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HOT WEATHER PHILOSOPHY OF BILDAD AKERS.

IT WAS ONLY AN ORDINARY knot of men and boys that almost obstructed the doorway of the waiting-room. It was not difficult for the detached lounge to discover that base-ball was the subject of discussion. We were about to pass on to the ticket window when our ears caught a familiar note in one voice which seemed especially obtrusive and masterful. It dealt out with enthusiasm and authority such words as "ferst base," "pitcher," and "run," and averred that "that pitcher jest naterally had ought to be tuk frum the game in the fust eenin."

Of course, we did not pass on at once to the ticket window. We looked over the fringe of the crowd at a hale animated old man who was the centre of interest. We did not mean to catch his eye, but he caught ours, and, breaking into a sentence descriptive of the "pitchin" power of a "feller down my way," he advanced toward me and gave me what is called a handshake, while he roared his salutation through the waiting-room.

We knew him to be Bildad Akers before we saw him in the centre of the crowd. If there had been any doubt it would have been dispelled after that handshake. There is no other like it.

"Bless my soul, Ivry, who'd a suspicioned a-seein you down here jest as I was a-hopin you'd never ketch on as I had bin to Raleigh. Fer jest as sartain as I see you you've got to plunk somethin down in the Advocate about me. I don't keer, but Lizy says people 'll think I go to Raleigh jest to see and be seed, and then to git my name in the Advocate. So I sorter thawt I'd git out of these diggins without havin sot eyes on you. But shore as guns iron you have cotch me this time. Well, well—Ivry how air you anyway?"

We answered Bildad as courtesy and brotherly feeling demanded, and informed him that we were going down his way and anticipated with great pleasure the privilege of talking to him on the train. The old man drew his fingers through his hair and his face took on an expression which suggested to us a painful query on his part as to what "Lizy" would say now. But the dominant feeling in a moment conquered and his pleasure expressed itself in the words: "I'd jest as soon talk to you as any of these other fellers." This from Bildad meant much.

In a few minutes we were on the train. The car was crowded. Not a vacant seat could be found. There was one defiant looking little man with a stubby moustache and bull-dog jaw who was occupying two double seats. Bildad eyed him for a moment, and then approached him and said: "You feller, there, hike them hoofs offen that seat and dont make me think so much of a hawg tryin to eat two years o' corn at the same time." The little man at first hesitated, but looking up at the owner of that voice, he immediately "hiked." We turned the seat and settled down for our chat.

The conductor came around. There was a look of trouble on Bildad's face. We found that he had not become accustomed to the little slip that had been placed in his hat. "Ivry," he said, "it's a piccayunish thing to mind, but do you know it riles me evrytime that captin puts one of them things in my hat. It's too much like brandin steers or ticketing punkins and roosters out at the State Fair." We tried to explain the utility and necessity of the slip, but even then he was not satisfied.

After criticising some hill-side plowing that was being done in a field to the right, my companion lit an old Virginia cheroot which was minus its wrapper, looked at us a moment, and said:

A DELIVERANCE ON BASEBALL.

"Ivry, you think I'm shamed of myself, aint you, about that baseball blsness? Well, I aint one bit. I haint only bin tawkin about it, but I went to the game this very evenin. I might as well tell you that ever sence I was a boy at the ole Pond school-house and played 'cat and town ball,' I've jest naterally hankered arter every good game of baseball what was in walkin or ridin distance. Why, it's like hearin preechin when I see a good game. I larn so much bout myself and others. To see a feller hold a bat jest like he was a-goin to miss the ball minds me of these fellers who never spect to make anything in life, and never does. They dont spect to hit the ball. Then to see a man what has got on a base and doesnt wait for a ball to put him on another base jest teaches me that it won't always do for a feller to wait for somethin to turn up as old Bill Sellers has bin a-doin. It takes the best quality of brains to play a good game, and it jest pintedly stirs all the bile in me to see two good teams a-playin agin one another. It'd help you, Ivry, if you would take

more intrust in sech. No, I aint got a thing to be shamed of; even if I am a steward in the church."

We assured Bildad that if he did not have laid up against him any sin more grievous than that of liking baseball, his account with the Recording Angel was all right.

In spite of the fact that Bildad's conscience had seemed so clear, our assurance that we attached no blame to him seemed to please him. But he put his mouth close to our ear and said in a subdued tone: "You needn't tell Lizy bout my goin to the game this evenin. I tell her bout evrything, but wimmen is so quare, what's the use of botherin them with things they cant understand and may make a fuss about?"

HE DISCUSSES THE ADVOCATE.

The train rattled on. The conversation lagged and finally stopped. Bildad was nodding. We allowed him to sleep. This, however, was only for a few minutes. The voice of a porter calling a station waked him. He rubbed his eyes and yawned. Then he said: "Ivry, how is the Advocate?"

We told him that the Advocate would be getting along finely if we could only keep any money in the treasury; that unpaid subscriptions were bothering us, especially in the summer season; that we had a good many friends among the subscribers, but that a large number would take the paper as long as we would not say anything about pay, but that the moment we would ask them for their subscription, they would get mad and stop the paper. We dwelt for awhile on the fact that the "Old Raleigh" is, with one exception, the only first-class religious paper in Southern Methodism which is supporting itself from only one-half of a State. We closed by saying: "If we had more friends like you, Brother Akers, we would sweep everything."

The old man slowly shook his head, and said: "Ivry, we have got some quare fellers among us Methdists. I met up with one of em last week. I was a hitchin my hoss at the post-office when Jeems Sedly cum out with a letter in his han. He was as mad as fire. I sed, 'Jeems, what's the matter?' Jeems said, 'Jest look thar,' and he handed me the letter. I tuk it and read it and seed whar you was a-axin him to send you some money, sence he was over three yeers behind. I said: 'Jeems, that's all right. Why don't you anty up?' He said: 'That's a dun, and I hate duns like snakes.' I said: 'That's square. If I owe a man anything and haint antied up, I cant blame the man for wantin his money and tellin me so.' 'Well,' sed Jeems, 'I prescribed for only a year.' I axed Jeems if he had paid for a year. He scratched his head and said he hadnt, but lowed to do it. 'But they want me to pay for the time ever since then. This is eight times they have wrote me, and Im gittin tired of it.' 'Well, have you rote fer em to stop the paper?' sez I. 'No,' he sez, 'they knowd I prescribed fer only a year. They ought to have stopped the paper. Why didnt you stop it by not takin it out of the office?' sez I. 'You knowd if them Advocate fellers stopped the paper thout your orderin it stopped, you would have got your dander up and would cuse em of not wantin to credit you. Ef you was too no-count to write to em, why in the name of common-sence did you keep on takin the paper out of the office? You wouldnt write to em, and you kept on takin the paper and readin it, and how in the name of common-sence and religion could you keep em from thinkin you still was a wantin of it, and how in the name of common-sence and religion can you be agin payin em?' Jeems only sed he wasnt agwine to even ef he had read the paper all this time. He didnt tell em to send it all this time, and he wasnt agwine to pay for it. Well, Ivry, I seed it was no use to talk to him enny more. I left him, and as I left I sez to myself: 'I trust to the good Lord the "Old Rolly" hasnt got many like him to fool with. He needs both sense and religion.'"

We assured Bildad that we had so many good, true men and women among our readers, that if he didn't mind, we would not talk on the subject any more. It was a sore subject with us, and had given us more trouble than anything else connected with the paper.

BILDAD'S SCHEME.

But Bildad was not willing to leave the subject altogether. He said:

"Ivry, I have gotten an idee in my head which has been buzzin thar ever sence I hearn you at the Deestrick. You said down thar in your speech that Methdism wont never deliver the goods (you didnt say it adactly in them wurd) until our people git to knowin more about the church—not one society, but the whole church. You sed people had to