

# Golden City of the Transvaal Country in the Throes of Hard Times

(Copyright, 1908, by Frank G. Carpenter.)  
**JOHANNESBURG**—(Special Correspondence).—I write this in the golden capital of South Africa. Johannesburg rests on a reef out of which has been taken \$200,000,000 worth of the precious metal and which is supposed to have \$2,000,000,000 or \$3,000,000,000 left. There is more gold about it than about any other city of the world, and more is coming from it than from any other gold region. Johannesburg is the Denver of Africa, and like the Denver of the United States, it is about a mile above the sea. Indeed, it is even higher than the great mining city on the edge of the Rockies. It is close to 6,000 feet, and if you could stretch a wire about the earth at its altitude, it would almost cut the top of Mount Washington.

**Denver Versus Johannesburg.**  
 Denver and Johannesburg have many things in common. They are both on high plains and not far from bleak, semi-deserts. They are both in the hearts of the continents to which they belong. Denver is about half way across the United States. It is a little bit over the edge, perhaps, veering toward the west, which, after all, is the best part of our big country. Johannesburg is about half way between the Atlantic and Indian oceans, and it is farther north of the Cape of Good Hope than Sandy Hook is east of Chicago. Its nearest port is Delagoa bay on the Indian ocean, which is about 400 miles distant, and it can also be reached by rail from Durban, which is a little more than eighty miles farther.

Both cities are based upon gold, and are fed by the mines. The territories which support Denver lie in the Rocky mountains at its back, extending a long distance to the north and south. Those which support Johannesburg are right under the city, and they run in a great narrow strip east and west. They consist of several veins, covering a distance of 100 miles. The best part of the whole has only a length of sixty miles, and it is right in the center of this that Johannesburg is situated. Some of the houses are built over gold mines, and the streets run over land which has been honeycombed with tunnels and filled up again, after the gold has been taken out, for fear that the buildings might fall in. When one climbs to the roofs of the houses of the mines extending east and west almost as far as the eye can reach. There are little white mountains of tailings standing out upon the landscape in either direction, and these mountains come right to the city itself.

**Founded by Miners.**  
 Both cities were founded by miners. Denver was started in 1858, just a half century ago. Johannesburg dates back only to 1886. The land about both cities was considered almost worthless until the mines were discovered. The ground upon which New York stands was once sold for a half peck of glass beads and brass buttons. The site of Melbourne was bought for a pair of old blankets and the foundation of all Chicago was offered for a pair of cowhide boots. In early days there was a 2,000-acre farm on the site of Johannesburg and it was sold for a team of broken-down oxen. Today the land and buildings which stand on that farm are assessed at about \$350,000,000 and from it comes out every year, in January, 1908, two business lots, not far from where that farmer's hut stood, brought \$100,000, and it is only four years since the Standard Bank of South Africa erected a building upon which it has erected a building worth \$500,000. A lot on Pritchard street sold for \$200,000 about nine years ago and there are business locations here so valuable that one would have to cover them with bank notes to buy them. This is so now, notwithstanding that times are hard and business is decidedly dull.

And still Johannesburg is only about 21 years old. When our boys who are to cast their first votes at the coming presidential election were raw, red babies the country about here was a wilderness and a waste, covered with grass during a few months of the year and a bleak and burned desert for the remainder. It was then in its beginning as a mining camp and its most striking features were canvas tents, mud huts and ox wagons. The first lots were then selling for a few shillings apiece and it was not until some time that buildings of tin and galvanized iron began to rise.

**Johannesburg of Today.**  
 The Johannesburg of today is made of steel, stone and wood, and many of its six-story structures, although the skyscrapers of Denver are absent. It is not as well built as Denver, but it is a magnificent city considering its source of supplies and that it is away off here in the wilds. There are about 100,000 people here, the same population as Denver. It numbers about 150,000 souls, but 60,000 of these are blacks made up of Kafirs from all parts of South Africa.

Johannesburg is laid out somewhat like Denver. Its streets generally cross each other at right angles, and they run far out into the country. There are something like 300 miles of roadways, and the town altogether has a municipal area of more than eighty square miles. There are town lots far out in the country and enough streets and avenues to accommodate the growth of the next 100 years.

Denver has as good a street car system as any city of its size in the world. Its electric lines cover every part of the municipality and reach far into the country beyond. Johannesburg has the best car system of South Africa, and the lines belong to the municipality. I understand that they pay well and leave a big profit every year in the city treasury. The street cars are all double-deckers. There is a covered compartment on the roof, and for a "hike"—that is, a ride—you can go to any part of the city or its suburbs.

I do not know how many churches Denver has, but I venture there is no denomination in the United States which has not at least one house of God there. The same is true of this Baal-whorling town of the Transvaal. It produces enough of the yellow metal to make a big herd of golden calves every year, but nevertheless, it keeps the Sabbath, and has no end of Protestant and Catholic churches. The English church will hold 1,100 people and it cost over \$100,000 to build. There is also a large Jewish synagogue, about thirty Free-masonry lodges and some other, semi-religious organizations.

As to amusements, these South African towns pay more attention to such things than we do in America. Johannesburg has athletic grounds which cover thirty acres, including fields for cricketing, bicycling and golfing. There is a woman's bicycle track and outside the city limits there is a race course, where races are periodically held throughout the year. At the summer and winter handicaps the prizes amount to \$1,500 or more, and there is a meeting each season, when the races last for three days. The town has a turf club and social clubs of various kinds. It has a recreation and concert hall which will hold 2,500. I think its citizens pay more attention to fun than



POSTOFFICE AT JOHANNESBURG.

we do. There is no business done after noon Saturdays, and the people then go to the races and club grounds. The city has fairly good theaters. It has a public library, a university and excellent schools.

**Sixty Thousand Blacks.**  
 Johannesburg has, in proportion, a larger colored population than Washington. It has 60,000 or 70,000 natives, made up of Kafirs, Basutos and other negroes of this part of the world. The blacks are not allowed to vote, and they have little to do except as workers for the whites. They have far less rights than our negroes, although they dress and look much the same. The Kafir here rides in a separate car, a little trailer which is attached to the rear of the train for his accommodation. In going along the streets the negroes must keep off the pavements and walk only on the edge of the roadway or in the middle of the streets. He has his own churches and schools, and the whites expect him to keep to them.

About the only municipal positions that the blacks have are as assistant policemen. They are dressed in uniforms, and carry clubs, which are more like shillalabas than our police clubs at home. The Kafirs also act as janitors. They have little victrolas, two-wheeled cars, a little trailer which is attached to the rear of the train for his accommodation. In going along the streets the negroes must keep off the pavements and walk only on the edge of the roadway or in the middle of the streets. He has his own churches and schools, and the whites expect him to keep to them.

**Employed Whites.**  
 Of the 90,000 whites in Johannesburg about 60,000 are males and the remainder females. In other words, there are about 80,000 more men than women, and a large part of the former are bachelors who have come here to seek their fortunes. Many of these drifted in here at the time of the war and

IN THE MARKET SQUARE.

were soldiers in the Boer or English armies. When peace was declared the country was booming, and for awhile they found plenty to do. At that time Johannesburg was growing like a green bay tree. Many new buildings were going up, real estate values rose out of sight, and everything was planned on the basis of Johannesburg's becoming a second Chicago. The money paid in indemnities and for the repairs necessitated by the war brought thousands of pounds into circulation and the demand for labor far exceeded the supply. Mechanics were imported by the shipload, and wages rose. Carpenters got \$5 per day and other mechanics proportionately high wages. Then the boom fell out. It was found that the country was overpopulated, and that the towns were overbuilt. The new business blocks could not be rented, and the values of property fell. Houses which were worth \$25,000 four years ago can be bought for \$5,000 to \$10,000 today, and rents have proportionately fallen.

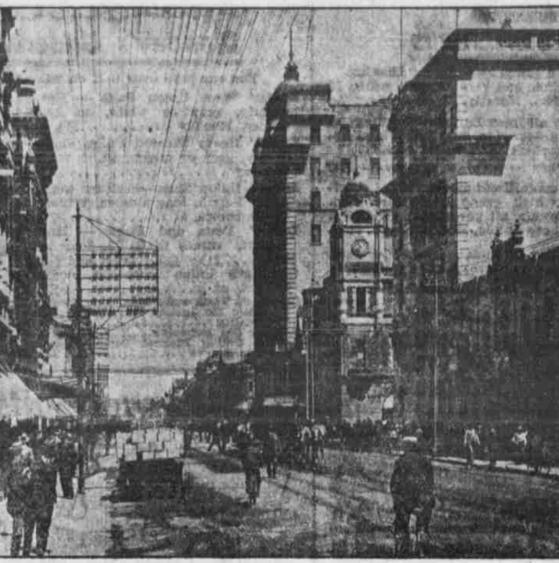
When the boom burst thousands of men were thrown out of work, and there are thousands of mechanics in South Africa who are now a burden on the community.

**White Man's Job.**  
 It must be remembered that there is a prejudice here against the white man doing what is considered the black man's work. There are many whites who would be glad to go into the mines at about a dollar a day, which is the Kafir's wage, but the trades unions and the people are against it. There are about six times as many blacks as whites in South Africa, and the whites feel that they must keep up their standing as the superior race in order to hold their own. So far the white men act largely as overseers. They do but little hard work, and after they have been in the country but a short time, they get the idea that hard work is degrading and turn all jobs of coarse manual labor over to the Kafirs. Some of the whites have said, I understand, that they will not labor for less than a living wage, and that amount is considered to be at least 10 shillings or \$2.50 per day. So you have a lot of reduced gentlemen mechanics down on their uppers and half starving out here in this land, which is producing more gold and diamonds than any other part of the world. I do not think this is a good place for



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Americans without capital. There are a large number of our skilled specialists, such as mining and mechanical engineers, who do well, but even such men should have a job contracted for before they start. This is no place to wait for a job. Indeed, I doubt if there is anywhere in the world where the bare necessities of existence cost so much. Houses which would rent for \$15 a month in any city of this size in the United States cost here from \$25 to \$50 a month; and bachelor livings—that is, board and lodging—run from \$35 to \$60 per month per head. Clothing is dearer than in our country, and as to such luxuries as



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drinks and cigars, the charges are enormous. Any kind of a bottle of ginger ale costs 25 cents, and at the better restaurants the price of a Scotch highball is a half dollar. I have paid 25 cents for a small glass of mineral water and 37 cents for a glass of lemonade. The rates at the Carlton hotel, where I am stopping, are about the same as those of the best hotels of New York, and it seems to me that the face of Queen Victoria on the golden sovereign, the coin which is universally used here, turns pale whenever I look at it and order a meal. I



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suppose the old lady knows she is going to leave me.

**Like Tantalus.**  
 Indeed, the situation of these people makes me think of Tantalus, who was condemned to stand up to his chin in water under a loaded fruit tree and see fruit and water retreating every time he sought to satisfy his hunger and thirst, or of the poor little boy whose face is pressed against the glass of the candy store window as he hungrily eyes the sweetmeats within. Johannesburg is surrounded by gold, bedded on gold, with gold extending

thirty miles on each side of it. It is pouring out 150 million dollars of gold dollars every twelve months and for the past ten years it has been flooding the globe. Nevertheless its people are poor and the most of the treasures they dig up from their soil go to the nabobs of England and the stock companies of Europe. It is somewhat like Ireland, a country of absentee landlords, and its people are the white and black slaves of these far-away millionaires. In addition to this the country is cursed by the cheap native and Chinese labor supply. It would be far better off if it turned out gold and diamonds at a high wage rate and the wages were spent at home.

### South Africa in Debt.

As a result of this boom and its collapse the South Africans are deeply in debt. Both farms and business blocks are plastered with mortgages and interest rates are comparatively high. The people are optimistic and they have all the push of the pioneers in a fast developing country. They overestimated everything at the time of the war and branched out upon credit. During the fight with the Boers money flowed like water. England's purse strings were with capitalists of millions. There are several thousand miles of railroad and there are a half dozen cities with great ports and costly improvements. The wonder is not that South Africa is hard up. It is really a wonder that it is at all.

### South Africa's Small Population.

Indeed, South Africa is much bigger in the eyes of the world than it is in reality. The whole country has not as many white people as Philadelphia and in this I might include all the whites who live south of the equator. Nevertheless, there are banks here with capitals of millions. There are several thousand miles of railroad and there are a half dozen cities with great ports and costly improvements. The wonder is not that South Africa is hard up. It is really a wonder that it is at all.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

## Gleanings from the Story Teller's Pack

**Too Precious.**  
**A** RICHMOND woman has in her employ a little dork, Miff Cole. One day Miff became confidential and told his mistress he was 'gold' to the cimiterary next Sunday.

"But, Miff, that's a long walk. You know it is more than five miles."

"Oh, missus, I ain't goin' to walk. I a goin' to ride."

"How is that, Miff?"

"I a goin' in a kerridge 't my uncle's funeral."

All day Saturday Miff could talk of nothing but the approaching affair. Sunday his mistress excused him, and she expected that on Monday she would be regaled with a full account of the funeral. But Miff turned up with a most melancholy face. In answer to her inquiry he said:

"I didn't go, missus. He ain't dead yet."

—St. Louis Republic.

**Needed the Prayers.**  
 The late Lord Sackville, as all the world knows, became persona non grata to the government while he was ambassador to Washington, through expressing an opinion on the political situation.

"It was through a mean trick that Lord Sackville was led into this expression of opinion," said a London correspondent the other day. "Once in describing the trick to me he compared himself to a country clergyman."

"This clergyman, he explained, was wanted on one Sunday morning by a young man."

"Will you kindly ask the congregation's prayers this morning," said the young man, "for poor William Smith?"

"Whilingly," said the clergyman. "And at the proper moment in the service he brought all those present to pray earnestly for the unfortunate William Smith in the great trouble and peril that encompassed him."

"The request, he was pleased to note, made a deep impression on the congregation."

"After the service," meeting the young man who had asked for intercession in Smith's behalf, the clergyman said:

"What is the matter with your friend? Do you think it would do any good if I were to call on him?"

"I'm afraid not," was the sorrowful reply.

"Is it as bad as that?" said the clergyman. "What is the trouble, then?"

"Bill," said the other, "is going to be married."

—New York Times.

**An Artist's Humiliation.**  
 Several good prices are related by Sigismund Goetz. He once painted his own portrait. "I designed it as a birthday surprise for my mother, but one day left it exposed in the studio, instead of, as usual, covered up. Of course, my mother chose that very afternoon to call, and equally of course, she spotted the portrait."

"Who is that?" she said.

"Oh, a man I've been painting, I replied, instantly feeling several sizes smaller, a shrinkage which continued almost to vanishing point when my mother, after another look at the picture, said severely: "Why do you waste your time on such uninteresting people?"—Pittsburgh Chronicle.

**Sign of the Craft.**  
 "In the days before even the 'Tie club existed," said a member of the Players' society, "when I was a club reporter myself, I used, whenever I had a week's pay in my pocket, to dine at a quaint little restaurant not far from Washington square."

"The place was a quiet one and had as its peculiar attraction a waitress named Sadie, a bland and smiling Swedish girl. "I had noticed for several evenings a young fellow dining like myself, with careful reference to the right hand side of the menu. My curiosity was excited about him, and one evening I called the affable Sadie to my table."

"Sadie, who is that fellow over there?" I asked.

"His name ban Smith, said she;—'Hopkinson Smith.'"

"Ah, yes," said I; what is his business, do you know?"

"'Vall, sy dunno juss't," she replied. 'Ay always 'tought he ran writer feller like you vas—he naffer has mooch moneys.'—Harper's Weekly.

**Wise Beyond Her Age.**  
 Rene La Montagne, the crack polo player, tells this story of a very small miss, the 5-year-old daughter of a prominent merchant of the Cedarhurst set.

Mr. La Montagne was driving a small trap from the Rockaway Hunt club to his home in Cedarhurst, when he encountered the little miss, who was out for a walk with her nurse and a small baby brother, who occupied the perambulator. Being an intimate friend of the child's parents, he offered to give her a lift as far as her house. The offer was accepted, and on the way Mr. La Montagne was regaled with interesting items of family news which were slipped out in rapid succession until he pulled up in front of the house.

"The child alighted, and as there was nobody in sight on the grounds, he asked her if she could get indoors safely."

"Oh, yes," said the little tot, "and thank you very much."

"Don't mention it," nodded back the polo player; when to his surprise the child opened her eyes very much and murmured: "I won't."—Philadelphia Record.

**Who's Who?**  
 One day last fall, on the loneliest coast on Cape Cod bay, the writer ran across an old man living all by himself in a little shack hardly large enough for a chicken coop. He was carefully sewing on a net and smoking a corn-cob pipe. One would think, to look at the situation, that a month of such solitude would land a man in a madhouse.

"Don't you get awfully lonesome here, Uncle Ned?" I asked.

"Oh, yes," he replied, cheerfully. "Well,

I should say not. No, sir-ree."

"Why, Uncle Ned, what on earth do you do to keep you busy?"

"Who, me? Why, let me see"—musingly—"sometimes I sew and thinks, and sometimes I 'ee' sets."—Success Magazine.

**Heard in a Royal Nursery.**  
 A little story has come from England, which, if not true, at least is "ben trovato" and shows that little pitchers exist in palaces as well as in cottages.

One day lately Princess Yolande, King Victor Emmanuel's eldest daughter, who is 7 years old, was heard instructing her little brother, Umberto, in the way he should go. "No," she said, "you must not call our American cousin 'Caterina.' Mamma would do that. To you she will be Signora Cugona (Mrs. Cousin). You must not be too familiar."

"Will she bring me a Teddy bear?" said the infant.

"No, you greedy boy, she will be the one to be brought. Anyway Teddy is coming to Europe and there will be more bears."

"Tus is Roosevelt known in royal nurseries.—New York Times.

**He Had Figured It Out.**  
 A negro who lived in Manassas, Ga., was suddenly betrayed of his wife, who had relatives in Augusta. During the completion of the funeral arrangements the widower had gone to the railroad station and asked the price of round-trip tickets to Augusta—two tickets, one for himself and one for the remains. The agent explained that while he was away might need a round-trip ticket for himself it would be necessary to purchase only a one-way ticket for the late lamented, the agent taking it for granted that the interment was to be at Augusta.

"I knows what I'm doin'," protested the negro, somewhat heatedly. "I a act a definite idea what I wants! 'Mah wife has got more'n eighty-nine kinfolks down to Augusta, an' all o' 'em wants to see her before she's buried. I a got it all figured out dat it'll be more economical fo' me to take her to Augusta and back here again dan it'll be to feed a parcel of niggers dat would come from Augusta to de funeral heah!"—Atlanta Constitution.

**Not Amphibious.**  
 After a scorching day's work old Ben Smith lighted his corn-cob pipe and sat down on the little wharf to rest. Near him lay the visible result of his labors. A trout from the north approached and loftily remarked: "Ah, I see you have an alligator."

"It is amphibious, is it not?"

"Amphibious, h—l!" he growled. "He'd bite yer arm off before ye could say 'Jack Robinson.'"—Everybody's Magazine.

**Ennio Kills a Shark.**  
 A remarkable combat between a large eagle and a shark was witnessed by Captain Henderson and the crew of the steamer Tanager in Chesapeake bay. When coming out of Ocohanneck creek they saw the eagle dive and come to the surface

with a shark. Then followed a fierce struggle, the shark pulling the eagle under the water until it was almost exhausted. The fish was finally killed and floated dead on the water.

Members of the steamer's crew put off in a small boat and captured the eagle, although it clawed them repeatedly, and its mate, hovering close by, tried to attack them. The bird was then presented to the park zoo at Baltimore.

**Roundup With A. W. Jerris.**  
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of the fairly cheering assurances which escaped the lips of all.

Occasionally the camera flared got in his deadly work. Two young women stopped at a street corner to ask of the campaign's progress.

"Are you for Jerris?" asked one of the party.

"Certainly we are," came the reply in tones of injury that anyone could ask such a question.

"Well, then, prove it."

"How?"

"Just stand still a minute, please," and the shutter clicked.

An auto came rushing down the street. An occupant shouted to the chauffeur and the machine came to a standstill.

"If one good boot deserves another," declared Clark Colt, "then we owe you several."

Four of the Omaha Boosters with whom Jerris traveled to the Pacific coast were in the car, and Colt's remark was in reference to the addresses which Jerris made for the Omaha Boosters on that trip. With Mr. Colt were James Taylor, William Wigmore and Joseph Kelly.

"If there is anything we can do" came from them as well as practically everyone else with whom Jerris shook hands, chatted and joked during the day.

"I have been looking for you since morning," James McIntosh of Sidney was telling Jerris a few minutes later.

"What brings you to town?" asked Jerris.

"'What do you suppose? I just came in to see if there was anything I could do for you."

Running for office may have its trials, but it ought to be worth it if one has friends like these. Assurance of good will must ring welcome in the ears of any man and if there could be a satiety of this Jerris would be satisfied.

## Gossip About Noted People

**Lincoln and Douglas.**  
 ONE of the most interesting stories of all American history—that of the forensic contest between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas in Illinois fifty years ago—is told in the November "Century" by Frederick Trevor Hill.

In this part of the article (Freepress) Lincoln was almost a stranger, and his unclouded appearance and slouchy bearing was not offset by any direct knowledge of his professional attainments. On this occasion, however, he speedily dispelled all doubts of his ability by advancing boldly to the attack. Reminding his auditors that Douglas had seen fit to cross-examine him at their last meeting, he announced that he was prepared to answer the seven questions which had been put to him provided his adversary would reply to questions from him not exceeding the same number.

"I give him an opportunity to respond," he continued, and, turning to Douglas, paused for his reply.

In an instance the vast audience was hushed. Even the fakirs and vendors at the outskirts of the crowd ceased pllying their trades and strove to catch a glimpse of the platform. It was a dramatic moment, and an unequalled opportunity for Douglas, but he merely shook his head, and smiled. "The judge remains silent," continued Lincoln. "I now say I will answer his interrogatories whether he answers mine or not."

No more effective challenge was ever uttered, and the audience, quick to recognize its courtesies and fairness, responded in a fashion that must have disconcerted and nettled Lincoln's cautious adversary. Certainly Douglas was in no amiable mood when he rose to make reply, and the interruptions of the audience speedily worked him into a passion. Again and again he assailed his hearers as "Black Republicans," characterizing their questions as vulgar and blackguard interruptions, shaking his fist in their faces, and defying them as a mob. More than once Mr. Turner, the republican moderator, was drawn into the fray by the speaker's aggressive tactics, and the whole meeting was occasionally on the verge of tumult. Lincoln's closing address, however, had a calming effect, and when his time expired the audience quietly dispersed, to spread the news throughout the countryside, that this unknown lawyer was actually out-manuevering his distinguished adversary and forcing him into the open, beyond reach of cover or possibility of retreat.

**The Original Topsy.**  
 The death, at the ripe age of 79 years, of the original Topsy in the stage version of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" must, says the New York Times, awaken many dormant memories in the minds of men and women to whom that lurid representation of southern slavery was once a source of aesthetic gratification. Probably "Uncle Tom's Cabin" has been the most popular American play, and for many years Mrs. G. C. Howard was almost the only theatrical Topsy. Long

after her youth and the disappearance of her husband, the original St. Clair, from the stage, she was often in evidence in the principal theaters.

Performances of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," to have the authentic stamp, required the engagement of the original Topsy. The play was hastily written and produced, in Troy, N. Y., in 1852, not for her sake, but to enable her infant daughter, Cordelia, to appear as little Eva. Cordelia was 4 years old when she first prattled with Uncle Tom, and was revealed, skywards, behind a scrim drop, surrounded by stage angels, in the catastrophe. But Cordelia, whose wonderful precocity was the theatrical marvel of the simple '50s, had grown to womanhood and retired from the stage long before her mother had ceased to be the public ideal of the dainty hoyden who was never born, but "just grown."

As Caroline Fox Mrs. Howard, the mother of the most gifted child actress our theater has ever known, excepting Bljuz Heron, was herself a child actress of great popularity. She was born in 1829 and had a professional reputation and a following in the '30s. She remained in the glare of the footlights until the nineteenth century was waning. Certainly her professional career was noteworthy, and, as the sister of Humpty Dumpty Fox, and the mother of little Eva, she had reason to be proud of her connections.

**Told About Pius X.**  
 Like most aged people, Pius X sleeps very little and is up at 5 o'clock in the morning. He celebrates mass, has breakfast, then takes a turn in the gardens and goes back to the Vatican to read the morning papers. He reads them, too, with considerable zest. Many of the papers, during the early months of the papacy, referred to his discontent with his lot and these references much amused him. "If I am not careful," he observed whimsically, "I'll be leading an insurrection in the Vatican some day."

The pope likes tobacco and his favorite smoke is a Turkish cigarette. "Do you really smoke Turkish cigarettes, your holiness?" asked an English bishop during a private audience last year. "I do, my child," answered Pius. "I haven't been able to christianize them yet." Not that Pius X believes all the virtues are on the side of Christianity. "The only Christians in Mantua are the Jews," was the laconic reply he gave as bishop of Mantua to an official inquiry as to the morals of his diocese.

Having invited a number of the clergy to dinner one day, the pope was vexed to find them all kneeling when he entered the audience chamber. "Be seated at once," he commanded to the horror of the officials. When, later, it was explained to him that nobody was seated in such fashion unless he was shortly to be made a cardinal, the pope only remarked: "Dear me, by being merely polite I have burdened the church with the salaries of nearly 100 new princes. What would have happened if I had been positively hospitable I don't know."