



BRED IN THE BONE

BY ZOE ANDERSON NORRIS.

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ON THE prairies the wind has full sweep. It chants ceaseless dirges. It moans and shrieks and whistles, dies down to a whisper, rises once more and wails.

Across the prairies of southern and eastern Kansas vast fields of wheat wave in the wind, varied by acres of yellow, rustling corn, meadows of alfalfa and clover fresh from a soil so loamy that one might thrust one's arm down elbow deep into its blackness and touch no clay, but beyond, nearer the Colorado line, vegetation is stunted, the black soil assumes an ashy look, gaunt cattle browse upon the parched prairie grasses, and the smart cottages of the east give place to huts.

In one of these huts, about which the wind howled incessantly, rocking it to its inefficient foundation, an old woman stood slowly pressing her gaunt hands together and looking, her heart in her eyes, at a creature who huddled close to the open fire, shivering.

He was a pitiful object. His clothing was in rags, his shoes were worn until the toes protruded, and his head was clean shaven, while his hands, transparent and emaciated, trembled weakly as he spread them out to the blaze, fanned by the wind, which crept wistfully up through the wide cracks of the crumbling hearth.

The old woman suddenly opened her arms. She made as if she would have clasped him in them. Instead she pressed her hands nervously together once more and spoke.

"You ain't had nothin' to eat," she said. "You're hungry, ain't you?"

"Yes," he answered.

She hastened to the fireplace and fumbled with the pots and pans.

"He's walked such a long way," she muttered, "and he's hungry, of course. Why didn't I think of that before?"

As she prepared his meal she glanced at him again and again. Her old eyes, peering through the network of wrinkles surrounding them, gazed over him.

"I ain't blamin' you, Jamie," she said by and by. "Don't think I am blamin' you. It wa'n't your fault. How could you help what was bred in the bone? You did what your father did before you. It was bred in the bone."

He was silent. His hollow eyes followed her hungrily as she set the plate, knife and fork on the table. He crouched nearer the fire, his shaven head turned, watching her.

"The good Lord himself couldn't blame you for what was bred in the bone," she went on falteringly. "How could he? Like father, like child. He was a thief, and you—oh, Jamie!"—She broke off with a sob, though her eyes were dry. They were too old for tears.

"You've walked so far, dearie, haven't you? You are tired, ain't you? I know you are tired."

She hovered over him.

"I ain't blamin' you for what's bred in the bone," she reiterated. "I ain't blamin' you."

By this time she had prepared his food and set it on the table. Rising, he made his way to it with lagging and weary footsteps and took the chair she had placed there. She pushed it nearer to the table and passed her wrinkled hands over his stooped shoulders.

"There, now," she said, "eat," and she watched him while he ate.

He was famished. He devoured his food, snatching at it like an animal. She refilled his plate again and again. She poured out his coffee and sweetened it for him as if he were a child. She hovered over him as a hen would hover over her one chick, tenderly, broodingly, caressing him with her eyes.

"It ain't been so very long since like since you were a little child, Jamie," she cooed, "all huddled up in my arms. That was when we were among the best, before he—before it all happened and we took to hiding out here on the prairies with the wolves and the coyotes—before he left me. If he had only taken me with him, but he wouldn't. He left me."

Suddenly he dropped his fork and listened. The rays from the candle on the table lit up his frightened eyes.

She also raised her head, listening.

"Don't be scared," she said soothingly. "It's only the wind a-howlin' and a-whistlin'."

wind, I could get along. Listen how it blows. It never quits blowin'. Sometimes I'm afraid," her voice sank to a whisper; "I'm afraid it will get into my brain and addle it. Some days I can't think, it blows so. Listen now!"

From far away across the prairie the wind came sighing. It moaned and moaned. It rushed nearer. Its moan grew louder. It developed into a shriek. It shook the unsheathed hut. It wrenched the shutters apart and flung them to again. Then it died away in an unceasing moan.

The man turned livid. He dropped his knife and fork and sprang to his feet.

"Listen!" he cried.

Along with the sigh of the wind there came the sound of horses' hoofs beating upon the hard turf of the prairie.

"They are after me!" he panted hoarsely. "They found the cell empty, and now they are after me. Hide me! Hide me!"

And he was like a little child again, clinging to her skirts.

"Go to the cellar," she commanded, grasping his shaking shoulders and pushing him forward, "and stay there."

She unlocked the back door and shoved him out.

"You'll find the openin' close to the side of the house," she told him. "Go there and stay. They won't think there's a cellar to this little old hut. I won't let them find you, Jamie. They shan't except over my dead body."

She caught his sleeve as he started forward.

"Whatever you do, Jamie," she begged, "don't go and leave me. Promise me you won't go and leave me. I can't stand the lonesomeness of it and the wind."

"I promise," he said, and impatiently wrenching himself loose from her hold, he disappeared into the darkness.

She went back inside the hut.

Impatient fists pounded upon the door. Sharp voices demanded that she open it.

She turned the key and stood looking vacantly at the men as they clanked in.

"Is James Rankin here?" they demanded to know.

"James Rankin?" she repeated.

One of the men laughed.

"Yes, James Rankin," said he. "Did you ever hear of him before? He is your son and an escaped convict."

A long shudder shook her.

"An escaped convict," she repeated.

"Yes; an escaped convict, and we have come to arrest him. Where is he?"

She did not answer. With difficulty she kept her eyes away from the back door of the hut, through which the convict had again escaped.

"If it wa'n't for the wind," she muttered, "and the lonesomeness of it, I could get along."

The leader threw out his hands in an impatient gesture.

"She is foolish," said he. "Now that I think of it, somebody said she was foolish. Come, we will ransack the hut."

The old woman muttered incoherently as one after the other the men passed the door which led to the way of the

"He is not here. That is one thing certain. We are wasting our time here looking for him."

They opened the door and filed out. The wind, rushing in, fanned the candle to a flicker. The old woman shut and locked it after them, stood in the middle of the room a moment waiting, then made her way stealthily out the back door toward the cellar.

She listened until the horses' hoofs had died away, then she flung wide the cellar door.

"Jamie," she cried, "come out! They're gone! They're gone!"

There was no response. She peered in. It was too dark to discern anything there without the aid of a light.

She returned to the hut and, finding a match, went back into the cellar. She scratched the match on the stone wall. The light illumined her eager face and her dim, narrow, hungry eyes. It also illumined the rude interior.

It was empty.

The match dropped from her nerveless fingers to the floor. It flickered there for a moment, then went out.

She crept feebly up the steps and stood outside, at the mercy of the wind. Sweeping across the wide belt of the purple prairie, it made merry with her.



HE WAS A PITIFUL OBJECT.

It caught at her skirts and tore them. It tangled itself in her gray hair, unloosed it from the comb and flung it about her upturned face and across her eyes, lifted questioning to the quiet of the stars glimmering so tranquilly above all earthly tempests, whether they be of winds or storms or sorrows.

Then, tired of toying, it sighed and moaned and sighed and moaned, died away, sighed and moaned and died away again.

DICKENS' LONDON.

As we jog along or walk by turns we come to Buckingham street and, looking up at Alfred Jingle's lodgings, say a grateful word of Mr. Pickwick, says Kate Douglas Wiggin in The Atlantic.

We tell each other that much of what we know of London and England when we come to it seems to have been learned from Dickens.

Deny him the right to sit among the elect if you will, talk of his tendency to farce and caricature, call his humor low comedy and his pathos bathos, though you shall say none of these things in my presence unchallenged, but the fact remains that every child, in America at least, knows more of England—its almshouses, debtors' prisons and law courts, its villages and villagers, its beadies and cheap jacks and hostlers and coachmen and boots, its streets and lanes, its lodgings and inns and landlords and roast beef and plum pudding, its ways, manners and customs—knows more of these things and a thousand others from Dickens' novels than from all the histories, geographies, biographies and essays in the language.

Where is there another novelist who has so peopled a great city with his imaginary characters that there is hardly room for the living population as one walks along the streets?

The Land of Lorna Doone.

Blackmore knew thoroughly the region of which he wrote, and when he speaks of a locality he gives it its true name and nearly always describes it exactly as it is. There is Blundell's school at Tiverton, for instance, which the boy John Ridd is attending in the first chapter. You find its "gray stone walls" and near the Lowman stream there today, giving perfectly the impression of the story.

The school building sits far back in an open grassy yard which is entered by a heavy barred iron gate, the very gate where John and his mates stood watching for the passing of the troopers when one of the lads, accidentally or otherwise, struck John "very sadly in the stomach part" and thus led to the fight on the "ironing box." This "ironing box" is a triangle of turf where two paths meet at the far end of the green near the school building. It has continued through the passing years unchanged, and were it not that the building is now a private residence I have no doubt the youngsters would have their fistfights there just as of old.—Harper's Bazar.

Know What He Wanted.

An autograph hunter who was very anxious to obtain the signature of the poet Campbell adopted the familiar stratagem. Having come across a line in one of his poems the meaning of which appeared to be obscure, he wrote a short note to the author, asking him to interpret the words in question.

He received the following laconic reply: "Sir—In return to your note I send you my autograph. Thomas Campbell."—San Francisco Argonaut.

Outgo and Income.

Brown—It's very difficult to get one's income up to one's expenses, isn't it?

Smith—Yes, but it isn't half so difficult as to get one's expenses down to one's income.—Judge.

ECZEMA—SATANIC ITCH.

This most aggravating and tormenting of all skin diseases is caused by an acid condition of the blood, and unless relieved through certain instrumentalities too much of this acid poison reaches the skin and it becomes red and inflamed. The itching and burning are almost unbearable, especially when overheated from any cause. The skin seems on fire, sleep or rest is impossible, the desperate sufferer, regardless of consequences, scratches until strength is exhausted. This burning, itching, humor appears sometimes in little pustules, discharging a sticky fluid, which forms crusts and scales. Again the skin is dry, hard and fissured, itches intensely, bleeds and scabs over. This is a painful and stubborn form of the disease.

While Eczema, Tetter, Erysipelas, Salt Rheum and many like troubles are spoken of as diseases of the skin, they are really blood diseases, because

THERE CAN BE NO EXTERNAL IRRITATION WITHOUT AN INTERNAL CAUSE.

If the blood is in a pure, healthy condition, no poisonous elements can reach the skin. External applications of washes, lotions and salves sometimes mitigate the itching and soothe the inflammation, but cannot reach the disease. Only S. S. S., the real blood medicine, can do this.

S. S. S., the only purely vegetable remedy known, is a safe and permanent cure for Eczema and all deep-seated blood and skin troubles. It goes direct to the seat of the disease, neutralizes the acids and cleanses the blood, re-inforces and invigorates all the organs, and thus clears the system of all impurities through the natural channels; the skin relieved, all inflammation subsides, and all signs of the disease disappear.

Mrs. Leta M. Hoffman, of Cardington, Ohio, says she was afflicted with scrofulous sores and Eczema from birth. Her face at times became so badly swollen that she was not recognizable, and her limbs and hands were very sore. She was treated by all the doctors in town without being benefited, and in her search for relief, was told by an old physician to take S. S. S. She followed his advice and was promptly cured and has never had a return of the disease. This was seventeen years ago. She sincerely believes she would have been in her grave years ago but for S. S. S., and adds, "what it has done for me it will do for others."

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THE OLDEST DEMOCRAT

A Contestant for the Honors Accorded Mr. White.

MR. POWELL VOTED FOR VAN BUREN

A Democrat of the Old Jefferson-Jackson School Who Voted for McKinley and Will do so Again—Voted for More Democratic Presidents Than Anyone in the County.

Mr. White, whose political convictions were recently published in THE NEWS, has a rival for the honor of being the oldest democrat in Madison county. The following letter explains the situation as it now stands:

WARNEVILLE, July 22—Editor NORFOLK NEWS.—Dear Sir: I see by an article in your valuable paper that you claim Mr. White to be the oldest democrat in Madison county, but I claim that distinction and think I voted for more democratic presidents than any man in the county. I have only missed two since 1836, beginning with Martin Van Buren at that date. In 1864 I voted for Abraham Lincoln and in 1896 I voted for Wm. McKinley and still wear a McKinley badge and shall vote for him this fall.

Respectfully,
JAMES POWELL.

Mr. Powell writes a very good hand for his age—he must be at least 85 years old—which indicates that he is still in possession of remarkable vitality and vigor.

Here are two of the oldest democrats of the county, representing the Jefferson-Jackson school of democracy, who fail to see in Mr. Bryan's party what they have been taught to believe was true democracy. Their devotion to true democratic principles has been earnest and steadfast. They were the war horses of the party when Mr. Bryan's present standard of that which is termed democracy, was in his swaddling clothes. They have been consistent followers of democratic teachings.

The only times they have departed from the party was when they have considered the perpetuity or the honor of their beloved country assailed.

They voted for Abraham Lincoln because they recognized in him the guardian of their country, its peace and welfare.

In 1896 one of them, on account of the anarchistic teachings of democracy or its assault upon the country's monetary system, refused to tread in the political paths to which he had been accustomed since his young manhood. The other still clung to the party, hoping that it might prove in the right.

But in this year, 1906, both of these representatives of a strong democracy, which they consider as forsaken, will register their votes for McKinley and against Bryanism and all that it implies.

This in spite of the fact that the Kansas City convention paid particular pains to laud Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln, and made the welkin ring with encomiums on the constitution, patriotism and the flag, which they recognize as the empty vapors of a hypocritical and demagogic assembly.

Their action should and will cause the democrats of the younger generations to stop and consider whether they and their party are drifting.

If it holds nothing to retain the support of those about to retire from a field fraught with victories and achievements for their country, what has it to offer to the new and rising generation upon whose shoulders the country's welfare is to rest.

Mr. Powell's vote for president, judging from his letter, was: Van Buren, twice; Polk, Cass, Pierce, Buchanan, Douglas, Lincoln, Seymour, Greeley, Tilden, Hancock, Cleveland, three times; and McKinley once.

Pneumonia Cured.

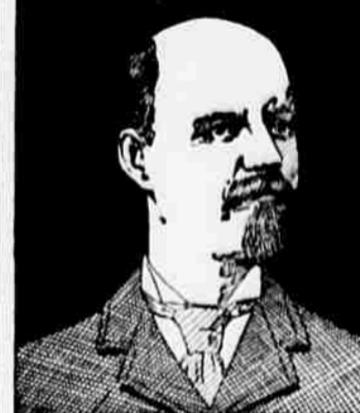
Mrs. A. J. Lawrence, of Beaver, Pa., says: "Brazilian Balm brought me out of a severe attack of pneumonia in splendid shape. It is a wonderful remedy for coughs and lung troubles. Also, for outward use, for burns, cold-sores, and chapped hands and face, it cures like magic. It is invaluable in the family."

The fat undertaker, Who plants by the acre, Poor victims of cough and cold, Is sighing and crying. For we've all stopped dying Since Brazilian Balm was sold— And for those who desire Not just yet to go higher It's worth its weight in gold.

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SHE WAS BLIND.

A blindness comes to me now and then. I have it now. It is queer—I can see your eyes but not your nose. I can't read because some of the letters are blurred; dark spots cover them; it is very uncomfortable.

I know all about it; it's DYSPEPSIA. Take one of these; it will cure you in ten minutes.

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