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VOL. I.

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA, SATURDAY, JULY 24, 1880.

NO. 50.

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## CHICAGO

As It Appears to a Hoosier.

Special Correspondence of the Leader.

Leaving Indianapolis via the I. P. & O. Railroad Wednesday evening, July 7, at 6 o'clock, after a very pleasant trip of seven hours, during which I received the kindest attention at the hands of all the gentlemanly attaches on the train, from conductor down, I arrived at Michigan City, Indiana's only lake port, and the seat of the State Prison North. Here I waited until 4:30 A. M. for the Michigan Central train, which brought me to Chicago. During this "lay over," through the thoughtful consideration of Mr. Anthony, the courteous chair car conductor, I whiled away the "wee sma' hours of the morn'" wrapped in the gentle but seductive embrace of the charming Morphius, and stretched at length in one of the delightful parlor cars which render travel over the I. P. & O. Road so pleasant. My advice to friends who wish to go to Chicago or anywhere else in the north or northwest, is to go via the Indianapolis, Peru & Chicago railroad. By so doing they will not only find pleasure and comfort in traveling, but will meet with the politest attention possible from all the train officials.

Boarding the 4:30 train on the Michigan Central, after an uneventful ride of two hours and a half, I found myself in Chicago, which is fifty-six miles distant by rail from Michigan City. I have said uneventful ride, but it was eventful in one respect; and that was by the maneuvers and counter-maneuvers of the two trains at Michigan City, I got "turned around" and bewildered as to directions; and when the sun arose in the morning, behold it came from the north. I have tried diligently to adjust myself to the circumstances of the case and believe that what seems north to me is really east, but have failed so far. When I arrived in the city and told Doctor McCallister of my predicament as to cardinal points, he at once suggested that I had brought out a cargo of "tamaraek" from Indianapolis, and had sampled it too freely. In hope of finding the receptacle and a "new unconsumed drop of the 'craythar,'" he at once began a thorough search of my pockets, valises, etc., but finding nothing but a piece of blue ribbon and a cigarette holder, he finally came to the conclusion that, as I assured him, I was a strict disciple of Murphy, the temperance oracle, and that the derangement as to directions must be accounted for on other grounds. After talking over the matter, we agreed that the trouble arose from the immense increase in the population of Chicago, which has increased day by day at such a rate since the first announcement, when it was 475,000, that it is now above half a million and increasing. The fact is, there is no telling what it may be when they get through counting it. The only thing that will stop the growth is for the Superintendent of the census at Washington to telegraph for the returns to be forwarded to him. This is the only thing that will keep it from doubling St. Louis before they quit bringing in unfinished returns.

The joy of all classes of Chicago people at the unexpected increase in the census returns is unbounded. The polite and cultured think it is "extraordinary," "unprecedented," "remarkable," while the irreverent say that it beats h-l. The St. Louis drummer in bated breath and suppressed whisper, says that it's all a d-d lie. He takes care, however, to go out on the lake shore where nobody can hear him when he says this. Leaving a large margin for "doctoring" in the returns as published, there is no doubt that the increase in the population and business of Chicago in the last ten years, has been immense. And it is not undesired either. Chicago is a city broadly metropolitan in all its characteristics. While of course Anglo-Saxon ideas and policy predominate, yet almost every nation of Europe, together with the omnipresent washee, washee, John Chinaman, are represented in the city's population. The colored population is thought to be somewhere between five and eight thousand. There is very little, comparatively, of the ignorant, foolish, narrow-minded and damaging color prejudice, characteristic of St. Louis and other southern and semi-southern cities. A man goes more upon his merits here than upon his color. This point is well illustrated and substantiated by reference to Dr. J. L. Lewis, dentist; Dr. C. H. McCallister, physician and surgeon and Lloyd Wheeler, Esq., successor to John Jones, deceased, in the clothes renovating business, and other colored men doing business here, whom I have not met. Dr. Lewis and McCallister each have a large practice, and most of it comes from the whites too. In such places as St. Louis and Louisville, these educated and expert professional gentlemen would be characterized as "Nigger" doctors, and would have to depend entirely upon colored people for support; but here in enlightened, free and progressive Chicago, their talents and skill are recognized and patronized alike by white and colored. Every lover of humanity, of justice, of liberal ideas, and of progress in general, can not fail to rejoice at seeing Chicago distance St. Louis and all other cities of Southern proclivities, whether in the South or not. I do not wish to be understood as saying that there is no prejudice at all in Chicago, but I think I am within the bounds of truth, when I say there is as little of it here as anywhere on the continent.

Chicago is liberal, too, in other respects than color. She is liberal in the amount of beer and whisky which she manufactures, and her citizens are decidedly liberal in the amount of it which they consume. My first impression was that they were trying to drink it all up, so that the disappointed St. Louisans couldn't get any of it to brace up their fallen fortunes. I presume, however, that is not the case, as their shipments in the direction of that now suburban town are quite large. With all the extensive consumption of alcoholic fluids here, I have seen very little drunkenness indeed. Theaters, and variety halls, and saloons run seven days in a week, and Sunday is not a blue day unless people choose that color. You can go to church and hear your sermon and then go to a variety hall and get your beer and hear

your song. Honors rest even and easy between the stage and the pulpit. So far as I have seen, there is very little encroaching or poaching on the part of either one. Chicago boasts of some eminent ministers of the Gospel, most prominent among whom is Rev. Dr. Swing, formerly of Miami University, Oxford, O. The Doctor is quite liberal in his theological views, and he and his church agreed to disagree, and he now preaches to a very large audience of the most intelligent people in the city, in Central Music Hall. The trouble between the Doctor and his former congregation, was that his hell-fire and damnation was not hot enough to suit them. They wanted a man that could give them the old bill of fare, with all the ancient embellishments of Calvin and his conferees. The Doctor could not conscientiously do this, hence the mutual dissolution of partnership. Dr. Swing is recognized in Chicago and elsewhere as one of the leading thinkers of the age. Rev. A. T. Hall, formerly of the Indiana A. M. E. Conference, has charge of a church in his city. Rev. G. C. Booth and Rev. Richard De Baptiste, are also prominent colored ministers.

The buildings of Chicago, public and private, hotels, churches, store-rooms, etc., are a striking feature of the city, and are unexcelled anywhere in the country. This, of course, is owing to the fact that they are all of recent origin. The Palmer House and Grand Pacific Hotel are probably the finest hostleries anywhere on the continent. The Custom House, City Hall and New Court House are all magnificent buildings, and reflect great credit upon the generosity of the general government and the public spirited character of the citizens of Chicago.

The street car system is well arranged and very minute, enabling you to reach any part of the city at very small cost. Summer cars, far superior to the close boxes on the Indianapolis lines, are used here. The travel on them is immense and it is said that the stock pays such high and frequent dividends that none of it finds its way to the market. Where the travel is so immense as it is here, it is an outrage and robbery to charge even the small sum of five cents fare for a ride. The drivers are a high-toned set of fellows, many of them sporting kid gloves, silk neck-ties and gold (?) chains. They are probably stockholders in the companies.

The aggregate business interests of the city are immense. The wharves are lined with boats and shipping of every character, loading and unloading merchandise of every kind. A very large trade is done in lumber from Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota. The grain trade, however, is Chicago's chief pride, and in this line she leads all the other cities of the world without exception. The stock and general merchandise trade here is second to no city in the West. It is claimed by enthusiasts at Chicago, that more hogs are killed here now in midsummer than are slaughtered in St. Louis, Kansas and Louisville during the pork season.

The Government Pier on the lake shore is quite an important feature of the public improvements being made here. It is built out in the lake about a mile from the shore, for the purpose of affording a safe harbor retreat for lake-craft in case of a storm. It is a work of great magnitude, and will be of much value to the shipping interests of the city. The railroad facilities and traffic of Chicago are immense, excellent, perhaps by no other city in the West except Indianapolis.

In the way of suburban retreats and parks, this city is well supplied. The principal parks are Lincoln, Union, Central and Lake, with several smaller ones. Socially, I can not say much about Chicago, as this is not the season of the year when social life shines to best advantage, or rather it is the season when social entertainments go into a state of hibernation or suspension. I am told, however, that this is a lively city in the ball and party season. I learn that Chicago is justly proud of quite a large number of fantastic society belles, who to know is to admire and worship. The gentlemen whom I have met are certainly entertaining, social, jovial and intelligent. Drs. Lewis and McCallister are a couple with what and lemonade. Dr. McCallister has the reputation of making the best lemonade and drinking the most of it (and nothing stronger), of any gentleman in the city. It is interesting to hear these gentlemen tell how they "Chicagoed" Prof. Greener, of Washington, in a game of whist. They say they beat that gentleman so badly that he packed a "kit" and declared he would play no more in the West. Mr. Loyd Wheeler is very enthusiastic about the future of Chicago. He thinks that nothing on earth nor in Heaven can prevent it being the metropolis of the continent. I like Bro. Wheeler's enthusiasm, but would prefer to wait for the St. Louis census returns in 1890 before I put up any money on Chicago.

The enumerators in the Missouri metropolis may see double at the end of the next decade. Mr. George Beard, a practical printer, and editor and proprietor of the "Republican Advocate" is quite an intelligent and energetic young man. "Rocky Mountain Dan," otherwise Dr. R. Cunningham, formerly of Terre Haute, latterly elsewhere, is looking at the "tiger" here—and your correspondent finds him a very pleasant companion in "taking in" the city.

For fear of taking up too much space, I will blow off my head of steam right at this point. E. K. B.  
Chicago, July 13, 1880.

**The Plantation Ballads of the Long Ago.**

By W. ALLISON SWEENEY.  
[Continued.]  
Anybody who has had the good fortune to witness the great Jefferson in his rendition of Rip Van Winkle—rollicking, good-for-nothing Rip—will remember that tender and touching speech which he makes after coming out of his long sleep of twenty years, peering in vain amongst the curious faces of the villagers for a single look of recognition and remembrance, he turns his weather-beaten face from the jeering, laughing crowd, and in a hazy, tremulous voice, asks: "Are we so soon forgotten when we're gone?" And I have thought that the same exclamation might be applied, in a different sense, to the subject of this communication—The Plantation

Ballads of the Long Ago. To-day I find myself wondering what has become of them? Are they destroyed, obliterated from the face of existing facts and things, by the ruthless touch of time? Are they so soon forgotten? And shall I never meet spilt-bound and entranced beneath the subduing sadness of their theme and the thrilling tenderness of their melodies? To be sure the evils which gave inspiration to their authors have passed away, leaving no sign behind save a broken blighted race, and a nation seared and scorched by the flames of civil war; and yet should we, whose sorrows and oppressions became their theme, allow the mildew and rust of forgetfulness to form about them? To-day I think not—to-day, as I allow myself to drift back into memory's shadowy chambers, "the past rises before me," and I feel that it would be ingratitude to do so. Eloquent and beautiful was the sentiment that pervaded the exclamation, "Let me write the songs of a people, and I care not who makes their laws." Oh, how truly and wisely reckoned the enthusiast! For when the time comes for the impartial historian to write and sum up the history of the bondage of the colored race in America, and the causes which fed the sentiment, which finally swept the institution of slavery from the face of the earth, he will say of the eloquence of the forum and the stump, "It was great and powerful, because it appealed to the judgments of mankind of the pen, a silent, subtle influence, and of the wild and rude plantation melodies of that day—greater than all other factors and influences—because they appealed to the human heart, melting it into contrition and sorrow."

Take a few examples, for instance, as types of that vein of pathos which pervaded most of the old slavery ballads, and you will cease to wonder how it was they could touch the secret springs of the Nation's heart, until it throbbled with the warmth and glow of humane philanthropy, never ceasing until the slave pen and the auction block became insatiable of the past. What story more eloquent than this one verse from "Necodemus":

"Necodemus, the slave,  
Was of African birth;  
He was bought for a bag  
Full of gold,  
He was reckoned as part  
Of the salt of the earth,  
And he died long ago,  
Very old."

And the concluding lines of another verse:

"And his last sad request—  
Wake me up at the dawn  
Of the great jubilee—  
On the morn of the great jubilee."

Never will I forget the last time I listened to the sublime invocation to posterity, which the poet had put into the mouth of the humble slave. It was years ago—a party of young men of my own age, was patiently waiting for the death of our last day of grace which Abraham Lincoln had seen fit to extend to the South ere he should declare slavery forever abolished on American soil. When from the distant clock-tower came the greeting in funeral tones—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve. Death to the old year—birth to the new! Death to Slavery—life to Liberty! As if by mutual impulse and agreement, a score of voices shouted, "Let us wake Necodemus tonight; and if the dead can hear the shouts of the living—can witness their joy and their sorrows, Necodemus was awakened that night! The time had finally arrived for his children to do as he requested of them. The "dawn of the great jubilee" had come.

A song which never fails to affect an audience, no matter what its composition, and which has been sung more times than any other of the old slavery ballads within the last thirty years, is seldom heard nowadays, and yet what a world of feeling it contains:

"Way down upon the Swanee river,  
Far, far away;  
Dare's where my heart is turning eber—  
Dare's where the old folks stay."

In listening to this old familiar ballad, how readily does imagination picture out the fleeing slave, far from the home of his ancestors, worn out, weary, foot-sore, traveling by night and hiding by day, while the sun in bay of the approaching blood-hounds during the long watches of the night bursts upon his sensitive ear. So with this one:

"Take me back to the place  
Where I first saw the light—  
To the bright, sunny South,  
Take me back."

Who can not see in this "plaint of a banished, yearning soul, longing to visit once more the scenes and associations of youth, or the spot

"Where the little ones lie asleep,  
And old master lies buried  
Close by,"

"Hang up the fiddle and the bow—  
Lay down the shovel and the hoe;  
There's no more work  
For poor Uncle Ned,  
He is gone where the good darkies go"

Yes, and the shovel and the hoe have long since corroded with rust; the fiddle has been mute for lo these many years. And

"The little log cabin in the lane"  
has gone to decay; the path which led to the babbling spring on the hillside is overgrown with grass; the spring itself has long been dry—but never will we forget Uncle Ned. "Poor Uncle Ned"—yes, humble, obscure, if thou wilt—a slave, certainly—a creature, it may be, of the panty—yet there can be no truer type. How alike the real Uncle Neds and Uncle Toms whom all of us have known.

"Then wake again the songs of old—"

Not that I would linger in mawkish sentimentality over the things which in some senses it might be well enough to forget. Not that I would, if I could, resurrect the past, the dreadful, terrible past—with its auction blocks, its chain gangs, its slave-pens and blood-hounds. Oh, no; for would that the "dead past" could "bury its dead" in this respect. But that I would ask you never to forget to do homage (even though it cause you to unbend a trifle from the proud attitude of American citizenship which to-day belongs to you), to the memories, the martyrdoms of the sires of your race.  
Indianapolis, July 12, 1880.

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