

put to the best possible use—offer one of the substantial hopes for the future of the country. And it behooves Americans of every stripe of pessimism, optimism, and the shades between to know

what the nation itself, as distinct from state, city, school, or university, is doing, through books, for that civilization to which every one of us is making some contribution, for better or worse.



Old Bill

BY ROBERT HAZARD

THE old man said:
“Automobiles is all right and I guess they’ve come to stay. Horses is a back number now, but it’s a pity. Now there was Old Bill.

“When I was a boy I used to go out to the country to visit my uncle Joe. He had a big farm about ten miles from town with lots of horses and cattle and hogs and everything. One day Uncle Joe said: ‘Come on along, Bub, I’m going over to old man Spencer’s to buy a horse. Everybody in the country has been trying to buy that horse, but the old man wouldn’t let him go. I guess the old man must be pretty hard up to sell him now.’

“The farmers around there all took pride in their stock. A man might be worked to death and dirty and ragged, but he tried to keep his stock looking nice. They all knew each other’s horses and cattle and would recognize a man’s team on the road before they saw him.

“Old man Spencer’s children had all grown up and moved away, and he and his wife kept on farming in a small way and had a pretty hard time of it.

“We drove over in the buggy and old man Spencer led the horse out. He didn’t look to me like so much of a horse. He might have been a cross between a

Clydesdale and a French Coach horse. He had that long head with a bulged forehead and Roman nose and long flat legs and big feet and feathers like a Clydesdale, but he was a deep-red bay, and round-barrelled and smooth and neat like a Coach horse. He weighed about twelve hundred pounds.

“Old man Spencer bargained with uncle about the price, and finally uncle paid him what he asked and old man Spencer handed the halter-rope over to me. He said: ‘I raised Bill from a colt.’ The tears started running down the old man’s face and he put one arm around Bill’s neck and kissed him on the nose. As soon as he let go, Uncle Joe whipped up and we drove away quick.

“Bill certainly got plenty of work. He was good at everything. If Uncle Joe had a heavy load to haul, he always hooked Bill up with the best one of the other horses because in a pinch Bill would get down and pull like the devil himself, and then the other horse wouldn’t give up as long as Bill kept on. It seemed to be a point of honor with Bill never to get stuck, and he never did. I’ve seen him pull the tongue out of the wagon and break a single-tree, just steady pulling when the load refused to budge. The wagon might be

stuck but you couldn't say Bill was stuck. I've seen him slip to his knees on an icy road but he kept right on pulling. Uncle Joe said he'd pull the hind gates off o' hell if you asked him to.

"Harry Noggins came over one fall with his mules and the corn-binder to cut corn for uncle. Harry was very proud of his mules. They were counted the best mules in the county and stood sixteen hands high. He needed three head on the binder and suggested that uncle give him two horses, so he could change them when one got tired. Uncle said he could use Bill. Harry looked insulted at uncle's idea that Bill could hold up with the mules all day.

"I went out to the corn-field in the afternoon to see the corn-binder work. Harry was hollering at the mules and throwing clods at them to keep them up with Bill, and Bill was drilling right along a little in the lead and as cool as could be. I went in and told uncle about it and he laughed and laughed and went out to see for himself. That night at supper Harry said: 'That's the biggest day's binding I ever did. What'll you take for that horse?' Uncle said: 'He ain't for sale.'

"And Bill was fast on the road too. He could take the surrey or spring wagon to town like a road-horse with a buggy, so that job fell to him too.

"It was fun taking the milk to town in the spring wagon with Bill, because he had a long easy trot that didn't look fast but ate up the miles like everything. We'd pass some one in a buggy driving a road-horse, and he'd get mad at being passed that way and whip up and pass us, but as like as not his horse would have to break into a gallop in order to do it, and that made it look worse.

"We boys used to ride him for fun and to get the cattle in. He trotted

rough enough to shake all your insides out but he had a wonderful smooth canter and gallop. He liked it too. When I'd go into the barn and slip the riding-bridle on him, he'd begin to paw and toss his head. I'd mount him in his stall, and he'd back out and whirl around and come out of the barn with his head up looking for the cattle and rarin' to go.

"As soon as he located the cattle, he would stretch out and go till the wind would whistle in your ears. Usually some of the young stock would give him a run for it. As soon as he had passed them, he would bear in close, and as they turned he would turn so short that you'd go off if you hadn't slid down on the right side in advance. Then he would head them for the barn. He certainly loved to work cattle. I had to hold him in all the time, because it isn't good for dairy cattle to be run much.

"He was too smart, though. He had a way of looking around and watching you like nothing got by him. He knew how to open all the gates and barn doors. At first he was kept loose in a box stall. The door fastened with a wooden button that turned, and there was a hole in the stall door for ventilation. The rascal would stick his head through the hole and turn the button with his lips, and waltz out and open the granary door that was fastened with a hasp with a padlock just hooked into it but not locked. It was too much trouble to keep it locked, because we had to get in and out frequently. We tried hooking the padlock in upside down in the hasp to fool him, but that didn't do any good. Next uncle put a halter on him and tied him to the manger with a rope, but he would untie the rope, so that didn't do any good either. We tried all kinds of knots, but he could work

them all. He couldn't undo a spring snap, though, so uncle fixed all the gates and stalls with chains and spring snaps, and then we had the best of him.

"He used to play dumb about the work when he was tired, though he knew just what to do. If I'd go to hitch him up single when he was tired, he would pretend that he didn't know how to back into the shafts. He'd step first to one side and then to the other. Finally I'd whack him in the ribs and say, 'Get in there, Bill, you God-damned old fool,' and then he'd step in as nice as you please. He just sized people up and tried them out to see what he could get away with. If it didn't work, he gave in gracefully and made the best of it.

"He was good at cultivating corn. Lots of horses are always trampling the corn, particularly at the end of the row, where you have to turn around, and they get their feet over the tugs and lean against the tongue and have a terrible time, but Bill stepped around like he was walking on eggs.

"If the horses were loose in the barn lot and I opened the gate to the pasture to let the other horses out and tried to keep Bill in, he would push me right out of the way and go out unless I had a club to stop him with. I hid a club behind me once, and when he tried to push past me I hit him on the nose with it. He was mad at me then and wouldn't go into the barn. I chased him around and finally got him cornered, and he jumped the barbed-wire fence. He got his front feet over all right but came down on the top wire just above his hind feet so that the wires sagged down and left him sitting up just like a dog with his hind feet off the ground.

"I liked to died laughing at him, and he looked very much hurt. If he had struggled he would have cut himself up

terribly, but he just sat there while I got the hammer and pulled all of the staples out of the fence and let the wires down to the ground and stood on them and told him to get up. He walked into the barn very slow and looked very dignified and injured.

"Sometimes uncle would unhitch Bill and let him go to the barn by himself. One time uncle stood talking to a man for a long time before following Bill to the barn. Before uncle got to the barn Bill came out. Uncle hollered: 'Bill, you get back in that barn.' Bill stopped and turned part way and looked at uncle and then looked at the gate to the corn-field. The gate was open. Don't tell me that horses can't reason. You could see as plain as day that Bill was figuring up what he stood to win or lose. He took another step toward the gate. Uncle hollered: 'Bill.' Bill stopped and turned his head around and looked at uncle, then took another step and stopped. Then he took another step and then made up his mind that it was all right and trotted off into the corn.

"Uncle just laughed and sent me to get Bill in. Bill didn't knock the corn down but just took a bite here and there as he went along. I couldn't drive him back; he was too fast for me, but after a while he turned and trotted back to the barn. He ran into his stall and acted scared to death. He pushed against his manger and pranced and looked around at me. He was just putting on, because he knew I wouldn't beat him after he had come back. I slapped him on the rump good and put the halter on and cussed him good and he seemed satisfied then. You can't beat a horse when he comes back or he'll take it that he got beaten for coming back and not for running away and he knew it.

"Bill wasn't really afraid of any-

thing. I could drive him right up alongside of a locomotive and he wouldn't shy, but once in a while on a level stretch of road with nobody in sight he would shy at a bird flying off of a fence-post or some little thing like that. He'd throw his head and tail up and prance and snort like he was scared to death, but it always looked kind of put on to me.

"Bill never bothered the other horses much. Once in a while a new horse would come onto the place that would try to fight him, but Bill would make short work of him. Some horses like to get another horse in a corner and kick or bite him unmercifully, but Bill was too dignified for that sort of thing.

"One winter a terrible blizzard came up. It snowed and blew all day and all night, and next morning it was going harder than ever, with the thermometer at twenty below zero. Uncle Joe said the people in town needed the milk and it would have to go. He put the tongue in the spring wagon and hooked up Bill and John. He loaded up the milk, put on his big fur coat and cap and fur gauntlet-gloves and wrapped a couple of blankets around his legs and started out. The snow was drifted over the tops of the hedges. The wind was blowing so hard you could hardly stand against it, and the air was so full of snow you couldn't see over twenty feet.

"Uncle got back about noon. The snow had frozen onto his eyebrows and eyelashes. He said that he couldn't face the wind. He had to hold one glove up in front of his face and just peek out once in a while. He couldn't see the road and just left it to the horses to find the way. He said they got along fine, only a couple of times they got in so deep they got their front feet over the

neck-yoke and he had to get out and clear them. The snow packed under their feet and held them up somewhat, but the wagon-wheels cut through and let the tongue down under the snow. Uncle was the only one to get to town with milk that day.

"My cousin Dick, when he was about four, liked to ride Bill when I was ploughing with Bill and John to the walking-plough. It was handy, because Dick could hang onto the hames, and if he fell off there wasn't anything to hurt him. He got so familiar with Bill that he would get right underneath of him, and if I didn't put him up on his back right when he wanted me to, he would try to climb up one of Bill's front legs. But nobody worried about it, because Bill wouldn't step on him. One time when the team was pulling, Bill's hame-strap broke and the harness slid off and carried Dick with it. Bill stopped dead and didn't move until I had picked Dick up. He was scared and crying pretty bad, and I was afraid it had spoiled his nerve for riding, so I held him until he had calmed down a little and then he wanted to get right back on Bill again. He knew it wasn't Bill's fault.

"Bill did kick me once. A hog got into the barn and ran under Bill's feet and Bill kicked at the hog and hit me. He knocked my feet right out from under me and the hog ran over me. He didn't kick any more, so I wasn't hurt much.

"One time when I was out at uncle's in the summer a terrible storm blew up. It blew and rained for three whole days, and the creek between us and town rose and flooded the bottom-lands and went over the road and the bridge, too, all except the railing. The second day of

the storm my aunt got very sick. Uncle tried to telephone the doctor but the line was down. He studied it over and said: 'Bub, maybe you can get through on Bill. I'm too heavy. I'll write a letter to the doctor and you can bring the medicine back and find out what to do.'

"I put the saddle and bridle on Bill and struck out. When we got to the bottoms, Bill wanted to turn back. The bottoms are nearly a mile wide there, and the road was almost all out of sight under the water, and I couldn't remember just where it lay, but I told Bill to go ahead. He waded in slow, going very carefully. The water got deeper and deeper till it was almost over Bill's back. The road was very crooked, as it was laid out to follow the highest ground and was graded up four or five feet high. You couldn't see anything but a smooth stretch of water, with a tree sticking up here and there. Bill would turn one way and the other following the road. If he got off the road and into the barbed-wire fence, it would be all up with us, but all I could do was hold the reins and let him go. Just before we got to the bridge he had to swim a little, and then he struck the approach to the bridge and we were all right. Bill tapped with his feet on the bridge at each step to make sure before putting his feet down. The planks were all in place, so we got through.

"The doctor read the letter and said that he ought to go out, that he could get through if I could. He got his satchel and started out with his horse and buggy with me riding alongside. When we got to the water he stopped and looked doubtful. After a while I said that he could get through on Bill if he would sit quiet and let him alone, and I could wait for him in the buggy till he

got back. He thought it over and said that he'd try it. He mounted Bill and I told him: 'Now let him alone. Don't try to tell him where to go.'

"Bill didn't like it at first. He kept looking back at me, but I told him it was all right, to go ahead. I could see them most of the way across and I felt sure that Bill would make it if the doctor just wouldn't get scared where the road was crooked and run Bill into the fence. Well, they made it all right, and in a couple of hours they came back. The doctor said everything was all right and he'd come out again when the water went down a bit.

"The only time Bill ever came anywhere near balking was going to church. He certainly hated to take the family to church on Sunday, particularly in the winter. There was an open shed for the horses, and I guess he got cold waiting through the long service. Sunday morning he didn't know how to get into the shafts of the surrey. Then he stopped at every gate and tried to turn off at every crossroad. He pretended to be trotting like everything, but it was all up and down and we hardly moved. Uncle didn't go to church, and my aunt held the reins and she couldn't do anything with him. Once he went lame about a quarter of a mile from the house and we thought he had picked up a nail. My aunt turned him around and he limped back home. Uncle unhitched him and picked up his feet and examined them but couldn't find anything wrong. He thought maybe he had sprained an ankle, so we hooked up another horse and went to church. The next day Bill was all right.

"When I was a young fellow, Uncle Joe sold out and moved to town, and one of the neighbors got Bill. When I

was grown up I went to farming myself and I saw Bill once in a while.

"Mr. Potter, the man that owned Bill, was pretty poor, but he kept him after he was too old to work much any more. He let him run in the pasture in the summer-time and take life easy.

"Potter had a little boy and girl. They didn't have any way to get to town or any spending-money, so one June they picked a lot of cherries and got Old Bill up from the pasture and rigged him up with some old bits of harness patched together with string and wire and hooked him up to an old tumble-down spring wagon. They drove to town to peddle the cherries and get some spending-money. The little girl would stay in the wagon and mind the outfit while the boy went around to the back doors to sell the cherries.

"Once while the boy was in one of the houses making a sale, the old bridle fell apart and came off, and Old Bill, seeing himself free, took a notion to start out for home. The little girl sawed on the lines, but of course it didn't do any good with the bit under Old Bill's neck. A lot of women sitting out on the front porches got scared and ran out and screamed till a man stopped Old Bill. Then the boy came out from the house and they all gave him hark from the tomb for leaving his sister in the wagon; said she might have been killed and so on.

"I was on my way to town and arrived on the scene just at this time. I spoke up and said: 'Now hold on, folks. I've known this horse all my life and he wouldn't run away and hurt anybody. I used to read the paper all the way out to the farm driving him with the lines hooked over the dashboard. If all you

people had as much sense as Old Bill here has, you'd have something to be proud of.' So they shut up and let the boy alone.

"Mr. Potter wouldn't let them peddle fruit any more on account of the accident. He said it would look as though he wasn't taking proper care of his children. But Old Bill got a job peddling again before long.

"A Mr. Morris in town had gone broke in the coal business and went insane. Not very bad but he couldn't work. His wife ran a little store and the six kids helped in the store and carried papers and did anything they could to bring in a little money, and so they got along. They borrowed Old Bill after the Potter children had to quit, and went to peddling vegetables that they bought at wholesale. They made out fine at it. They were very likable youngsters and I imagine that people bought more from them than they could use. They got out and pushed the wagon to help Bill up the hills. Old Bill of course played dumb with them, and they scolded him and slapped him with the lines, and altogether they all had the time of their lives.

"Well, there were a lot of old women in the town that had outlived their usefulness and they got the idea of organizing a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals. The opposition women that got left out of that society started one of their own for the prevention of cruelty to children. The first outfit came down on the Morris children for abusing Old Bill and had them up in court. The second gang hadn't had a case yet, so they came down on Mr. and Mrs. Morris for not providing for the children. It looked for a while like the kids were going to be sent to a home

and Old Bill was going to be shot. Some neighbors offered to put up enough money to keep the Morrisses going and keep the family together. The children didn't want to accept charity when they could take care of themselves, but they decided it was better than going to jail. Potter came in and claimed Old Bill, and so there he was back in the pasture again.

"One spring I needed an extra horse to take the milk to town so the others could keep on ploughing. I couldn't find a cheap horse in the country, but Mr. Potter said I could have Old Bill if I would take good care of him.

"Bill was about twenty-four years old by that time and hadn't done any work for quite a while. His teeth were all worn down to little round knobs at the roots, so he couldn't chew his feed good, and he was thin, hadn't shed yet, and looked terrible. But for all that, he was absolutely sound in wind and limb.

"I took him and started feeding him fresh-cut alfalfa uncured and crushed oats, and he ate it fine. The second day I decided to see if he could make the trip to town. As soon as I started putting the harness on, he threw his head up and started stepping around. He started down the road with his head up and his tail over the dashboard, but in about a mile the sweat was running down his legs, and though he was trotting fast, the wagon was hardly moving. I stopped him and let him rest till he was ready to go again. We finally got to town and back again, but poor Old Bill was white with lather and about all in, but you could see he was proud of himself.

"The feed agreed with him fine and he put on some flesh and shed off nice, and his new coat shone in the sun. He

did much better as time went on, but he would still trot straight up and down in one place when he got tired instead of stopping before he was told to. There was one bad hill to climb and he'd take a good rest before he tackled it. Then he'd dig in and go up it like he used to when he was a four-year-old, but he had to be rested again at the top.

"One day we met two strangers on the road in a buggy. They stopped and motioned me to stop. One, an old man, got out and came over and said: 'I'm a veterinarian, just moved to town, and I'd like to get your work. Now, your mare here is kind of poor. You bring her in to me and I'll fix her up so she'll feed better and put on flesh.'

"I said: 'He's a horse. He's twenty-four years old.'

"He said: 'I know her teeth are bad. I'll file them down so she can chew her feed.'

"I said: 'He ain't got any teeth.'

"The other man got out and said, 'He's terrible deaf,' and then he hollered in the vet's ear: 'It's a horse, twenty-four years old.'

"The old vet. said: 'Never mind. I know she's got the bots. I can get rid of them and she'll put on flesh.'

"Me and the other fellow shouted together: 'He's a horse. He's a horse.'

"The old fellow said: 'I know she's horsin'. You can't tell me nothing. I been a veterinarian for fifty years.'

"We all shouted together and then the other fellow shouted in the old man's ear till he understood. He looked kind of crestfallen, and then he climbed back in the buggy and they drove off.

"After the spring work was over I didn't need Old Bill any more, so I kept him out in the pasture. There was a missionary preacher who used to come

out to my place with his wife and three children to tramp around the pasture, and they took a liking to Old Bill. The children rode him and brought him sugar and carrots.

"When they found out that I didn't need him they wanted to take him home with them for the children to play with. They had a little one-acre place just out of town. I never had much use for preachers and missionaries in particular, but this fellow wasn't so bad. It was a lot of trouble to get out and cut a bushel of fresh alfalfa for

Old Bill every morning. I told the preacher all about how Old Bill had to be fed, and he promised to treat him right, so I let him have him. They led him off down the road with the children dancing around him.

"I went over to see how Old Bill was getting along in a week or so. They had a tight little barn, and Old Bill was lying down in his stall asleep. He was bedded down about a foot deep with straw, and the children had spread an old blanket over him and put two pillows under his head."



Women's Colleges and Race Extinction

BY HENRY T. MOORE

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Does education for women mean race suicide? Here is statistical evidence to show that type of education may be an important factor.

WORSE than any accusation ever pointed at Judge Lindsey and companionate marriage is the one which is levelled against the seven leading women's colleges by Henry R. Carey in his recent article in *The North American*, "Sterilizing the Fittest." He makes the devastating charge that these exclusive institutions are so prejudicing their graduates against wifehood and motherhood that they are cutting off the next generation from its natural supply of first-rate minds; they are cultivating the individual at the clear cost of race deterioration and are responsible for policies which if carried much further will have done more harm to the home than any other single influence in present-day society.

The charge is a serious one, and it is apparently supported by conclusive data

except that Smith and Vassar fall less clearly within his conclusions, and data are not presented for Radcliffe. For the other four colleges, Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Mount Holyoke, and Wellesley, he finds clear proof that they are guilty of "the wholesale suppression of marriage among the selected best of the nation."

The sad conclusion to which his argument would lead us is that the endowments and equipment that are now being built up for these institutions will shortly fall like ripe plums into the hands of the more fertile members of society, daughters perhaps of lower-class immigrants who will take as ready possession of their accidental heritage as did the barbarian invaders of decadent Rome.

The first question that raises itself in