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"THE END OF EVERY GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE."

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MISCELLANEOUS.

From the N. Y. Transcript.

BLACKBIRD, THE OMAHA CHIEF.

[The following extract is from a proof sheet of Washington Irving's forthcoming work, entitled 'ASTORIA, or Anecdotes of an Enterprise beyond the Rocky Mountains.']

On the 10th 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 toward each other so as to cross at about half their height. Thus the naked poles diverge in such 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, painted with undulating bands of red and yellow or decorated with rude figures of horses, deer and buffaloes, 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 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 now 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 haassing kind: consisting not only of main conflicts and expeditions of moment, involving the sacking and burning and massacre of towns and villages, but of individual acts or 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 vain-glorious trophy of scalp. The lonely hunter, the wandering wayfarer, the poor squaw cutting wood or gathering corn, was liable to be surprised 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 red 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 a 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 uncultivated 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-ha, 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 men. The village 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 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 prophecied 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 his 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 Otteres 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 entirely round it, with his rifle, loading and discharging it 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 be easily 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 forage into the land 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 bulwork of earth; but the Blackbird kept up so galling a fire, that he seemed likely to execute his menace. In their extremity they sent him 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 impulses, 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; fasting 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 a 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 mysterious 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 conjurors 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 villages as a 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, forget their own miseries, and surrounded his dying bed. His dominant spirit, and his 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 barques of the white man. 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 900 yards of its starting place; so that for thirty miles navigating with cost and sail 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 barques 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 the 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 to the mound, for the use of the deceased was still observd by the Omahas. That rite has since fallen into disuse, for the tribe itself is almost extinct. Yet the hill of the Blackbird still 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 enclosed the grim skeletons of the Indian warior and his horse.

ANECDOTE OF NAPOLEON.

In the beginning of his consulate he often used to escape from the Tuileries, disguised in a big great coat and a large round hat, so that even the soldiers did not know him, and go early in the morning to Gen. Sebastiani's lodgings, awaken him, and walk arm in arm along the Boulevards. In one of these morning walks, Bonaparte wishing to make a handsome present to his beloved Josephine, stopped before a large store of precious curiosities. They found a chambermaid cleaning the store, went in, and asked for the master of the house. The servant answered in a dry tone, that there was no master of the house, looking with a suspicious eye upon the two intruders, whom she thought might be a pair of rogues who had entered the store so early with no very favorable exterior, their boots and great coats covered with mud. She ran quickly into a bed room where two young clerks slept, and awakened them in haste, whilst the two strangers looked upon each other and smiled. One of the young men came has tily and half clothed from his room, and asked their pleasure. Bonaparte's eyes fell upon two large and beautiful transparent vases, of an exquisite workmanship, whilst Sebastiani spoke with the clerk, who sent immediately for the mistress of the store, when Bonaparte, in his abrupt and peremptory manner, asked the price of these vases. The widow measured him from foot to head, and said dryly, "that their price was beyond his reach." "This may be, madame, said Bonaparte, irritated, but still in a moderate tone, "but I think it would not cost you much to answer my question." "Ten thousand francs, sir," answered the lady, in a dry tone. "Well, madame, is that your lowest fixed price?" "Yes, sir, I have but one price as every one of my customers knows." "Well, madame, I think I shall buy them; be so good as to place them aside so that nobody else may take them." "But, sir," said the astonished lady, "how then? I shall say they are sold, but—but——" "What *but*, madame?" said Bonaparte, growing warm. Sebastiani gave him a hint, and said, "Madame is right; she does not know us, and of course is not to be blamed for asking at least something by which she might be assured that we were in earnest." He handed her at the same moment a bank note of one thousand francs. The widow, still more astonished; received the note, turned and re-turned it, and handed it to a clerk, directing him in a whisper to go to a neighbor's and see if it was not a forged one, and then addressing herself to the two strangers, said, with the Parisian gracefulness so characteristic of all these female shop keepers, "Gentlemen, I ask your pardon—you appear to be fine and well bred gentlemen, but God knows, since that Corsican, has been at the head of our government we are overrun with rogues and vagabonds, who have even attempted to commit forgeries, (which was true,) and, therefore, I have sent to my neighbor's, who is an *agent de change*, (a broker,) and who understands his business well." "But how then, madame, I thought Bonaparte was a good Frenchman!" "Yes, yes," answered the merchant, smiling "he has been a good a Frenchman, because he was too greatly interested to be otherwise." Sebastiani saw that Bonaparte began to grow warm, and interrupted the loquacious lady by asking her "what she had now to say of the first consul; if he had not crushed anarchy, re-established order, put France in a flourishing state." "Yes, he has so well re established order, that we have now instead of laws, bayonets—instead of liberty, slavery, and legions of miserable spies, who denounce [illegible] every one who dares to speak against him or his adherents," &c.

This woman was of an exalted character, very handsome and bold, and astonished both by her vehemence and the facility with which she talked to them. Bonaparte could not resist interrupting her in saying—"But, madame, you forget yourself by touching these very delicate political matters, in which you cannot have the least concern, being obliged often to deal with the first consul's friends and adherents; and if we should belong to them, what then, madame?—would you not fear to be arrested?" "I fear to be arrested!" said she, laughing loud; "you, gentlemen, could you denounce a poor widow who has five little children to provide for? No, certainly, no, I have nothing to fear from *you*—you appear to be too honest and good gentlemen to wish to ruin a poor woman because she uoed with freedom the only gift of God, her tongue, which the usurper has left her.

On leaving the store, Bonaparte told her he would send the money for the two vases. In walking out they took a hackney coach, and stopped at a short distance from the Tuileries, in the *rue de l Echelle*. Bonaparte, although not well treated by this spirited lady, was, nevertheless, the first who said that he liked her frankness, but that she deserved some good lesson for the future. As soon as he arrived at the Tuileries, he sent Gen. Lasnes, with one of his carriages in search of the widow, with a polite invitation to come immediately with him to see the gentlemen who had bought the vases, as they wished to speak with her upon other purchases, and to pay her what they owed. The unsuspecting lady, seeing a gentleman clad in citizens' clothes, and an elegant but plain coach, was soon ready to go, and off they went at full speed. On the road, she inquired very anxiously after the names of these gentlemen—if he (Lasnes) was their friend; and many other questions which Lasnes was expressly prohibited from answering. But what was her perplexity when she alighted at the great staircase of tha Tuileries, and saw that she had to deal with one of the generals attached to the consul. She exclaimed at various intervals, "Oh, mon dieu! mon dieu! what will become of me if these gentlemen should denounce me to the consul?" Lasnes, who, although a very rough soldier, was, nevertheless, very humane, and of a good heart, assured her, as well as he could, that not the least harm was intended against her. But what was her terror when the first consul's cabinet opened, and she recognized in him the stranger to whom she had spoken so freely. She was ready to faint, and fell upon her knees and wept bitterly, humbly asking pardon.—Bonaparte himself was moved; he helped her up, and requested her to be quiet and composed. These kind words restored her spirit, and she was able to listen to the following friendly words:—"Madame, you have been a little imprudent in speaking so freely of me to strangers; happily for you these words have not been heard by Fouche or one of his agents; you would not have come off so easily. Let this be a warning to you for the future. Here is your money; and give this (20,000 francs) to your children, and say to them, that if the mother is not my friend, I wish at least the children might be!"

It was by such means that Napoleon made himself popular. Compare him with Louis Philippe and his popularity.—*Zodiac.*

MEXICO,

As it was in the days of Montezuma

When Fernando Cortez conquered Mexico in 1519, the city of Mexico contained a population of upwards of sixty thousand families. It was divided into two distinct parts, in one of which lived the nobility, and in the other the lower castes. The public edifices and the dwellings of the court and nobility were built of stone. The temples were magnificent. The one dedicated to Vitzpotzli, the good of war, and the most worshiped of all their deities, was the most spacious. Besides the dwelling of the priests erected on the inside, and the great number of squares, it contained many for other inferior deities, to which the people had to pay homage on their entrance—this great edifice would accommodate more than ten thousand persons, who came to dance at their regular festivals One of the squares was set out with trees, at regular distances, through which iron bars were passed, whereon were suspended the heads of victims who had been sacrificed to the gods. In another department, was a large stone, terminating in an acute angle, upon which the priests suspended the victim to be sacrificed, cut open his breast and took out his heart. A splendid chapel contained the grand Idol. It was the figure of a man, sitting upon a high altar. His head was crowned with a helmet of burnished gold. In the right hand it held a serpent, and in left a shield of four arrows. The countenance was most horrific. The priests slowly withdrew the curtains when they permitted the people to pay their adoration to this deity of their worship! On the left was another idol of similar display and characteristic pretending to be his brother, and equally an object of profound adoration.

The city contained eight temples of a similar description. The chapels in these edifices amounted to not far from two thousand, dedicated to different deities. They were constructed in great magnificence, and their appendages and trapping were of inestimable value.

No one could approach the royal presence, except being barefoot, with profound awe, and my "great lord," uttered in a suppressed tone. When he dined in public, (which was frequent) he sat by himself at a superb table; being first helped from his choice of two or three hundred dishes, and then leaving the rest to the nobility. He drank several kinds of liquors from richly-ornamented cans. The horde were kept out by a rail.—They could look on and see the royal gormandizing "in the distance." Buffoons displayed themselves to amuse the royal eyes, and all sorts of music saluted the royal ear. And then the people went to the squares, to wrestle, shoot, and run, to please his grace.

The vast mines contributed much to Montezuma 's prodigious wealth; besides he drew by usage about one third of the whole productive wealth of his subjects. The nobility were compelled to make him vast annual presents in person. The Emperor was the law in all things, and the slightest disrespect towards him cost the life of a subject. Every town in the empire had a regular militia; and it is even stated that Montezuma had upwards of thirty vassals, from each of which he cou'd have brought into the field one hundred thousand men.

SNUFF, VERSUS GUNPOWDER.

Mr. Benson E. Hill, in his "Recollections of an Artillery Officer," gives the following instance of the power of the titillating dust in reducing a fortress. It was during the march on Paris, after the battle of Waterloo. "Our heavy metal was employed during the 15th and part of the 16th, against Rocrop, so effectually, that, towards the middle of the latter day, a *parlmentaire* was sounded, and his Royal Highness, accompanied by Col. Dickson, Aster, and Roel, advanced to settle terms; the other members of the etat major, remaining at about two hundred yards from the scene of conference. Immediately on the French officer joining the group in front, he lifted his hat, and appeared to ask the prince a short question. A negative shake of the head was observed as the reply, followed by some conversation with Sir Alexander, who immediately set off at a gallop to the spot we occupied; and as soon as he was within hailing distance, my name was loudly uttered. I rode towards him, wondering for what purpose it could possibly be required. "Give me your snuff box," said the Colonel, "the Frenchman says he has not had a piuch this fortnight."

I handed it to my chief, and took the liberty of remaining were I was, to see how its contents would be relished. Making a profound obeisance, the Frenchman seized the proffered box, and, judging from his pantomime, relished with immense gusto the first pinch, for it was quickly followed by a second and a third. He then entered on the business of the mission and as the terms were proposed to him, it was easy to see which were readily accepted, and those to which he yielded a forced and reluctant consent: in the first case, he bowed only; but in the other, he consoled his wounded pride by resorting to my box. The conference extending much longer than on former occasions, I had serious apprehensions that not a pinch would be left; but at length he retired. On re-appearing, he notified the prince that the terms offered were accepted, restored my tabatiere to Sir Alexander, and took leave. The usual orders were given, and a general movement of the troops ensued."

The City Crier of Chicago.—Every nook or earth for a sweep of miles from Chicago, is put under demand and held to the city prices. A poor negro who it seems is one of the first settlers had his little patch on which he had *squatted* bid upon the other day. He is quite an important character in the place. Dressed fantastically in red, with a badge of white ribbon upon his hat, he goes through the city with his bell calling around to all men far and near that now is the time to make their fortunes, by the valuable properties in the lots under the hammer'—Surely, said one and all, no man will have the effrontery to bid away the tenement of black Ned. The moment of sale, however, came, and as the auctioneer lifted his voice, Ned stepped upon a stand and requested leave to speak. He reminded his auditors that he was one of the first settlers—that he came there when the place was nothig but a desert and quagmire—that he had done his part faithfully towards attracting speculators thither and enriching them while there—that he had always been ready to good word and wor —that under his auspices the city had grown up from nothing to what it is—and that he most earnestly hoped and presumed that no *gentleman* would now bid away from him his house and home. All was now silent for some moments; a length one man ventured to bid a thousand, another three, another four, and so on till it went up to twenty-five thousand;—when the negro himself fell to bidding, and finally over-bid them all, and so it was struck off to him!—*Cor. Boston Trans.*

Steamboat on Fire.—A correspondent of the Boston Traveller was lately passenger on board one of the largest steamboats of Lake Erie, which took fire in the dead of night. Those who know the awful character of a fire on the water will easily appreciate the peril through which a multitude of lives but just escaped on this occasion.—There were six hundred passengers, all asleep. The noise made in attempting to extinguish the flames, awoke some of the passengers, and they went upon deck to learn the matter; but just as they opened the cabin door, the sagacious pilot, who knew that if the great multitude of passengers were alarmed, the hands could not operate to extinguish the fire, called out aloud—'Fill up the boilers, boys—fill up the boilers—no delay.' 'O they are filling their boilers,' said the passengers, and down they slipped into their bearths again. But it was soon found necessary to make a hole in the side of the boat near the wheel to get at the fire, and to this end they had to let down the little boat; and thus operating upon the side of the steamboat, roused some of the passengers again, who thrust their heads out of the side windows called, 'What is the matter?' 'Nothing, nothing,' said the pilot, 'we wish to land some passengers just ahead here at Chiwanga—Down with the boat boys.' So the passengers quietly took in their heads and decamped again and thus the great multitude were kept quiet, in ignorance of what was going on, till the fire was extinguished and they were delivered from their imminent peril.

LATE AND IMPORTANT FROM SPAIN.

We are indebted to Capt. Townsend, of the ship Empress, arrived yesterday morning, from Malaga, which port he left on the 26th ult. for the following interesting intelligence. A despatch was received at Malaga on the 25th ult. from Madrid, announcing the complete defeat of the Carlist Army, consisting of 14,000 men under the command of Gen. Gomez, (by the Queen's General, Alaix) with the loss of several hundred killed and 3000 prisoners.

The engagement took place on the 21st Sept. but the name of the place is not given. We also learn from Capt. Townsend, that the above news was confirmed by an extra Courier from Madrid, who arrived a few hours before the Empress sailed. Great rejoicings in Malaga on account of the victory.—*N. Y. Com. Adv.*