

THE EARLHAMITE.

VOL. II.

MARCH 16, 1896.

No. 12.

SIDE BY SIDE.

[Awarded second place at State Oratorical Contest.]

The universe is the product of evolution. An ascending energy pervades all life. By slow degrees nations have risen from the mountain foot of their existence to its summit. In the wild forests of northern Europe two thousand years ago roamed the blue-eyed Teuton. To the lowlands by the northern sea came the war-like Saxon, ere long to begin his bloody conquest of Britain. Yet fierce and barbarous as he was, the irrepressible germ of progress lay deeply implanted in his nature. His descendants have girdled the globe with their possessions. To-day it is no longer a debatable question whether it shall be Anglo-Saxon or Cossack, constitutional law or imperial decree, that is destined to mould the character of governments and to determine the policies of nations.

Out of a people holding tenaciously to the principles of the Great Charter has arisen in America a nation of free men and free institutions. On its shores two oceans lavish the products of the world. Among its rivers, mountains and lakes, in its stately forests and on its broad prairies, like rolling seas of green and gold, millions of toiling sovereigns have established gigantic enterprises, great factories, commercial highways, and have developed fruitful farms and productive mines. The ennobling architecture of its churches, schools, and benevolent institutions; its municipal greatness, keeping pace with social progress; its scholars, statesmen, authors and divines, giving expression and force to the religious and humanitarian zeal of a great people — all these reveal a marvelous progress. Thought is

lost in admiration of this matchless scene over which floats in majesty the starry emblem of liberty.

But see! At the bidding of thought the tide of time rolls back four hundred years. The generations of men of all nations, kindreds, and tongues, who have developed this civilization in America, return to the bosom of the old world. Myriad merchantmen, fleets, and armaments shrink and disappear from the ocean. Daring explorers in their frail crafts hie to their havens on the European shore. The fleet of discovery, bearing under the flag of Spain the figure of Columbus, recedes beyond the trackless sea. America is one great wilderness again. Over the trees of the primeval forest curls the smoke of the wigwam. The hills resound with the hunter's shout that dies away with the fleeing deer. On the river glides his light canoe. In the wigwam Laughing Water weaves into moccasins the rainbow-tinted beads. By gleaming council fire brave warriors are stirred by the rude eloquence of their chief. In the evening-glow the eyes of the children brighten as the aged brave tells his fantastic legends. The reverent and poetic natures of these forest children feel the benign influence of the Great Spirit; they hear his voice in the wind; see his frown in the storm cloud; his smile in the sunbeam. Thus in reverential awe the Red Man lived. His was the life that is the common lot of human kind. Bravely did he struggle with famine and disease. He felt his pulses hasten in the joyous freedom of the hunt. Quick to string his bow for vengeance; ready to bury the hatchet

or smoke the pipe of peace; never was he first to break a treaty or known to betray a friend with whom he had eaten salt.

The invasion of his broad dominions by a paler race brought no dismay to the hospitable Indian. Samoset voiced the feeling of his people as he stood among the winter-weary Pilgrims and cried "Welcome, Englishmen." Nor did the Indian cling selfishly to his lands; willingly he divides with Roger Williams and with Penn, who pay him for his own. History bears record to no finer examples of fidelity. To Jesuit, to Quaker, to all who kept their faith with him, his loyalty never failed.

Unfortunately civilization is not an unmixed blessing. Vices begin to creep into his life and deepen the Red Man's degradation. He learns to crave the European liquid fire. Broken treaties shake his faith in the new-comers. Continued aggressions goad him to desperation. The White Man's bullet decimates his tribes and drives him from his home. What if he fought? His forests were felled; his game frightened away; his streams of finny shoals usurped. He loved his family and would defend them. He loved the fair land of which he was rightful owner. He loved the inheritance of his fathers, their traditions, their graves; he held them a priceless legacy to be sacredly kept. He loved his native land. Do you wonder still that in his breast he should brood revenge, when ruthlessly driven from the temples where he worshipped? Do you wonder still that he skulked in forest gloom to avenge the desolation of his home? Is patriotism a virtue only in Saxon hearts? Is there no charity to cover his crouching form as he stealthily opposed his relentless foe?

The charge of cruelty has been brought against the Indian; but the White Man has been the witness and the judge. Anglo-Saxon England, with its progressive blood, its long continued development of freedom and justice, its eight centuries of Christian training, burned the writhing martyr in the fires of Kenilworth from a sense of duty. In the name of religion and liberty, the cultured Frenchman, with his inheritance of Roman justice, ten centuries of Christian ideas, murders his brother on that awful night of St. Bartholomew, and during the Reign of Terror swells the Seine

with human blood. Let it be remembered, before condemnation is passed upon the Red Man, that, while he burned and tortured frontiersmen, Puritan Boston burned witches and hanged Quakers, and the Southern aristocrat beat his slaves and set blood hounds on the track of him who dared aspire to freedom. The barbarous Indian, ignorant alike of Roman justice, Saxon law, and the Gospel of Christian brotherhood, in the fury of revenge has brought no greater stain upon his name than these.

But what have two centuries of contact with the foremost wave of Anglo-Saxon civilization wrought for him?

"You say they all have passed away,
That noble race — and brave;
That their light canoes have vanished
From off the crested wave:
That mid the forests where they roamed
There rings no hunter's shout;"

"You say their conelike cabins
That clustered o'er the vale
Have disappeared — as withered leaves
Before the autumn's gale."

If in their stead, we have to-day a race of blighted promise, will you spurn them? You, whose sires have permitted the most debasing influences to surround these forest children, brutalizing their nobler instincts until sin and corruption have well nigh swept them from the Earth?

To-day the Indian is pressed almost to the farther sea. Does that sea symbolize his death? Does the narrow territory still left to him typify the last brief day before his place on Earth "shall know him no more forever?" Shall might make right and the fittest alone survive? Oh Love of God and of His "Strong Son," thou who liftest up the oppressed and succorest the needy, is thine ear grown heavy that it cannot hear his cry? Is thy arm so shortened, it cannot save? Dost thou not yet enfold him in thy love? Look with compassion down, and with thine almighty power move this nation to the rescue of my race. To take the life of a nation during the slow march of centuries seems not a lighter crime than to crush it instantly with one fatal blow. Our country must not shame her principles by such consummate iniquity. Has the charity which would succor dying Armenia no place for the

Indian
feited
tunitic
divine
the p
given
cept
to a p
more
oblig
a com
Ideal
huma
only
dread
her c
decla
equa
tion
right
claim
siste
with
their
dation
that
have
cons
but
The
hea
of p

alw
as
thr
ma
les
the
wa
th
ch
ch

Indian at home? Has America's first-born forfeited his birthright to her boundless opportunities? No legacy of barbarism can efface the divine image in man. No tardiness in entering the paths of progress can destroy his divinely given capabilities. No lot or circumstance, except of his own choosing, can invalidate his claim to a place in the brotherhood of man or release more fortunate, more enlightened people from the obligation of a brother's keeper. Poets sing of a coming federation of the world, and we applaud. Idealists dream that in this commonwealth of all humanity the divine spark in man shall be the only test of citizenship, and we think of their dream as future history. America entered upon her career of freedom and prosperity with the declaration that "all men are born free and equal." Her prosperity has advanced in proportion as she has preserved to her citizens this birthright of freedom and equality. Aside from the claims of a common humanity, can you as consistent Americans deny equal opportunities with yourselves to an American people in their struggle to rise from ignorance and degradation? The claims of brotherhood, of the love that is due a neighbor-race, and of tardy justice have not been wholly lost on your hearts and consciences.

The plaintive melodies, running from his tired but bravely enduring soul, are heard in heaven. The threatening night of oblivion lifts. The great heart of the nation sways us with the olive branch of peace. Some among the noblest of this country

have championed our cause. Within the last two decades a great interest in Indian civilization has been awakened; a beneficent government has organized a successful system of Indian education; training schools and college doors stand open to us. We clasp the warm hand of friendship everywhere. From honest hearts and sincere lips at last we hear the hearty welcome and God-speed. We come from mountain fastnesses, from cheerless plains, from far-off low-wooded streams, seeking the "White Man's ways." Seeking your skill in industry and in art, seeking labor and honest independence, seeking the treasures of knowledge and wisdom, seeking to comprehend the spirit of your laws and the genius of your noble institutions, seeking by a new birthright to unite with yours our claim to a common country, seeking the Sovereign's crown that we may stand side by side with you in ascribing royal honor to our nation's flag. America, I love thee. "Thy people shall be my people and thy God my God."

GERTRUDE SIMMONS, '99.

BIOGRAPHY.

MISS GERTRUDE SIMMONS, the author of the above oration, and who received second honors at the recent oratorical contest, entered Earlham College last fall as a Freshman. Miss Simmons came from the Sioux Nation, South Dakota, and entered White's Institute, at Wabash, Indiana, where she remained till last June. Miss Simmons, in twelve years, has acquired a rare mastery of the English language, and she was greeted with tumultuous applause when her oration was delivered at Indianapolis.

THE CONDITIONS OF PROGRESS.

As we look at the works of nature, we see always present the fact of progress. The sun, as it goes with its system, is making progress through the regions of space; the planets are making progress, each revolution counting one less to be made before the purpose on which they are now started is realized; the winds and the waters are ever going upon the errands assigned to them; the trees and the grass, year after year, are changing to greater usefulness, and dying, still change and reappear the servants of another gene-

ration of plants; insects and other living creatures appear, mature, and pass away; and whether we search the heavens or the earth, no completed state is found in which there may be continual, unchanging rest. Even the ocean's rocky floors which seem to say, "Here at last we shall abide," must sooner or later be torn by some power which says to everything: "Rest not; though thy first purpose be accomplished, there is yet another."

And why must this be so? In answer there comes another question—How could it be other-