

An Hour with the Editor

THE STORY OF FRANCE

IV.

The conquest of Gaul by Julius Caesar was a turning point in the history of that country and of Rome as well. Caesar sought the office of pro-consul in the Gallic provinces, which then embraced only the southeastern part of the country, and Northwestern Italy, and was given the place for five years, his tenure of office being subsequently extended by the Senate to ten years. He was also given four legions, among them being the famous Tenth Legion, whose feats of arms he has commemorated. Whether he was ambitious of conquest or was forced into hostilities by the restlessness of their neighboring people must remain a matter of doubt, but he had not long been invested with his new authority before he was at war. He exhibited his policy in his dealings with the Helvetii. This race inhabited the mountains of Switzerland. Nothing is known of their origin. They first appear in history about 100 B.C., when they were settled on the frontier of Trans-Alpine Gaul, but without invading the country. Later they began to feel the pressure of the advancing hordes of Germans, and influenced in part by this and in part by a desire to settle in the more favorable climate of southwestern Gaul, they resolved to emigrate en masse. In 58 B.C., they burned their twelve towns and four hundred villages, and met at a rendezvous at the foot of the Lake of Geneva to the number of 368,000 men, women and children of whom according to Caesar, 92,000 were capable of bearing arms. Notwithstanding their assurances of peaceful intentions, Caesar forbade them to cross the Roman territory. A conference ensued in which the Helvetii acted with frankness, but the Roman consul with deceit. While he was ostensibly considering the best way of meeting the wishes of the would-be emigrants, Caesar was secretly constructing a wall to prevent their passage of the Rhone, and this accomplished he refused to allow them to proceed westward. They therefore turned towards the north, but Caesar, who had in the meanwhile received five additional legions from Rome, fell upon their rear guard and cut it to pieces. He then assailed the main body of the emigrants and slew them without mercy. A brave and warlike people, they resisted courageously, but hampered as they were by their women and children and all their household wealth, they could make no effectual resistance, and although they were able to prolong the struggle for a year, they were at length driven back to Switzerland, having lost during the year of struggle more than a quarter of a million of those who had set out for the West. The course of Caesar cannot be justified upon any grounds. It was a merciless display of Roman power at the expense of a people who had no hostile intentions whatever. The Gallic tribes, namely the Aeduians and Averniens, witnessed this destruction of their neighbors with considerable complacency, and sent envoys to congratulate Caesar, but they had scarcely returned when war broke out on their own borders. Ariovistus at the head of a large German army crossed the Rhine. He was a soldier of great repute, and even Caesar was doubtful of his ability to encounter him successfully in the field. He sent messengers asking him to meet in conference. To this Ariovistus replied: "If I had any business to transact with Caesar, I would go to him; if he has any business to transact with me, let him come to me." Caesar, who seems to have wished to avoid a conflict the end of which he could not foresee, contented himself with sending an order to Ariovistus forbidding him to molest the Aeduians who were allies of Rome. To this the haughty German replied that he had already conquered the Aeduians. This reply left Caesar no alternative than to advance against him, for such a rebuff, if submitted to, would destroy Roman prestige in Gaul. Ariovistus had no desire to try his strength against Caesar, although in his reply to a further demand that he should advance no further into Gaul, he said that, if Caesar wished to try his prowess against men who for fourteen years had never slept under a roof, he would be welcomed. The Roman legions were accordingly led northward by Caesar and on their approach Ariovistus proposed a conference for the partition of Gaul. To this Caesar would not harken for an instant, and hostilities were begun. They ended in the overthrow of Ariovistus after a struggle in which all the honors were not by any means on the Roman side. The great German led the remnant of his troops back across the Rhine, and died shortly afterwards.

The expedition against Ariovistus, although intended nominally for the defence of the Gauls against invaders, had the effect of alarming the people, who saw with good reason that the end of their independence was at hand. They resisted the extension of Roman power with much courage, but after eight campaigns, which lasted over a period of nine years, and were attended with varying fortunes on both sides, Caesar made himself master of the whole of Gaul, and had found opportunity in the meanwhile to invade Britain. The bloodshed was terrible. The Nervians were practically exterminated. In their petition to Caesar, sent from the depths of a morass where they had taken refuge, they said that of their three hundred senators only three were left, and of sixty thousand fighting men only five hundred survived. Caesar granted this fragment the peace for which they sought. The Aduatians met with even a worse fate. They declined to surrender. In the final bat-

tle four thousand of them were slain, and the remainder of the tribe, numbering fifty-six thousand men, women and children were sold into slavery. The Eburons were wholly exterminated. Another tribe, whom Caesar does not name, were punished by each man having his hands cut off and being sent to wander through the country as a living witness of the vengeance of Rome.

But even these cruelties did not repress the independent spirit of the people, and a great rebellion arose, headed by a leader whose real name has not come down to us, but who is called Vercingetorix by Caesar, because he was chief of a hundred chiefs. The story of the struggle which ensued cannot be told in detail. It was a splendid exhibition of courage on the part of the Gauls and of skill on the part of the Romans. Caesar never before or after met a foe so worthy of him as Vercingetorix, who was a young man of magnificent appearance, great strength, much skill as a soldier and dauntless courage. He was, however, no match in military genius for his competitor, and his soldiers, brave though they were, could not withstand the disciplined forces of Rome. The war terminated with the capture of Alesia by the Romans. Vercingetorix had occupied that city with about 80,000 men and was besieged in it by Caesar with a somewhat smaller force. Caesar says that 250,000 Gauls advanced to the relief of the besieged, but it seems incredible that so vast a host could have been assembled; still less probable does it seem that the relatively small force of the Romans could have prevailed against such a multitude. After a struggle lasting for several days Caesar was victorious. Vercingetorix refused to find safety in flight, but went to Caesar's camp and asked mercy for his people. The Romans refused. The Gauls, who had been taken prisoners were distributed among the Romans as slaves, and their gallant leader himself, after having graced Caesar's triumph, was slain. This ended Gallic independence, and shortly after the Roman legions returned home, the whole country becoming a Roman province.

TALES OF ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

The Greeks in Egypt

Psammetichus was ruling in Egypt, during the latter part of Arsura-bani-pal's reign in Assyria, where the latter's power was on the decline. In a former article we told how Psammetichus was chosen from among the twelve princes to rule over the country of the Nile, and of how the "brazen army" came up out of the sea to help him fight his battles.

These "brazen men" were the Greeks, the Hellenes, as they then called themselves, and being of a different race, and their war regalia still further disguising them, the very sight of them was sufficient to inspire terror in the minds of the African peoples. Their consternation was much as ours might be were we to behold today a glittering army arriving among us from another planet.

Of armor, the Egyptians knew practically nothing. On the battlefield they wore no protection of any kind. Fancy their horrified amazement when they saw for the first time, the metal-encased Greek soldiery. "With their bulging corselets, the two plates of which protected back and chest, their greaves made of a single piece of bronze reaching from the ankle to the knee, their square or oval bucklers covered with metal, their heavy, rounded helmets fitting closely to the head and neck, and surmounted by crests of waving plumes, they were, in truth, men of brass, invulnerable to any Oriental weapon. Drawn up in close array beneath their 'tortoise' they received almost unhurt the hail of arrows and stones, hurled against them by the lightly-armed infantry, and then, when their own trumpet sounded the signal for attack, and they let themselves fall with their own weight upon the masses of the enemy, brandishing their spears above the upper edge of their bucklers, there was no form of native troops or company of Mashuasha that did not waver beneath the shock, and finally give way before their attack."

No wonder that Psammetichus desired to retain such troops in his service, and in order to do so, he paid them handsomely and gave them the post of honor as "the guards of his right hand." Besides this their military honor would have kept them loyal to their employer, in the face of all munificent offers to serve elsewhere.

Attracted by the stories sent home by the Greek mercenaries, their countrymen began to flock to the fertile valleys of the Nile, and to settle along the Pelusiac branch of the great river with the permission of Psammetichus. The Pharaoh believed that the infusion of new and vigorous blood with the Egyptian people would have a beneficial effect upon the older nation, but his subjects were not of a like mind with their ruler.

In the first place the Greeks did not come among them respectfully and solicitously as had the Africans and Asiatics, they had not the deferential manner of the Hebrew and Phoenician merchants. Toward these latter peoples, the Egyptians had always been friendly. But the Greeks came sailing proudly over the sea in their own fine ships of war, confident of their strength and ability, and showing no spirit of servility even to the great Pharaoh himself. And the older nation shunned them. They thought them unenlightened, and on account of their manner of eating, unclean. They feared their strength, as a man fears the strength of a beast, but they

despised them, and they were fiercely resentful of the open favor shown them by their sovereign. In consequence of this one very dramatic event took place.

It had been Psammetichus' custom, since he had placed the Greek mercenaries in service at home to garrison the outposts with native troops against the attacks of Assyrians, Libyans and Ethiopians. These native troops were the Mashuasha, picked bodies of men, and remained at their distant stations for a year at a time. Such an exile was lonely and monotonous enough, but when the King apparently forgot all about them, and left them for three years without sending troops to relieve them, the garrison soldiers, always dissatisfied, decided to leave the service of the King. So, on a certain summer day, two hundred and forty thousand Egyptian soldiers assembled together to march to Ethiopia, and quit the land of their birth, the land of their father's power.

Psammetichus had heard of what was about to happen, and with only a handful of followers he made haste to overtake the army of men on their journey to the country of his enemy. He came face to face with them on a plain where they were encamping for the night. He was a goodly King, and he had always been the idol of his soldiers, but the wound was deep in the breasts of those who had been so long exiled in favor of "the brazen men," and when he pleaded with them by their old time love for him, they were silent and unmoved; when he besought them not to desert their national gods, and incur their everlasting enmity, they remained coldly indifferent; but when, with tears in his eyes, he spoke of the loneliness and the suffering of the wives and children they were leaving behind them, the hearts of the soldiers almost melted. Then one of their leaders spoke up with a loud voice, and cried that while manhood lasted they might found other families and make other homes, but time could never restore their dead faith in a traitor-king. And so, in the very face of the Pharaoh, the Mashuasha packed their tents and continued their march, and Egypt never saw them again.

THE UNCHANGEABLE PAST

There is an old song beginning with these lines:

"How very easily things go wrong,
A sigh too much or a kiss too long,
And life is never the same again."

Correspondents last week interested us all in the consideration of Dryden's lines:
"Not Heaven itself can the past hath power;
What has been has been and we've had our hour."

The most tremendous fact in our existence is that life pivots upon seeming trifles and that the past is unchangeable. Living would be unbearable if we thought of this too much; yet it is wise to think of it sometimes. Fortunately most people have an instinctive sense that certain times and actions are critical in their nature, and therefore take thought before they act; nevertheless we would all be much the better if we reflected more than we do upon the impossibility of recalling the days that have been and living them over again.

The relation of cause and effect is one of the accepted canons of philosophy; but we should be careful to distinguish between this and a mere sequence of events. There is a school of teachers who would have us believe that our lives are a chain of events, the links of which are forged together by Fate, and that we shall struggle in vain to free ourselves from them. This theory is often relied on as an excuse for wrongdoing, and oftener still as a reason why no effort should be made to improve upon the past. Many a man justifies an act which he knows to be wrongful because it seems to him to be the logical result of other acts, over some of which he had no control. Yet no one who is honest with himself, will claim that he has ever lost his freedom of will. Even physical force, while it may compel obedience to the will of another, cannot deprive the person compelled of his freedom of will. We are all conscious of our ability to resist to the last extremity. The instinct of self-preservation may lead us to yield, but the yielding is always a voluntary act. The human will may be indomitable, if it wishes to remain so.

It is because of this essential freedom of our will that we are the arbiters of our own destinies, and being so, we have only ourselves to blame if we hamper our futures with an unworthy past. We are often told that when we do things, that we feel at the time are wrong, we are sinning against God; we do not often think, and we are not very often admonished that we are sinning against ourselves. An all-merciful Father may forgive us trespasses against Him; but we have no power to forgive our sins against ourselves. If one should say that there is a God, who has made certain laws for His glory and that if we offend against them, He will punish us, we may refuse to accept such a statement, or at least regard such consequences of our acts as so remote as to be negligible. We may disbelieve in rewards and punishments in another world, and with much reasonableness put those, who assert such things to be in store for us, upon proof of their assertion. But we cannot escape the fact that we have to live this life, and that it is the sort of life we choose to make it. Right living is rewarded in this life; wrong living is punished in it. This may provoke a smile, and some may quote the language of the Psalmist who spoke of the

ungodly as those who prosper in this world, who increase in riches, whose eyes stand out with fatness, who have more than heart can wish. There is a species of religious teaching which would have us believe that misery is the price which the righteous pay in this world for eternal joy in the next. But that is not true. "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord," wrote David; not good because the Lord will give a reward hereafter for such thanks, but because the spirit which inspires what the Psalmist calls thankfulness is of itself a good thing; it is really the best thing available to mankind. Riches, honor, power, these things are worth having if we mean to use them rightly; but they are nothing to the feeling that one can stand unshamed before the Universe and feel himself in harmony with God and the eternal laws of life. This is what counts in the long run in the life that we are living from day to day, and as a matter of course it is the only thing that can count in any future life there may be.

But some say that they are not much concerned about what counts in the long run, for there may be no long run for them. They want what counts now. This is reasonable; not the best of reason doubtless, but pretty good reason just the same. It is a foolish doctrine that everything sweet is bad and everything bitter wholesome. There is an abundance of wholesome pleasure in the world. The trouble with very many of us is that we pervert our tastes. We do it physically. A recent racy writer on eating says that the world is ceasing to eat and is learning only to dine. The wholesome dishes that our grandfathers, and even our fathers, used to enjoy are distasteful to us. We must have something that will coax us to eat it. He says the result is going to be physical degeneration and that white men will have to give way to a race of people who eat and do not dine. In pleasures that appeal to the mind we see a tendency in the same direction. Lying before us is an article dealing with the alleged grace, artistry and high significance of the antics of some dancers, and we are gravely informed in it that a girl in tights who is able to stand on her toe and touch her chin with her knee is appealing to the soul. We saw the other night in the theatre a worn-out female tearing a passion in tatters after the fashion of a woman of the half-world and we were expected to be edified thereby. In the last illustrated London News samples are given of New Art in which we are expected to see something of infinite importance. Silly people write about these things as though they were wonderful, and other silly people think they are. We poison our intellectual digestion with neurotic trash and then are amazed that we take no pleasure in things that really are worth something. Much of the so-called literature of the day is rotten. We feed our imagination with things we would not throw to the dogs, if dogs could understand them. We poison the sources of our happiness, and force ourselves to seek for pleasure where there is nothing except unhealthy excitement.

Of course there is nothing new in this. King Solomon said it several thousands of years ago, when he told young men to rejoice in the strength of their youth, but to remember that they had to take the consequences of so doing. Note that he did not say not to rejoice in the strength of youth because the consequences were certain to be serious; but only that in rejoicing in it, that is in taking our draughts as the springs of pleasure, in employing the powers of our minds and bodies, in exerting the abilities with which we are endowed, we should always have in mind that there are consequences to be faced. "God will bring thee into judgment," is only another way of saying that "what has been has been," and we must abide by the consequences. Therefore let us keep in mind that the past is unchangeable and so erect the fabric of our lives that each stone in it shall be well and truly laid.

THE GLACIAL PERIOD

II.

It was stated last Sunday that we are living in the Glacial Period, and possibly this may seem to some to be rather in the nature of a figurative expression; but it is literally true. A very considerable portion of the earth's surface is covered with what Sir George Nares called paleocrystic ice, that is, ice that has been in place from very ancient days and forms as much a part of the solid surface of the earth as do the rocks upon which it rests. It is well to remember that the normal state of water in high latitudes and high altitudes is solid. The great difference in a structural sense between the ice-cap at the South Pole and the underlying rocks is that the ice is being constantly added to by the falling snow and hence moves slowly towards the lower levels of its own weight.

It is quite impossible to estimate with any accuracy how much of the earth's surface is covered by glacial ice; but a few data may serve to give a vague idea of its extent. Greenland is of unknown area. It lies across fully twelve degrees of latitude, and has an average width of more than 200 miles. It is supposed to be 500,000 square miles in extent. By far the greater part of it is covered with a vast neve, out of which uncounted glaciers flow. The Antarctic Continent is estimated to have an area of 4,000,000 square miles, and the greater part of it seems to be covered with an enormous thickness of glacial ice. Icebergs have been seen in the South Polar Sea

extending 200 feet above the water. This implies a thickness of 2,000 feet for the glacier from which they broke away. We shall probably know more about the extent of the great southern glaciers when the full reports of the latest exploratory expeditions are made public, but sufficient is known at present to warrant the opinion that there may be millions of square miles of glaciers there. There is no means of arriving at any definite idea of the glacial area in America. It extends from the vicinity of Cape Horn to the vicinity of Point Barrow, not interruptedly, of course, but everywhere along the western mountain ranges, except in Mexico and Central America, there are glaciers. They are found even in Ecuador, which is directly under the Equator. The glaciers are numbered by hundreds, varying in size from the Taku, having an area of many square miles, to the smaller, whose surface consists of only a few acres. The glaciers of Asia are confined chiefly to the Himalayas, where they form the source of all the principal rivers of India. They are of vast extent as compared with those of Europe and the majority of those in America. There are glaciers in the Caucasus Mountains, but none in the Altai range. There are many glaciers in the Alps and their combined area is estimated at 1,100 square miles, which is about the same as the area of the Muir Glacier. There are small glaciers in the Pyrenees. The Scandinavian Peninsula has many of them. Spitzbergen, Nova Zembla and Iceland are also largely glacier-clad. Even in New Zealand there are glaciers, and probably some may be found in the highest elevations of Africa and Australia. Perhaps it would do as a rough approximation to say that the surface of the earth now covered by glaciers may be equal to the area of Canada, or upwards of 3,000,000 square miles. When we remember that in the Tertiary Age, which preceded the Glacial Period, the climate of the earth was such that tropical vegetation flourished at the North Pole, it will be apparent that we are yet living in the Ice Age, although there is abundant reason for believing that its local rigors are diminishing.

It will be of interest to quote from Baron Nordenskiöld's account of his exploration of Greenland undertaken in 1883. He left Disco Bay, which is in latitude 69 deg. and journeyed for eighteen days across a continuous ice field. "Rivers were flowing in channels on its surface like those cut on land in horizontal strata of shale or sandstone, only that the pure deep blue of the ice-walls was by comparison infinitely more beautiful. After proceeding for various distances these rivers would plunge into yawning crevasses, whence they would find their way to the sea by sub-glacial channels." He goes on to say: "On bending down the ear to the ice, we could hear on every side a peculiar subterranean hum, proceeding from rivers flowing within the ice, and occasionally a loud single report, like that of a cannon, gave notice of the formation of a new glacier-cleft. In the afternoon we saw at some distance from us a well-defined pillar of mist, which when we approached it, appeared to rise from a bottomless abyss, into which a mighty glacier river fell. The vast, roaring water-mass had bored itself a vertical hole, probably down to the rock, certainly more than two thousand feet beneath, upon which the glacier rested." The Baron sent three Eskimos forward from this point. They travelled about one hundred and fifty miles further into the interior, and reported that one great ice-terrace extended over another seemingly for an indefinite distance.

Greenland may be taken as exhibiting the condition of a very great part of the northern hemisphere after the greatest rigor of the Glacial Period had passed away, just as the Antarctic Continent probably represents what it was like during the period of the greatest cold. We are, therefore, able to form a fairly accurate idea of what the glaciated portions of the earth were like during the geological period now under discussion. There were one or more centres of glacier formation, vast neves on which the snow fell and solidified into ice under the dynamic force of its own pressure. At one time it was thought that one continuous ice-sheet, originating in the North, moved slowly southward under the momentum given by its ever increasing weight, and perhaps also because of the centrifugal force contributed to it by the movement of the earth around its axis. This may not be accepted as settled, for there may have been several neves, or glacier-producing centres. At one time also, it was assumed that there was only one Glacial Period. Now the general opinion seems to be that there may have been several. An opinion is also growing up that the glaciers may not have been as extensive at any one time as has been supposed. For example, the glacial action, whose effects we see on the Pacific Coast, may have taken place at a much later date than that on the Atlantic Coast. Tradition brings glacial action in lands now free from ice within the historic period, but geology takes no note of tradition, although possibly if it did, it might find a clue to the solution of some of its difficulties.

She—Say, are those poems in the papers Oedipus yours?

He—Yes.

She—Well, the girls persisted that they were and I always spoke up for you.

The paper of which our money is made is manufactured of linen rags from the Orient and of silk from Italy or China.