

tions of America we find an uncrowned imperialism already raising its haughty head. Coleridge in his *Table Talks* states, "The true key to the declension of the Roman Empire, and which is not to be found in all Gibbon's immense work, may be stated in two words—the imperial character overlying and finally destroying the national character." Let us hope history does not repeat itself in this particular, and that the imperialistic spirit of to-day, chastened and purified by the experience of the past, may be the harbinger of peace among the nations of the earth. The Roman Empire increased in size through conquest out of proportion to social and national structure, and there was no cohesive attraction between the conquered provinces and the central authority.

Autocratic and military despotism crushed out every feeling of national aspiration. The Roman Legions returned home in triumph laden with the spoils of foreign conquest, and Rome became the mistress of the world. Corrupted and enervated by wealth and intoxicated by power, the rulers fell into every form of extravagance and sensuality. Internal dissension and jealousy soon began to manifest itself, the central authority was weakened, the moral and social structure of the people was loosened and the nation crumbled into ruin and decay. It was no wonder the Empire fell an easy prey to the hardy Goths, Vandals and Huns of northern Europe.

In this rapid review of the decline and fall of Roman civilization we do well to institute a comparison in order to discover if any of the causes which led to the overthrow of that great empire are present with us to-day. We have an advantage over them of fifteen centuries of nation building, with many vicissitudes of fortune, in our attempts to build up an Anglo-Saxon civilization on Roman models. It cannot be denied that we have made great progress over them in the art of constitutional government and in the extension of the rights of citizenship; the last stronghold of special privilege to surrender was the divine right of kings to rule. All power is now vested in the hands of the people, and will be wielded wisely or unwisely in proportion to the diffusion of knowledge and the general standard of morality maintained.

#### PHILOSOPHY VS. CHRISTIANITY.

Unless we can show that the Anglo-Saxon race possesses inherent elements of permanence and continuity which the great nations of the past did not possess, what guarantee have we that history shall not repeat itself and that we shall pass through the same stages of national life that they did? It may be said that all the forms of civilization in the past were