

Lo! The Poor Indian.

The people of the Eastern States imagine almost as wildly about the *West* as an Englishman does about America in general. An Englishman of the upper class and untraveled, will ask you if our people speak the English language, and if the wild beasts of the forest do not occasionally carry off the children from our cities, and other equally ridiculous questions; and we laugh at their simplicity. But how many Americans are there in the Eastern States who fancy the whole West to be filled with Indians, or at least that they form the great body of its inhabitants? We saw no Indian on our outward journey until we reached Omaha; and there only two melancholy specimens of this once powerful and savage people. Only here and there on the remainder of our journey, and at long intervals, did we meet even small Indian squads. More rapidly than the mist upon the mountain side are the aboriginal races disappearing from our soil; so that, before the next generation shall have attained to manhood, the red man will be as great a curiosity as are now the outlandish bipeds and quadrupeds which make up the staple of the menagerie. The Indian has, for the last half century, been seen by our eastern people in his poetical rather than in his real character. Cooper and the novelists, Longfellow and the poets, have by turns and together presented the Indian under the attractive form of primitive simplicity, with a certain native nobility of soul shining out through thoughts and deeds which find but few examples in real life; and unlimited sentiment and sympathy have been expended upon the poor red man, which, when applied to him as a race, is almost as gratuitously expended as it would be upon the other savage tenants of the forest. Stripped of this sentiment, the conflict which is exterminating the Indian tribes is seen to be, not a malicious warfare of a stronger upon a weaker and an inoffensive race, but the old and eternal clash of civilization with barbarism, which has at last reached and invaded the vast solitudes of this western territory. So long as savage life, with all its brutality and cruelty, was numerically so strong, it was necessarily met with corresponding numerical strength or with its equiva-

lent skill. The contest was for possession; and the real question whether this fair region should be open to the occupation and uses of civilized men, or remain the nursery of mere animal existence. The most fastidious sympathizers with the Indian tribes can hardly trust their own judgment in a decision for the triumph of barbarism. Individuals, civil and military, who have conducted wars or negotiations with the Indians, may have abused their trusts and been infamously guilty of deception and inhumanity. This is shameful and heartless; but the great tidal currents in human affairs flow ever on, regardless of individual examples of power or suffering. And the conflict of races on this continent is one of the most noticeable of these gigantic movements. Whatever palliation or excuse, however, has hitherto been successfully urged in favor of the white race in the details of this conflict, it is no longer available in our future dealings with the shattered remnants of the Indian tribes. Humanity and policy alike dictate a course of patient forbearance, justice and protection to the Indians. They are too few to be feared; and it is the depth of inhumanity and cowardice to treat them with injustice. Let the record at least be closed with the seal of forbearance brightened with hope to the vanquished.

— Col. C. G. Hammond, general superintendent of the Union Pacific R. R., met us at Cheyenne while on his way to Ogden. As he is personally known to many of our number, he met with a hearty welcome. Frank Colton, General passenger agent, came on board our train at Laramie, and accompanies us to Omaha. He has shown himself most attentive in furnishing us with all general information our party has desired, regarding the country we are crossing and in regard to the business prospects of the overland railroad. Geo. E. Stevens, superintendent of the U. P. R. R. car department, met us at Ogden, and gave his most attentive personal supervision to the running gear of our train over the entire road to Omaha.

— Buck-skin Joe, well known as a hunter, trapper, and Indian scout during the past fifteen years, was at Cheyenne as we passed, awaiting the regular eastward-bound passenger train that follows us, to proceed on to the place of his birth in New York State, which he has not visited since his boyhood. He attracted much attention from our party, who gathered around him and listened with marked interest to his startling and romantic tales of Indian fights and frontier life.

As human hearts throughout the world are much the same, it is not unlikely that similar thoughts may have vibrated from many a one, when under like circumstances with our own "homeward bound" eyes, have looked out upon Laramie Plains. Before our night's repose we gazed on streams whose flowing waters coursed westward in the direction of the Pacific. Yesterday we followed the great Platte river, which seeks its outlet in the Atlantic, whither our faces are now turned. First climbing by gradual ascent to these elevated and comparatively fertile plains, we have inhaled pure ether from the cloudless vault of heaven amid the freshness of an early morn, and our spirits seemed to have gathered brightness and strength to observe and endure the apparently toilsome ascent still to be overcome. As our eyes scanned the horizon, we saw the sun come up; no mist obscured its rising, but it illumed at once the snow-clad mountains beyond the mighty "Medicine Bow." Then new rays of promise seemed to cast their gentle benedictions over us, and everything seemed indeed light about us, as we approached Sherman, the summit point of a trans-continental trip. Our train rested momentarily on this highest spot, then gently glided eastward, gathering constant speed until we felt our inward monitors proclaim—with all possible deference to the many lovely scenes we have enjoyed, and warm friendships we have made—we are on our own eastern slope, and closing rapidly the distance that divides us from the loved ones that cluster around the hearths of our ancestors, and the sweetly blessed thought fills our souls that home is the loveliest spot of earth, in whatever country found, and that now each day of separation brings us nearer to its sacred shrine.

— The following telegram was forwarded yesterday morning at 10,30 from the summit of the Rocky Mountains, by F. Colton:

SHERMAN, June 28, 1870.

Associated Press, Boston:—The Boston Board of Trade excursion party are on top of the world; highest point crossed by rail. All well and in good spirits: bound for Boston.

— A young antelope apparently quite tame, attracted much attention from some of our ladies, and particularly from the children of our party, at one of the way stations where our train stopped for water. He was so cunning that we have him on board checked for Boston.