

Arbor Day Hymn.

Air—My Maryland.

Now join we all in glad some song,
This Arbor Day, glad Arbor Day;
And lift a chorus sweet and strong
To hail the balmy month of May.
The birds are singing in the trees,
The flowers are springing at our feet,
And sunshine tempers every breeze
This Arbor Day, glad Arbor Day.

O nature fair, we sing to thee,
This Arbor Day, glad Arbor Day;
Rich nature, who with hand so free
Hath lavished beauties in our way,
God give us eyes thy works to see,
God give us hearts that know thy love,
And souls that feel thy harmony,
This Arbor Day, glad Arbor Day
—VERNON P. SQUIRES.

CLEOPATRA

(Editorial in Victoria Colonist, C. H. Lugin, editor.)

We shall never know what the real Cleopatra was like. That she was a woman of extraordinary personal charms seems to be unquestionable. That she was a woman of brilliant attainments may be inferred from the fact that she was said to be able to converse freely in seven languages. That she was possessed of great talents may be inferred from the ascendancy over Caesar and Antony. She came of a family which produced many great men. She was a daughter of the Ptolmeys, a family, which originating in Greece, ruled Egypt for three centuries. The splendor of their reigns was remarkable and some of the sovereigns of the name gained great renown by their literary and scientific attainments. Cleopatra was born in 69 B. C. and died in 30 B. C. having been therefore only 39 years old at the time the little serpent ended her short but meteoric career. When eighteen years of age she ascended the throne of Egypt conjointly with her brother. The latter dispossessed her, whereupon Caesar came to her rescue, with the result that she was restored to her place and her brother was driven from the kingdom. Two years later she repaid Caesar for his kindness by going to Rome to live with him. She remained there for two years until immediately after Caesar's death. Of her relations with Antony and her tragic death on being falsely told that he had been slain at Actium it is not necessary to say anything.

Cleopatra is interesting as a type of her sex at the meridian splendor of ancient civilization. In some respects we fall to-day very short of the height attained in Egypt and Rome during the century preceding the beginning of the present era. When Cleopatra visited Antony at Tarsus in 41 B. C., her voyage is said to have been marked by inconceivable magnificence. Ingenuity and wealth exhausted themselves in contributing to the pleasure of those in power in those days. Yet such men as the Ptolmeys and such women as Cleopatra were not mere voluptuaries. The fine arts received their patronage; literature flourished under their influence, what then passed for science was greatly encouraged by them. Among them were great soldiers, great statesmen, men of the broadest ideas. There were philosophers among them, careful students, profound scholars. Yet along with all these admirable traits we find an abandonment to sensual pleasures that is incomprehensible to the people of our own days. We

would find ourselves unable to understand how, for example, a European queen could sink to such a level that at the time of a crisis in the affairs of her kingdom she would go to a foreign capital and live as mistress of the sovereign in exchange for his protection against another country, or that the people of either country would tolerate any such conduct on their ruler's part. That Cleopatra could have done this and that Caesar lost no standing by it serves to show upon how very different a plane society was ordered then to what is now. The age was one of intense materialism, against which the teachings of the Neoplatonists in Egypt and of Christ in Palestine were protests. Of this materialism Cleopatra was a splendid representative. For her there was nothing in life comparable to material enjoyment, and when the man of her choice was reported slain, all the greatness and glory of her surroundings all the traditions of her illustrious race were as nothing. Only in death could she find solace. In her we have the spirit of ancient civilization typified. It was of the earth earthy. It was great in material achievements; it was little in everything which tended to the elevation of man to his true position. We can find in the career of this remarkable woman, if we look closely enough, all that is necessary to account for the fall of the empires of her day and the centuries immediately preceding. They built upon a foundation that was not abiding, because they ignored the divine spark which alone distinguishes mankind from lower creatures. We cannot imagine representative men and women of this age recognizing the higher aspect of humanity which the Psalmist had in mind when he uttered that rhapsody beginning:

"When I consider the heavens the work of thy fingers,
And the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained,
What is man that thou art mindful of him."

No such lofty conception entered their minds. Their thoughts were not above the present life; their ideal of existence was to make the most of the passing hour. They said to their souls let us eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die. Of this class was Cleopatra, with all her beauty, all her accomplishments, all her intelligence, all her power as queen. The civilization which she represented did not die with her, but lingered on for some centuries but it had lost its vital force and not even the glorious galaxy of thinkers beginning with Philo Judaeus and ending with Hypatia could save it from extinction.

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