

HE UNDERSTANDS.

Our censors guard us roundabout,
 And hedge us with their dusty creeds:
 They cry us wrong in hope or doubt,
 And howl like ban dogs at our deeds.
 They wail our knotted skein of life,
 And flout us for our clumsy hands,
 Because with tangles it is rife—
 But all the time God understands.

Our censors measure step and stride
 With mathematic rod and rule,
 And when we wander to one side,
 Straightway they cry aloud, "Thou fool!"
 And book and bell and candle bring
 To curse the one who halting stands,
 But, ah! the footsteps wandering—
 He understands—He understands.

Our censors weigh our every word,
 And sift its sound for sign of sin,
 And whispered dreams that are unheard
 Against the screen of fate they pin.
 With harpy smile they search our brain
 To bind our thoughts with brazen bands,
 But hope shall struggle not in vain,
 And all the time God understands.

He understands our little fears,
 Our little doubts and little woes;
 And in the shadow of the years
 He sees the soul. He knows—He knows;
 He scans us, not as censors do—
 To mark the blindly searching hands—
 But all our good He brings to view,
 He understands—He understands.

—Josh Wink in Baltimore American.

A TALE OF THE PLAINS.

Mr. H. G. Cotton, a brother of President W. A. Cotton of the Merchants' Bank, was in the Conservative office the other day, bringing a newspaper clipping that he judged rightly would be of interest to us. Mr. Cotton, who now lives in Lewis, Iowa, north of Red Oak, was an inhabitant of Omaha in the earliest days, and later took part in the first surveys for the Union Pacific. A map of the old freighting trail to the mountains, hanging on the office wall, interested him, and the comments he made on it certainly interested his hearers; he went over it inch by inch for quite a distance, pointing out the stage stations and ranches, naming the owners and telling what became of this one and that, and diverging here and there into an anecdote.

When he sat down again something was said about Indians, and he thereupon mentioned a little incident, suggested to him by the previous conversation, of the fall of 1866, when the Cheyennes and Sioux for a time interrupted stage travel and drove in all the ranchmen and surveying parties.

He was with a party of about eight, who had been at work in the Laramie plains and westward, until it was thought dangerous to remain out any longer. They therefore came down, keeping a sharp lookout for Indians, but seeing none until the night they camped at O'Fallon's Bluffs, just above the forks of the Platte. They always kept a guard, as everybody did in crossing the plains in the early days. The guard consisted of two men, who were changed occasionally through the night.

This time they were aroused in the middle of the night by the guard calling out that they had got an Indian. Their story was this: They had been sitting by their smoldering fire, when they heard a voice say "How," and at a little distance perceived an evil-looking Indian sitting on his pony holding out his hand. Then they covered him with their guns and called up the others.

All hands tumbled out quickly and surrounded the Indian, keeping a careful lookout for others. He sat on his

pony, with a rifle across his saddle and a bow behind his back, and seemed friendly; but declined their invitation to dismount. Looking him over carefully, they observed that he had a new hat on his head, of the kind called "cowboy," also a new saddle-blanket and a new bridle on his horse. It was therefore plain to them that he had been concerned in some recent robbery of emigrants; and feeling satisfied that he would bring a war party upon them before morning if allowed to go, they made him get off and spend the night by their fire. They put a double guard over him; in fact, Mr. Cotton says, none of them slept any more that night.

In the morning they concluded to keep an eye on him, at least until they reached Cottonwood Springs. Jack Morrow had been driven off with the rest of the ranchmen, but there was a camp of soldiers there, and they expected to reach the place before night. The Indian objected. He liked to travel with them, but had a number of reasons why it was not convenient at that time. He would like to go and get his squaw and pappoose, who were about ten miles off on the right, and would meet them again further down the road. They did not doubt that he would meet them, though they were skeptical as to the squaw and pappoose; and they insisted all the more on his going with them. They tied his pony behind their wagon, having already, as they supposed, taken away all his weapons, and invited him to get in and ride. This he refused to do. He didn't like to ride; he would walk. So he walked, naked but for his breechcloth, hat and moccasins, the others watching him sharply.

Mr. Cotton saw that he was continually trying to fall behind, and called a halt. "Boys," he said, "this fellow's got to go in the wagon, if we have to put him in by force." So they surrounded him and closed in, prepared to throw him into the wagon.

Mr. Cotton says he had the wickedest face he ever saw. His eyes glittered like a snake's. As they came near him, he whipped out from somewhere in his breechcloth a butcher knife—that long—and made a leap for the nearest white man. He dodged, and away went the Indian, racing for the river like a jack-rabbit.

All the party began popping at him with their pistols, and one jumped into the wagon and jerked out the rifle that, like most of the plains parties, they had hanging in the bows. This was a long, heavy gun, carrying an ounce ball. The man dropped on his knee, aimed carefully at the jumping redskin, who was nearly to the river bank by this time, and when he fired he dropped him. The ball struck him in the middle of the back, and broke him in two. When they came round him he was helpless from the waist down, but he lay on his back striking at them with his knife—like a wasp. They fired ten or fifteen balls into him, and then a couple of the party, "who had queer kind of tastes," Mr. Cotton said, "began sawing at his scalp. I got sick at the stomach and left."

They then hurried on, feeling uneasy, for they were in a very dangerous neighborhood. A few miles back in the sand hills to their right was a famous meeting-place of the Indians, and on their left was a ford much used by the savages; Beauvais' ford, perhaps. They expected every minute to see a murderous band come galloping over the bluffs and to have to fight for their lives. But they saw no Indians,

and reached Cottonwood Springs without further adventure. There they found a large force of regular troops just arrived, and reporting their experience to the commander, a scouting party was sent out, which found the body of the Indian just as they had left it, and also the fresh trail of several hundred warriors at the ford mentioned, but did not see the hostiles themselves.

This was the extent of the surveying party's Indian adventures on that trip. All the way in they saw the traces of their depredations, but they missed them everywhere, by good luck.

At Blue Springs, however, they met a party of five young men going to the mountains. They were well-armed and fearless, and were taking the chances of the road against the advice of the plainsmen. While Mr. Cotton's party were still at the station, a cavalry squad came in, bringing in an ambulance the bodies of all five of the young men. They had found them stripped, mutilated and scalped, lying by the roadside.

DEMOCRACY'S HOPE.

The republican party is the best knit and most skillfully led political party the world ever saw. It has had more "luck" of the good kind, in the last five or six years, than ever before fell to any party's lot. It is entrenched in every federal department, and rules twenty-eight of the states. It holds in the hollow of its hand essentially the whole of the bounding, growing, aggressive northwest, and the whole Pacific slope. It is equally solid in the middle north and the potential east. It holds Delaware. It has probably a majority in both Maryland and Kentucky, on a fair count.

To expect some petty quarrel between leaders to even seriously weaken an organization with its prestige, its financial facilities, its backing in every social, financial ramification, is vain imagining.

The one way the democracy can hope to overcome its rival is by and through making itself worthy of the country's respect and support. Pitch out the isms and fads and follies; discard the leaders that have led only to defeat and humiliation. Drop the theorists whose vaporings have been demonstrated of less value than the babble of babes. Get back on the broad platforms that covered every principle of liberty, honesty and efficiency. In a word, make the party worthy, and it will prosper.—Chattanooga Times (Dem.).

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