

An Hour with the Editor

THE ROMAN EMPERORS

On the retirement of Diocletian and Maximian, Constantius and Galerius assumed the title of Augustus, as the new constitution of the state provided, the former retaining supremacy in the west and the latter in the east of the Empire. These men were cast in very different molds. Constantius was gentle and unassuming, living a life of simplicity; Galerius was severe and haughty, surrounding himself with all the magnificence of which the East was the home. Both men were personally courageous and excellent soldiers. It became necessary to select two Caesars and Constantius, either from indifference or a desire to avoid discord, assented to the selection of both of them by Galerius, who chose his nephew, afterwards known as Maximian, a youth of no experience, and Severus, who had occupied a somewhat humble position in his court. The latter was given the government of Italy and Africa; the former that of Egypt and Syria. Galerius retained as his own jurisdiction the region between Italy and Syria, and thus, either directly or indirectly, through his appointees, was supreme over three-fourths of the Empire. Constantius was at this time in poor health, and Galerius began to make arrangements for a successor to the throne of the west, his ambition being to make himself the absolute master of the whole realm.

At this time there appeared in the public life of the Empire a man, whose career marked an epoch in the history of the world. Constantine was not the greatest of the Roman emperors, perhaps, but he was a man of exceptional powers and certainly a Maker of History. He was born in the year 274. It is said by some writers that Britain was his birthplace, but others claim Greece as his native land. There is doubt also as to the family of his mother. It has been claimed that her father was a British king, but the weight of authority is to the effect that he was an innkeeper. When Constantine was made Caesar, he divorced Constantine's mother, and the youth—he was eighteen—was thus placed in a position of great humiliation. He offered his services to Diocletian, instead of going west with the train of his father, and that emperor, who had a keen eye for merit, accepted them gladly. At this time Constantine was of tall and athletic figure, handsome in countenance, expert in athletic games and in the use of arms, gentle in his manners, prudent in his habits, and quite free from the vices of his day. His popularity with the soldiers was great, and Galerius, who had become Augustus, viewed his rapid promotion with jealousy. When news of this came to the ears of Constantine, he sent an urgent message to his son, asking him to join him in the West. On one pretext or another Galerius delayed his departure, but the young man finally escaped from the palace of Nicomedia by night and by forced journeys reached the coast of Gaul as his father was leaving for Britain to head an expedition against the Picts. The expedition was successful, but was followed by the death of Constantius, which occurred in 306. He had been Augustus for fifteen months previous to his death, and the soldiers, after some deliberation, acclaimed Constantine as Emperor and Augustus. Galerius was at first minded to reject the action of the army in Britain, but on consideration decided to recognize it, but to reduce Constantine's rank from that of Augustus to that of Caesar, a decision quite in keeping with the constitution prescribed by Diocletian. Constantine had too large a mind to permit a mere matter of title to stand in the way of his progress, and he accepted the lessening of his rank without complaint, acknowledged Severus as the new Augustus, and set himself to the task of strengthening himself in the esteem of the people over whom he ruled. The character of Constantine was well displayed in the treatment which he accorded to the children of Constantius by his second wife. A man of less exalted instincts might have revenged upon them the indignity done by Constantine to his mother, but Constantine treated the children with every possible consideration, and although they never received princely honors, he provided for them so that they were able to live in affluence and dignity.

The cost of maintaining four courts was very burdensome to the people of the Empire. Previous to the time of Diocletian there had been only one imperial court, and all the provinces contributed to its maintenance; but with great establishments to maintain in so many places, the tribute that had been paid to Rome by the other parts of the Empire was discontinued. The people of Italy had long been free of taxes, and when Galerius ordered that a census should be taken and that every one should make a statement of his property, there was profound discontent, which was all the greater, when it was found that torture was resorted to in order to compel people to make a full statement of their possessions. For five centuries the people of Italy had contributed nothing to the Imperial exchequer, and the thought that an obscure peasant, who disdained to set foot in Rome, should assume the right to compel them to maintain his state in a distant province was more than they could bear. The discontent found expression in rebellion, and Maximian, son of the Emperor Maximian, was elevated to the throne of Italy. Maximian, who never willingly abstained from the assertion of his power, and who retired from office only because he was compelled to do so by the overshadowing influence of Diocletian, thought the time was ripe for his emergence from retirement, and so he again assumed the purple and caused himself to be proclaimed Augustus. Thus Rome had

at one and the same time five rulers claiming imperial rank, namely, Galerius and Severus, who were constitutionally Augusti; Maximian, who had proclaimed himself Augustus; Constantine, who was Caesar, and Maximian, who was also Caesar. Severus undertook the task of overthrowing Maximian, but he reckoned without that old yet able soldier. After a short but vigorous campaign, he was taken prisoner and conducted to Rome, where he was given his choice of death, and selected the painless one of opening his veins. Severus was a good administrator and a fairly able soldier. His weakness was a love of pleasure, which does not seem to have been marked by cruelty, as was usually the case in those days.

Maximian was not content with this success. He was a man of great vigor, and no sooner had order been restored in Italy than he set out for Gaul, his determination being to strengthen his position as Augustus by an alliance with Constantine. He found that prince very willing to enter into his plans, and perhaps the more so since Maximian offered him his beautiful daughter Fausta as his wife. The marriage took place at Arles in 307, when Constantine was thirty-three, and the fact that he had remained single to such an age shows his character in a notable light, for it was the custom of the princes of that time to marry early, and in most cases often. Constantine now began to prepare himself for the struggle that he had long anticipated. The innkeeper's grandson aimed at nothing less than the dominion of the world, and his alliance with the family of Maximian greatly strengthened his hands.

ORIGIN OF EVIL

Last Sunday an effort was made on this page to give some idea of the nature of wrongdoing considered from the standpoint of human relations. It was pointed out that the logical, or philosophical, deduction from the necessity of providing for self-preservation and racial preservation was that we should learn to do as we would be done by, and that in the Golden Rule, as laid down by Jesus, we have the very consummation of wisdom. It may not be amiss to consider for a little while the origin of wrongdoing. Many persons are sincerely of the opinion that men do wrong because they are influenced to do so by a being, who is omnipresent, omniscient and all but omnipotent, and is engaged in ceaseless warfare with the Creator. For this there is no warrant outside of poetry, although some of the poetry is doubtless very ancient. There is a disposition among men to believe that, as darkness is the opposite of light, silence the opposite of sound, weakness the opposite of strength, evil the opposite of good, there must be some being working for wrong in opposition to the Divine power which works for good. Hence the hypothesis of Satan, of whose existence so many people are so profoundly convinced, that it is surprising they do not add to their creed a statement that they believe in him. There is no need for such an hypothesis.

"Man is of the earth earthy," said the Apostle, although he prefaced the statement with the words "the first." In this fact we find the origin of evil. The source of evil is in ourselves. We do wrong because the actual or cultivated needs of our physical natures impel us to violate the rights of others. If man was ever perfect, he was content with what was his own. He felt the moment he began to desire what was some one else's, and we do no violence to the teachings of philosophy or religion if we suppose the first illustration of selfishness was prompted by the cravings of man's physical nature. Let your imagination carry you back to the early days of human history as disclosed by geology. Life was then a perpetual struggle to keep alive. If you choose to believe that previous to this period man lived in Edenic conditions, when there was no such thing as wrong-doing, you have not only sacred tradition to support your belief, but geology shows that such a state of things may easily have been possible. But let us confine ourselves to things of which there is incontrovertible evidence, evidence that every one must accept whatever his religious belief may be or if he has no religious belief at all. This evidence shows that there was a time in the history of mankind when every consideration had to give place to the all-important one of keeping alive. Then might became right; the weakest went to the wall; the fittest survived. The Cains slew the Abels. There was not enough for all, and the life of a man was as nothing to one who desired to have what the other possessed. This is no fancy picture. This is exactly how things must have been when men lived in caves and fought with the mammoth and the cave-bear. In this condition of life we find the foundation of human practices and of human society, and we may well believe that absolute disregard of the rights of others continued as long as the physical condition of the earth remained unameliorated. When it became easier to keep alive the incentive to deprive others of what kept them alive became less compelling, and the better nature of man began to assert itself. We must not lose sight of the fact that man's nature is dual, and that what we call wrong, that is, the things which the Ten Commandments prohibit, and against the doing of which we make laws, are physical acts, that is, they are things which are prompted by the actual or cultivated wants of our physical being.

But some may ask if this does not imply a denial of the idea that wrong-doing is a violation of Divine law. By no means. "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love

one another." It was new not in the sense that before it was uttered men were not under any obligation to obey the law of love, but in the sense that it drew attention to duties that were not merely negative, but positive. Everything that is dictated by selfish disregard of the rights of others is contrary to this law. You may ask how it was possible for men to observe this Divine law under the conditions described above. Perhaps it was impossible. Even in these days, when we are all free, theoretically at least, to enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and there is, or might be, abundance for us all, we know how the voice of our physical nature will drown that of conscience, and love for their children will prompt men to do what their consciences tell them is wrong and the law of man declares to be a crime. But the days of the cave-dwellers have passed; the privations of the Ice-Age have disappeared. The spiritual side of our natures has freer scope, and in the case of most of us absolutely free scope. Necessity, which is said to know no law, no longer has any real jurisdiction over most of us. We can do right if we wish to do right. Our wrongdoing is deliberate, and therefore we cannot complain if we find ourselves under condemnation. Human ideas of justice, of the distinction between right and wrong, are of no avail when we seek to characterize the conduct of those to whom Nature in bygone years made the burden of living almost too heavy to be borne, and to whom the wrongs of our modern social system make life little else than a curse. This thought makes it seem that if there must of necessity be somewhere a Fountain of Divine Justice, as if there must be an era or a place, where all that seems humanly wrong will be made right, as if there must be somehow a means provided for salvation from the sins of the world.

TALES OF ANCIENT CIVILIZATION Egypt—VII.

Queen Hatshepsitu, and the Voyage to Find the "Ladders of Incense."

The old legend which relates to the miraculous birth of this long-ago queen tells of how her mother was visited once in the night by the great god Amon, who descended from heaven in a cloud of perfume and flowers, and the result of the god thus honoring his handmaiden was the birth of Hatshepsitu, a daughter, perfect in form and feature, and of a great courage and wisdom. The pictures on the queen's tomb tell us the story of the child's birth into the world, of how her mother was attended by a troop of ministering heavenly spirits during her travail, and the child was born amid great rejoicing. They show also her earthly father presenting his infant to the nobles, declaring to them that she will reign over Egypt and the world. The Theban monuments represent the child grown to womanhood, retaining still the perfection of feature, but disguised as far as possible to look like a man, "with uncovered shoulders—wearing the short loin-cloth and the keffiyeh, while the diadem rests on her closely-cut hair, and the false beard depends from her chin." Whether in reality Hatshepsitu ever appeared in this guise or not is a matter of doubt; the monuments were made during her lifetime with the idea probably of deceiving posterity into believing that a true representation, for men were accorded higher honors than women, in death as well as in life.

However that may have been, Hatshepsitu was married while still very young to her brother Thutmosis, by whom she had several daughters. Thutmosis was her junior, and when his father died, though he inherited the kingly office, his wife was the real head of the state, and governed Egypt with a firm hand. Under her the country flourished, and building was done on a very large scale. One great monument in particular remains still a thing of wonderful beauty. It was that which she erected to her father Amon, and thus she describes it: "As I sat in the palace and thought upon him who created me, my heart prompted me to raise to him two obelisks of electrum, whose apices should pierce the firmaments, before the noble gateway which is between the two great pylons of the King Thutmosis I. . . . and the single block of granite has been cut without let or obstacle, at the desire of My Majesty, between the first of the second month of Piri of the Vth year, and the 30th of the fourth moon of Shomu of the Vth year, which makes seven months from the day when they began to quarry it." One of these obelisks is standing today amid the ruins of Karnak, graceful in outline and covered with a variety of beautiful figures as perfect as it was in those long-gone years when the queen and her brother looked proudly upon it.

When Thutmosis II. died, Queen Hatshepsitu reigned alone, and it was after the completion of the great monument that Amon enjoined a difficult task to be done in his honor. For the services in the temple aromatic gums were used in the making of incense, and these gums were brought from a great distance by slow transport, and must of necessity pass through "impure" hands. The most highly-prized of the gums was that obtained from the incense sycamore, which was brought across Africa, and which was supposed to lose much of its virtue in transit. Hundreds of years before Hatshepsitu's time there had been friendly intercourse between the Egyptians and the people of those aromatic regions, but now "None climbed the 'ladders of incense,' none of the Egyptians; they knew of them from hearsay, from the stories of people of ancient

times, for these products were brought to the kings of the Delta, thy fathers, to one or other of them, from the times of thy ancestors the kings of the Said, who lived of yore."

One day Hatshepsitu had gone to the temple to offer prayers; her supplications rose up before the throne of the Lord of Karnak, and a command was heard in the sanctuary, a behest of the god himself, that the ways which led to Puanit should be explored, and that the roads to the "Ladders of Incense" should be trodden. It should be explained that the word "Ladders" has not the meaning which we give it; it is employed in the text to signify "Khatin," meaning a country laid out in terraces.

Nothing was known of Puanit except that it lay to the south or to the extreme east, "that from thence many of the gods had come into Egypt, while from out of it the sun rose every morning." Amon described it as a place of delight, and of his own creation. He commanded that ships should be at once despatched to this faraway coast and "laden joyfully with living incense trees and with all the products of the earth."

So the voyage of exploration was begun. Hatshepsitu chose five "well-built galleys, and manned them with picked crews." She caused them to be laden with such merchandise as would be most attractive to the barbarians, and placing the vessels under the command of a royal envoy, she sent them forth upon the Red Sea in quest of the incense.

The expedition was in every way successful, and after many weeks reached the Land of Perfumes on the Somali coast. Their meeting with the natives, their parleying, the giving of bright beads and ornaments covered with gold, of dyed linens and polished weapons; the natives' naive delight, their merry hospitality, all find a parallel in many stories of adventure. "Have you come down by way of the sky?" asked the simple people, "or have you sailed on the waters of the Tonutir Sea? You have followed the path of the sun, for as the king of the land of Egypt, it is not possible to elude him, and we live—ourselves by the breath he gives us."

The rest of the story must wait for another chapter.

THE VEGETABLE KINGDOM II.

In the previous article brief reference was made to the reproductive power of vegetation. This is a quality which absolutely differentiates that kingdom from the kingdom of minerals. A nugget of gold may exist for an indefinite period. The sun may shine upon it for a million years, the rain may fall upon it, summer and winter may come and go, but it remains the same, except that it may be worn by the action of the rain and the winds. Plant a nugget of gold and it will never produce another of its kind. The smallest lichen can do what the mountain cannot do. It can grow; it can reproduce its kind. Here we are confronted with a barrier which Nature has placed in the pathway of Science, and on which She has inscribed: "Hitherto shalt thou come and no further, and here shall thy proud steps be stayed." There is no use in your going to your books to discover the source of this power of reproduction. It is not told in any book of science. In these days, when Science has moved forward a little on timid feet, and free thought has gone romping on ahead of it towards all manner of conclusions, it may be well to mention that all the wisdom of all the learned men that ever lived has not progressed a hair's breadth beyond the writer of the First Chapter of Genesis, who wrote: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed after its kind, and the fruit tree yielding fruit, whose seed is in itself upon the earth, and it was so." If you do not accept this explanation of the origin of vegetable life, you will have to do without any, for there is no other.

No one seriously claims that plants have intelligence, although some of them do things, which seem to indicate the possession of a property akin to it. One of the most remarkable, and at the same time most useful of these properties is in connection with reproduction. Take, for example, three very important articles of food, wheat, Indian corn and potatoes. These plants are of tropical origin, but they reach perfection in the Temperate Zone and in a latitude, where there is always an element of doubt as to whether they will attain it. What is perfection in a plant? It is its ability to reproduce its kind. A plant has not fully performed its functions until it has provided for a new generation; and here is the remarkable fact to which reference is made above. When the conditions under which reproduction is easy and certain, the plant produces little seed; where they are difficult it produces more. Wheat will grow luxuriantly in Louisiana, but a stalk of wheat will carry more grains in the Peace River than in the Gulf State. The corn states of the American Union are not the natural habitat of that grain, but they produce it in its best type. Our northern potatoes are infinitely superior to those grown in lands where the potato is indigenous. So also is the case of the apple. Its origin was in southeastern Europe and southwestern Asia; but the finest apples produced in those mild latitudes cannot be compared with the product of British Columbia, grown where at times the winter temperature is very low. It is true that cultivation and selection has had much to do with the superior excellence of northern grain, tubers and fruits, but the fact remains that the impelling instinct of reproduction, which every plant possesses, is the dominating factor in

bringing about this increased fruitfulness.

A notable thing about plant life is its ability to overcome the laws of gravitation. Plants as a general rule build upwards. There are exceptions, it is true. The lower forms of vegetable life grow laterally. The little green growth which we see on water and is known as water slime is a plant, and it grows laterally; so do the lichens on the rocks; but nearly all vegetation raises itself above the ground. This tendency is so strong that it seems almost resistless. A mushroom is a very frail structure, but in its effort to get upward, if only for a short day's life, it will lift up and push aside clouds of earth. There has been more than one instance in Victoria, where the ability of a frail plant to force concrete out of place has been demonstrated. The roots of a tree will throw great buildings out of perpendicular. What we call "the gnawing of time," the destroying factor in the case of ancient structures, is often vegetation. Plants demand room to grow, and while it is true that in their growth they follow the line of least resistance, the tendency is to grow away from the centre of the earth, although in order to do so, they send part of their growth deep into the soil to give themselves a secure foothold. The structure of some plants is so substantial that they retain their erect position even though their life principle has gone; in other instances it is the plant-life that seems to keep them erect. We all know this, although we all may not have thought much about it. A day or two ago two plants of the same kind were brought in from the garden. One stands erect; the other has drooped. Chemical analysis could not find in one anything that is not in the other. But something has gone out of one, and we say the plant is dead. What was that something? It could not be seen or weighed or measured; but it was as real as the mountain peaks across the Strait. This is one of Nature's insoluble riddles.

SMASH FOREIGN OFFICE SECRECY.

There is a growing feeling against the One Man control of the Foreign Office and the secrecy of that Man and his refusal to inform the House of Commons, whose servant he is, of what is going on behind the Foreign Office doors.

That great financial paper, the Economist, says that "Sir Edward Grey would do better for the country if he took it more into his confidence. His failures, we think, have been largely due to a well intentioned but ill-concealed reticence, and his good deeds would have borne more fruit if the House of Commons had been allowed, as it were, to participate. A one-man policy lacks strength, and secrecy is no guarantee of success. Moreover the penalty of secrecy is a constant leakage of secrets, along with mischievous whispers, rumors, and false reports."

"Both the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary were questioned from the Liberal and Tory benches on the tragic events in Tripoli," says the Nation. "The tone of both Ministers was peremptory, and we greatly regret that perfectly proper and urgent questions concerning not merely foreign policy, but common humanity and the decent conduct of war, which the Government is pledged under the Hague Convention to uphold, should be answered in this fashion. It becomes the urgent duty of the Liberal Party to call for a prompt discussion of the foreign policy of the Government."

The Star makes a very vigorous protest. "The two Front Benches," it says, "work together in concert and complicity in order to remove the conduct of Foreign Affairs from the knowledge and control of the House of Commons. Far different was it in the days of Disraeli and Gladstone. Then the Commons were free. Then Gladstone, aflame with indignation over the Bulgarian horrors, was able not only to cross examine Disraeli but to move a series of resolutions which threw a blaze of publicity on the facts."

"Today the position is analogous, but Italy is in the dock, and the horrors in question are Italian horrors. Sir Edward Grey, however, is able to stifle all questions and all criticisms. Unlike Disraeli he has not to face the House of Commons, for the House of Commons as an effective organ of criticism no longer exists."

"The only watch dog that is not muzzled is the Press. It is the stern duty of the Liberal Press to do what ought to be done on the floor of the House, and to say plainly what ought to be said there. The secrecy of the Foreign Office must be smashed, and the House of Commons must regain its liberty. If it cannot regain its liberty without breaking its absurd rules of procedure, then let the rules be broken. Are there not ten or twenty Radicals who will do this? For it must be done sooner or later."

"Consider the pass to which this secrecy has brought us. Sir Francis Lascelles, who for thirteen years was our Ambassador at Berlin, declared yesterday (Nov. 2) at the Mansion House (where men can actually use their tongues) that never in his experience had England been more furiously hated throughout the length and breadth of Germany than she is at the present moment. This is the work of our secret Foreign policy. The Liberal Party are not going to stand it any longer. They must have the facts out about Germany, and they must take control and see whether the awful devilry which is leading us towards war with Germany cannot be excoriated once and for all. There is no cause for enmity between Germany and England."