Recollections of a Patriarch.

BY METHUSELAH.

youths of about my own age.

hearing, by Allah sil Nebi, by Al- eth by a mere trifle the wisdom of lah and his prophets, that there the ape!" still lacked a month and three days And thus she rattled on, filling to the completion of her fifth cen- my brain with history and my tury! Wallah, may I die the death stomach with doughnuts and waof a dog and my grave be defiled if termelon, till my pain and my she looked a day older than 600.

and she, bidding me "Kosh ame- the events of my own life. deid!" (you are welcome), listened "Bashun ustun! on my head be

the following tale:

and as for snakes, Wallah, I could months!

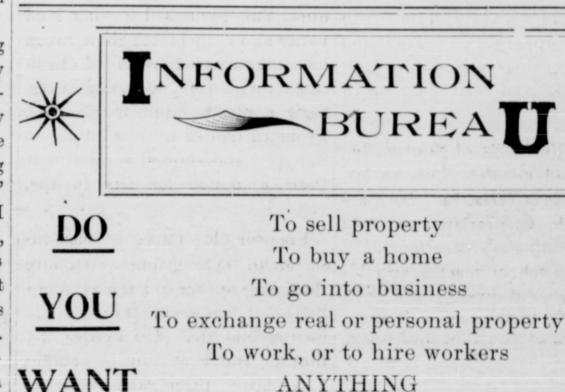
grief were assuaged. When she Not only was it esteemed a high bade me go, with her usual loving honor to be invited to the tents of farewell — "Murakhas! Mobarek!" the Wahi, head of our house, but | (goodbye, good luck go with you) I granny (I call Eve "granny", had reason to feel grateful to her, though there are five generations and so have ye who, in generations between us) made excellent dough- to come, shall read these lines that nuts, and was a great kessengou, tell of our first mother, for it was story-teller. I remember, as though owing to her that I became a scribe. it were yesterday, when I was but Yea, for did she not on my eight-70 years old, how I was struck ieth birthday provide me with a down by a big boy of about 90 and goodly roll of parchment and reeds robbed of my bag of marbles. In to write with thereon, bidding me my distress I ran to granny's tent, record the doings of our tribe and

to my woes, cursed my cowardly it!" said I, "if I fail to do that assailant as a "Shitan keh bacheh" same!" and I kept that oath and a son of a devil! and consoled me diary ever since. Indeed, my rewith a large slice of watermelon cords would fill 500 volumes, judgand a goodly supply of doughnuts. ing from the piles of parchment Then, taking me on her lap, she that fill the four corners of my tent. wiped away my tears and related At one time I had thoughts of boiling them down to one volume, and "Oh, it was just a lovely time we having that same published by had in the dear old garden, Metty. Mahalaleel & Co., but have been Everything so peaceful and beauti- deterred from so doing, warned by ful; no thistles nor nasty stinging- the lamentable fate of my father nettles, only gay flowers and sweet Enoch's work, "The Prophecies of fruit. And all the animals were Enoch," published by the same there, so tame and kindly disposed. firm in the year 613, and which fell Why, Metty, if I chanced to come flat on the market, only two copies, across a lion or a tiger, a bear or a out of an edition of thirteen, having wolf asleep under some bush or sha- been sold, one to his father, Jared, ding tree, I would think nothing of and another to his grandfather, lying down beside him to pillow my Cainan, who died at the ripe age of head on his soft body, and slumber 910, when I was but 417 years old. peacefully till awakened in the cool Adam died in his 930th summer, of the evening by the voice of Adam and my beloved Yahi Ribi, dear calling me to go with him for a friend, Eve, a year later, aged 931; gallop (for we often had a race though, Staffir Allah! may God foraround the grounds mounted on a give her! with her last breath she giraffe, or a zebra, or an elk, or bade me engrave her age on her some other swift-footed creature); tombstone as - 592 years and 3

coil the most poisonous of them Verily we sons of Adam are a round my neck as a necklace. In- long lived race! but then, Shukur deed, it was wearing these pretty Allah! praise be to God! we never ornaments that first suggested to had but the one hakim (doctor) in me the idea of making an apron. our tribe, and we avoided that Shi-For, of course, you are getting too tan keh bacheh (son of the evil big a boy now, Metty, to believe I one) as we would poison. He died picked up the idea of dressmaking suddenly in great agony - Allah through eating of the fruit of the karim! God is most merciful!--

tree of knowledge. That foolish fib about 600 years ago, having, so it Allah. It was his talleh, his kiswas the invetion of our lying Yese- was reported at the time, inadvert- met, his destiny; yet did I miss him de fakir, devil-worshipping priest. antly swallowed one of his own much, for truly we were more like Why, Metty dear, there is about as nostrums; and so - Khoda shefa unto brothers than father and son, Shukur Allah! Praise be to God, much knowledge to be obtained midehed! God gives relief! - we there being but 65 years difference who has blessed his servant with a from an ephah (three pecks) of were rid of him, the silly coloo keh- in our ages, father having taken good memory. This is the 1656th those apples as there is from the bi! brother of an owl! Enoch, my unto himself a wife at the ridicuyear of creation, and my 968th pastek (watermelon) you are now father, might have been living with lous age of 64. In contrast to my birthday; yet can I recall the early eating. And I ought to know, for us now, had he not contracted the father's precocious marriage, my days of my childhood, yea, even as barik Allah (praise be to God)! we foolish habit of walking with Allah, eldest grandson, Noah, remained a far back as my 60th birthday, for I had pretty well cleared the tree of but while yet in his prime, in the bachelor till he was 500; and, he remember that on that occasion I its fruit before we were caught. 365th year of his life, he suddenly chesm, on my eyes be it! though I was invited unto a festival held Min Allah! God forbid that I disappeared. He had been seen am now entering my 969th year, in the tents of my revered relatives should in any way disparage my strolling in the wilderness with Al- my eldest great grandson, Shem, Adam and Eve, where I spent some Adam! May his grave be honored! lah that morning, and as he never has not yet attained unto the comhappy hours in the company of But is he in any way the wiser for returned to his tent, and we could pletion of his first century. having partaken of the fruit, or are find no trace of his body, we natur-Adam was at that time 747 years any of his descendants, now living, ally concluded, Allah kebur! God is old. Eve was but a few days the wiser for his having done so? powerful — that he had been kid- (inquire of Cheubim on the wall).-younger, yet did she vow, in my Bismillah! our knowledge exceed- napped or carried off by his friend [J. C. Hutton, in Secular Thought.

(Signed) METHUSELAH. Tent 247, by the Eastern gate

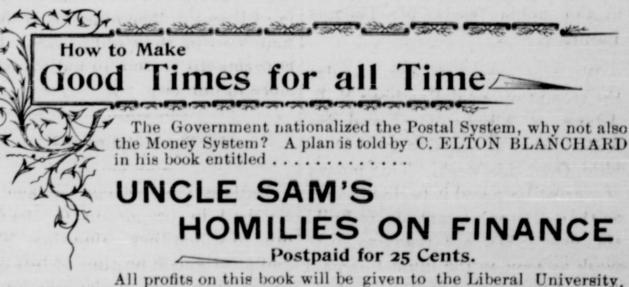


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