RALEIGH REGISTER
AND NORTH-CAROLINA GAZETTE.

"Ours are the plans of fair delightful peace, unwarp'd by party rage, to live like brothers."

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BLACKBIRD, THE OMAHA CHIEF.

FROM THE NATIONAL GAZETTE.

From Mr. Irving's new work, "ASTORIA, or Anecdotes of an Enterprise beyond the Rocky Mountains"—now in the Press.

On the 10th of May, the party arrived at the Omaha (pronounced Omawhaw) village, about eight hundred and thirty miles above the mouth of the Missouri, and encamped in its neighborhood. The village was situated under a hill, on the bank of the river, and consisted of about eighty lodges. These were of a circular and conical form, and about sixteen feet in diameter—being mere tents of dressed buffalo skins, sewed together and stretched on long poles, inclining towards each other, so as to cross at about half their height. Thus the naked poles diverge in such a manner, that, if they were covered with skins like the lower ends, the tent would be shaped like an hour glass, and present the appearance of one cone inverted on the apex of another.

The forms of Indian lodges are worthy of attention, each tribe having a different mode of shaping and arranging them, so that it is easy to tell, on seeing a lodge or an encampment at a distance, to what tribe the inhabitants belong. The exterior of the Omaha have often a gay and fanciful appearance, being painted with undulating bands of red and yellow, or decorated with rude figures of horses, deer and buffalos, and with human faces, painted like full moons, four or five feet broad.

The Omahas were once one of the numerous and powerful tribes of the prairies, vying in warlike might and prowess with the Sioux, the Pawnees, the Sauks, the Konzas, and the Iatans. Their wars with the Sioux, however, had thinned their ranks, and the small-pox in 1802 had swept off about two-thirds of their number. At the time of Mr. Hunt's visit, they still boasted about two hundred warriors and hunters: but they are fast melting away, and before long, will be numbered among those extinguished nations of the West, that exist but in tradition.

In his correspondence with Mr. Astor, from this point of his journey, Mr. Hunt gives a sad account of the Indian tribes bordering on the river. They were in continual war with each other, and their wars were of the most harrassing kind—consisting, not merely of main conflicts and expeditions of moment, involving the sackings, burnings and massacres of towns and villages, but of individual acts of treachery, murder, and cold blooded cruelty, or of vaunting and fool-hardy exploits of single warriors, either to avenge some personal wrong or gain the vainglorious trophy of a scalp. The lonely hunter, the wandering wayfarer, the poor squaw, cutting wood or gathering corn, was liable to be surprized and slaughtered. In this way, tribes were either swept away at once, or gradually thinned out, and a savage life was surrounded with constant horrors and alarms. That the race of men should diminish from year to year, and so few should survive of the numerous nations which evidently once peopled the vast regions of the West, is nothing surprising; it is rather matter of surprise that so many should survive; for the existence of a savage in these parts seems little better than a prolonged and all besetting death. It is, in fact, a caricature of the boasted romance of feudal times—chivalry in its native and uncultured state, and knight errantry run wild.

In their more prosperous days, the Omahas looked upon themselves as the most powerful and perfect of human beings, and considered all created things as made for their peculiar use and benefit. It is this tribe, of whose Chief, the famous Wash-ing-guh-sah-ba, or Blackbird, such savage and romantic stories are told. He had died about ten years previous to the arrival of Mr. Hunt's party, but his name was still mentioned with awe by his people. He was one of the first among the Indian Chiefs on the Missouri, to deal with the white traders, and showed great sagacity in levying his royal dues. When a trader arrived in his village, he caused all his goods to be brought into his lodge and opened. From these he selected whatever suited his sovereign pleasure—blankets, tobacco, whiskey, powder, ball, beads and red paint; and laid the articles on one side, without deigning to give any compensation. Then calling to him his herald or crier, he would order him to mount on the top of the lodge and summon all the tribe to bring in their peltries, and trade with the white man. The lodge would soon be crowded with Indians, bringing bear, beaver, otter, and other skins. No one was allowed to dispute the prices fixed by the white trader upon his articles, who took care to indemnify himself five times over for the goods set apart by the Chief. In this way the Blackbird enriched himself, and enriched the white men, and became exceedingly popular among the traders of the Missouri.

His people, however, were not equally satisfied by a regulation of trade which worked so manifestly against them, and began to show signs of discontent. Upon this, a crafty and unprincipled trader revealed a secret to the Blackbird, by which he might acquire unbounded sway over his ignorant and superstitious subjects. He instructed him in the poisonous qualities of arsenic, and furnished him with an ample supply of that baneful drug.—From this time, the Blackbird seemed endowed with supernatural powers, to possess the gift of prophecy, and to hold the disposal of life and death within his hands. Wo to any one who questioned his authority or dared to dispute his commands! The Blackbird prophesied his death within a certain time, and he had the secret means of verifying his prophecy. Within the fated period the offender was smitten with a strange and sudden disease, and perished from the face of the earth. Every one stood aghast at these multiplied examples of superhuman might, and dreaded to displease so omnipotent and vindictive a being; and the Blackbird enjoyed a wide and undisputed sway.

It was not, however, by terror alone that he ruled his people; he was a warrior of the first order, and his exploits in arms were the theme of young and old. His career had begun by hardships, having been taken prisoner by the Sioux in early youth. Under his command, the Omahas obtained great character for military prowess, nor did he permit an insult or injury to one of his tribe to pass unrevenged. The Pawnee republicans had inflicted a gross indignity on a favorite and distinguished Omaha brave. The Blackbird assembled his warriors, led them against the Pawnee town, attacked it with irresistible fury, slaughtered a great number of its inhabitants, and burnt it to the ground. He waged fierce and bloody war against the Ottees for many years, until peace was effected between them by the mediation of the whites.—Fearless in battle, and fond of signalizing himself, he dazzled his followers by his daring acts.—In attacking a Kanza village, he rode singly round it, loading and discharging his rifle at the inhabitants as he galloped past them. He kept up in war the same idea of mysterious and supernatural power. At one time, when pursuing a war party by their tracks across the prairies, he repeatedly discharged his rifle into the prints made by their feet and by the hoofs of their horses, assuring his followers that he would thereby cripple the fugitives, so that they would easily be overtaken. He in fact did overtake them, and destroyed them almost to a man; and his victory was considered miraculous, both by friend and foe. By these and similar exploits he made himself the pride and boast of his people, and became popular among them, notwithstanding his death-denouncing fiat.

With all his savage and terrific qualities, he was sensible of the power of female beauty, and capable of love. A war party of the Poncas had made a foray into the lands of the Omahas, and carried off a number of women and horses. The Blackbird was roused to fury, and took the field with all his braves, swearing to "eat up the Ponca nation,"—the Indian threat of exterminating war. The Poncas, sorely pressed, took refuge behind a rude bulwark of earth; but the Blackbird kept up so galling a fire, that he seemed likely to execute his menace. In their extremity they sent forth a herald, bearing the calumet or pipe of peace, but he was shot down by order of the Blackbird. Another herald was sent forth in similar guise, but he shared a like fate. The Ponca chief then, as a last hope, arrayed his beautiful daughter in her finest ornaments, and sent her forth with a calumet, to sue for peace. The charms of the Indian maid touched the stern heart of the Blackbird; he accepted the pipe at her hand, smoked it, and from that time a peace took place between the Poncas and the Omahas.

This beautiful damsel, in all probability, was the favorite wife whose fate makes so tragic an incident in the story of the Blackbird. Her youth and beauty had gained an absolute sway over his rugged heart, so that he distinguished her above all his other wives. The habitual gratification of his vindictive impulse, however, had taken away from him all mastery over his passions, and rendered him liable to the most furious transports of rage. In one of these his beautiful wife had the misfortune to offend him, when suddenly drawing his knife, he laid her dead at his feet with a single blow.

In an instant his frenzy was at an end. He gazed for a time in mute bewilderment upon his victim; then drawing his buffalo robe over his head, he sat down beside the corpse, and remained brooding over his crime and his loss. Three days elapsed yet the chief continued silent and motionless; tasting no food, and apparently sleepless. It was apprehended that he intended to starve himself to death; his people approached him in trembling awe, and entreated him once more to uncover his face and be comforted; but he remained unmoved. At length one of his warriors brought in a small child, and laying it on the ground, placed the foot of the Blackbird upon its neck. The heart of the gloomy savage was touched by this appeal; he threw aside his robe; made an harangue upon what he had done; and from that time forward seemed to have thrown the load of grief and remorse from his mind.

He still retained his fatal and misterious secret, and with it his terrific power; but, though able to deal death to his enemies, he could not avert it from himself or his friends. In 1802 the small-pox, that dreadful pestilence, which swept over the land like a fire over the prairies, made its appearance in the village of the Omahas.—The poor savages saw with dismay the ravages of a malady, loathsome and agonizing in its details, and which set the skill and experience of their conjurers and medicine men at defiance. In a little while, two-thirds of the population were swept from the face of the earth, and the doom of the rest seemed sealed. The stoicism of the warriors was at an end; they became wild and desperate; some set fire to the village as a last means of checking the pestilence; others, in a frenzy of despair, put their wives and children to death that they might be spared the agonies of an inevitable disease, and that they might all go to some better country.

When the general horror and dismay was at its height, the Blackbird himself was struck down with the malady. The poor savages, when they saw their chief in danger, forgot their own miseries, and surrounded his dying bed. His dominant spirit, and love for the white men, were evinced in his latest breath, with which he designated his place of sepulture. It was to be on a hill or promontory, upward of four hundred feet in height, overlooking a great extent of the Missouri, from whence he had been accustomed to watch for the barks of the white men. The Missouri washes the base of the promontory, and after winding and doubling in many links and mazes in the plain below, returns to within nine hundred yards of its starting place; so that for thirty miles navigating with sail and oar, the voyager finds himself continually near to this singular promontory as if spell bound.

It was the dying command of the Blackbird that his tomb should be upon the summit of this hill, in which he should be interred, seated on his favorite horse, that he might overlook his ancient domain, and behold the barks of the white men as they came up the river to trade with his people.

His dying orders were faithfully obeyed. His corpse was placed astride of his war steed, and a mound raised over them on the summit of the hill. On top of the mound was erected a staff, from which fluttered the banner of the chieftain, and the scalps that he had taken in battle. When the expedition under Mr. Hunt visited that part of the country, the staff still remained with the fragments of the banner, and the superstitious rite of placing food from time to time on the mound, for the use of the deceased, was still observed by the Omahas. That rite has since fallen into disuse, for the tribe itself is almost extinct. Yet the hill of the Blackbird continues an object of veneration to the wandering savage, and a landmark to the voyager of the Missouri; and as the civilized traveller comes within sight of its spell-bound crest, the mound is pointed out to him from afar, which still encloses the grim skeletons of the Indian warrior and his horse.

THE AMERICAN FARMER.

BY NICHOLAS BIDDLE.

From an Address before the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture.

If I have failed to prove that the pursuits of agriculture may be as lucrative as other employments, it will be an easier task to vindicate their pleasure and their importance. I need not dwell on their retirement, one of the purest enjoyments of this life, and the best preparation for the future, on those healthy occupations, on that calmness of mind, on that high spirit of manliness and independence, which naturally belong to that condition. These are attractions which must have deep roots in the human heart, since they have in all times facinated at once the imagination, and won the judgment of men. But I may be allowed to say, that in this nation, agriculture is probably destined to attain its highest honors, and that the country life in America ought to possess peculiar attractions,—the pure and splendid institutions of this people have embodied the highest dreams of those high spirits, who in other times and in other lands, have lamented or struggled against oppressions; they have realised the fine conceptions which speculative men have imagnied, which wise men have planned, or brave men vainly perished in attempting to establish. Influence in reclaiming the lost dignity of man, and inspiring the loftiest feelings of personal independence, may be traced in every condition of our citizens; but, as all objects are most distinct by insulation, their effects are peculiarly obvious in the country.

The American farmer is the exclusive, absolute, uncontrolled proprietor of the soil. His tenure is not from government. The government derives its power from him. There is above him nothing but God and the laws; no hereditary authority usurping the distinctions of personal genius; no established church spreading its dark shadow between him and heaven. His frugal government neither desires or dares to oppress the soil, and the altars of religion are supported only by the voluntary offerings of sincere piety. His pursuits, which no perversion can render injurious to any, are directed to the common benefit of all. In multiplying the bounties of Providence in the improvement and embelishment of the soil, in the care of the inferior animals committed to his charge, he will find an ever varying and interesting employment, dignified by the union of simple and generous hospitality. His character assumes a loftier interest by its influence over the public liberty.

It may not be foretold to what dangers, this country is destined, when its swelling population, its expanded territory, its daily complicating interests shall awake the latent passions of men, and reveal the vulnerable points of our institutions. But whenever these perils come, its most steadfast security, its unfading reliance, will be on that column of landed proprietors—the men of the soil and of the country. * * * * * These men, rooted like their own forests, may yet interpose between the factions of the country, to heal, to defend, and to save.

From the Carolina Watchman.

The Salisbury Internal Improvement Convention,

Successful beyond all calculation.

This body assembled in the Presbyterian Church, in the town of Salisbury, on the 10th of October, and continued in session for three days. Bartlett Shipp, Esq. of Lincoln, was chosen President, and Jas. R. Dodge and Warren Winslow, Esq'rs. were appointed Secretaries. Delegates were in atteodance from nineteen counties, to the number of 131. It included as much business talent, and sound practical sense, as we have ever seen collected together. There was no attempt at oratory or flourish, but much sensible discussion, and many sound statistical views were taken of the various matters submitted. The members seemed to have come together, with the fixed purpose of preparing to act; and the impression made, we think, is most favorable to the hopes of the friends of internal improvement—the success of the proposition to recommend the three-fifths and and two-fifths principle for the adoption of the Legislature, was most signal and complete; without the least halting or hesitation, one hundred and thirty among the most sound, substantial and respectable gentlemen of 19 counties, selected from all political parties of the State, gave the proposition a full, sonorous *unanimous aye.* We call this, not only a victory but a most auspicious and glorious one.

We copy the other resolutions below, they of themselves are not very strong, but taken in connexion with the resolution to act immediately under the charter granted in 1833, for a Rail Road from Fayetteville to the summit of the Narrows, they too are most encouraging. It will be perceived that books are to be opened in a short time for the subscription of stock under that Charter which as far as the summit of the Narrows of the Yadkin, is thought to be as favorable a one as need be: Indeed the distinguished Engineer, Maj. McNeil who was a member of the Convention, declared that the charter was without exception, as to the part between those points.—He further stated also, that he was so well satisfied with the feasibility of the work, and the profitableness of the Stock, that he would take the stock under this charter to a liberal extent. We learn that he afterwards said, in private conversation that he would take stock to the amount of $20,000 (it is known that he is able to meet that sum.) We learn also that some of our wealthiest men, in those vallies, are going in largely to this subscription. In a word, confidence is at last begun to be felt strongly in an enterprise that will do something for this rich and abundant country. If it should never get any further, it will be a most noble achievement. But as Maj. McNeil said in his remarks to the convention, 'you might as well try to stop a steam car at full speed, with the simple energy of a man's arm, as to arrest the progress of Internal Improvement when it had once been begun.' Whether it will be best to extend this work in the direction of the Catawba or to Wilkesborough or to both, are matters which will have to be provided for, by an amendment of the present charter, which can no doubt be readily had; and by the time the work shall reach the Narrows, those interested will be best able to determine as to its further direction. Upon the whole the result is most cheering: it is to us, who have had our heart set upon this subject, the most delighted day of our editorial life. We rejoice, we bound with hope, and we bow down with gratitude, to the giver of all good gifts, that light is at last breaking upon us.

1st. *Resolved,* That a Committee of five be appointed, whose duty it shall be to draw up a memorial to the next Legislature recommending the expediency and necessity of adopting some general rule for the equitable distribution of our portion of the surplus revenue to be received from the General Government for works of Internal Improvement.

2d. *Be it further resolved,* That this Convention doth recommend the adoption of this principle, namely: that whenever any company incorporated for the purpose of Internal Improvement, shall have subscribed and paid, or secured to be paid 3-5ths of its stock, that the State shall stand pledged to a subscription for the remaining 2-5ths.

3d. *Resolved,* That in the opinion of this Convention, the interests of a large, wealthy and populous portion of the State of North Carolina, require the speedy construction of a Rail Road from the town of Fayetteville to some point on the Yadkin River, above the Narrows, and thence by two branches, the one running directly to the town of Wilkesborough, the other running across the valley of the Catawba River, so as to intersect the Charleston and Cincinnati Rail Road at the most eligible point.

WASHINGTON'S ADVICE TO A YOUNG LADY.

The subjoined letter is taken from the last volume (the 10th recently issued) of Spark's Life and Correspondence of Washington. It was written to Miss Harriet Washington, his orphan neice, who had resided for some time in his family, and to whom he extended his care and aid. She then resided with some of her relatives at Fredericksburg. The letter is dated Philadelphia, Oct. 1791:

DEAR HARRIET: I received your letter of the 21st inst. and shall always be glad to hear from you. When my business will permit, inclination will not be wanting in me to acknowledge the receipt of your letters; and this I shall do the more cheerfully, as it will afford me opportunities at those times, of giving you such occasional advice as your situation may require.

At present I could plead a better excuse for curtailing my letter to you, than you had for shortening yours to me, having a multitude of occupations before me, while you have nothing to do; consequently you might with as much convenience to yourself have sat down to write your letter an hour or two or even a day sooner, as have delayed it until your cousin was on the point of sending to the post office. I make this remark for no other reason, than to show it is better to offer no excuse than a bad one, if at any time you should happen to fall into an error.

Occupied as my time now is, and must be during the sitting of congress, I nevertheless will endeavor to inculcate on your mind the delicacy and danger of that period to which you are now arrived under peculiar circumstances. You are just entering into the state of womanhood, without the watchful eye of a mother to admonish, or the protecting aid of a father to advise and defend you; you may not be sensible, that you are at this moment about to be stamped with that character, which will adhere to you through life; the consequences of which you have not perhaps attended to, but be assured it is of the utmost importance that you should. Your cousins with whom you live, are well qualified to give you advice; and I am sure they will if you are disposed to receive it. But if you are disobliging, self willed, and untowardly, it is hardly to be expected that they will engage themselves in unpleasant disputes with you, especially Fanny, whose mild and placid temper will not permit her to exceed the limits of wholesome admonition, or gentle rebuke.

Think then to what dangers a giddy girl of fifteen or sixteen must be exposed in circumstances like these. To be under little or no control may be pleasing to a mind that does not reflect, but this pleasure cannot be of long duration, and reason, too late perhaps, may convince you of the folly of misspending time.—You are not to learn, I am certain, that your fortune is small. Supply the want of it, then, with a well cultivated mind, with dispositions to industry and frugality, with gentleness of manners, an obliging temper, and such qualifications as will attract notice, and recommend you to a happy establishment for life.

You might, instead of associating with those from whom you can derive nothing that is good, but may have observed every thing that is deceitful, lying, and bad, become the intimate companion of and aid to your cousin in the domestic concerns of the family. Many girls, before they have arrived at your age, have been found so trust worthy as to take the whole charge of the family from their mothers; but it is by a steady and rigid attention to the rules of propriety, that such confidence is obtained, and nothing would give me more pleasure than to hear that you had acquired it. The merits and benefits of it would redound more to your advantage in your progress through life, and to the person to whom you may, in due time, form matrimonial connection, than any other; but to none would such a circumstance afford more real satisfaction than to your affectionate uncle,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.