

An Hour with the Editor

THE ROMAN EMPERORS

Having repelled the Goths, vanquished the Allemanni and overthrown Tetricius, who had made himself ruler of Gaul and all the western provinces, Aurelian had yet another grave task before him before he could claim to have restored the empire to its ancient prestige. That extraordinary woman, Zenobia, was virtually an independent sovereign over nearly all the Asiatic provinces. Gibbon thus describes her: "Zenobia was esteemed the most lovely as well as the most heroic of her sex. She was of dark complexion. Her teeth were of pearly whiteness, and her large black eyes sparkled with uncommon fire, tempered by the most attractive sweetness. Her voice was strong and harmonious. Her manly understanding was strengthened and adorned by study." In an age when women in power vied with men in the indulgence of brutal passions, she was conspicuously virtuous. Her courage, except towards the close of her career, was unquestioned. She was of royal lineage, being descended from Cleopatra and through her from the Macedonian kings of Egypt. She married Odenathus, who had raised himself from a humble station to be the master of the East. They were an able pair. She followed him everywhere in his campaigns, often marching on foot at the head of the troops to stimulate them when their spirits drooped. She was an admirable horsewoman, and dressed in a military costume was conspicuous on all great occasions. Withal she was very womanly, and underneath her seeming firmness there was an element of feminine weakness. Odenathus was a splendid soldier, and when he died, slain by assassins prompted by his nephew, he was virtually sovereign over all the eastern dominions of Rome except certain parts of Asia Minor. Zenobia rose to the occasion created by the death of her husband, and proclaimed herself queen, causing the murderer of Odenathus to pay the price of his crime. She treated the demands of the Emperor Gallienus, who ordered to recognize his suzerainty, with absolute contempt, and proceeded to show the extent of her ambition by conquering Egypt. Historians are not certain as to her ultimate intentions. She had not openly disavowed the supremacy of Rome, but as yet had only refused to acknowledge an unworthy emperor. She called herself "Queen of the East," a title that might mean anything or nothing. The capital of her realm was Palmyra, that wonderful city of palms, which had for centuries been the halting place of caravans between India, China and Parthia on the one hand and the Roman dominions on the other. Here Zenobia maintained a state that was a compound of Roman majesty at its best and Eastern magnificence. Rome itself presented no splendors that exceeded those of the eastern city, whose ruins today attest its former greatness.

Aurelian, having reduced the remainder of the Empire to his unquestioned sway, determined upon overthrowing the power of Zenobia. This he did in two great battles, and Zenobia took refuge in Palmyra. The siege of this city was protracted, so much so, indeed, that Aurelian offered the Queen very favorable terms of capitulation, which she spurned. She relied upon two things. One of them was the power of famine, which she vainly expected would compel the Romans to retreat. Palmyra was a long way from Aurelian's base of supplies and Zenobia's Arabian soldiers harassed all provision trains; but at length their hostility was overcome and Zenobia saw with amazement the Roman army bountifully supplied. At this time she received word of the death of Sapor, king of Persia, upon whose assistance she had reckoned. Her courage failed her and mounted upon a fleet dromedary she fled from the city, only to be overtaken and brought back by Aurelian's soldiers. Palmyra then submitted and the emperor with characteristic moderation treated the citizens and the army with every consideration. When Zenobia was brought into the presence of Aurelian, she seemed to lose all her courage, but what was far less excusable, she threw the blame of her resistance to Aurelian upon the scholar Longinus, one of the greatest men of his or any other day, and that unfortunate man paid the penalty of his queen's rebellion. After Aurelian had departed from Palmyra, the citizens rose against and massacred the small garrison he had left behind. He returned and completely destroyed the city, massacring the majority of its inhabitants. He then advanced into Egypt and subdued a rebellion there. This accomplished, the whole Empire was at peace and acknowledged the sway of this remarkable man, who had risen from a poor peasant lad to be the greatest ruler of the time and had restored the glories of Rome of the Caesars.

The triumph with which Aurelian celebrated his achievements was one of the most remarkable functions ever witnessed in Rome. Tetricius, who had ruled over the West, marched in a chain behind his chariot, but the figure that attracted the greatest attention was that of the beautiful Zenobia, who almost fainted under the weight of the jewels with which she was adorned. Around her neck was a chain of gold, so heavy that a slave was appointed to support it. Aurelian rode in a chariot that had been used by a Gothic king, and it was drawn by four stags. Twenty elephants, four huge tigers and two hundred specimens of uncommon animals preceded him. They were followed by sixteen hundred gladiators. After the car of the Emperor and the captive queen and princess, came representatives from all parts of the then unknown world, including China. The display of booty was enormous and the whole procession was perhaps the most remarkable that Rome had ever witnessed. After it had been concluded, Aurelian granted his favor to Zenobia and Tetricius, conferring

estates upon both. Zenobia married a Roman aristocrat, and it was known that her descendants were living several centuries later.

Considerable uncertainty surrounds the history of the few months following this triumph, but it is known that a rebellion broke out, which Aurelian suppressed with unusual severity. He seems to have chafed under the limitations of peace, and in the autumn of 274 he set out to conquer Persia. While on his way against this enemy, he was the victim of a conspiracy and was slain by one of his most trusted generals. His reign lasted less than five years, but it was crowded with glorious deeds. He made a well-meant effort to restore Rome to something like her former greatness, and if he did not wholly succeed, the fault was not his, but that of a people who had become degenerate. As a soldier the world has produced few men who can be compared with him, for he was victorious against every foe, and although occasionally it seemed as if he was to be overcome by disaster, he was always able to achieve ultimate success. As an administrator he was not wholly successful, which was possibly not wholly his fault, for he never received the support of the Senate, which affected to despise him because of his ignoble origin.

TALES OF OLD EGYPT

IV.

Last week we learned something of Isis and Osirus, of what kindly and beneficent deities they were, setting an example to humans by their diligence and their perfection in husbandry and the domestic arts. Now we shall read of Isis' great sorrow, which caused her endless weeping, for even today, when the summer solstice draws near, her tears fall down from heaven into the Nile, and the river rises and spreads itself over the bosom of the land.

Isis was one of the five children born to Nuit, the goddess of the starry skies. Ra, the head of all the gods, was very angry because Nuit had married Siby, god of the earth, and he cast a spell over the goddess to prevent her giving birth to her children in any month of any year whatsoever. But Thot took pity upon her, and, playing draughts with the moon, won from it in several games one-seventy-second of its fires, out of which he made five whole days, and as these were not included in the ordinary calendar, Nuit could then bring forth her five children one after the others, Osirus, Haroeris, Sit, Isis and Nephtys.

Osirus and Isis wedded one another, for it was quite legitimate in those days for brothers and sisters to marry, especially if they happened to be immortals; and because they ruled upon the earth with such a display of wisdom and kindness, and all the people loved them so, Sit, their brother, became very jealous and angry, and desired to have Osirus' kingdom for himself. It was only Isis' continued vigilance that kept Sit from working a great mischief, for Osirus was obliged to be absent most of the time, building cities and instructing his people.

However, Sit's opportunity came at last, when Osirus had returned home in great triumph from Memphis, and all the people had risen to do him honor. Sit gave a great banquet and invited seventy-two of his followers, and they all united to pay their royal guest homage. In the midst of the feasting a very beautiful and curiously carved chest which Sit had had made, was brought in and shown to the assembly. All professed deep admiration, and Sit, who had planned the whole matter beforehand, laughingly said that he would give the box to any one whom it would fit. Allin turned to get in it, but none was successful until Osirus made the effort, and he laid down within it very easily. At once Sit and his conspirators closed the lid and made it fast, soldered it with melted lead, and then threw it into the Nile.

Isis was overcome with grief. She cut off her long and beautiful hair, rent her clothes, and left the kingdom to go in search of the casket that held Osirus' body. After many days of weary wandering, she found the box at the mouth of the great river, under a giant acacia tree. She hid it away from sight and then went to Ruto, her native city, for she was suffering very much.

Here Osirus' son, the little Horus was born, and in the marshlands, with the thick reeds affording her a secure hiding-place, she nursed the baby and cared tenderly for him. One old-story tells that Osirus used to return from the spirit world during the night-time and watch over and instruct his infant child, and that it was owing to these teachings that Horus became so proficient a ruler and such a great warrior. After a time, the wicked Sit, not content with the evil he had done, not content with the throne he had so dishonestly gained, went out hunting one day, and coming accidentally upon the casket that held Osirus' body, he opened it and cut the mortal remains of the great king into fourteen pieces, which he threw in all directions.

To mutilate a dead body was, in the mind of the ancient Egyptians, far more of a crime than killing a man, for in so far as the body was perfect in death, so would the form of the spirit be perfect in the after-life. Poor Isis felt compelled to start once more upon a sad pilgrimage in order to recover the fragments of Osirus' body and piece them together. After many months she found them all but one, and with the aid of her sister Nephtys, her son Horus and the god Thot, she joined them together and embalmed the body.

Then Thot worked enchantments by inscribing all the bands and belts with magic inscriptions, and by performing incantations so that the body spoke and ate and could use its limbs as freely as before.

Osirus' first kingdom after death was the kingdom of the cemetery, known to the Egyptians as "The Meadow of Reeds" and "The Meadow of Rest"; but later he acquired great honors, and ruled in the Milky Way. Later still he sat at the Gate of Paradise, and passed judgment upon those who applied for admission.

As for Isis, the old stories tell us, and the old pictures show us, that she was always at her lord's side.

Horus, their son, grew to manhood, and eventually wrested part of Sit's possessions from him, and ruled upon his father's throne with righteousness, dignity and honor.

We must not forget Thot, that gentlest and most forbearing of all gods. It was Thot who presided over the scales of justice, and if he saw that the heart of an applicant for heavenly joy outweighed Truth in the balance, he invariably pressed a little on the side of Truth that judgment might be favorably inclined.

In reading these old stories of ancient civilization, stories in which there must always be some grains of truth, it is interesting to study them comparatively, for we can invariably find points of similarity. For instance, compare the picture of patient, loving, self-sacrificing Isis with the infant Horus in her arms, with the picture of the Indian goddess Sita, with her two little boys in the forest, and another still more beautiful picture, that of the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus. All three pictures are typical of the woman's renunciation and the mother's sacrifice.

OLD EGYPTIAN MEDICAL SCIENCE.

In the old days of Egypt, when living was comparatively primitive, medical science had its rough beginning, and while since then it has made giant strides, yet some of the very remedies we use today are a counterpart of those which were employed five thousand years ago. Herbs that we consider beneficial were pounded up into powder and steeped in hot water in the same manner that we use them now, and poultices were made as our mothers made them. For instance, one recipe which would puzzle us at first by the seemingly absurd character of its ingredients is analogous to the well-known linseed poultice. "Take an old book and boil it in oil, then apply half a time to the stomach," says the ancient Egyptian recipe. Now books were written on papyrus, an absorbent vegetable substance, and an "old book" was recommended for economical reasons. The physicians made use of all the means which we employ today to introduce remedies into the system whether pills or potions, ointments, draughts or clysters. Not only did he give the prescriptions, but he made them up—he prescribed the ingredients, he pounded them either separately or together, he macerated them in the proper way, boiled them, reduced them by heating and filtering them through linen. Fat served him as the ordinary vehicle for ointments and pure water for potions, but he did not despise other liquids such as wine, beer (fermented or unfermented), vinegar, milk, olive oil and "ben" oil, either crude or refined—the whole, sweetened with honey, was taken hot night and morning. The use of more than one of these remedies became world-wide. The Greeks borrowed from the Egyptians; we have piously accepted from the Greeks, and our contemporaries still swallow many of the abominable mixtures invented on the banks of the Nile, long before the building of the Pyramids.

The Chaldeans, contemporary with the Egyptians, possessed no school of medicine. They rather trusted to the magic of sorcerers and exorcists to cast out the demons that were the cause of their aches and pains. "The facial expression of the patient during the crisis, the words which escaped from him in his delirium, were, for these clever individuals, so many signs revealing the nature and sometimes the name of the enemy to be combated—the Fever-god, the Plague-god, the Headache-god. Consultations and medical treatment were, therefore, religious offices, in which were involved purifications, offerings and a whole ritual of mysterious words and gestures. The magician lighted a fire of herbs and sweet-smelling plants in front of his patient, and the clear flame arising from this put the spectre to flight and dispelled the malign influence, a prayer describing the enchantments and their effects being afterward recited. The sick man was to take a clove of garlic, some dates, and a stalk bearing flowers, and was to throw them into the fire bit by bit, repeating appropriate prayers at each stage of the operation. "In like manner, as this garlic is peeled and thrown into the fire—and the burning flame consumes it, as it will never be planted in the vegetable garden, it will never draw moisture from the pond or from the ditch—so may it remove the baleful curse. The sickness which is in my body, in my flesh, in my muscles—like this garlic may it be stripped off, and may the burning flame consume it in this day. May the spell of the sorcerer be cast out that I may behold the light." The ceremony could be prolonged at will—the sick person pulled to pieces the cluster of dates, the bunch of flowers, a fleece of wool, some goat hair, a skin of dyed thread, and a bean, which were all in turn consumed by the fire. At each stage of the operation he repeated the formula introducing into it one or two expressions characterizing

the nature of the particular offering, as, for instance, "the dates will no more hang from their stalk, the leaves of the branch will never again be united to the tree, the wool and the hair will never again lie on the back of the animal on which they grew, and will never be used for weaving garments." The use of magical words was often accompanied by remedies, which were for the most part grotesque and disgusting in their composition; they comprised bitter wood shavings, raw meat, snakes' flesh, wine and oil, the whole reduced to a pulp, or made into a sort of pill and swallowed on the chance of bringing relief. The Egyptian physicians employed similar compounds to which they attributed wonderful effects, but they made use of them in exceptional circumstances only. The Chaldeans, however, were not ignorant of the natural virtues of herbs, and at times made use of them, but they were not held in very high esteem, and the physicians preferred the prescriptions which pandered to the popular craving for the supernatural. Amulets further confirmed the effects produced by the recipes, and prevented the enemy once cast out from re-entering the body. These amulets were made of knots of cord, pierced shells, bronze or terra cotta statuettes and plaques fastened to the arms or worn round the neck. On each of the latter kind were roughly drawn the most terrible images that they could conceive, a shortened incantation was scrawled on its surface, or it was covered with extraordinary characters which when the spirits perceived they at once took flight and the possessor of the talisman escaped the threatened illness.

LIMITATIONS OF CREEDS

One of the reasons why the Christian Church has not a greater hold upon the daily life of the community is to be found in the fact that it insists too much upon creeds. In the Sermon on the Mount, a great deal is said about what a man ought to do, and nothing as to what he ought to believe. It is quite true that Jesus did say some things about believing. He expected those to whom He spoke to believe in His divine mission, or character, if you prefer the expression, but He is not on record as saying that it is a deadly sin not to so believe. St. Paul talked much of belief, and the church has followed his example, but it is open to question if belief, in the sense in which the term is used in the New Testament, meant adherence to a formal creed or anything more than the acceptance of a certain fundamental principle. Before a man could become a Christian it was necessary for him to accept as true that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and possibly some other things; but this belief was not the end, but the beginning of the Apostles' preaching. The Epistles of St. Paul were addressed to people who believed in the new faith, but no one who reads them need pretend to deceive himself with the idea that belief was of any value unless it was followed by an actively virtuous life. Neither can such any one claim that belief spontaneously led to a new life. There is good authority for saying that "not every one who sayeth Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven," and that it is necessary to do the will of the Father who is in Heaven. Creeds have their limitations in the formation of character. Of themselves they are like "faith without works," which we are told is dead.

But creeds have their limitations in another way. At first they are an attempt to define what is indefinable. Christianity is not merely an organization, it is not only a system of religion. It is a real, active energizing force operating on human nature. If a man has in him "the mind that was in Christ Jesus," he becomes "a new creature." To borrow a homely simile he is "a live wire." He has something in him that he did not have before. Keeping the simile in mind, read the first half dozen chapters of the Book of the Acts, just as you would read a magazine article. Read it not as something mysterious, something to be explained in a spiritual sense, but as a narrative of facts, and see if you do not get the impression that the Apostles were storage batteries of a new energy, that is new so far as they themselves were concerned. Now you can no more hope to describe that energy in words than you can describe electricity in words, and yet nine-tenths of all the discord there has been and now is in Christendom, has arisen out of the fact that men could not and cannot agree as to definitions. Creeds have their limitations because they cannot state in exact terms what they are intended to state.

At the most a creed is an effort to express something; of itself it is nothing at all. A man may repeat the Apostles' Creed forty times a day, and be none the better for it. For the greater ledger of humanity, a cup of water given in love will more than balance a thousand repetitions of a form of belief. Some of the most cruel monsters the world has ever seen have been the most ardent believers in creeds. Indeed their cruelty was often in proportion to the ardor of their belief. The mere intellectual acceptance of a certain formula is perhaps a first step to becoming Christ-like, but it is only a first step and perhaps it is not a necessary step. This is a more important consideration than many teachers and preachers may be willing to admit, for there are thousands and tens of thousands of persons who find themselves unable to give their intellectual acceptance to any form of belief that has ever been devised, and yet who strive honestly to live as they believe Christ would like them to live. May it not be pos-

sible that the church magnifies the importance of formal belief? It seems very clear that the early Christians, the men and women who revolutionized the Roman world and conquered the all-conquering Barbarians, had no catechisms.

THE PROPHECY OF IT

The schoolboy lives in a world of his own; he has tasks to perform, times to observe, hours for play and for study; he gets knowledge of his world by looking at the things about him and hearing the news of it; an ancient wisdom, garnered by the boys of a thousand generations, becomes his and makes him at home in a world which is as familiar as the sound of his mother's voice, the path to the woods, or the round of his daily duties. But this world is also full of mysteries; another world surrounds it and sends now and again a call to him, or flashes light on a great, far-reaching landscape. He comes continually upon references to this greater world in the books he studies, and still more often in those he reads; he hears many things about it from his elders; the newspapers report it, the magazines illustrate it; he lives in his own world, but all the paths of play or work in that familiar world run on into the greater and more mysterious world.

To that world, too, his imagination travels, and his heart beats faster when he hears the stories that are told about the adventures that await men in it, the things they have done, the perils they have faced, the deaths they have died. There, beyond the hills, is the wonderful romance which his own world somehow foreshadows. For everything in that world has a prophetic quality. His studies are never complete; the book is finished, but not the subject; the year ends, but not the course. Half the boys in the school are preparing for college, and know that they are making ready for something higher and more difficult in the future. When perplexities present themselves to the boy they are explained, but he is often told that the problem will be clearer when he is further on. And when, from time to time, he hears an address at the close of the school year, he is told that all his work is planned with reference to the future, and that there is something much more important than his school, through which he is passing into a mysterious and wonderful existence which his elders call Life.

When he hears these things, he knows they are true. It seems as if he had always known that there was a vaster world than that in which he is finding his sport and his tasks. His whole nature has predicted a greater field of play and work than he has known, a more mysterious way than that in which he has walked. He has always been living in a world "half realized," and he imagines that when he gets into this greater world the sense of unreality, of strange shapes in the woods and mysterious figures in the darkness, will cease to haunt him. Then he will really know the things with which he is dealing, and the strangeness of it all will vanish.

But the man's world is fuller of mystery than the boy's world, and the sense of "moving about in worlds not realized" is far more poignant and haunting. If a man has any intelligence or imagination, he never escapes from the consciousness of vast forces which he does not understand, of movements into which his life is caught that rise like tremendous tidal waves far below the horizon line of knowledge and sweep irresistibly onward to some goal beyond the range of his imagination. In all his relations with his fellows, in all their occupations and enterprises, in the structure of the State, the order of the home, under all the manifold activities of work which men call business, he discovers inexorable and unescapable moral principles and processes. If he has eyes to see, every tool will become to him an instrument of education, and the enormous practical activities of the race will seem in the end a marvelous system for the making of character.

In his friendships and affections, in which he expects to find the fullness and completeness of life, he will find a cup held to his lips of such vast capacity that he cannot drain it; and in his own nature he will discover a capacity for devotion and sacrifice for which there is no adequate human language. Which ever way he turns, the horizon will bring him, not to the end of the world, but to the beginnings of other worlds; all the little pools by the way, if he tries to sound them, will prove fathomless, and in the simplest relations with his fellow infinity and eternity will be present; and the whole material structure of things that seems so solid and immovable will become a passing symbol of the eternal order of the spiritual life.

As the boy felt in his heart the reality and wonder of a greater world before him, so the man knows that he is at the beginning, not the end, of his career; and that, as there is a lesser world behind him which was touched with the illusion of permanency but endured only for the brief span of his childhood, so the life in which the man shapes and trains himself is but a more advanced school; prophetic, as all schools are, of coming opportunity and skill and power and life.—The Outlook.

The Dealer—Well, he's sixteen years old, mum, I'll admit that; but he ain't wind broke nor nothing'.

Mrs. Newcash (who has decided not to buy)—We're very sorry, but we would not care to buy a horse that was not thoroughly wind broken.