

Comment by the Editor

COSMOPOLITAN ORIGINS

Iowa is often mentioned as a region of homogeneity, and the characteristics of its landscape are said to find their counterpart in the "dead level" of its inhabitants. It is true that there are few very poor people and few very rich people in Iowa. There are no very large cities and no deserted wilds. And in living together in peace and prosperity its people have become somewhat alike. But to show the cosmopolitan origin of the people of the State we only need to remind the reader of the groups of people that came from Canada, from New England, and from the Old South, as well as from all parts of Europe, and became component parts of the population.

The present number of *THE PALIMPSEST* tells of the knickerbockered Englishmen who brought English capital and English sports to the prairies of northwest Iowa. At a somewhat earlier date there trailed up the Des Moines Valley wagon trains driven by men with velvet jackets and wooden shoes, while perched high up on astonishing assortments of boxes, chests, and trunks were women with caps instead of bonnets on their heads. They founded the Dutch town of Pella in Marion County. Villages with long streets, for all the world like German

towns, grew up in Iowa County where the Amana people lived their old world lives. Count Ladislaus Ujházy, friend of Kossuth, led his Hungarian exiles, shipwrecked by their revolution against Austria in 1848, to Iowa and began a settlement known as New Buda in Decatur County. And in Adams County the French Icarians built their log cabins about a common dining hall and tried to live out their communistic ideas.

The long-robed Trappist monks established their monastery and are still practicing their vow of silence at New Melleray near Dubuque. The Amish Mennonites with hooks and eyes on their garments and whiskers under their chins drive their autos into Iowa City for their Saturday shopping. Denmark and the other Scandinavian countries, and Ireland and Switzerland and Bohemia have sent their contributions. Some elements have been transitory but most of them have been assimilated. They have become a part of the homogeneity—a population prairied by general prosperity as the land was prairied by the ancient glaciers.

J. C. P.