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Historical Novelist Tells of Events That Almost Surpass Human Belief

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HISTORICAL NOVELIST TELLS OF EVENTS THAT ALMOST SURPASS HUMAN BELIEF
From "THE CLANSMAN" by Thomas Dixon

"EDUCATION, SIR, IS the development of that which is. Since the dawn of history the Negro has owned the continent of Africa - rich beyond the dream of poet's fancy, crunching acres of diamonds beneath his bare black feet. Yet he never picked one up from the dust until a white man showed to him its glittering light. His land swarmed with powerful and docile animals, yet he never dreamed a harness, cart, or sled.

"A hunter by necessity, he never made an axe, spear, or arrowhead worth preserving beyond the moment of its use. He lived as an ox, content to graze for an hour. In a land of stone and timber he never sawed a foot of lumber, carved a block, or built a house save of broken sticks and mud.

"With league on league of ocean strand and miles of inland seas, for four thousand years he watched their surface ripple under the wind, heard the thunder of the surf on his beach, the howl of the storm over his head, gazed on the dim blue horizon calling him to worlds that lie beyond, and yet he never dreamed a sail! He lived as his fathers lived - stole his food, worked his wife, sold his children, ate his brother, content to drink, sing, dance, and sport as the ape!

"And this creature, half child, half animal, the sport of impulse, whim and conceit, 'pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw,' a being who, left to his will, roams at night and sleeps in the day, whose speech knows no word of love, whose passions, once aroused, are as the fury of the tiger - they have set this thing to rule over the Southern people . . . Merciful God - it surpasses human belief!"

'A SPEECH THAT MADE HISTORY'

"What is our condition today? . . . If we attempt to move forward we are literally chained to the body of a festering Black Death!

"Fifty of our great counties are again under the heel of the Negro, and the State (of North Carolina) is in his clutches. Our city governments are debauched by his vote. His insolence threatens our womanhood, and our children are beaten by Negro toughs on the way to school while we pay his taxes. Shall we longer tolerate Negro inspectors of white schools, and Negroes in charge of white institutions? Shall we longer tolerate the arrest of white women by Negro officers and their trial before Negro magistrates?

"Let the manhood of the Aryan race with its four thousand years of authentic history answer that question!

"It is no longer a question of bad government. It is a question of impossible government. We lag behind the age dragging the decaying corpse to which we are chained.

"Who shall deliver us from the body of this death?"

"Hear me, men of my race, Norman and Celt, Angle and Saxon, Dane and Frank, Huguenot and German martyr blood!

The hour has struck when we must rise in our might, break the chains that bind us to this corruption, strike down the Negro as a ruling power, and restore to our children their birthright, which we received, a priceless legacy, from our fathers!

"I believe in God's call to our race to do His work in history. What other races failed to do, you wrought in this continental wilderness, fighting pestilence, hunger, cold, wild beasts, and savage hordes, until out of it all has grown the mightiest nation of the earth.

"Is the Negro worthy to rule over you?"

"Ask history. The African has held one fourth of this globe for 3000 years. He has never taken one step in progress or rescued one jungle from the ape and the adder, except as the slave of a superior race . . .

"The corruption of his presence in our body politic is beyond the power of reckoning. We drove the Carpet-bagger from our midst, but the Scalawag, our native product, is always with us to fatten on this corruption and breed death to society. The Carpet-bagger was a wolf, the Scalawag is a hyena. The one was a highwayman, the other a sneak . . .

"Shall the future North Carolinian be an Anglo-Saxon or a Mulatto? That is the question before you.

"Nations are made by men, not by paper constitutions and paper ballots. We are not free because we have a Constitution. We have a Constitution because our pioneer fathers who cleared the wilderness and dared the might of kings, were freemen . . . If you can make men out of paper, then it is possible with a scratch of a pen in the hand of a madman to transform by its magic a million slaves into a million kings.

"We grant the Negro the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness if he can be happy without exercising kingship over the Anglo-Saxon race, or dragging us down to his level. But if he can not find happiness except in lording it over a superior race, let him look for another world in which to rule. There is not room for both of us on this continent!

" . . . It took Spain 800 years to expel the Moors. When the time comes the Anglo-Saxon can do in one century what the Spaniard did in eight.

"We have been congratulated on our self-restraint under the awful provocation of the past four years. There is a limit beyond which we dare not go, for at this point, self-restraint becomes pusillanimous and means the loss of manhood . . .

"I ask you, my people, freemen . . . to rise to-day and make good your right to live! The time for platitudes is past. Let us as men face the world and say what we mean.

"This is a white man's government, conceived by white men, and maintained by white men through every year of its history, — and by the God of our Fathers it shall be ruled by white men until the Arch-angel shall call the end of time!"

Did you, dear reader, think the above speech was made today? Actually it tells of the South's struggle in another tragic period known as the Reconstruction Era, 1865-1900, which the South won. The above is a composite of two speeches from the remarkable pen of historical novelist Thomas Dixon, Jr.

The first speech, as shown, is from "The Clansman" (movie title: "The Birth of a Nation"), published in 1905. Dixon's publisher, D. Appleton & Co., wrote that "John Hay while Secretary of State read the proofs of this book and pronounced its history unassailable before the author would allow it to go to press. At Mr. Hay's request the author presented the proofs to him for his personal library."

The second oration, under the heading, "A Speech that Made History," is from "The Leopard's Spots," 1902. Of this work, Dixon's publisher says it "is the fruit of more than 20 years of patient thought and study on the relations of the white and black races in America . . . It is an historical revelation as well as a romance." In his preface, Dixon writes, in 1902: "It will be a century yet before people outside the South can be made to believe a literal statement of the history of those times. I tried to write this book with the utmost restraint."

Dixon, a North Carolinian, was a college graduate, state legislator, and minister, having held the pastorate of leading churches in Boston and New York. Not only was he an enormously popular novelist, he became the most popular Lyceum lecturer in America and addressed over four million people.

