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W. F. LAMEY, Editor and Publisher

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1904

The Passing of a Negro Type.

Thomas Nelson Page contributes an article in Scribner's Magazine on the old time negro. It is an interesting study of a social institution the like of which the world will doubtless never again witness. The African slave and his master lived on terms of peculiar intimacy and interdependence.

On the great majority of the plantations the negroes were members of the "family" of their owner. They were more like the clansmen of a feudal chief than like serfs. No servants or retainers of any race, says Mr. Page, ever identified themselves more fully with their masters. This relation became in fact the history of both master and servant, grew with their growth and continued through life. In fact, the line of finally parted was even such that it was often remarked that the affection of the slaves was stronger toward their masters than toward their own offspring.

On the great plantations, where the slaves numbered hundreds, such classes as spring from absenteeism were of rare occurrence. The great lords were compared with the total white population of the south. The bulk of the aristocracy was made up of those who owned from one to twenty-five colored servants, while nine-tenths of the white owners had no slaves at all. It was on the small plantations that the typical southern negro was found. Page says:

The mammy was perhaps the most important of the servants, as she was also the closest, and the most beloved of the household. She was usually selected by her mistress from the companions of her children by reason of her being the child of some favored servant, and as most likely to possess sense, amiability, judgment and the qualities which have gained for her character and efficiency. She also grew up in intimacy with the girls of the family, and when she married she became in turn the nurse and mentor to the mammy, and then the mammy of her young mistress, children, and often of her children.

Next to the mammy in point of dignity was a coachman, who was the head man, the same position that is held in English houses. He was a person of great dignity and he looked that every inch. He had charge of the horses and the carriages. He was the governor of the young children and the mentor of the young men, and their confidence even after they had grown up.

I have known instances in which he addressed his master in the form of saying what young gentlemen should be about, and it was taken in good part. He was usually fifty years old, and was supposed to be at pains to make friends with the old servants of the family, the more glorious class, and their influence in the household was not inconsiderable. They had an intuitive knowledge which amounted to an instinct for distinguishing the grain from the chaff, and they knew a "great man" at sight. Their advice and quasi-authority have wrecked the chances of many an aspiring suitor.

It is to the eternal credit at once of the whites and the negroes, says Mr. Page that during four years of civil war, when the white men of the south were absent in the field, they could intrust their wives, their children, all that they possessed, to the guardian ship and care of their slaves with perfect confidence in their fidelity.

Turkey is handicapped in her ambition to rank among the progressive powers by a reputation for cruelty. She has the excuse that her subjected population requires stern measures of repression. It has happened again and again in the history of civilization that a brutal soldiery distributed through the country provokes resistance and rebellion. Just at this time, when new methods of warfare call for intelligent soldiers in the ranks and progressive nations seek the best of their young men for recruits, Turkey clings to her old traditions and deliberately employs or impresses the worst elements for the army. In some cases she makes the army a penal institution and gathers in the lawless and notorious subjects. While this method of recruiting continues there is little prospect that the horrors of the past will be abated. But a war with an up to date power may show Turkey that her methods are obsolete. She will need highly trained and disciplined soldiers, not brutal basal barocks.

The election by the Tsin corporation of Thomas Lee McNutt, Tsin's great scot halfback, as treasurer of the university will hardly be regarded as a reward for that gentleman's services upon the football field, but if he accomplishes as much for the revenue of his alma mater in his new position as he did behind the invincible blue line of 1901 he will well deserve a niche in Kiff's hall of fame.

The government experts estimate the corn crop for 1904 at 2,453,000,000 bushels, a yield never exceeded but once, which was in 1902. Thus far in 1904 the prospect is that the exports of corn will be lower than for 1903 by about 2,000,000 bushels, and the figures for that year were 20,000,000 bushels below the exports of 1902. Evidently the home market outbids the foreign.

Mr. Morgan's restoration to the Italian government of the famous statuettes of Ascoli, which came into his possession innocently and in exchange for 62,000 good American dollars, was a graceful act and one which Italy seems to thoroughly appreciate. It shows, besides, that money does not always smother sentiment.

Colonel Cody will now probably retire to his position of shooting glass balls. They have not so elusive as Hole in the Wall bandits.

A Record Making Siege.

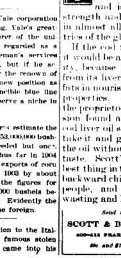
In November forty years ago half of the duration of the siege of Petersburg had expired. It had lasted about four and a half months, or about the time that has expired since the siege of Port Arthur on sea and land was actually begun. Petersburg was the last great siege in history previous to that conducted on Liaotung peninsula by the Japanese and is the proper one to consider in noting military progress or the reverse of it. There was no complete investment at Petersburg, neither at Sevastopol, the next great siege of modern times preceding it. The Russians evacuated Sevastopol, not being surrounded by the besiegers, and the Confederates marched out of Petersburg after nine months of resistance, giving battle as they marched. Port Arthur was virtually surrounded at the end of May and cut off from the army base on the north. The Russian detachment of an isolated fortress was alone marvelous; it is unique. Vicksburg fell forty days after its garrison was cut off from outside supplies.

In another sense the siege of Port Arthur is unique. The position was primarily adopted for permanent defense. Vicksburg and Petersburg became in the course of military operations the refuge of their defenders, rising to reasons of strategy, and their occupation was made the best of a bad situation. Port Arthur is strong by nature, like Gibraltar, and the siege operations have proved how well the Russians prepared their artificial defenses. Yet in spite of its strength the fortress was quite ready to fall months ago that owing to the extraordinary valor of the Japanese, supplemented by the most modern engines of war the fall of the fortress was only a question of days. But the result proved that valor on the outside fronted and that the odds of material appliances were on the side of the defenders.

It was a military necessity for the Japanese troops to take Port Arthur at the cost of any cost and thus free the army and navy for operations elsewhere. But attempts to carry the works by sheer brute force failed with the most fruitful slaughter. Wire entanglements as obstructions to charging columns proved of immense service to the Russians in repelling the furious Japanese assaults. While the material is modern, the idea is very old. There were instances in the civil war where entanglements of the kind were improvised and the strength of them were very effective. But the troops in the civil war always found the wooden shells and sharpened-to-fine crossing troublesome to clamber over and through. The chevaux-de-frise which be removed by during men willing to expose themselves. Often guns were through with axes and wide sections removed as readily as a picket fence. The shells offered to the Japanese and the chevaux-de-frise to Field fortifications were often located with standing timber in them, and this was made impassable by felling trees to overlap one another as they lay on the ground.

The wire entanglements may be cut with slippers, but at Port Arthur the Russian searchlights made the field at night as light as day, and the wire cutters were seen and shot down. The searchlights also disclosed the presence of Russian and cannoneers in repelling charges. This one modern device was of immeasurable value to the defenders. The assailants were literally mowed down as they closed in upon the trenches, and the fire of the searlights the early assaults would doubtless have been carried home. Like the Confederates in the siege of Petersburg, the Russian engineers had gradually the range so as to sweep with fire the ground occupied by the Japanese columns.

We read of the "massacre" made at Port Arthur by the intrepid Japanese but there is nothing new in this, only now it is the rule rather than the exception. It is the employment of formation for battle in contrast with the old system of charging with solid columns. Twice in ten hours there was the method used by Grant at Vicksburg against Pemberton's detachments to carry the Confederate positions by storm in the preliminary skirmish of the siege. But the result of their own accord, when halted by the abatis or other obstructions, even when the men who had so to check the advance temporarily, would rush forward in parties of 50 and 100 or 200. Gaining the rear of the abatis, they would open fire upon the enemy's trenches and in this way cover the rush of their comrades. Twice in ten hours the civil war soldiers arrived at by experience are now part of the military tradition. In fact the slaughter and as a prolonged test of modern war appliances the siege of Port Arthur will rank as a record making event.



Turkish brigands have attacked an American consul, resulting in a number demand by the United States upon the porte. It was unlikely that the sultan would have of the case and the Ballo feet occupy the center of the international stage unchallenged.

Charles J. Bonaparte having been chosen a presidential elector from Maryland, it is to be hoped that the "first Napoleonne" has not lost all its pep yet.

WINE AGAINST DEATH.

Strange Wager of Mexican War Veteran Nearing Decision.

A wager between life and death made fifty-five years ago may soon be paid, says the Chicago Tribune. In the vault of a bank in Covington, Ind., repose a bottle of ancient claret the contents of which will be drunk by the single survivor of a little band of twenty soldiers of the Mexican war. The wager is the most unique of the kind on record. After the close of hostilities and the mustering out of the regiment, the men went to the front from Kentucky and Indiana, but not in session. This was in 1848. It was decided to celebrate yearly thereafter on Thanksgiving day.

At the first dinner a bottle of wine was presented to the little company and in a half joking manner one suggested that the bottle remain unopened until but one survivor remained, that one to quaff the wine to the memory of his comrades who had gone before. The idea was greeted with instant favor, and it was so agreed. Each year the annual dinner has been held, and each one since then by remented the ties of comradeship formed in the crucible of Mexico. For years at the annual gatherings the bottle has occupied a place of honor at the head of the table and was annual by the subject of merry jests and predictions as to who would be the last survivor to drink its contents. As the years passed and the little band became reduced in numbers the jests ceased, and instead the old soldiers who were left looked with awe and reverence upon the flask, regarding it as a link that binds them to the memory of those who have gone before.

Now there are seventeen who have crossed the dark river, leaving three who will likely assemble on next Thanksgiving day. Of the three who are left all are past eighty years of age, and all know full well that soon the strange compact made in 1848 must end. Each wonders to whom the lot will fall. In the yearly interval between the Thanksgiving ceremonies the bottle of wine is kept safely under guard in the vault, and for years before many years it will be removed from its place of deposit for the last time. For fifty-five years it has been preserved, a pathetic memory of the shadowy past, but the time will be long until its mission will be fulfilled.

TRIP FOR TORPEDO BOATS.

American Fleet of Five to Sail for the Philippines.

A fleet of torpedo boats, consisting of the Barney, Bailey, Biddle, Porter and Stewart, all members of the reserve torpedo boat flotilla of the United States navy, is soon to be subjected to an unusually severe test by crossing the York Port. It will start from Hampton Roads on a cruise to the Philippines by way of the Atlantic ocean, Indian ocean and up the Pacific. Never before has such a long cruise been undertaken by torpedo boats which in the distance to be covered and the difficulties to be encountered compare with this prospective voyage.

The length of the five torpedo boats is the Bailey, which is 206 feet in length, 19 feet beam, nearly 7 feet draft and has a displacement of 280 tons. Her triple expansion engines are capable of developing 3,600 horsepower and sending her through the water at a speed of thirty-five miles an hour. The Barney and Biddle are sister ships and are 197 feet in length; 18 feet breadth and 172 feet between perpendiculars. Each has a record of 32 miles per hour. The Porter and Stewart are each 175 feet in length, 18 feet beam and are as nearly like the other twin craft.

The long journey to the orient will be not only a severe test of the torpedo craft, but it certainly will be a severe trial of the health and strength of officers and men who have been small crew vessels. The question of coaling is one of the problems which confronts the officers who have to lay the planning of this protracted voyage. The Porter and Stewart have a coal steaming radius of more than 3,000 miles there is no danger in sending them from the coast of Virginia. The proposed trip of the torpedo boats is the result of a decision made last winter attended the sending to the far east of a flotilla of torpedo boat destroyers. The cruise was a great success, and the more during project now given will doubtless arouse even more widespread interest.

The Thanksgiving Bird.

The origin of the Thanksgiving way ceremony, by which it was known by the native Cherokee Indians, says the Second Mesa Hopi Messenger, dated our Pilgrim Fathers, running through the woods in search of game for the first Thanksgiving spread, heard the moccasin calling in the familiar tones of our domestic turkey, "Turk, turk, turk." These first Yankee huntsmen, imitating the moccasin, killed the bird for its real song, immediately labeled it "turkey," and turkey it is to this day. Our ancestors thought it a musical was the Indian name "moccasin." The more peculiar to the duck when assuming themselves in perfect contest on the river beaches.

A Tax on Theater Tickets.

Victoria, in Australia, is probably be the first British community to levy a tax on amusements for the support of local charitable institutions, says the London Chronicle. Mr. Bent, the premier, proposes a tax of a penny on every shilling spent in the purchase of theater tickets. The Melbourne theatrical managers are alarmed at this proposal, which they say means a levy of 8 per cent on their gross takings. They have had a long conference with the premier, but he succeeded in convincing him to their belief.

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