and slew him. The way to the throne was now open, and Probus reached it with the approbation of all classes. He was a man of obscure origin, but of a singularly noble spirit, great administrative powers and military genius. Aurelian had advanced him from one post to another, and there is no doubt that he was of all the Roman people the best fitted for the imperial office. He permitted the Senate to exercise the powers of civil government, but retained to himself the absolute charge of military matters. Thus formally was the Senate deprived of one of the functions that up to this time it had possessed at least nominally. Probus reigned six years, and during that period he restored peace to every province of the Empire. His greatest achievement was in Gaul, which country the Germanic tribes had invaded. There is a great deal of confusion as to the identity of these tribes. In fact, it may be said that very much of what we are told concerning the Teutonic peoples of the first four centuries of the Christian Era is little more than guesswork. A number of names have come down to us, such as the Franks, the Burgundians, the Frisians, the Batavians, and so on. Sometimes these people are all included under the general term of Vandals. As a matter of fact there is much uncertainty as to their origin or their relationship to each other, if any, in point of fact, existed. The most venturesome of these tribes were the Franks, whose name denotes that they claimed to be free men, and has been given to France, although there is great reason to doubt if they were the

ancestors of any considerable part of the French people. The Franks were a fine fighting race, and had been enlisted in very considerable numbers in the Roman army. A detachment of them was stationed on the shores of the Black Sea, and the men were seized with the ambition to go by water from their station to the mouth of the Rhine, where their relatives resided. Accordingly they revolted, seized a number of vessels and set out upon their journey. They plundered such cities on their way as seemed most likely to afford an easy prey, and finally passed out of the Strait of Gibraltar and sailed up the coast to their proposed destination. The success of this daring expedition produced a profound effect upon the history of Europe. It was the first great maritime adventure, and it demonstrated that the sea was not an obstacle but really an assistance to the efforts of brave and ambitious men.

Probus proposed to add Germany to the Empire, and perhaps if he had lived long enough he would have matured plans to that end. While he was engaged in framing his future policy, he erected a wall of stone from the Rhine to the Danube, a distance of two hundred miles. He devoted his efforts after the restoration of peace to internal improvements, and employed the army in the cultivation of the soil and in draining marsh land. The soldiers chafed under this unaccustomed labor. They had never shirked the privations of war, because they had always been permitted to enjoy licentious pleasures in times of peace. Probus on one occasion expressed the hope that the time was near at hand when the mercenaries could be disbanded. This coming to their ears, a number of them, who were working in the marshes on a hot summer day, rushed to a tower where Probus stood supervising their work, and slew him. Thus perished one of the best and ablest men who ever wore the purple.

CLOUDS

At the point where the V. V. & E. Railway crosses the international boundary in the valley of the Similkameen there is a lofty mountain, which about half-way to its summit opens into a wide basin closed in on three sides and having an area of several square miles. Recently on a fine morning, when the sun shone brightly everywhere, a little wisp of cloud suddenly appeared in the valley about half-way between its base and the mountain summit. It seemed quite out of place as it floated there, but it grew in size, and in less than half an hour it had covered the whole valley with a great snow-white mass, which not only reached up the mountain side, but also out over the plain. Something like this occurs daily in a thousand places in this land of mountains and valleys, and it is only mentioned here to draw attention to the fact that the cloud came from nowhere, but was formed out of the air in that little mountain lap. Clouds are formed from moisture already in the atmosphere. A cloud may be driven by the wind across the face of the sky, but the birthplace of clouds may be directly over our heads. This may serve to explain how it is that a day of bright sunshine is often turned in a few minutes to a day of shadow.

Here a word of definition may be useful. The custom is to speak of clouds as vapor, but water is vapor before it becomes a cloud. Vapor is invisible. For illustration, take the exhaust pipe of a steam-engine, or what is more convenient, the spout of an ordinary tea-kettle. What we see issuing from the pipe or the spout is not vapor; it is cloud. The vapor is between the cloud and the pipe or spout, where you will observe a small space of apparently clear air. This small space is full of vapor, which as it comes in contact with the cold air is forthwith converted into cloud, and the cloud is simply a mass of minute particles of water—water-dust, as it is sometimes called. If the day is bright and warm, in the case of the pipe, or the kitchen is warm, in the case of the tea-kettle, the cloud of water-dust soon becomes reconverted into vapor and is invisible. You know it is there just the same, and in the case of the tea-kettle, if the weather happens to be cold, you will find the vapor in the form of running water on the window pane, and even perhaps in the form of ice. The atmosphere carries a burden of moisture, the amount it is able to hold depending upon temperature and some other things. A sudden fall of temperature may cause the atmosphere to give its moisture in the form of a cloud, or in the form of rain, or in the form of snow. Instances have occurred in Russia, where the windows of a crowded ballroom have been thrown suddenly open, when the invisible vapor in the heated room has fallen in snowflakes.

Clouds very often form on the windward sides of mountains, especially when they face the sea. The explanation of this is that the water-laden atmosphere being carried inland from the sea is forced upwards into colder levels, and the rarified and colder air is unable to keep the vapor in solution, and so it forms a cloud, which is likely to be further condensed into rain. On the leeward side of the mountains the sky may be clear, while rain is falling heavily on the windward side. We see this illustrated in Victoria. The Olympic mountains to the south and the Sooke hills to the west present barriers to the moisture-laden winds from the ocean, and so clouds are formed and these deposit their burdens in the form of rain or snow on the higher levels, and the sheltered area around Victoria is free from rain. It is more strikingly illustrated by the Coast Range. "The Hope Mountains," said

one who has traversed them often, "is the very home of snow," and yet just east of the mountains are semi-arid areas where only bunch-grass and a few trees grow. If you will get the geography of this part of the country in your mind, you will see that the Hope Mountains form the eastern boundary of a structural valley extending out into the Pacific Ocean. The southern boundary of this valley is Mount Baker and the Olympic Range; the northern boundary is formed by the mountains seen from Vancouver and the elevations in the southern part of Vancouver Island. The valley itself consists of the lowlands also through which the Fraser river runs, the Gulf of Georgia, the Straits of Juan de Fuca, and the waters connecting them. In centuries upon centuries the Fraser river has filled up about one-third of the valley with fine debris from the rocks of the Interior, and the debris which was carried out to sea was deposited off Cape Beale to form Swifsure Bank. This valley, which is perhaps two hundred miles long and twenty miles and more wide, presents itself like a funnel to the winds from the Pacific, which pass up it, possible reinforced by winds from the south that come up by way of Puget Sound and the relatively low lands lying between the head of that arm of the sea and the low coast line at Gray's Harbor. This moisture-laden air is driven up the valley; not always at great speed, but with greater or less rapidity, until it comes to the Hope Mountains, which say to it: "Thus far shalt thou come and no further." The Fraser canyon, which extends at right angles to the valley, is too narrow to permit the winds to proceed in that direction, and so if they must go on, and they must, for there is constant pressure behind them, they must climb the mountain sides. But it is just the same with the wind as with a man; if it must climb an elevation it must lay down part of any burden which it may have been carrying on the level. And so the southwest wind begins to climb the mountains, and as it climbs it drops its burden. In summer it falls as rain; in winter as snow, and it is as air that has been partly dried that finds its way over the bunch-grass lands lying to the east of the mountain range.

It will be seen from this very imperfect explanation how it is that there is such a wide difference in the amount of rainfall in different localities in this province. The genesis of the rain is in ocean, but it is vapor in the first instance; then it becomes cloud, and then rain. It is the rain or snow, dependent upon the elevation and time of year when it is precipitated, that feeds the rivers. As the rain and snow are formed from the moisture which the air carries, and the air is laden in the Equatorial regions chiefly, it follows that the real source of the Fraser, the Skeena, the Kootenay, the Stikine, and all the other rivers of British Columbia is in the heart of the Pacific Ocean, to which the water flows back again in due course. Thus we have an endless chain from the ocean to the air by evaporation or by waterspouts, then through the air across the surface of the sea, then across the lower levels of the continental shore, then over the mountains, then down to the mountain peaks and valleys, then in numberless little streams to the main structural valleys of the continent, then down these in the form of rivers again to the sea, an endless water chain passing from sea water to vapor, from vapor to cloud, from cloud to rain or snow, from rain or snow to springs, from springs to rivulets, from rivulets to rivers, and so back to Mother Ocean again, and that is why "all the rivers run into the sea and yet the sea is not full."

TALES OF ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

A Picture of Ancient Chaldaea

Under a brassy sky, the Chaldean city of Uru lay panting in the noonday heat. Not a breath of wind stirred the sultry air in her narrow, sinuous streets. The dogs, the city's unkept scavengers, too overcome by the blaze of the sun to stir themselves to seek their mid-day meal in the piles of refuse which stood here and there, stretched at full length in any spot where a shadow afforded shelter. There were few customers in the bazaars, and the proprietors were too listless to press their wares with their usual effusion. In the poorer quarters of the town, where the mud and clay huts jostled one another for room, naked children lolled under the shadow of the eaves, the heat making their eyes and limbs heavy with sleep. Even the women ceased for a little while from their interminable round of labor, and tried to catch a refreshing breath from doorway or window. About the palaces which reared their massive bulk on the outskirts of the city, were green oases, where fountains played under the date-palms and acacia trees, and in the green courts upon which the harems opened, the children wandered in a desultory fashion: inside the women tried to sleep, fanned by the tireless arms of their slaves. The temples which stood here and there throughout the city became in the sun's blaze things of countless beauties. There was no brilliancy of ornamentation in the dull, unglazed bricks of the palaces, but the temples were adorned with cedar inlaid with gold, and encrusted with precious gems, and their minarets were wholly covered with gold, and the walls were studded with brilliant mosaic work, so that at noonday they blazed with color, painting the eyes that beheld them.

As the day wore on, renewed activity began, men and women alike filled the streets and crowded the bazaars; the men in short tunic and "abayah," a garment corresponding to the Roman toga; the women, many of them

with head and face uncovered, wearing their long draped garment of hairy texture. Slaves were everywhere, some on their own or their master's business, others in attendance upon their owners. On the roofs of the low houses the women began to gather to resume their labor, to bake, to wash or to hang the linen to dry; or, when they had slaves to do their menial tasks, to sew or embroider, and to gossip back and forth. The children, awaking to normal life, played in the alleys between the houses, and the narrow streets, romping with one another, chasing the dogs and throwing stones at the flocks of ravens. In the closed courtyards of the palaces, the gates of which were guarded by eunuchs, and where an army of slaves stood ready for duty, the princesses, followed by their women, walked, dressed in brightly-dyed garments, confined at the waist by a narrow girdle, their fingers, their arms and their ankles glittering with gold and gems, their hair, kept in place on the forehead by a fillet, fell in thick plaits or was confined in a coil at the nape of the neck. Perhaps the masters of the house joined them, for save on the days of religious sacrifice, the ordinary daily life of a prince was not arduous, though then his work was as heavy as that of a slave, and dressed as a slave he must go about his duties. Again in times of trouble, when, as often happened, wild beasts attacked the flocks and herds, the princely rulers were expected to go out alone and destroy the enemy, while if war broke out, his place was always in the danger zone, at the head of a picked body of troops.

As the sun drew nearer the west, a woman left the city gates and journeyed to where the river wound its way through the dry reeds and the sun-parched grass. She carried a bundle in her arms, close against her breast. Her unveiled face was still young, but drawn with suffering, her body was pitifully thin, and the half-starved flesh gleamed here and there through the rents in her ragged tunic; on her neck, hanging from a slender cord she wore the badge of her shame, a small silver disc, stamped with the representation of an olive, which showed her to be an unwed wife. The hands that held the bundle trembled, and when in a spot where the grass grew thickly, she laid it down, the woman groaned aloud, and lifted her empty arms to heaven in supplication; then suddenly crossing them before her eyes, she ran through the reeds to where the deep stream of the river hurried musically through the rushes. There was a flash of white, a sharp, quickly-smothered cry, and then silence, a long silence.

The dying sun bathed the city in a golden glow, and painted the dancing waters of the river, and fell upon the gay colors of a gorgeous procession that wound its way down the hill and towards the city gates. Black eunuchs walked ahead, their skin like polished metal, then came the palanquin of the princess, borne by four attendants, the curtains scarlet, fringed with gold, and beside it trotted pretty page boys, naked save for their scarlet loincloth and the chain of gold about their necks. More palanquins followed, all gaily decorated and festooned, bearing the princess' women, and then came the retinue of servants and slaves, their tunics and loin-cloths dyed in gay colors, for it was the whim of this princess that brightness and beauty should be everywhere about her. The bearers of the palanquin chanted as they walked, a slow swinging melody, and not a face in the company but wore a smile, for their princess was lovely and gracious and kind, and it was a joy to serve her. Now and then she parted the curtains of her canopy to show her charming face and smile appreciation at the golden, dancing river, or to nod approval of the musical chanting, or the special smoothness of some bit of the road.

Then the bright eyes of one of the little page boys spied something lying where the reeds grew thickest, and he whispered to one of the eunuchs, and the big black man left his place to reconnoitre. Returning, he spoke through the closed curtains, and in a moment the face of the princess appeared, her eyes bright with eagerness. The gay procession came to a halt, and there was a whisper of expectancy through the crowd of slaves.

The bundle which the trembling hands of the woman of shame had left by the river bank, for the wild dogs or the serpents to discover, was brought to the princess, and when it was unwrapped, it proved to be a little baby boy, sleeping a drugged sleep, from which the poor mother had thought it would never awaken. It was a beautiful baby, and the princess wept over it, and called upon Ea and the other gods to aid in its restoration.

So the baby thus recovered was taken home to the palace, and the Chaldean law made it the princess' own, and in time he became a famous scribe, honored by kings and people.

This is a true story of old Chaldaea, that famous country that flourished three thousand years before the Christian era, and the proof of its truth may be found on the old Assyrian tablets inscribed at the time, and whose characters are still, in many cases, as legible as when first made.

SUNDAY

Apart altogether from any moral obligation we may be under to observe Sunday, because one of the laws of the Jewish people required them to keep holy the Sabbath Day, there are very substantial reasons in favor of Sunday observance. This is true not only of the day as a period of rest from labor, but as one during which a portion of the time, at least, may be specially devoted to what is

called worship, and would, perhaps, be more accurately described as spiritual exercises. The man or woman who takes no note of the existence of a spiritual side to human nature, misses one-half, and possibly the more important half, of life. It is certainly the more permanent half. To many persons Sunday is only a day of recreation. Let it be granted that they need the recreation, and that they are all the better for it physically; there must inevitably come a time when recreation will be impossible. "Rejoice, O young man, in the strength of thy youth." If you like to take your gun and go about into the woods, or your fishing-rod, and whip the water of some stream, or your motor-car and sweep along the country roads, you no doubt have a perfect right to do so; but if this is all you do on Sunday, if you never stimulate your spiritual nature, if you never think of those things which make a man independent of external things for peace, happiness and contentment, you are missing a great opportunity; for if you live to mature years, you are certain to find that the time will come when you will say of mere physical enjoyments "there is no pleasure in them."

The Roman Catholic Church in its wisdom requires of its adherents that they shall attend mass once on Sunday. That being done, the rest of the day may be devoted to recreation. In this as in many other things that Church shows its profound knowledge of human nature. It treats the Sabbath as "made for man, not man for the Sabbath." It expects its adherents to utilize Sunday for both their spiritual and physical welfare, and wisely makes its first application obligatory. The Protestant churches, on the other hand, do not teach that church attendance is obligatory, but as a rule they debar recreation on Sunday. There is no virtue in omitting to go to your office or keeping your store closed on Sunday. The virtue consists in the manner in which you use the day from which business has been excluded. But some will say that there is nothing in a church service that is attractive to them. Such persons should not be too sure that the fault is not chiefly in themselves. To sit a church service through simply as an act of duty is to be bored; to participate in it actively is a source of strength and pleasure. Most people expect too much from the man in the pulpit. They go to church once in a blue moon and, because they are not thrilled by something the minister says, they vote the whole thing a bore. If, on the contrary, they attended not simply to hear the preacher or the singing, but for the sake of the spiritual uplift which comes from the full participation in the whole service, they would come to take a new view of church-going.

There is another aspect to the case. Ministers are frequently blamed because the services, and especially the sermons, are not more interesting; but if such persons would think of the position occupied by the minister, they might change their views. Sunday after Sunday, and usually twice each Sunday, the average minister stands up before the same people to talk on the same subject. The congregation is likely to consist of a few men, a number of women and perhaps as many children. He has little incentive to deep thought, little incentive to the discovery of new phases of the eternal truths relating to mankind. If he knew the pews would be filled by people who represent the active life of the community, he would be a different preacher. Sometimes it may be the fault of the pulpit that the pews are empty; but if men and women would learn to appreciate the value of what has been called above the spiritual uplift which comes from the public worship of God, and would attend church not simply to hear what the preacher might have to say, but in order that for a brief space of time they might get themselves into contact with the spiritual things, that are eternal, they would expect less from the pulpit, but would undoubtedly receive more, for the consciousness that he was addressing men and women, who are present for that purpose would give him an inspiration, which is in too many cases painfully lacking.

But church-going is not the only way in which Sunday may be profitably spent, for it is not only by going to church that spiritual strength can be developed. In these days of intense activity we have left very little opportunity for contemplation. This is a great mistake. The great leaders of the world have been men who gave up much time to contemplation. We speak of such persons as "men with vision"; but visions only come to those who open their minds to them. You may remember that Paul, speaking of spiritual gifts, said: "Howbeit this kind cometh not but by prayer and fasting." Prayer and fasting are simply means whereby spiritual force is given an opportunity to develop. Read the story of all the greatest of men, and you will be convinced that much of their greatness was developed from within, and was not due to influences from without. Now we cannot all be great. We cannot all guide the destinies of nations; we cannot all influence mankind for generations; we cannot all exercise the faith that moves mountains. But we can all make ourselves the better and stronger by contemplation, by learning our own natures through introspection. Sunday night, in part at least, be very profitably devoted to thought and the study of ourselves. On week-days our business cares occupy our minds; on Sunday we can lay these aside and give ourselves up for a little while to searching into the inner recesses of our own hearts and our own minds, those great undiscovered countries that lie close at hand to our daily walks in life.