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and The Cotton Plant.

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AND THE COTTON PLANT.

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ACROSS THE CONTINENT.

III.—The Passing of the Indian Type. (Editorial Correspondence.)

A hundred years ago the Indian held undisputed sway over our great Western empire. He was lord of all that he surveyed. Hunting, fighting, fishing, he was undisturbed, and there is today no habitable portion of the earth about which so little is known as was known about the trans-Mississippi country in 1800. Even the Rocky Mountains, Mr. Roosevelt tells us in "The Winning of the West," were not known to exist as a district range until Lewis and Clark made their exploration in 1804.

But the red man and his happy hunting grounds are gone; only in our books of history and romance do we know them now, and in the wail of the tribal troubadour as he sings of his people's ancient glory. At the St. Louis Exposition last year I saw no more pathetic figure than that of the stolid Indian, a stranger and an object of curiosity in a land which but yesterday knew no habitation save his hunting tent.

Blankets, Tomahawks and Feathers Gone.

The great Indian realm of 1834-'54 comprising all of Nebraska, and Oklahoma, nearly all of Kansas, Montana, Wyoming and Colorado, and nearly half of the Dakotas, has now shrunk to the comparatively narrow confines of Indian Territory and even here the white man outnumbers him six to one. In traveling through the Territories one sees more people riding in automobiles than wearing blankets, and in Muskagee, the very heart of the Indian's present domain, I saw but one full-blood Indian in my stay of several hours. Had I waked up in the town without knowing my whereabouts I might easily have believed it to be Greensboro or Columbia, except possibly for an Indian store—and even here three-fourths of the clerks were white.

Nor does this (to most people) surprising statement indicate how complete is the disappearance of the Indian of Fenimore Cooper and the dime novel. Mr. Wm. O. Beall, who has been out here for a long time, speaking of this matter, says:

"Most people in the East think of an Indian as a red man wrapped in a bright-colored blanket, wearing a war-bonnet of gay feathers and carrying a tomahawk and a scalping knife. I have been in Indian Territory ten years, and have not seen what is known as a blanket Indian. There are approximately about 95,000 citizens in the five civilized tribes in the territory. About 6,000 of these are absolutely white, by reason of inter-marriage, while nearly 23,000 are negroes, who were the slaves, or descendants of slaves, of the Indians, leaving about 65,000 people who are actually of Indian blood. Approximately one-

third of the 65,000 are full-bloods who would come within the common Eastern designation of an Indian. The others do not look at all like Indians."

Dissolving Tribal Relations.

Next year is to see yet another act in this closing drama of the red race. On March 4, 1906, the tribal relations of the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Creeks, Choctaws and Seminoles are to be dissolved, and the Indian will be formally absorbed into that civilization against which he has waged a desperate but unavailing struggle.

This means first that the tribal governments are to be broken up, and second, that each man, woman and child is to receive his or her share of the public domain, and will hereafter stand before the Government not as a ward, but as a citizen. For a time, however, certain restrictions will be imposed—such, for example, as that which forbids the Indian to sell his homestead of forty acres. This allotment has been the work of the Dawes Commission established in 1893, and which has had the colossal task of passing on the claims of 250,000 applicants for a portion of the Indian's bounty. Only 95,000 of these—including Indians of all degrees of blood—have been allowed, and the Commission will formally complete its labors on July 1st.

Coddling and Killing Indians.

We hear now and then that the Indian is not now decreasing in numbers, but it looks to me as if he is bound to fail rapidly as soon as the artificial support he has had from the Government is withdrawn. This indeed has been a poor preparation for the hard struggle of every-day life. Take the Osages, for example, the richest of the Indian tribes. Now every individual, young or old, receives an annuity of \$24 a month from Washington, and as this is more than they need, it is no wonder that it encourages both idleness and prodigality. What will they do when this pension ceases and each man must depend on his own resources for support?

Half the time we have been killing Indians and the other half we have been coddling them. The Pilgrim fathers, we are told, fell first on their knees, then on the aborigines, but of late—as President Roosevelt himself has intimated—the Indians have needed to be saved from Eastern philanthropy as well as from unscrupulous and criminally-disposed white men.

The trouble is that most of the philanthropy has been of the long-range variety and the philanthropists have usually measured up to Edward Everett Hale's definition—"a man with long hair who doesn't know what he's talking about." Near at home there hasn't been much philanthropy—either of the genuine sort or Dr. Hale's. These traders have known exactly what they are saying and doing, and they have shared liberally in the Indian's spoils—just as an unscrupulous toy seller might cheat the eyebrows off of a pampered child of wealth.

Sidelights on Indian Character.

For the Indians may be just as aptly termed a child race as the negro. Tomahawks, feathers,

and blankets he has largely given up, as I have said; but his other childish tastes yet remain. He lets the trader charge him 50 cents for a five cent plug of tobacco; he spends or wastes his money as fast as he gets it; he works as little as he can, and his favorite Bible motto would be, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Where the Indians have built good houses they are often used only one week in six, and I saw more than one neat cottage which had been deserted for a shed or a tent. Up in the Ponca tribe, a Guthrie man told me, the Government built some neatly-painted two-room dwellings—but alas! in some cases the Indians continued to use the sheds for their families and turned over the cottages to their ponies.

The Call of the Wild.

But you cannot transform a race in a day. The negro's inheritance from his aeons of African barbarism is still a more powerful factor in shaping his character than is his environment among the most highly civilized people on earth. But the Indian has lacked the advantage of this immediate contact with the white man. Suppose all the families had been scattered over the country, each family under the tutelage of some white family, how much greater might have been the Indian's progress! As it is, what wonder that "the call of the wild" is still too strong for the red man? We have all felt it—this desire to shake off all conventionality and the appurtenances of civilization and go back to the wild, free life of the earth's first men. You remember how in the story of "Bob, Son of Battle," Bob, the high-bred dog, taken to Alaska by his owners, clung to them for a time. But night after night the untamed dogs of the forest called to him, called him to the freedom of the far-reaching woods, called him to the wild, unhampered life of his ancestors—and he yielded. So it was with the Illinois Methodist negro missionary, highly educated, who went over to Christianize our African tribe a few years ago. But he, too, yielded to the lure of the wild, and last spring we had the story of how he reverted to savagery and become the chief of a barbarous tribe.

In spite of schools and churches therefore, we still have to reckon with the call of the wild, the inheritance of ages of savagery, the reversion of type. Thus a railroad man told me of a young Indian who went to college, acquired an excellent education, and won high rank among his fellows. But when sickness came he shook off his cloak of culture, wrapped his head in a blanket, grunted like an Indian of the plains, and gave no aid to his physicians. Of three Indian girls who went from one family to the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania two conducted themselves much like college-bred white women; the third came back home, forgot her books, put on her Indian clothes again, and choose the primitive life of the squaw.

Indians and Negroes.

I have been very much interested in trying to arrive at a comparison between the Indian and the

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