

Reminiscences of a Wayfarer

Some of the Important Events of the Pioneer Days of Richardson County and Southeast Nebraska, as remembered by the writer, who has spent fifty-one years here.

THE NEW AND THE OLD

"Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble."

The patriarch who is said to be responsible for the above profound declaration, seems to indicate that man born in some other way might not be so full of trouble, but failed to give the modus of the operation. Accepting the truth of the statement, which all human experience has amply verified, we assume what is equally true, that nations born of man—using the word in its generic sense—are of brief existence, and just as full of the same brand of trouble, but on a larger and vastly more extended scale. As aggregates always partake of the nature of their unities, it follows that they are also subject to similar vicissitudes,—troublesome lives, and ultimate death. None in the past have been exempt from the common fate, and it is very certain that none will be, in the long life of our race that is yet to transpire. To go no farther in the past than is covered by the history of our own nation, and take its natural life as a fair sample of all that preceded it, we observe that to bring it into being, and keep it so, has been one continuous struggle against untoward and unfriendly conditions. Like a child, it has had to fight for its life at every step, and the worst of all the enemies it ever had were what is known as domestic,—such as long time war with the native Indian tribes, disputes over the nature of our governments, state and national—for the idea seems to have been that ours is a conglomerate mixture of all kinds of sovereignties, with not much of a head anywhere—and the perennial crop of uneasy politicians and demagogues that has been and yet is, the peculiar curse of the republic, for to them more than to any other, we owe the wasting, bloody civil war of the decade of 1860. Thomas H. Benton, in my humble judgment, the clearest thinker of American statesmen, said: "the danger to this country would come from uneasy politicians; its safety from the tranquil masses." Every year has proved the truth of that prediction, and it was never more true than it is at this moment.

The span of my own life covers the stormiest years of our national life, and it has been a fact known to the veriest mediocre of the period, that the Negro question in one form or another, has been, of all others, the most vexatious. The presence of the black race in America was involuntary—he was a slave to begin with, and continued to be so until the institution was abolished as one of the results of our civil conflict; and then occurred the greatest mistake that was ever committed in connection with that unfortunate people—they were entrusted with the elective franchise. I remember with much personal satisfaction that when the 15th amendment to the constitution was submitted to our legislature for ratification, at its session in 1869, I, as a member of the upper house of that body, cast my vote for it under protest. It was a foregone conclusion that it would be adopted by an overwhelming majority, and I was unwilling to stand alone as the only member voting against it, but I was more unwilling to allow the occasion to pass without giving expression to my serious objection to a measure that would enfranchise an ignorant, half-civilized race, who were no more competent to

measure and rightfully understand the responsibilities imposed by a freeman's ballot, than any other animal of a lower order than man. We already had enough and to spare, of ignorance and brutality in the electorate of the country, without swelling the number with millions more of the most objectionable material that the folly, or blind partisan zeal of men, anywhere in the world, ever tried to make voters out of. The impolicy of the measure has long ago been demonstrated, so much so, that the amendment has, to all intents and purposes, become a dead letter on the statute book of the nation, and it ought to be so.

Nevertheless, the dusky race is with us yet, and still as powerful for evil as it ever has been, and quite as demoralizing to the dominant race as in the day of its greatest subservance, as I shall presently endeavor to show. It was only the other day a man of some national distinction made an address before the graduating class of our state university, by invitation of the authorities of that institution. His subject was "Dixie," which sobriquet was given the southland in the time of its rebellion against the authority of the general government, and one it is likely to retain as long as the recollection of that awful strife shall dwell in the memories of the American people. Among other matter to which he gave attention, and the chief one I take it, was the Negro, or as he politely put it, the racial question. I read that part of his address with some interest, not particularly in what he said, as in what he might, but did not say. This orator has long been in public life, and is, in an intellectual way, fairly representative of the people who have honored him in the past, and who have recently further distinguished him with a seat in the United States senate—the Areopagus of America—and the greatest deliberative body on earth.

We had a right to expect a man, so honored and so distinguished, in an address of the character mentioned, that if he touched the racial question at all, he would deal with it frankly, comprehensively and in detail; that our people, less advised on the subject, might gain a knowledge of the real disturbing element in the society of the south, and which has made the continued presence of the Negro among the white people, a source of anxiety, not to say alarm, for the peace and good order of the southern section of the country. But he did nothing of the kind. The real question was not touched at all. He talked much about the Negro as though the people in the north do not know what a Negro is, nor what he is like. So far as the anthropological relation of the African with the balance of the human family is concerned, it is altogether probable that the people north of that imaginary line known as Mason & Dixon's, are as well informed as the senator-elect from Mississippi is, and on that point instruction was not needed. That there is, and always has been, since the black race has been denizens of this continent, a cause for racial alarm on the part of the whites, there can be no doubt. Had some intelligent representative white lady from the south delivered the address, instead of Senator-elect Williams, she would, if allowed a free hand, have told her auditors that that disturbing question in the southland is not so

much the negro himself, as it is the disposition to race amalgamation by the male portion of the white race. The pretended fear that the white man's daughter will marry a "nigger" is the merest bosh, and nobody knows that fact better than Senator Tillman, who frequently talks that nonsense. But what of his son? What is he doing? Marrying a negro woman? Nothing of the kind, but he is doing what he can to increase the race of mixed bloods and their name in the south is becoming legion.

It is the common experience of the ages, that where two distinct species of the human race come in contact, and they are disposed to amalgamate at all, and do so to any extent, all that is necessary to a complete absorption of one by the other, is indefinite continuance of such contact.

I have stood on a corner convenient for the purpose in a southern city, and taken note of the variegated hues of color in the faces of the people passing by, and I affirm what I know to be true, that of the mixed bloods and the pure African, there passed me more than three of the former, to one of the latter. Among other significant facts in the same connection was one concerning school children. At my point of observation the children going to the colored school went one way, while the children going to the school provided for the whites, went another. I observed among the colored children, so-called, there were more than five mixed bloods to one full blood, ranging from perfect white, all the way in deeper shading, to the perfect black. This told an awful story, but somehow and for some reason not explained, the southern people do not like to talk about it, and yet it is the *bet noir* of the whole South.

It is claimed on the authority of the census, that the blacks in the south are steadily on the increase. This, in point of fact, is not true, and for this reason—every mixed blood is classed as a negro. In that sense they are on the increase; not otherwise.

The eminent gentleman could have enlightened the university students on this subject and made his address one of lofty distinction and lasting profit. He could have told them further that the dominant race in the south is in no danger of ultimate corruption by taking into its veins the blood of the black race, for it is not doing that. That can only be done when the white women in the south shall become as lost to the higher ideals of civilized life as a certain class, low down in the scale of manhood of the white male population appear to be, which all the world knows is a thing impossible. It is the black race that is being decimated, corrupted and destroyed; not the white one. Assimilation sufficient to change fixed types into mongrel people, such as exists in Mexico, Central America, and some of the South American states, requires the concurrent action of the sexes of both the amalgamating species. No instance in the history of the Germanic races can be found where they have mingled their blood with that of the African, the Indian or the Mongol, sufficient to produce a distinct type of the mongrel, while just the reverse is true of the Latin races. While the blood of the Anglo-Saxon is not being corrupted at the fountain, a surplus and worthless population is being engendered that will require an indefinite time to eradicate; and southern society, or any other burdened with this undesirable race, must suffer in the consequence. But what is that to a professional reformer? Nothing.

Among other reminiscent things pleasant in memory, are

the many solitary hours of study I have devoted to the works of the mighty thinkers in past ages and in later times, on this same subject of race integration and disintegration—great historical men such as Plato and Aristotle and their contemporary Grecian and Roman philosophers, and Malthus, La Marck, Darwin and Spencer of the nineteenth century—names written high on the scroll of the immortal few in the temple of Mnemosyne, there to remain as imperishable as time itself. From these we learn that the natural process of race continuance by survival of the fittest may be arrested, if not prevented entirely, as can be seen, as an object lesson, by a glance at the people of Mexico. It is not pertinent to my purpose to enter upon a discussion of these questions in a paper like this, but I do insist that it would have been consistent with a statesman's duty to his constituents, the American people, when addressing them, as Senator-elect Williams did at Lincoln, to have treated the race question in his own vicinity—a dangerous menace to the peace and happiness of the people—as a political philosopher, when the subject of his address made it entirely in order to do so. But as though partisan political clap-trap is the proper thing in an address to a graduating class at a country school or a state university, whether the subject in hand is "The Price of a Soul," or historic "Dixie," the distinguished lawgiver from the south, in conformity to precedent perhaps in that particular, interlarded his address with something very like it, and disposed of his subject much in the way the novice played Hamlet, by leaving Hamlet out. Politics in these latter days, seem to be in order at any and all social functions among the people, except funerals, and it is not impossible that a new departure will be inaugurated as to them in the near future, when some peerless orator—that is, one who can talk by the mile will on such occasions discuss the "trusts," or the "principles of my party," (personal pronoun, possessive case), while the mourning friends are paying the last sad rites in the memory of the loved and lost.

In the old days, on the close of a school year, some one eminent as a teacher in some branch of human education (not necessarily in a regular school or college), was invited to address the graduating class on the completion of their labors, and just before they bid farewell to

their alma mater to begin the real battle of life. Such addresses were always suited to the occasion, and nothing was allowed to enter into them that would offend the sensibilities of anyone, either in his religious or political beliefs. The world has progressed since then like the crawfish—backwards.

His Opportunity.

"A man in Winsted, Conn., ate 18 eggs at a sitting," says the Buffalo Express. Perhaps he was determined to take full advantage of the recent slight slump in price.

THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN.



"Grandad, what was Adam's great sin?"
"Adam's great sin, Tommy? Why, parting with his rib, to be sure."

THAT EXPLAINED ALL.

Hearty Party (meeting old acquaintance)—How are you? Haven't seen you for years. How's the wife.
Old Acquaintance (very much married, gruffly)—She's all right.
Hearty Party (pleasantly)—Ha! I brought you two together, you remember.
Old Acquaintance (resentfully)—Oh, it's you, is it, I owe a grudge to? —Ally Sloper.

BARRED.

"If time hangs heavily on your hands, why don't you go into politics?"

"A man as rich as I am," answered Mr. Dustin Stax, "doesn't dare go into politics. He is considered lucky if they let him shove a card under the door with a check attached to it."—Washington Star.

CURED IN ONE ACT.

"Fred, dear, I feel it in my bones that you are going to take me to the theater to-night."

"Which bone, darling?"
"I'm not sure, but I think it's my wishbone!"—Sydney Bulletin.

AFRICAN'S FAVORITE DISH.

Dinuzulu, the Zulu chief, has burst a blood vessel, says a telegram from Martsburg, and it is said to be only a wonder that his father did not do the same when he was enjoying British hospitality in London after his capture. He and his sable suite were housed in one of the artistic mansions of Melbury avenue, near Holland house, and his favorite breakfast was a basin of oatmeal porridge and a pint of whisky, which he preferred to milk. Otherwise he was fairly quick in his assimilation of the manners and customs of civilization.

A hammock for two; Just you—and

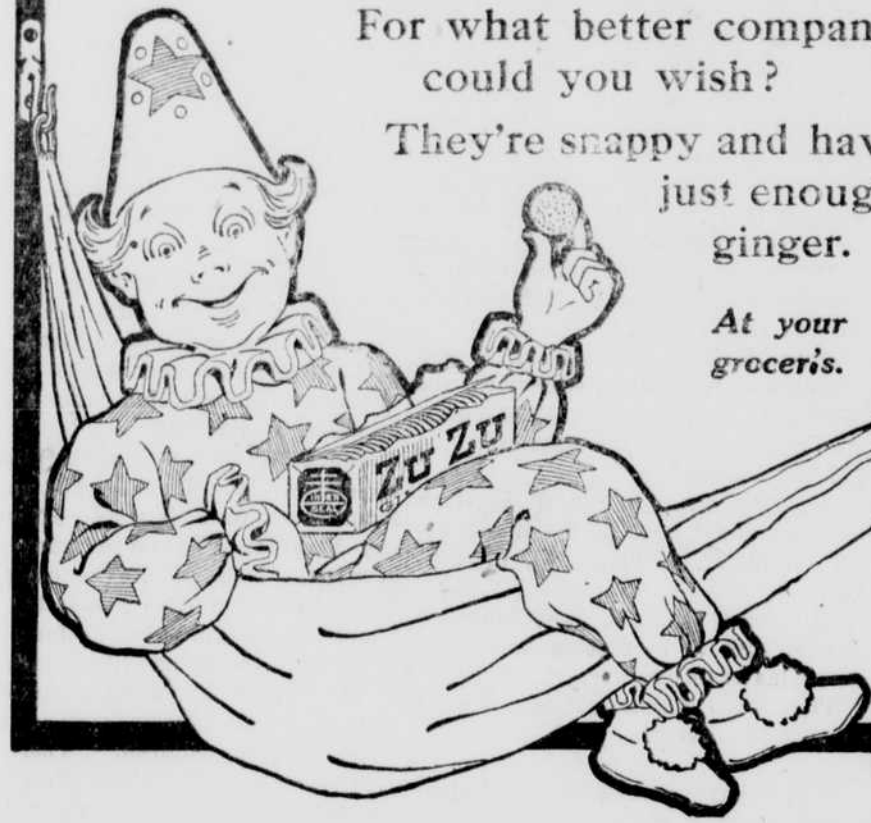
Zu Zu

the glorious little ginger snap.

For what better company could you wish?

They're snappy and have just enough ginger.

At your grocer's.



5¢

A Package
NATIONAL
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COMPANY

RATHER FIERV.

Old Uncle Hiram from down Bacon Ridge way halted in front of the "quick lunch room."

"Waal, begosh," he drawled in deep meditation, "I always heard that thar was a blamed lot of fire eaters up in town, but I didn't know they would go that far."

"What, now, Uncle Hiram?" asked the city nephew.

"Why, just look at that sign, 'Lightning Lunches.' Just think of lurching on lightning!"

MARRIED CHUMS.

"Has he any friends?" asked the judge of a prisoner in the dock.

"No, only a wife," was the matter-of-fact reply of the witness. Rather hard on the wife not to be counted as her husband's friend, wasn't it?

It is the perfection of marriage when a couple are real chums as well as lovers, just as it is the perfection of parenthood when children count mother and father their real, best friends.

FULLY EXPLAINED.

"Yes, her husband is always confidential with her. He isn't like so many men who never tell their wives anything."

"Do you mean Porgie?"
"Yes."
"His wife doesn't get much out of Porgie. He can tell her all he knows in five minutes."

A SORE SUBJECT.

"How much did that capitol cost?" inquired the sightseer in Harrisburg.

"Sir," replied the guide, severely, "we are here to improve our minds; not to talk scandal."

Chataqua, July 25 to Aug. 1.

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