

# An Hour with the Editor

## THE ROMAN EMPERORS

The murder of Probus was followed by the elevation of Carus to imperial rank. He was not only the choice of the army in Gaul, but he was the person, who would have been the choice of his predecessor, if he had been able to make one. Carus was a brilliant soldier of humble origin, possessing the qualities needed in the field rather than those required in the council room. He was of austere habits and of great personal courage. His selection by the army was ratified by the Senate, but that proceeding was purely formal, for under Probus his powers had become practically extinct. The brief reign of this emperor—he only wore the purple a year and four months—was occupied chiefly by an expedition against Persia. That his hands might be free for military operations, he conferred the civil administration upon his two sons, giving to Carinus the West and to Numerian the East. When he reached the Persian frontier an embassy came from the capital of the Great King, as he was called, soliciting terms of peace. Carus received the embassy sitting upon the grass with a piece of stale bacon and a dish of peas before him. Whether this was done of a purpose, or was simply illustrative of the simplicity which Aurelian and Probus had introduced into the army, cannot be told with certainty. There is no doubt of its effect upon the ambassadors. They knelt humbly and asked the Emperor's wishes. He demanded the instant submission of the King, saying, if he presumed to resist, "I will make Persia as bare as my head," at which he pulled off the skull cap that he wore, disclosing a head without a hair upon it. The ambassadors returned, but the King of Persia was not dismayed by their report, although at that time the forces of the kingdom were occupied on the frontier of India. Carus met with success at the outset, and his plans would probably have succeeded if he had not died during a severe thunderstorm under conditions which led to the belief that he was struck by lightning, although his intimate officers denied that such was the case, claiming that his death was due to a disease from which he was known to be suffering. It is probable, however, that this was only a pious fraud, designed to keep the soldiers from believing that the gods were unfavorable to the expedition. It was the current belief in Rome that a place struck by lightning was accursed, and the practice was to enclose it with a fence so that no one might approach it. The soldiers refused to accept the explanation that the Emperor's death was due to sickness, and when it was recalled that an ancient augury had fixed the limits of the Empire at the River Tigris, the troops would be satisfied with nothing but retreat, and the Persians, to their amazement saw a victorious force abandon its conquest and return to its own base.

Carinus and Numerian were thereupon recognized as emperors. The former was dissolute and indolent; the latter inherited the excellent qualities of his father. Carinus had remained in Rome, where he violated all the rules of decency in his manner of living, combining with his licentious habits a cruelty which was without any justification. In the course of a few months he was married and divorced nine times, and his conduct generally was that of a man who had no sense or responsibility, except to amuse himself and keep the people amused. For this purpose he caused the most remarkable exhibitions to be given in the great theatre, known as the Circus Maximus. This vast structure was capable of seating, it is said, 38,000 people. During the reign of Probus, a forest was taken up by the roots and transplanted into this place, and at a given signal a thousand ostriches, a thousand fallow deer and a thousand wild-boars were let loose in it and were slaughtered. In the following day a hundred lions, a hundred lionesses, a hundred leopards and a hundred bears were turned into the forest, and these were slain by hunters, amid the applause of the multitude. Zebras, elks, camelopards, tigers, hippopotami, alligators, and, in short, every kind of animal that could be secured were brought to Rome that the people might enjoy the sight of the rage, which often found vent upon the hunters. But wonderful as these exhibitions were, they paled into insignificance before the splendor of the fetes given by Carinus. Some of his entertainments were given in the great building erected by Titus, which is now known as the Coliseum. In the arena enclosed by this structure, which provided seats for 80,000 people, the most extraordinary scenes were enacted. The equipment of the theatre was sumptuous. The long rows of seats were all softly cushioned; great canopies were arranged so that they could be raised or lowered to protect the spectators from the rays of the sun; a wire netting of gold served as a protection from the animals in the arena; fountains of perfumed water played in various places. The arena itself was arranged after a fashion that makes the best efforts of modern entertainers seem cheap and ineffective. A day's performance might open with the whole surface covered with fine sand upon which gladiators would contend; then on a signal water would flow upon it, and when it was deep enough would be put on, a fight that was real enough. This would be followed by the transformation of the arena to a representation of the deserts of Africa, or some other country, with the characteristic wild beasts stalking through it, and against these hunters would exhibit their skill. Perhaps when the arena was covered with water, instead of war galleys, hippopotami and alligators, and perhaps various marine monsters would be released to

swim or wade through it. On several occasions Carinus caused all the furniture of the great structure to be temporarily replaced with chairs and couches made of gold, silver and amber. Indeed, if we may believe contemporary accounts, the splendor of these public exhibitions given by Carinus were such as has been equalled in no age and in no country. It seems also as if mechanical skill must have reached a degree of perfection such as has never since been attained.

While Carinus was displaying such qualities in Rome, his brother Numerian was exhibiting regal characteristics in the East, but unhappily his life was cut short by illness. His place was taken by a soldier named Diocletian, who, as we shall see, was one of the most remarkable men that the Empire ever produced. Diocletian set out with his army for Rome to assert his new authority, and Carinus unwillingly advanced against him. Once in the field, however, he showed considerable capacity. His troops were physically more than a match for those of Diocletian, for the latter had been worn out by long campaigns in the East. When the armies met victory was with the banners of Carinus, but in the very hour of his triumph the Emperor was slain by one of his officers, who had a deep personal grievance against him, and the way to the throne was left clear to Diocletian. This was in May, 285, a year and four months after the death of Carus.

## A "FRANKENSTEIN"

Do you know the story of Frankenstein? Perhaps you may not be quite sure about it, and so its outlines may be given. It is a tale by Mary Wollstonecroft Shelly, wife of the poet, and is about the most gruesome thing in literature. Frankenstein is an ambitious mechanic, who sets out to build a creature that shall be human-like in its mechanism, trusting that a divine spark from Heaven will give it life. He succeeds, and the monster is human in everything except the finer senses of our nature. The machine hates its creator, whom it seeks to destroy. It slays all his family and finally pursues him to the far North, where Frankenstein dies, and those who come to rescue him find the horrible monster standing over his corpse. When they draw near it leaps over the ship's side, and is lost in the ice. Very often this imaginary monster is referred to under the name of its maker, and that is why when a person is seized beyond his control by some device of his own invention, mental or physical, the controlling power is called a Frankenstein. It is in this sense that Current Literature, commenting upon the poem which follows, speaks of our "Industrial Frankenstein." The poem is by Charles Buxton Going, and originally appeared in Hampton's Magazine. It is as follows:

Shot and furnace and forge—  
Thus have ye set me free  
On the roadway that leads the gorge  
And the ship as it takes the sea!

"God through infinite ages had given me rest;  
Yours was the forest, the flint, the girde of skin.  
But primal lord of the beasts, were ye cursed or blest  
When ye called me out of my slumber to serve  
your kin?"

For what ye have launched ye must ride,  
Whither it tends ye must fare.  
The choice ye have made ye must abide—  
Ye perish, unless ye dare!

"That which ye think in your inmost souls, I do—  
Build, or shatter; till, or ravage the land.  
I am the sword, and I am the scalpel, too—  
Unto your fertile brain, the tireless hand."

That I have grasped, ye must hold.  
That which ye hold, ye must use.  
Ye chose one to serve you, of old—  
Now, are ye free to choose?

"The work ye plan and I do may raven your soul;  
The pace ye set and I take ye never can drop.  
Fast and yet faster I drive—but whether the goal?  
Stopping were chaos; but what if ye do not stop?"

Iron of hand and of heel,  
Speeding the engines of fate,  
Ye have wrought out a world of steel  
Ye are helpless to uncreate!

According to the poet, humanity has forged for itself fetters of steel from which there is no escape. Out of all the materials stored in the earth we have selected iron to do our bidding, and we seem to be caught in its resistless clutch. As the years pass we devote our energies to discovering new uses for this terrible metal. It is said that this is the Iron Age. Mythology tells us of a Golden Age, which was a time when life was simple, and men lived solely from the fruits of the earth. Poetry speaks of a Silver Age, when the world was given up to luxury and godlessness. Geology tells us of a Stone Age, when men had fallen almost as low as the brutes, by which they were surrounded. History speaks of a Bronze Age, when men began to make progress in the arts, and chiefly in the art of war. Then came the Iron Age, and we are yet living in it. These Ages were supposed by the ancient Greeks to be dependent upon what was called "the world-year," its length being determined by the time required by the stars to complete their great revolution around the central point of the Universe, the several Ages corresponding in a way to the seasons of our ordinary years. After the revolution has been completed, everything will begin over again, and history will repeat itself on a mammoth scale.

How long the Iron Age has continued we are not quite sure, but it is comparatively modern. While there is no doubt that iron ores

were smelted in India at a very early day, and that the people of Britain knew how to utilize iron before the Roman invasion, the general use of this metal did not begin much earlier than the Christian Era. The reign of Christianity and of the Iron Frankenstein are, therefore, almost identical so far as time is concerned. It is only of comparatively recent years that we have begun to deal with steel in any large and diverse way, or, as our poet puts it, that steel has grasped us. Up to two hundred years ago the production of iron was small, and before the invention by Watt of the steam-engine the uses to which this metal was put were limited. Then it began to get a grip upon us, and from that time onward the history of our civilization has been the history of iron. No longer do we, like the Romans, seek out the least refractory ores and reduce them to metallic form in open fires; we lay under tribute the most difficult of mineral compounds and wrest from them their iron. We must have iron. We seek it as though it were the Kingdom of God. Mankind is not strong enough to stand up against its power. All Europe today is feverish with efforts to prepare to use iron in works of destruction. The nations rest their claims to existence, not upon liberty, justice and honor, but upon ships of iron, guns of iron, shells of iron in the form of steel. It is iron, iron everywhere. We use the force of steam to urge ships of iron across the ocean, to draw carriages of iron with the speed of the wind across the land. Our ancestors lived in rude houses made of clay; their descendants learned how to bake the clay into bricks and so built higher. Today we use iron and pile up structures which dwarf the Pyramids.

Where will it lead us? The poet tells us that we are "helpless to uncreate." There can be no step backward. As we harnessed steam to iron, so now we are learning how to harness petrol, a product of the rocks, to this awful metal; so also are we learning how to harness electricity to it properly. Already it has been discovered how a man can stand inland and, by the use of electricity, and without any other contact than is possible through the ether, control the movements of submarine iron monsters, which, when the operator so desires, can discharge missiles of iron against floating monsters of iron and send all on board to a grave beneath the waters. It is all very terrible. This is our higher civilization. Thus far have we climbed above the golden days when men lived without toil and without war, when the fruits of the garden were sufficient for them. We seem to get a new meaning of the story of Eden. The shot and shell, piled in hundreds of arsenals, are the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge.

## THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS

"And angels came and ministered unto Him." These are the words with which St. Matthew closes his account of the temptations of Jesus. No one can ever know just what Matthew closes his account of the temptations read them we must keep in mind, just as we ought to when reading other things contained in the New Testament, that they were descriptive of events taking place in a world that was very similar to the world of the year 1911. There were no forces, agencies or powers existing then do not exist now, and none now existing that did not exist then. We have learned to use some of them that our predecessors of nineteen centuries ago did not know how to employ; we may have forgotten how to utilize some with the operation of which they were quite familiar, but that is the only difference in respect to such forces, agencies and powers between the Twentieth Century and the First. If there were angels, who could minister when Tiberius was Emperor of Rome; there are angels who can minister now when George V. is King of England, and if there are none now, we may be very certain that there were none then.

Having got this idea well into our minds, let us see under what circumstances the ministering angels came. Matthew tells the story in his plain, blunt way. Jesus had gone into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, whatever that may mean, and after a prolonged period of fasting the temptations became very strong, but when He had successfully resisted them, the angels came. Now this is either true or false. You, who profess to believe the Gospels, must concede that it is true, and if it is true, what do you think of it? Do not waste any time endeavoring to make up your mind as to the nature of angels, for you can never find out. The word "angel" means a messenger, not necessarily a being. Ancient poets have given angels the form of women, just as ancient poets gave a woman's form to the dawn, to night and to death. Many of our conceptions of the Deity and the occult forces of nature are derived from the language of poets of the products of artists' brushes. Therefore we may not deny the existence of ministering angels simply because, so far as any one can see, there cannot be any place in the Universe for white-robed winged messengers executing the decrees of Omnipotence. The existence of non-existence of ministering angels cannot be established as we can prove the existence of the Kaiser or that there was such a person as Queen Elizabeth; it can be proved as we prove the reality of wireless telegraphy, in which none of us hesitate to believe, although mortal eye has never seen the vibrations of the ether, or whatever it may be that carries messages through the air and even through the solid rocks.

Therefore, when we read that angels min-

istered unto Jesus, we may not deny it, for in the first place we are not quite sure just what is meant, and in the next place we have no right to deny the occurrence of an event the possibility of which we have never tested. This article is not intended as an argument either for or against the existence of angels, but is meant only to make clear what the quotation from the Gospel really implies. The story as told by Matthew, is one of fasting, temptation, angelic ministrations and supernatural power. Here is a regular sequence. The active mission of Jesus, the mighty works which He accomplished, the profound truths which He taught, and His sublime self-sacrifice came only after the visit of the ministering angels. This is the thought, and the only thought, that it is proposed to advance this morning. It may be worth much or it may be worth little. It may only be a stupid groping in the dark; it may be a suggestion that, if followed, will lead to light. If there are messengers of some nature passing between the Omnipotent and ourselves, it would be a great and helpful thing to know it. Is this the great mystery of the occult, a mystery which we cannot fully grasp because we have not, like Jesus, purified our bodies by fasting and strengthened our souls by trampling all temptations under our feet?

## TALES OF ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

### Egypt—The Pharaohs

#### IV.

In the history of Egypt's earliest days it is the figure of the king that stands out most prominently. All lesser personalities, as well as all events, group themselves about him. The old pictures represent him as being head and shoulders above the rest of mankind, and twice as large as any women who appear in the pictures with; for as the Pharaohs were considered as closely akin to the gods and possessing all the godly attributes, it would have been sacrilege to represent them as ordinary men. Their kinship to the deities was traced through the god Ra, and through Horus, son of Isis and Osiris, whom we wrote about last week. The Egyptians believed that every man possessed a double, and in many of the pictures on the tombs we see the likeness of the man himself followed by a smaller representation supposed to be the double, or the soul. The soul continued to live after the body had become dust. In the case of the Pharaohs this double was no less than the soul of the departed Horus himself, which became reincarnated at the birth of each king.

Therefore the honors paid to the Egyptian kings were unique. "He is approached, more eyes and head back bent; they 'sniff' the earth before him, they veil their faces with both hands to shut out the splendor of his appearance; they chant a devout form of adoration before submitting to him a petition." No one was free to dispense with any of this ceremony; even his ministers and the greatest lords in the land were obliged to approach him as a worshipper before a god. He was the mediator between man and the gods, and intervened on behalf of the rest of humanity to the deities, who would listen to his pleadings when they would remain deaf to the entreaties of all others.

The Pharaoh's costume was a complicated one, and every different garment and ornament had its deep significance. Besides the ordinary chieftain's tunic and toga, he wore the petticoat, the jackal's tail, the turned-up sandals, "and the insignia of the supreme gods, the ankh, the crook and the flail, and the scepter tipped with the head of a jerboa or a hare. He put on the many-colored diadems of the gods, the head-dresses covered with feathers, the white and red crowns, either separately or combined. The viper or Uraeus, in metal or gilded wood, which rose from his forehead, was imbued with a mysterious life, which made it a means of executing his vengeance and accomplishing his secret purposes. It was supposed to vomit flames and to destroy those who would dare to attack its master in battle. The supernatural virtues which it communicated to the crown made it a supernatural thing that no one could resist. Lastly, Pharaoh had his temples, where his enthroned statue, animated by one of his doubles, received worship, prophesied and fulfilled all the functions of a divine being, both during his life and after he had rejoined in the tomb his ancestors, the gods who existed before him, and who now reposed impassively within the depths of the pyramids."

But for all his magnificence and his godly bearing, Pharaoh possessed human feelings as well, and history tells us that he was kindly and playful in the home, fond of the company of wives and children. The ancient artists, who made the pictures on the walls of the great kings' tombs, depict Pharaoh displaying a little stiff tenderness toward his wives. We see him in one picture gravely laying his hand upon the cheek of a very small woman in a very tall crown, and in another picture he is permitting a similar person to move the pieces on a draught-board. Probably this was as far as the old-time artist dared to go, fearing to be condemned if he treated the majestic figure of the Pharaoh with too much levity.

Though Pharaoh led a busy life, often at war, and when at home acting the part of high priest on all great occasions, superintending the erecting of important buildings and monuments, hearing petitions, giving judgment, and like the chiefs of old, spending many weeks hunting, considering it his duty, as they did, to free the country from wild animals that devastated the villages, yet he very often

found time hang heavily upon his hands, and it was the duty of those attendant upon him to devise various ways of curing his ennui. Sometimes his pastimes were harmless, sometimes they were not. The sacrifice of human life was not considered when it was a question of diverting Pharaoh. Once a sorcerer had boasted before Cheops that he could raise the dead, and the Pharaoh immediately demanded that he should make good his claim. He had a prisoner brought before him upon whom the sentence of death had already been pronounced, and the sorcerer was given his opportunity. The story provokingly ends there, so we do not know what the outcome may have been, though we can form a fairly accurate guess, perhaps.

There were many women in the Pharaoh's harem, most of them chosen from among the relatives of the great feudal lords or the court ministers, but some of them prisoners or hostages taken in battle selected for their beauty and high birth. "Most of them" remained merely concubines for life, others were raised to the rank of "royal spouses," and at least one received the title of "great spouse," or queen. This was rarely accorded to a stranger, but almost always to a princess born in the purple, a daughter of Ra, if possible a daughter of the Pharaoh, and who, inheriting in the same degree and in equal proportion the flesh and blood of the Sun-god, had more than the others the right to share the bed and throne of her brother. She had her own house and a train of servants and followers as large as those of the king; while the women of inferior rank were more or less shut up in the parts of the palace assigned to them, she came and went at pleasure, and appeared in public with or without her husband." She was supposed to possess the attributes of a goddess, and to be especially powerful in banishing all malignant spirits and summoning the beneficent ones. She assisted her royal husband in making the daily sacrifices, heard petitions with him, and when he was absent from the kingdom, governed for him. Even after his death she did not lose any of her dignity; if the successor was under age she acted as regent, and in case of her being without issue, there was no law forbidding her to marry her husband's successor, although this very seldom happened.

But the palace, crowded with the king's wives and their numerous progeny, must have been a hot-bed of evil intrigue, just as are all places where polygamous conditions prevail. We are told that Pharaoh's wives were constantly plotting against one another, and that the children themselves had no bond of union except a common hatred for the son whom the chances of birth had destined to be their ruler. It would take pages and pages to describe the many buildings which composed the Pharaoh's palace, the endless retinue of servants and their multitudinous duties. The king's toilet alone required scores of adepts at several trades. There were the royal barbers, the hair-dressers, the manicurists, the perfumers, shoemakers, belt-makers, tailors, and laundresses, who took the linen "daily to wash in the river; they rinsed, starched, smoothed and pleated it without intermission to supply the incessant demands of Pharaoh and his family."

## ST. MARTIN'S SUMMER

When the bloom has left the grass,  
And the frost has bronzed the trees,  
When the song-birds southward pass,  
Tossed like dead leaves on the breeze,  
Come a few rare sunny days,  
As if Summer, with a sigh,  
Turned a soft reluctant gaze  
Ere she bade the North good-by.

These few days of warmth and glow  
Bear the good St. Martin's name,  
For a deed done long ago,  
With no thought or wish of fame.

Once a beggar weak and old  
Sat beside the public way,  
Numb and fainting with the cold,  
On a bleak November day.  
Busy people, not a few,  
Passed him with a careless stare,  
Till the good St. Martin drew  
Near the place and found him there.  
He uncloaked about his throat  
His own garment, thick and warm,  
Wrapped the beggar in his coat,  
And fared on into the storm.

Then, to shield the saint from cold,  
Heaven sent a summer day;  
Sunshine fell in streams of gold,  
From a sky as soft as May.

It was years and years ago,  
But the seasons never fail  
To repeat that warmth and glow,  
Lest we should forget the tale.  
And St. Martin still is blest,  
Not for formal rites or creed,  
But for what God loves the best—  
Gentle heart and kindly deed.

—Adalena F. Dyer.

Sexton—And did the new curate speak?  
Parson—Oh, yes, he passed a few cursory remarks.

Sexton—Dear me, sir! How shocking.

"John is making quite a lot of money nowadays, I guess."  
"Has he paid you what he owed you?"  
"No, but he hasn't tried to borrow any more."