



VERNAL BEAUTY OF THE CITY PARK IN MIDWINTER

PROOF THAT CALENDARS ARE OFTEN MISTAKEN AS TO SEASONS....

To those to whom a more strenuous climate than that of Oregon is familiar, the words "Winter in the Park" generally awaken visions of snow-laden boughs, frozen fountains, statues of goddesses whose attire is ill adapted to the weather, and who seem to be endeavoring to acquire additional protection by wrapping themselves in rigid icicles, or trackless wastes of spotless snow that cover the place where flowers and grass rustled in the Summer. A place one only hurries through, or visits when skating is possible.

But while the calendar still declares it is Winter in Portland the crocuses on the lawn down town are proclaiming that Spring is not far away. Some of the days the past week seemed to indicate that the crocuses were in the right. The air was so balmy and the sun so warm as to lure people out of doors, and a too tempting invitation was offered to visit the City Park, just to see if Spring had put in an appearance there.

The seal down near the entrance had scrambled out on the rocks, but whether it was to enjoy the sunshine or look for an iceberg is a matter of conjecture, therefore he could not be considered as an authority as to the proximity of Spring. Maybe he was only seeking companionship, after all, for he certainly looked homesome all by himself. But on gaining the top of the hill, after several pauses to enjoy the magnificent view unfolding at each advancing step, the first thing to meet the eye was a bright little daisy cheerily corroborating the crocus' proclamation. Then a glad note from a bird in the branches overhead added further confirmation.

Winter it was, however, for the Oregonian that morning bore a date but little past the middle of February. The only wintery feature visible, however, was Mount Hood and St. Helens, gleaming in the sunshine through the dark foliage. It looked very much as if it would be necessary to resort to those regions of eternal Winter to procure snow enough to glue out the remnant of Winter here and make it agree with the calendar, for the grass was a tender green and the buds on the trees swelling. But here in Oregon that is what is expected, the grass is always green this time of year. And just as we stand now and gaze on these imposing mountains of snow next Summer, when we come in airy gowns to listen to the lovely band concerts, we can sit under the noble trees and enjoy the music while watching those same peaks still snow-crowded. Yes, the bandstand is there, looking a little lonesome without the orchestra, and the seats are still in the old livery places under the fir that spread their branches, tent-like, overhead.

Many of the benches out in the sunshine were inhabited, for the City Park is never deserted, even in Winter. Winter, we must say, in order to be technical, in spite of the fact that added to the evidences of Spring already enumerated, the pussy-willows along the driveways have shed their furry jackets and are now a mass of fuzzy yellow pollen.

Some of the benches contained mere idlers, while on others sat men who looked as if they were drinking in the sunshine and the rare, pure air for the purpose of wooling back health and strength. The seats about the animal cages were very popular. Family groups were exploring distant portions of the park, while children were going into raptures over the bears and the monkeys and smaller animals, some of the latter of which were mere balls of fur rolled up in a sunny corner of a cage. The cold weather, however, had inconvenienced some of the regular boarders at the park, the man in charge assured me. In fact, the bears and the elk, especially, manifested keen delight in the snow.

In response to a remark that the sunshine had probably brought out the crowd he said "Oh, no; this is nothing unusual. There is always some one in the park.



patch. There were guinea fowls, too, that looked as if they had been borrowing feathers from all the birds, so very fluffy were they, and so variously colored. The white-headed eagles, buzzards and hawks were having a noisy but apparently a harmonious time together. The bears were snoozing in the sunshine, and the elk, though they had an immense wild field to roam in, lurked by the fence with heads held high, wistfully watching the visitors, but ready to make a fleet departure should any friendly overtures be made. It seemed incongruous to watch the mountain lion restlessly pacing his pen and yawning lazily. Was it freedom or feeding time he was longing for? He is certainly a beautiful animal, and very interesting to watch through the bars. But after pursuing this diversion for a while it was pleasant to go back to the green slopes and peep into the wild places where the great trees reared their heads skyward, or wander through the paths and driveways, catching now a glimpse of the river and now a view of the city as it lay spread out at the foot of the hill, the larger buildings standing out like emphasized words in an advertisement. There was the Oregonian Building, the Postoffice, the Chamber of Commerce, the High School, Bishop Scott Academy and the Synagogue, whose golden twin spires brought vaguely to mind some lines that had "domes" and "minarets" and "parapets" in them. But the recollection is so vague I cannot even ask The Sunday Oregonian to supply them, which is a pity, for they would just fit in the scene that meets the eye of the gazer in the City Park.

On the river a steamboat occasionally swept up or down stream and at the dock a fleet of sea-going vessels lay peacefully on the water. It was too far away to realize there was any din of loading or unloading. Beyond was the purple stretch of mountains broken here and there by glistening peaks. It occurred to me as I caught a glimpse of those snowy summits through the trees that they were something like the ideals in our lives, those exalted goals that tower mountain-like above the sordid aims and surroundings of every day life and toward which we commenced our pilgrimage long, long ago, filled with great and lofty purpose. It is true that in our journey toward them, we have wandered into many by-paths, over rocky roads, into chasms wild, and, too, through pleasant valleys so that the lofty peaks have long been shut from our sight. But occasionally some sudden turn in circumstance like an unexpected opening in the hills, has disclosed the spotless finger ever pointing upward, the vision bringing gladness, inspiration or may be reproach to us. Very likely we will sometime lie down without even the sight of them to bliss that last closing of the eyes. But they will still remain, with foundations deep sunken in the earth but crown high up in the heavens, waiting patiently for the sleeper to waken and complete his journey there where the pure air of heaven blows.

It is hard to imagine that the fine, wholesome, sunny park is haunted, but at that stage of my reflections it seemed to me one said, "Well, you could behold these ideals much more frequently if you would but cultivate the habit of looking up." As there was no one visible I hastened to get out of that locality and just as I turned a curve I came upon a young couple, a—well, I was again reminded that it was soon after St. Valentine's day and I concluded likely the remark above recorded was a scrap of their conversation that had reached my ear. That set me thinking how nice parks are and especially this park of ours placed so conveniently near the city and requiring so little to add to its attractiveness; beautiful enough to make a pleasure ground for the rich and the mighty but belonging to the people. And lovely, not only in Summer, when a man with a small dooryard and a large family may come here and make the whole family happy for a day, but also in the Winter when the mists lie close around it or the sunshine brings out all the beautiful surroundings.

EDITH L. NILES.

Why, even during the snow there were many people here, most of them after photographs. It is not at all amazing that the people of Portland love to visit the City Park, for, had art added nothing but driveways to nature's work there, the beautiful trees and charming outlooks would be enough to entice a lover of nature. But as it is, the park is a pleasant place to loiter, with the rustic bridges and the grottoes, where the sword fern is still as fresh as in midsummer, and at the fountain, Cupid, looking very happy as the water falls over him, although he is without the rich background of the flower bed he had last Summer and the beautiful grouping of foliage plants around the fountain basin. A few of the cages had an extra protection of fir boughs, and so did some of the more delicate plants. The flower beds, that last Summer were such a delight to the eye, were only heaps of mellow black earth. Otherwise there are few evidences of Winter about the park. The owls were the only things that

seemed really wintry. As they sat in prim rows on their perches, silently blinking at the passers, they looked for all the world as if they were training for a Christmas card with a snowy background. In the vicinity of the aviary there were so many pleasant noises that it sounded like it must be the last dress rehearsal before the grand Spring opening. Once in the building, however, one is forcibly reminded that St. Valentine's day is just past, for housekeeping preparations were going actively forward all over the place. Small birds were tugging valiantly at piles of straw on the floor, and when one finally succeeded in extricating a little shred from the heap, he fluttered off with it to a nest on the wall. Of course there were frequent pauses for consultation and billing. Up under the roof the turtle doves kept up a contented cooing, and down on the perches the parrots scolded a little. There was a special cage of tiny shapely birds from Japan, called Strawberry Finches, whose pretty scarlet bills certainly would convict them of having recently visited some one's strawberry

HOME-GETTING BY NEGROES AT THE SOUTH

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON PRINCIPAL OF THE TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE ...WRITES...

I RECALL that during the first years of the history of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, I spent a good deal of time traveling through the Black Belt of the South among the members of my race. One of the things that impressed me most vividly was the wretchedness of the houses in which the people lived. It was seldom that I could find a decent house in which to eat a meal or spend the night. On one occasion I recall, when passing through a cotton-raising district, a friend and I stopped at a cabin for dinner. When we sat down to the table there were five of us; on the table there was but one fork for the five of us to use. Of course, there was a little embarrassing hesitation. In the opposite corner of the cabin I noted there was a cheap organ for which the family had paid \$80 on the installment plan. More than once I led to go on the outside of the house at night and wait till the family had gone to bed before I could retire. I had to do this because there was but one room in the house. In the morning I had to make my toilet out in the yard, as there was no provision for any wash bowl or basin in the house. The object of this article is not to describe the bad conditions that existed at that time but to call attention to the improvement in the home life our people have made within the last 20 years or more. I do not believe that it is possible for any one to judge very thoroughly of the life of any individual or race unless he gets into the homes. How I recall in my

own case that I have completely misjudged the real worth of individuals because I was led to pass my opinion upon them because their dress was coarse or their language broken, or their faces uninviting. It has only been when I have seen the evidences of culture, convenience, thoughtfulness and gentleness displayed inside the homes of such people that I have been made to see the mistake of judging people outside of their homes. So with regard to the negro, if one wants to get an idea of the progress that the race has made within a few years, he should not pass judgment until he has had an opportunity to get into the homes of the race. To see the better side of the home life of the negro is not an easy thing for a stranger or for a member of another race to do. During the last three years I have spent considerable time in traveling through the South. During this time I have seen my people in the fields, in the shops, in schools, in colleges, in churches, in prisons and in their homes, but in no place have I noted such evidences of progress as in their homes. Behind the development of nearly every home there was a history in many cases both romantic and pathetic, a history of struggle, or self-sacrifice, of failure and then final success. Let me tell in brief the story of one of these homes I found in Mississippi. I found myself one night not long ago a guest in a home in Mississippi, of a member of my race. There were in it seven rooms. The parlor, the kitchen, the dining-room and bath and bedrooms were as

clean, sweet, comfortable, conveniently arranged and attractive as one would expect to find in Massachusetts. On the table of the sitting-room were to be found the daily paper, a weekly paper and several magazines; many of the books on the shelves of the library were standard books. The pictures on the walls were not of the cheap, gaudy, flashy character, but had been selected with taste and care. I saw little about this house except the color of its occupants to remind me that I was in the home of a negro. There was from kitchen to parlor a delicacy, sweetness and refinement that made one feel that life was worth the living. Another thing that pleased me as much as what I saw was the pride with which each member of the family referred to his own race and the faith all exhibited in the success of the race. I neither heard nor saw anything that led me to believe that any member of the family was ashamed of his people or wanted to discard the race to which Providence had assigned him for another race. Many people, I think, have the feeling that the average negro is continually seeking to get away from his own people, forgetting that every sensible negro has as much pride in his own as is true of other races. As the negro becomes educated, the more he finds comfort and satisfaction in the company of educated members of his own people. But I promised to tell the story of this family. Both father and mother had been slaves, and they were not ashamed of that. In some way both of them learned to read and write a little during

slavery. The father was one of the most faithful and trusted of his master's slaves. When Abraham Lincoln's proclamation was issued, the father and mother became free, and found themselves, of course, compelled to begin life with nothing, so far as the material part of life was concerned. They decided to make their new home near that of their former master, and always retained his good will, and received from him much good advice that proved to be useful in times of adversity. The chief desire of the hearts of these two ex-slaves had been, from the time they were married, to some day own at least a little shanty that they could call their own. In order to secure the first few acres of land, the sacrifices which this family told me about in their way were most interesting. The mother told me that, after plowing or hoeing cotton in the field day after day, by the side of her husband, she would make her meal of bread and water, that she often went barefooted for a good part of the Winter months. The father told me that, after he had secured a few acres of land, he would work in the cotton-field all day and then by moonlight or twilight he built with his own tired hands the first little one-room cabin; how a few years later, when he had saved a little by getting out shingles at night for sale, he was able to put glass windows in the cabin; and how still later he had added a second room to the cabin, and then a third and fourth, until the house had grown into this now comfortable house of seven rooms. He told

how, during much of the time that he and his wife were making this struggle to secure a home, they had to mortgage their crop for the food upon which to live, and pay a rate of interest for their loans that averaged 15 per cent. Not the least interesting part of the story that I heard from the lips of these two now happy ex-slaves was the manner in which they had contrived to educate their children, a boy and a girl, and it was through the efforts of these two children that many of the conveniences and refining influences had been added to the house. Inquiry on the outside of this house, among white and colored people, recalled the fact that this man was a regular taxpayer, had a comfortable little bank account, and that he had the respect and confidence of both races. The most encouraging thing in connection with the home-getting effort of the negro now going on is that one can find in almost every town and city in the country where there is any considerable number of my race at least one home that approaches this and often several in the same town. Another feature that is as encouraging as the material evidences of progress, is the disposition that is growing among my people to "classify" themselves, as an old colored man put it to me recently. The time is now passed when all colored people herd themselves together without regard to moral distinctions. There are colored circles where it would be just as impossible for a person of known questionable

character to enter as would be true of white society. Perhaps there are few indications that so clearly mark the progress that the race is making as the fact that the line is all the time being more closely and tightly drawn between the good and the bad. Some years ago, in one of our negro conferences at Tuskegee, I asked an old colored man how the morals were in his community. He replied: "Morals? Why, we hasn't got any of them things down our way." This now can be said of few communities, and it is very largely owing to the improvement that is going on in the home life of the people. In some sections of the Black Belt one cannot ride many miles through the country without seeing the new and second room being added to the old one-roomed cabin. There are other evidences of the activity of the race in home-getting. In Alabama, for example, there are at the present time three incorporated towns or cities where practically all the inhabitants are negroes, and where all the town officials are of the same race. Their names are Hobson City, Douglas City and Booker City. In the case of one of these towns within a few weeks 100 lots were sold to members of the race, and out of this number I was informed on good authority that there was only one purchaser who could not read and understand the papers bearing upon the purchase of the property. I could prolong this article to most any length with evidence showing that the negro is making slow but sure growth in

home-getting and in home life, and all this is a result of the education that the negro has received through his own efforts, through the state and philanthropic channels. With 100 times more money than is now being put into the South the whole problem of the negro would be much simplified within a few years.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON.

A Syrian Night.

The night hung over Hebron all her stars,
Mysterious procession of flame,
From the red bosom of the planet Mars
To the faint glow of orbs without a name.

The jacksals held wild cry 'tween the hills,
From slope to slope their cries shrill echoed;
Until we yearned for the sweet peace that fills
The home-land valleys on the eves of Spring.

About us we could mark the olive stir,
As the wind rose in frosty puffs and jets;
And far below, from out the purple blur,
We saw appear the great mosques' minarets.

There, centuried for centuries untold,
The bones of Isaac and of Joseph lay;
Were heaped and draped o'er Abraham's
crumbled clay.

Strange, ah, how strange, this shifting life and death!
Ne'er was the thought more deeply on us
Than when these patriarchs once drew vital breath,
Loved us we love, and mourned as now we mourn.

Others will come as we, and see, and pass,
And vainly strive to pierce beyond the bars;
But none shall call the mystery, alas,
Till night o'er Hebron cease to hang her stars!

—Clinton Scollard, in March Smart Set.