

No. 8--HEROES OF HISTORY.

(Written for the Desert News by Albert Payson Terhune.)

Augustus Caesar, the Politician Who Turned a Republic of Brick into An Empire of Marble.

A NINETEEN-YEAR-OLD boy—Gaius Octavius—came to Rome to claim his rights, in face of a world of opposition. A few years later he had made himself emperor of the world. The means whereby he gained that exalted rank were those of the politician, rather than the warrior or hero.

Rome had for centuries been a republic. Man after man had risen to high power, but had been checked by the people's will from becoming a Caesar, after making himself master of nearly all the world, wanted the crown, but, finding the populace hated the idea of a king, he postponed his plans for royalty until such time as he could win the people to his way of thinking. A party of Romans (calling themselves Republicans) was led by Marcus Brutus and Caius Cassius) feared lest he would lead the country as monarch, and conspired to kill him. They killed him without children. Octavius was his great-nephew and adopted son, and as such became his heir. The 19-year-old lad was completing his education in Greece, when (in 44 B. C.) he received news of his uncle's assassination. He hurried at once to Rome to claim his inheritance.

Octavius' prospects at this time did not amount to much. Every one in Rome was too busy with personal ambitions and schemes for making soldiers of the disturbed state of politics to pay much attention to the boy. Mark Antony, Caesar's friend and boon companion, had seized all the murdered dictator's papers and property, and was in no hurry to turn them over to the legal heir. The men who had assassinated Caesar paid equally little attention to the youngster's claim. It was enough to discomfit any ordinary man. But young Octavius was far from being an ordinary man. He laid his plans with all the skill of a born politician, and proceeded to put them into effect.

First he won over Cicero, foremost orator of the age, making use of the latter's hatred for Antony. Next he drew to him by liberal use of money and still more liberal promises a large part of the army, and used these soldiers to secure a senate into arranging for his election as consul. Through Cicero's aid he next caused Antony to be declared a public enemy. Antony allied himself with Lepidus, a general commanding a large Roman army, and prepared to march on the capital. Octavius, with his few soldiers, advanced to meet them. But before the two armies could meet together he arranged a secret meeting between Antony, Lepidus and himself. He pointed out to them that by quarreling they would only bring on civil war and a series of doubtful issues, but that by combining (into what was known as a "triumvirate") they could seize the reins of government, and, at their leisure, parcel out the rulership of the world among them. This appealed to Antony and Lepidus, and the triumvirate was formed.

The three then publicly declared themselves a ruling committee for the reconstruction of Rome's unsettled affairs. They entered the city at the head of their troops. To do away with all opposition they drew up a list of men who did not approve of their seizing the government, and added to this the names of their personal enemies. This list they handed over to the authorities, with the command that all the men named therein be put to death. Thus 300 senators and 2,000 noblemen were executed and no one left in power except such officials as favored the triumvirate. On the list, by Antony's order, was Cicero's name. Octavius, to keep peace with Antony, willingly sacrificed his old friend and supporter. The triumvirate's forces next marched against the republican army led by Brutus and Cassius and put it to rout, killing its leaders. The last adherents of the old Roman republic were thus put out of the way, and the triumvirate was left in undisputed power.

But Octavius had no idea of sharing his rulership with anyone. He resolved to get rid of his two allies as quickly as possible. With Antony's help he robbed Lepidus of all real power, then set about to destroy Antony. In this fate aided him, for Antony, choosing the eastern half of Rome's empire as his share of the spoils, became enamored of Cleopatra, the fascinating queen of Egypt. The love affair gradually robbed him of his popularity and power in Rome. Octavius soon found excuse to make war on the two royal lovers, and in a few years had caused Antony's overthrow and death. This left Octavius sole ruler of the Roman world. His "chance" had at last come.

By bribing the populace and the army, putting to death the few remaining persons who could oppose his reign, and pretending to keep up an outward show of the old-time republican government, he cleared the way for assuming what was practically the rank and title of emperor. Rome held the word "king." So he was called "Imperator" ("Commander," or "Emperor"), and took the surname of Augustus. Having won, by guile, murder and trickery, the rule of the world, Augustus forthwith became an ideal sovereign. An era of peace and prosperity set in. War, violence and hard times were succeeded by culture, the arts, general improvement and progress.

Finding that the people, worn out with strife, were glad to accept his rule, Augustus relaxed the barbarous cruelty he had heretofore employed, and became a merciful, wise ruler. He encouraged literature and high civilization. Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Livy and other great writers flourished under his patronage. Art and architecture also came to the front. It was Rome's golden age, even as the reign of Louis XIV was the golden age of France. Yet all this foreshadowed Rome's fall. For the empire, built on blood and battle, was now turning to the luxury which was at last to wreck it even as dissipation and idleness sap the strength of a prize-fighter.

Yet at the time no one foresaw this. The beauty and grandeur to which, during his half-century of sovereignty, he raised the country, led Augustus to say in dying: "I found Rome a city of brick. I leave it a city of marble." So far as outward show went, the same might have been said of all the Roman emperors. Yet the "marble," beautiful and rich as it was, was a mere shell, and had not the sturdy strength of the "brick" that had been cemented together by the lifeblood of countless heroes.

Without a son to succeed him; with no sure hope that the empire he had so laboriously built up would endure, his heart broken by domestic strife and his fame already on the decline, Augustus died in 14 A. D., leaving his throne a prey to squabbling claimants, his court a network of vicious plots and his country well started on the road that was to lead to its utter ruin. This was the reward reaped and the price paid by the first emperor of Rome.

KNOWLEDGE OF EGYPT IS BEING INCREASED

The knowledge of ancient Egypt is constantly being increased by the work of the excavator who was exemplified recently at the annual meeting of the School of Archaeology in Egypt held at University College.

Prof. Petrie dealt with the most recent discoveries, those which have been lately made in the course of the present year. For more than a month, he and his collaborators had been

at work at Ghizeh, near the well known pyramids, and then for more than two months at a spot about eight miles south of Assuan.

The discoveries ranged over every age of Egyptian history. The site near Ghizeh was that on which the Egyptian officials some two or three years ago found a tomb of the first dynasty. Their hopes of making fresh finds there had not been disappointed. In particular they had found a large circular tomb, probably that of some royal personage, not necessarily of a king. Most likely it was the tomb of a king's son. The period, which had been ascertained to a certainty, was that of the third king of

the first dynasty. Here they unearthed portions of 30 stone vases and a number of small articles. One of these small articles was a bracelet, not made of gold and turquoise, like the celebrated one found some years ago at Abydos, but of blue glass, which showed that royal ornaments were imitated in cheaper materials for the humbler members of the community. Another tomb contained 30 or 40 stone vases of the second dynasty, the largest group of that period ever brought to light. Ghizeh, the burial place for Memphis, had hitherto been considered to have been founded by one of the kings of the fourth dynasty, but as a result of these researches it was found that it had existed from the time of the first dynasty.

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SOME FACTS ABOUT EUROPE'S UNIVERSITIES

Europe has now 125 universities, with a total student body of 28,721. Next to Paris and Berlin come in point of attendance Budapest (6,551), Vienna (6,265), Moscow (5,860), Madrid (5,196), Naples (4,918), St. Petersburg (4,652).

The cost of maintaining the nine universities of Prussia has increased from 1860 to 1906 from \$9,850,000 to \$40,080,000, or an increase of 313 per cent for regular expenses, says the Independent. In addition new buildings and the like have cost a further \$24,000,000. Berlin alone requiring nearly \$7,500,000.

Berlin is fast becoming for Germany what Paris is for France, the overwhelming center of university life. In addition to its 3,320 matriculated students, about 7,000 others are permitted to attend lectures, making a total of only a thousand less than the reports claim for Paris.

In general the universities in the large centers of population increasingly attract the greatest number of students in Germany. Munich has now 5,943 full students, Leipzig 4,341, Bonn, 3,203, while the smaller university towns report no corresponding growth.

Even greater is the growth of the technological institutes. There are ten of these in Germany, with a total enrollment of 15,790 matriculated students. Through the influence of the Kaiser these schools have now been placed on an equality with the universities.

The women contingent is now 2,824 in the universities, of whom 320 are matriculated. In 1890 the number was only 664. Naturally Berlin leads with 771, but no Prussian university will matriculate a woman or admit her to examinations. This right she has in all but Rostock, in Mecklenburg.

The number of students in the Italian universities, according to late statistics, is 27,160, while in 1893 it was only 21,870, so that there are now eighty students to every 100,000 inhabitants. The greatest increase is in the law department, from 5,630 in 1894 to 9,421, while rather remarkably the medical department has gone back from 6,521 to 4,731 during these years.

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MAPS AND COMPASSES TO USE ON AIRSHIPS

An enterprising Paris firm is busy with a birdseye map of France, on which, for the use of aeroplanists and balloonists and air-navigators generally, the direct distances from town to town will be marked in clear figures. Now that the navigation of the air is a thing of the near future, people are realizing how difficult it is for the captain of an airship to find out exactly where he is, and maps will not be sufficient for this purpose. Traveling at the rate of 50 miles an hour, which is a speed already made by airships of all kinds, it is quite impossible to recognize a landscape from above.

The French Aero club is offering prizes for the invention of an airship's compass. The ordinary compass is no good at all. For some reason, as has already been proved on motor-boats, the action of the motor's magnet influences the compass so that no reliance can be placed on it. In the motor-boat race from Algiers to Toulon the boats had to follow torpedo-boats. They could not find their way across without them. In the race from Boulogne to Folkestone, where all the competitors had ships' compasses, most of them lost their way across the channel, and one of them spent all day rushing round Calais, and found himself off Cape Grinez in the evening, while several went to Dover by mistake instead of to Folkestone. So an airship compass will be a very necessary thing in the immediate future.

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STREET SCENE IN CARACAS.

Some idea of the tempestuous happenings of the past month can be gathered from the accompanying illustration, which depicts the little Venezuelan soldier on duty in the streets of Caracas, which have been in a state of constant turmoil since President Castro fled. Revolutions are an almost everyday occurrence in these parts, and the little soldiers are put to acute strains.

