

# The Messenger

WORLD'S GREATEST NEGRO MONTHLY

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JUNE, 1925

Vol. VII. No. 6

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World's Greatest Negro Monthly  
Published Monthly by the  
**MESSENGER PUBLISHING CO., INC.**  
2311 Seventh Avenue, New York  
Telephone, Bradhurst 0454

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Vol. VII                      JUNE, 1925                      No. 6

\$1.75 per Year                      15c per Copy  
\$2.00 Outside U. S.                      20c Outside U. S.

Entered as Second Class Mail, July 27, 1919, at the Post Office  
at New York, N. Y., under Act of March 3, 1879.

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# "SEVEN DAYS IN HELL"

## A TRUE STORY

By W. ASTOR MORGAN

### I.

It was the Summer of 1918, the sixth of June, and a great day for me, for with it, and many gifts from my best friends, came a diploma which sent me from college to practice the things I had learned. But on the tenth of that same month I received another diploma. This one was sending me to do the things I had not learned—to kill. I was called to the army. North Carolina is my home state and I had gone from school to my home town to visit my mother. She and I were happy three days, and then the draft call came. Negroes in my state, I was told, were being sent to a camp in Georgia. "North Carolina is terrible enough," I thought, "but Georgia!" You know what I mean. You shudder with me when you think Georgia. The first law of nature prompted me and as swiftly as the trail could carry one, it took me to Atlantic City where I usually worked Summers. From the seashore I wrote the official board in North Carolina, had my connections transferred to New Jersey and was off for Camp Dix. Providence was kind to me—I detest crowds—and she sent me in a company of three, two white boys and I. The passing of two or three hours brought us to camp where we were escorted, by a receiving committee, to our proper places, as I thought. The routine was tiresome for I had two suitcases: one filled with music, mostly my own compositions, the other with books, and a trombone which I carried hoping to make a band. Our escorts took us directly to an examination station where we were stripped of clothing and thoroughly gone over. They threw my trombone out through a window and tied a tag about my neck. It bore the name of the company to which I was assigned and was my identification. That tag is now in my safe. I think I shall keep it always. But this all ended, we dressed and were carried to our appointed companies, two of us to the same company but the other boy I never saw again. The minute I reached the company I recognized it was what we would know as a white company. No one gave any particular notice to me or seemed to object which of course at first forced me to marvel.

### II.

But suddenly I changed. "Why marvel?" I asked myself. "Aren't we going to fight for Democracy? Should a government which leaves its own peaceful borders to teach the world the spirit of Democracy, segregate its citizens?" I tried to cease thinking and to accept what the world was giving. But thoughts are living forces and we cannot keep them back. "Maybe the good old U. S. A. is the land of the Free and the home of the Brave; maybe she isn't so bad after all." One may say, with any amount of intelligence you should know its absurd. But I was a living witness. I was actually a black man in a white company—what could I think? "Perhaps she realizes," I thought, "if black men answer the same purposes as white men, they can serve together for the same cause, for surely, neither one will eat the other." My spell was broken by a call. We were given messkits, etc., and shown to our tents, the white boy to one and I to another. A few minutes later the call came for mess. It was the meal we call dinner for it was six o'clock. A white friend once told me there are three kinds of white folks. One outrightly tells the Negro he will not meet him on any grounds, the next makes himself miserable pretending to be satisfied with the Negro's presence, while the third knows the Negro is a human being, like other men, and is happy to accept him, not for his color, but on his merits. As I went to mess, for the first time, I knew these three classes were represented and wondered if I would find one of the last class. We crowded in. I looked anxiously for someone I might know but saw none.

As we began to eat, my eyes searched the hall for a single black face but none was to be seen. "Surely since I am here," I reasoned, "there must be others." To which something asked me, "then where are they?" I began searching again. There were present, aside from the acknowledged proud kingly Americans, Italians, dark and light, Jews, Indians and every kind of a man one could imagine, yet no colored man except me. How did I know? No matter what the color we know each other.

"Could I be here by mistake?" I asked myself. But that was quickly settled for I am not light enough to pass white. Light brown, to be sure, and with good features, but how can they mistake my hair?" I think I must have blushed, not for myself but for them. "Perhaps the use I make of English is helping to deceive them," I thought. I kept thinking, but conclusions were impossible.

### III.

Things kept moving. Ten o'clock rolled around and we rolled to bed. In our tent were eight men and almost eight nationalities. You should have heard the languages I heard in the dark there after taps. Those who spoke English told jokes, but all was a conglomeration as I was trying to catch each word from an Italian though he used much dialect, which I did not know; but the Cracker, whose speech is different from all other white men, whipped away with his jokes and each one ended with, "and then the Nigger Woman." Do you know anything about boiling blood? I think mine jumped past 210. However, I drank it all down, realizing it was my opportunity to learn and know. Things moved further. We began drilling (in civilian clothes) and in three days the captain made me corporal of our squad. That meant I was in charge of and responsible for our tent and the men in it. The men were fine under my supervision, including the Southerner. I didn't know whether it was because they were afraid of Army discipline, or they didn't know I was colored, or that they did know and didn't mind. The fourth day the Captain singled me out and commented on my work. He said my drill work was perfect, considering the time I had been there. But on the sixth day the white boy, whom I had not seen since the first day, saw me and we sat upon the grass for a chat. After speaking generally, he asked, "Do you want to be in this company with us white folks?" "No," I threw at him, "that is, not unless I am wanted here." He answered, "I am sure *THEY* won't want you when they know. They think you are white." Thought forces set in again. We parted. My mind rushed to the questionnaire and other papers which accompanied me to camp. They gave the facts. Then I thought, "how can what he said be true? They stripped me and saw me and under my clothes is darker than my face." I tried to dismiss the thought but could not.

The next day, while drilling, the orders were given, halt, at ease, fall out. My mind was fully made up. I walked to the Captain who had praised me, and saluted him. He was tall, red-haired, determined-looking and handsome. I told him I wanted to be transferred. He was deeply interested and asked, "Why? You are doing well, Morgan," "Yes, sir," I replied, and then asked, "Would it interest you to know I am colored?" That sufficed.

### IV.

I saw the evidences of a changing conscience, and Shakespeare says, "Conscience doth make cowards of us all." "Then," said he, "that's different." He dismissed the company, ordered me to get my belongings and prepared papers for my departure, which took place at once. An orderly took me to camp headquarters, but we were too late. It was past five and "you must take him back until

tomorrow," said the one in charge. "But I can't take him back," said the orderly. "He's colored." Nevertheless, he did take me back and, can you imagine my feelings, being, as I am, proud as any other living creature, going back to where, because of their ignorance, I am not wanted, and by reason of their dumbness I was there? The greatest worry I entertained was wondering if they would think I willingly and deceptively tried to sneak into their midst. Without taking cognizance of our pace, we were back to the white company and they gave me a bed in the barracks. I went for a mess kit, for mine was taken when I was sent away, but the stock orderly refused me. This I reported to the Captain. I was determined I would not suffer for their mistakes. Naturally, the Captain didn't want his superior officers to know his blunder of not recognizing a Negro, so he looked out for me. With an oath, he told the stock orderly if I wanted two mess kits to let me have them. Bed time came again, but this time it was different. They knew, and I knew they didn't want me. Were you ever forced where you knew you were not wanted? I was afraid to sleep. There have been so many hideous things done to us, so many lynchings, so many outrages against us, anything, everything flashed through my mind. "Would they attempt something violent in the night," I asked myself—and I prepared to die fighting. I didn't dare sleep until I thought all others had, with sleep, preceded me. But the barracks was a new environment and they didn't recognize me—hence I did not have to fight. The next morning after

mess, "there can be no drilling until that Negro is gotten rid of," I heard an officer say.

## V.

Away we started, the same orderly and I, and when we reached headquarters he left me outside. He told the officer inside he had a man to transfer. The officer asked, "to where, and for what reason?" "You cannot transfer a man unless he is more valuable in the place to which he is transferred." "What is the reason?" "He is colored," flashed the orderly. I was looking through the window. The officer turned a red that said we have been mistreated, signed the papers, and the orderly and I started on our last journey together, so different were we. On our way we discussed things and conditions. Finally, he said, "I think this transferring you is a lot of tommy-rot." I answered, "be a man. Tell me exactly what you would say about me if I were not here. Be fair to yourself, be just to the proposition and frank with me, I won't be offended." "Honest," he said, and may be he meant what he said, "in these two days of knowing you, I think you are as fine a man as I ever knew, and this Democracy stuff," with a wave of his hand, "it's all bunk."

We reached our destination. I was filthy, having drilled seven days in civilian clothes. He delivered me, and with a "goodbye, Buddy," he was gone. I sat thinking over the experience. Truly it was Hell. The commanding officer came to look me over, and he was Grigsby, one of my classmates, who left college in our junior year and trained at Des Moines.

### A Song of Spring

(Attributed to Antar - ben - Shedad - el - Absi, by Al-Asmai, in his "Romance of Antar." Prose translation by Terrick Hamilton.)

Flowers growing, rivers flowing,  
Horses prancing, fair maids dancing,  
Sweet birds singing, joyous winging,  
Breezes blowing, coming, going,  
Branches swinging, grape-vines clinging,  
Boughs advancing in the breeze,  
Blossoms dancing on fruit-trees,  
Streams are calling, dew-drops falling,  
Flowers studded with their pearls,  
Lovers passing, men and girls;  
Archers massing, hillsides wooded,  
On the wrist the falcon hooded;

Music playing, maidens straying,  
Shooting arrows of their glancing,  
Flinging spears of their fair looks,  
Most bewildering, most entrancing,  
Using wiles not known in books.  
By the rivers, by the brooks,  
In sunny and in shady nooks,  
All the world is wild with joy.  
Trip it, skip it, girl and boy!  
Merry be; joyous, free;  
Laugh and sing. This is Spring.

Shadows falling, lovers calling  
To and fro, homeward go  
'Neath the far blue sky of Heaven.  
Through and through it is riven  
With great stars; gold nails of Heaven  
In the skyey tents are driven,  
Hold the hangings fast

Of the cloud-tents vast.  
Fruits are ready, wine is heady;  
Maidens' hair in heavy tresses,  
Ripe for kisses and caresses,  
Like the tendrils of the grape-vine  
Twist and twirl and cling and twine,  
Straying, slaying hearts of men  
With their fiery darts; and then,  
Chaffing, laughing, kissing, cooing,  
Making love, and eager wooing;—  
Now to Nature and to men  
Glorious Spring has come again.

Note: Antar-ben-Shedad-el-Absi was a Negro Arab who lived about 600 A.D. Al-Asmai, an Arab, lived about 700 A.D. Terrick Hamilton, an Englishman, lived 1820. The romance has also been translated by Cordin de Cordonne.



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# "THESE 'COLORED' UNITED STATES"

## 21: MASSACHUSETTS

### LAND OF THE FREE AND HOME OF THE BRAVE COLORED MAN

By EUGENE F. GORDON

*Feature Department of The Boston Post*

Massachusetts, one of the thirteen original States, ranks forty-fourth in area, sixth in population, and first in the practise of those humanitarian principles upon which the foundation of these United States allegedly stands. To say, however, that Massachusetts is the Utopia of the other forty-seven varieties of oppressed is to tamper with the sacred truth, for—but I am running ahead of myself. Let us begin again, and continue more circumspectly. So . . .

Generally considered to be the original stronghold of the Abolitionists, Massachusetts to this day is looked upon as the land of the free and the home of the brave colored man. How the impression grew into conviction that Massachusetts originated the Every-Slave-a-Free-Man slogan is somewhat veiled in mystery; but such an impression there is, fairly widespread, and generally concentrated in the minds of native sons—and daughters—themselves.

Not only do the older residents of the state believe that Massachusetts is the guardian of all their rights, but they believe that Boston, the capital, is the seat of human justice. Faneuil Hall in Boston is the cradle of liberty, it is said; our colored citizen is sincere in the belief that this designation was made with him alone in mind.

Passing by this very natural mistake, we must concede, nevertheless, that most of the agitation to free the slaves was centered in Boston. We may justly give to New York the honor of being the first to establish an abolition society, but we shall not forget that "the town of Boston as early as 1701 (eighty-four years before the New York City movement) had instructed its representatives in the general assembly to propose putting an end to Negroes being slaves." Boston, therefore, is entitled to considerable praise for its early efforts in behalf of Negro freedom.

There did not exist, however, even at the most enthusiastic agitation for freeing the slaves, a universal sympathy throughout Massachusetts. Many men opposed the radical movement, just as many today oppose the institution of prohibition against liquors; it interfered with their business and threatened their "personal liberty." While some of the organized societies made speeches and published tracts against slavery, others worked with desperate energy to offset anti-slavery influences. There were men and women whose incomes depended almost wholly on the perpetuation of that inhuman institution; there are, today, men and women whose millions had their beginning in that very institution.

It was under the constitution of the United States that Massachusetts began to attract attention to herself as a haven for freed men. Having herself abolished slavery, she furnished to the anti-slavery cause some of its most brilliant minds. Against discouraging odds these men and women preached, plotted and wrote against slavery in the South. They were such persons as Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose "Uncle Tom's Cabin" began running as a serial in "The National Era," Boston, in March of 1852; Wendell Phillips, that eloquent Bostonian who, because of a speech in Faneuil Hall in 1807, became the principal orator of the anti-slavery party, and who, from then until Lincoln's proclamation, was Garrison's loyal and valued ally; William Lloyd Garrison himself, whose fiery denunciations of the slave traders in his paper, the "Genius of Universal Emancipation," led to his imprisonment for libel, who published in Boston the "Liberator," and who became the head of the American Anti-Slavery Society, and who, finally, barely escaped with his life from a pro-slavery mob in Boston in 1835.

Even though there was much strenuous opposition to

the friends of freedom in those days, yet, because of Massachusetts' lead in fighting the evil institution, she won the reputation far and near for whole-hearted benevolence, for unanimous indignation at slave holders, and for universal acceptance of the code involving the brotherhood of man. As most students of history know, and as has already been intimated, that was an erroneously bestowed reputation.

The sentiment of a majority of the people of this state, from the inception of slavery until its abolishment by proclamation throughout the nation, inclined more toward a desire to render the Negro contented with his degraded lot than toward an effort counter to slavery. In other words, the attitude of most citizens was passive, with strong sympathies for the slave trader and his business, rather than actively for or against it. Those who most directly opposed interference with the traffic and the institution were those whose interests were more or less involved in a financial way. Trading in slaves paid big dividends.

Not wholly a story of his inactivity while others fought to free him is the history of the colored man in Massachusetts. The story of Crispus Attucks, while often nowadays too evidently embellished with fictitious trimmings, is one of the attractive legends of the Revolutionary period, and outshines in popular imagination even the story of Peter Salem's spectacular killing of the British Major Pitcairn at Bunker Hill. These men, however, were fighting not as Negroes, but as Americans, a fact that we of today often overlook. Nevertheless, they fought, and in doing so established their right to freedom. Scattered over the Commonwealth of Massachusetts today are many direct descendants of colored men who fought at Bunker Hill and previous to the Battle of Bunker Hill, whose forebears themselves fought in the French and Indian wars just as did other Americans. Descendants of these men are today due as much and as exalted regard as is paid those white men who fought to establish American independence and, later, to preserve the American Union. The ancestry of such Negroes is tracable for a farther distance than that of many a person hereabouts who boasts his pure "Nordic" strain.

Justification in a measure has been found for the belief that Massachusetts is the land of the free and the home of the brave colored men, when it is remembered that this Commonwealth afforded asylum and encouragement to a long list of illustrious Negroes. Everyone knows of Frederick Douglass, who lived for a time at New Bedford; not so many are acquainted with the activities of Lewis Hayden, who fled from Kentucky to Boston and who was an influence in the underground railroad, or with William C. Nell, who taught the first Negro school in Boston, or with Lunsford Lane, who was arrested in his native state of North Carolina on the charge of having delivered abolition lectures in Massachusetts; or Charles L. Redmond, the first Negro to take the lecture platform as an anti-slavery speaker, or David Walker, who came to Boston as a young man and entered business, later publishing an anti-slavery pamphlet called "Walker's Appeal," which pamphlet the governor of Virginia referred to in a note to his legislature as "a seditious appeal sent from Boston." These men were not only free to say what they wished, but they manifested bravery in that they always ran the risk of being most severely dealt with if caught beyond an uncertain, imaginary line.

We have arrived now at a point where we may with safety draw a conclusion: It is a fact that the early activity on the part of a few white citizens of Massachusetts, coupled with activity on the part of a few col-

ored men, for the cause of human liberty, established this Commonwealth as the land of the free and the home of the brave colored man.

## II.

Without doubt Massachusetts remains until now the most liberally disposed state toward Negroes. Like New York, this commonwealth is strongly tinged with a foreign element, and where these people occur in large numbers prejudice against the Negro is not strongly developed. In addition, Massachusetts is supposed to nurture in its descendants of the abolitionists all of the abolitionists' fervid hatred of race discrimination and injustice. Of course this supposition is not altogether true, and it is doubtful that few, except the descendants of abolitionists themselves, take it seriously.

As a matter of fact the descendants of abolitionists are an aloof and sacred lot—all except a very few. Most of the original denouncers of the slave traffic and slavery have departed, only a sprinkling of bent old white haired men and women tottering here and there; but the sons and grandsons, the daughters and grand daughters of these fine old citizens, are almost as unknown as some rare New England fauna, and almost as sacred in their exclusiveness as the grasshoppers on Faneuil Hall. Their decision was made long ago, presumably, and it was, in effect, that the white folk of Massachusetts have done their share for the colored folk, and that now it is time the colored folk helped themselves. With which decision the recorder of these events has no quarrel.

It has been a matter of course that Negroes everywhere would look to Massachusetts as the bestower of prerogatives, and the colored section of this State's population, even today, demand certain mythical privileges. The average colored citizen of Massachusetts, especially if he be able to name a relative that was born here, is far more interested in boasting of his black lineage than of his American nationality. His religion is a passionate, an almost reasonless abolitionist-ancestor worship, and he parades the fact of his Negro antecedents not so much because of pride of race as a desire to continue as the "man of sorrow", the object in earlier years of impassioned oratory and underground machinations, the hero of one of the greatest episodes in American history, the War of the Rebellion. His reaction is similar to that of the soldiers who returned from the trenches and the late World War. Not being content merely with occupying a conspicuous place as men who had been the center of a great event, they were like spoiled children when they discovered that the world no longer made them the heroes of its imagination.

For a long time our amiable citizens of color in Massachusetts occupied the spotlight along. He was the object of many benevolences. He was often (and sometimes is now) welcomed in a social way. He contributed generously to the commercial prosperity of the Commonwealth. Often he was sent to the common councils, made a member of boards of aldermen, sent to the State Legislature, and with hardly more than white support behind him. He did thoroughly and well what was given him to do, but he did it with the consciousness of a man who is being accorded honors not because he deserves them but because of what he once was—the hero of a great cause—or what he is now—the descendant of that hero.

This interesting state of affairs continued uninterrupted for years. But after a while there came another seeker of publicity—an arrogant, domineering, boasting fellow. He desired a little petting too. He couldn't see why "the niggers" should have it all. This newcomer was the Irishman.

Note these figures. Today, with a population (quoting the 1920 census) of nearly four millions, Massachusetts has fewer Irishmen than Canadians, and fewer Negroes than either Irishmen or Canadians; yet, the Irish today in this Commonwealth is the most dominant group in politics, religion and blatant mouthing. The Negro is slightly in excess of 45,000, and, next to the Irish, makes more noise with the mouth than all other racial groups combined.

The quietest, least obtrusive, more self-effacing, most indifferent to clamor and agitations; the butt of whatever jokes everybody else wishes to make him—this is the hardworking native Yankee, often a descendant of abolitionists, often of slave traders, often of Mayflower immigrants and now and then just of plain everyday common Yankees. In Boston the Irish has driven the Yankee from South and East Boston, the Italians have banished him from the North End and the vicinity of the Old North Church, the Jews have crowded him from the West End and the larger portion of Beacon Hill, and the colored folk long ago saw to it that if the Yankee did not mind too much he might get out of the South End. Today the genuine Yankee, the kind with the twang like Coolidge's and who eats baked beans for Saturday night's supper and apple pie for breakfast (others try to do it, but it looks so much like gross imitation that they can't get away with it)—this Yankee hangs on along Beacon street and Commonwealth avenue and certain sections of the West End, while, in recent years, considerable numbers have migrated to these suburbs which surround Boston on the north and west. This Yankee does not know the Negro and the Negro does not know him—except as a white man; and this Yankee does not care to know the Negro. He is all sufficient unto himself taking all the glory that is given him for an apocryphal love for all black skins. He tolerates the colored intruder because to do so is easier than fighting him; because, chiefly, makers of history with scant regard for facts, and fools who believe everything, and human lollypops who take everything for granted that appears on the printed pages of a book, have built behind him a background of glamorous romance, which makes him a hero and a humanitarian. He has a role to fill, a part to play, a little piece to speak. He does all capitally.

Even though the Irishmen have eclipsed most of the glory that once blazed around our colored citizens, leaving them often very much in the shade when matters of importance are brewing, yet the colored citizen is undoubtedly bolder here than in any other State of the Union. He is never afraid to speak, be the issue what it may, and he does not falter in saying what he has to say in the manner that best appeals to his sense of the dramatic. Being the land of the free and the home of the brave colored man, is it any wonder that Massachusetts has produced the only citizen, white or colored, who has dared walk into the White House and call a President a ding-dong liar? A sense of his freedom to speak, a right he recognizes as his under the constitution probably imbued him with a feeling of safety, even though he stood on a plot of ground between Maryland and Virginia. That man, of course, was William Monroe Trotter.

Most colored folks in Massachusetts are either black or brown, and there is no middle ground—or so little of it that it is not worthy of mention. Those few who might be mistaken, in a gathering, for "Nordics," either have not yet discovered that they could "pass for white" if they wished, or they find it difficult, after years of associating with "blacks," to cross the line. The majority of light-colored persons who come from the South, where, traditionally, the colored man is detected even unto the sixteenth generation, are mistaken for foreigners here, and if they move into the North End or the West End they may forever after become lost to their darker brothers from "down home." This is no idle statement facetiously made; a number of instances might be cited were it necessary. Suffice it to say that there are hundreds of "Portuguese" who were once just plain Jack Johnsons and Mary Browns. They may be found in Boston, New Bedford, Lynn, Worcester and Springfield. There are scores of "Armenians" and "Greeks" and a few "Italians" who came to this great center of culture and liberty from Shoe Butten, Mississippi, Hop Toad, Georgia, and Corn Pone, Arkansas. It is a simple matter to become "white" where so many whites, were they in Georgia, for example, would without question be classed as colored.

So those who came with the sole thought in mind of



seeking larger freedom found it much larger than they had suspected even in their most rhapsodic dreams. They took advantage of it. And that was natural; not only was it natural, but it was human. Perhaps ninety-nine men out of a hundred, faced with the same situation, would have done similarly. Most of the colored folk who settle here, with every intention of remaining loyal to their smaller percentage of black blood, later, after being constantly mistaken for "whites", come finally to resent the imputation that they are anything else. And now a case to illustrate:

A short distance from where lives the recorder of these facts there resides a family of as handsome colored persons one could hope to meet. The straight hair of the father, the crinkly hair of the mother, and the varying degrees of texture in the hair of the children; their brown complexion, shading from light to dark; their evident Negro characteristics of facial contour—these are signs which long since established them in our neighborhood as one of the "good looking" Negro families hereabouts.

There came a time when the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People began collecting funds for backing the Dyer anti-lynch bill. The handsome daughter answered the agent's ring, and she seemed puzzled when told what she was expected to do. She stepped back into the hallway, half closing the door in the agent's face, and called for Mama. Mama came.

"Yes? What can we do for you?" Mama asked, eyeing the young woman agent suspiciously.

"Well, you see," explained the agent, "I represent the N A A C P—the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, you know, and we have a campaign on to raise money to stamp out lynching in the South . . . ."

She detailed at length.

"Yes?" said Mama again. "And what do you want us to do, please?"

"Why, to help—if you will. Being colored —"

Mama put up a deprecating palm, signalling silence.

"I'm very sorry, but we're not interested, not being Negroes . . . . Oh, that's all right; others have made the same mistake. We're Portygeese . . . ."

That is a true story. A friend to whom it was repeated took pains to explain the aversion of most Portuguese to the designation Negro; but, most interesting of all, he happened to know this family intimately, and remembered the time when they trailed through South Station on the morning train from Washington, at which place, some hours earlier, they had come in from "points south."

### III.

Other factors beside that one of greater freedom have entered into the general attraction to draw colored people to Massachusetts; these same factors have served to hold fast those who are native to the soil. Chief of these are the educational advantages.

For its total population, all racial groups combined, Massachusetts has proportionately the largest enrollment in institutions of learning than any other state. Negroes have honored with their scholastic attainments Harvard, the Institute of Technology, the State Agricultural, Tufts, Williams, Clark, Worcester Polytechnic, Boston University, Radcliffe, Mount Holyoke, Simmons, Lasell and Auburndale. In addition to these well established institutions there are the University and State Extension courses that run the full college length term.

Negroes have been students at all of these, but there have not been nearly so many as there should have been. The criticism for ignoring unequalled opportunities like these is laid at the doors of natives of this state more often than elsewhere. A majority of all college and university students come from other sections of the country, particularly from the South. For some reason, these men and women seem more appreciative of the store houses of priceless gems that only await claimants. Later, when the visitors from the South "make good", they will be pointed at as representative of the type of men Massachusetts produces! Most of Massachusetts'

so-called native sons, who have accomplished anything worthy of note, came here from the South.

### IV.

Massachusetts occupies the leading place among the States, in industry, the 1920 census indicating the value of all industrial products to be considerably more than four millions of dollars. This state is the most prominent textile manufacturing center in the Union; it dominates in the manufacture of boots and shoes. According to an authoritative statistician practically everything manufactured in modern industry is included in the manufactures of this state, "excepting in those basic industries in which the cruder materials, such as ores, are needed." Agriculture, once the dominant industry of the commonwealth, has been reduced amazingly by the cityward movement of the once large rural population. This desertion has left several scores of farms without tenants. Hay, tobacco, wheat, corn, oats, rye, buckwheat, maple syrup, apples, and various small fruits, such as cranberries, are the chief commodities awaiting both producer and consumer. Besides all this, Massachusetts is the leading fishing state of New England.

And now we come to the kernel of this most attractive nut. This is it: Of all the rich, flavored and wholesome meat here shown—the shoe factories, the mills, farms and fisheries, the slaughtering and meat packing concerns, the department stores and the bakeries—of all of these industries and businesses and enterprises, how many are owned, in whole or in part, by the free and brave colored man? And this is the answer: Not one tenth of one percent!

The typical Massachusetts citizen of color and of money is seldom interested in much more than maintaining a "front". There is not much behind the front, as a rule, but only those initiated into the intimacies of certain social circles ever see back of the scenes. Too much "freedom" has made him indolent; why should a free man work like a slave? Too much adulation—often, true enough, as hollow as his head, has caused him to place an exaggerated value upon his importance. He talks when he should act; he spends when he should save; he thinks in terms of "race" when he should think in terms of nationality; more often than not his "culture" is a mere fancy, his worth a conceit, and his accomplishments just ideas . . . .

### V.

Once upon a time Massachusetts stood gloriously forth as the exemplar for people all over these Colored United States. In those days she had something to offer her sister states in both precept and example as regarded her attitude toward her colored sons. With which introduction we bring ourselves to the crucial question: What did the Negro of the past in Massachusetts have that the Negro of the present has not? Moreover, what has this State given the world?

Well, let us see. The Negro of the past had members of his family in the State Legislature, in city councils, on boards of aldermen; he had a member of his group as headmaster in one of the most important graded schools of Massachusetts; he had business men, and statesmen—and politicians, who knew the game of politics as well as their opponents knew it.

Massachusetts gave Phyllis Wheatley, the first Negro poet in America, to the world. It gave to America the beginning of Negro masonry when, on March 6, 1775, an army lodge of one of the regiments of Britishers stationed under General Gage, in or near Boston, initiated Prince Hall and fourteen other colored men into the mysteries of Freemasonry. "From that beginning," says an authority, "with small additions from foreign countries, sprang the masonry among Negroes of America."

Massachusetts gave to America Lieutenant James T. Trotter, who wrote brilliantly on music and musical people, as well as served the people of the District of Columbia as Recorder of Deeds during the administration of Grover Cleveland. In those dear dead days there were office holders aplenty, both under the national government and under the Commonwealth.

Archibald Grimke, if I am not in error, went from this Commonwealth to serve as consul at Port au Prince, Hayti. George Lewis Ruffin, seeking freedom in Massachusetts after tiring of the increasingly oppressive atmosphere of Virginia, came to Boston, went to Chapman Hall school and Harvard University Law school, got married, and was elected to the State Legislature. He even went to New Orleans as a delegate to the National Republican Convention in 1872, where he presided as chairman! Later he was appointed by Governor Ben Butler police court judge in the city of Charleston!

Then there were Oscar Armstrong, Andrew B. Lattimore, Julius C. Chappell, Charles Harris, Robert Team-roah, William L. Reed and William H. Lewis, all members of the State Legislature. Lewis was the last to hold that office, the last Negro office seeker to be so completely supported by the wealthiest and most influential white residents of the vicinity of Harvard Square and Brattle street, Cambridge. Later, Lewis became Assistant United States Attorney, then Assistant Attorney General under Taft.

Colored Boston boasts—yes, boasts—of the only negro who ever had as an office boy a youth who later became mayor of Boston. That man was Robert Morris, a famous Catholic in his day, attorney for Catholic interests, and a lawyer of ability. The office boy who became mayor was "Mike" Collins.

So far as history goes, the last man to hold elective office in Massachusetts was William P. Williams, later, Captain Williams, of Company L. He was for years a member of the board of aldermen of Chelsea, serving for some time as chairman.

Besides these men, Massachusetts has given to America some of its romantic figures of actual life. Take, for example, the case of Mrs. Arianna Sparrow, of Boston. Does the mention of her name kindle no flame in the imagination, set the heart to beating a little faster? If not, it is because you do not really know. If you could imagine seeing in the flesh, for example, say—well, the daughter of Eliza, who, in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," fled with her child across the ice to escape the ferocious "Siberian bloodhounds" and the cruel brute with the murderous whip, would you not wish to see her? Would you not think that the State who claimed her as a citizen was one to be envied?

Massachusetts has that honor, in the person of venerable Mrs. Arianna C. Sparrow, who was born in Virginia, in 1841, but who has lived in Boston since long before slavery was abolished by Lincoln's proclamation. So those persons who have experienced sorrow at poor Eliza's plight might cheer themselves now with the knowledge that Eliza reached Boston after successfully eluding the bloodthirsty bloodhounds, and settled down here, where she sent her little daughter to the first school ever established in Massachusetts for colored persons. No historian who wishes to embellish his dry material with some living matter can afford to miss a chat of an hour or so with Eliza's little daughter. She holds a key to the gateway of a past that few even know.

The purpose of the foregoing paragraphs, under the Fifth section, was for reminding the reader that Massachusetts has given something of value to the country and to the world, although at present she may appear to be indifferent and incompetent. The foregoing represents somewhat the glory that was ours; we shall now compare that past glory with the present possessions. Lend attentive ear.

## VI.

In politics there is only one office under the State government, and that is Mr. Reed's. He is the newly appointed executive secretary.

Mr. Reed has been in a mediocre job at the State House so long that it is a pleasure to all of his friends to see his deserved promotion. There has always been something just a bit pathetic in the sight of that dignified, scholarly gentleman of the older school running errands for some of his inferiors who have sat in the Governor's seat.

But that is all that the colored man in Massachusetts

may claim in the way of political office under the Commonwealth. The estimate John W. Schenks holds a second rate assistant attorney's job to the United States District Attorney. He is worthy of something bigger, but whether or not he will get it is a matter for speculation. However, prospects do not seem very promising, in view of Mrs. Willebrant's recent ousting from office of the Mayor Harris, from whom Schenks received his appointment.

William C. Matthews is not holding public office, but, like our old friend Barkis, is willin'. He holds, though, what many Negroes throughout the United States think to be a strategic position in the White House anteroom. He is looked upon as the man who has Coolidge's ear—as though it would mean anything to the office seekers at large if he did have it. In the meantime, Mr. Matthews sits in his law office in the Old South building, while a million dusky politicians sigh, "Ain't the Bay State lucky!"

There is one colored assistant corporation counsel in Mr. Lucius Hicks, an ardent little Democrat. That is under the city government, of course. Mr. Curley was responsible for that assignment, as he was also for the designation of Joshua H. Jones as editor of the Boston City Record.

In Pittsfield there is Mr. Stevens, one of the State's bright legal minds. He is a good Republican and has represented his town in more than one Republican convention. Others here and there make noises, but neither they nor the noises count very much. Let us pass them by.

Massachusetts, as the whole world knows, has given to the world of literature an important figure in William Stanley Braithwaite. More interesting than the announcement that he has added another anthology of magazine verse to the long list already published, is the fact that he is president of the B. J. Brimmer Company, publishers, of Boston, a situation that recalls pleasantly the days when colored men were important figures in the business and industrial life of the Commonwealth. One recalls in this connection Gilbert, the nationally known wig-maker, and J. H. Lewis, who owned one of the largest tailoring establishments in Boston. Both these men are gone, and both their businesses with them.

So Mr. Braithwaite is one of those landmarks to which we, of Massachusetts, point with pride. Another is Mrs. Meta Warwick Fuller, the sculptress, of Framingham, Rodin's brilliant pupil, who would add lustre to the fame of any state and country. Still another is that remarkable real estate man of Brockton, whose name is Terry, and who owns properties in other states than this.

Joshua Jones, who was mentioned as Mayor Curley's appointee to editorship of the City Record, is remembered as the author of "By Sanction of Law," that novel which should have been a greater success than it was. He is now writing numerous short stories, all of which he intends to launch at the same time, soon. In addition, the public may expect soon to read his "Fairlee of Methuen," which, thank the Muses, is not a "race" novel. Josh is a credit to his adopted State.

Probably one of the best known women in New England lives in Boston. She is a member of the colored citizenry, born of free parents at Oberlin and educated in Washington, D. C., and Boston. This woman is Mrs. Mary Evans Wilson, who, in 1899, organized a great forenoon mass meeting in old Chickering Hall, Boston, to protest against the lynching of Sam House and others in Georgia. Julia Ward Howe was there, and spoke, and so were Alice Freeman Palmer, Edna D. Cheney, Anna D. Hallowell (granddaughter of Lucretia Mott), Florida Ridley and Maria Baldwin.

Since that time Mrs. Wilson has organized various movements seeking the welfare of colored people.

It was she who introduced Coleridge-Taylor to Boston; it was she who was instrumental in raising the greater portion of the money which paid for the Buffalo auditorium at Camp Upton during the war; and it was she who started the movement for the Women's Service Club in Boston, one of the most successful social service bodies in the State.

(Continued on page 243)



# The Letters of Davy Carr

A true Story of Colored Vanity Fair

## X.

*Virtue is its own reward. Thanksgiving. The big game.  
On with the dance. A doctor with heart trouble—  
a bad case. Fiddling while Rome burns.*

Sunday morning, December 3, 1922.

Well, Buddie, Thanksgiving has come and gone since last I wrote to you, and we certainly did have a "whale" of a time! I wish you might have been here. However, there is one consoling thought, that if you had been here then, you would not be coming for Christmas, and do you realize that Christmas is just three weeks off?

I hardly know where to begin, there is so much to tell, and I guess the best I can do, in any event, is to give you a mere synopsis, for the four days from Wednesday to Saturday, inclusive, were a whirling panorama of functions of every kind.

Of course I had been wondering what Jeffreys would do, especially as he had already invited his friend to spend the week-end with him. I had no idea that Caroline would say anything to her mother about the Baltimore affair, but, as I have since discovered, that young lady's reactions cannot be forecasted as accurately as one might imagine. Naturally, I did not think that even Jeffreys would have the nerve to expect to remain here as a lodger, though I did feel that he might have nerve enough to stay the month out, since there were only three or four days left, and since he had invited his friend for the week-end. If he should do this, it would of course be awkward for Caroline, Thomasine and me, for we knew so much about him, while Mrs. Rhodes and Genevieve did not. So all day Sunday I was in a mild state of wonder over the matter.

But two things happened to make further wonder unnecessary. In my letter mailed last Sunday I told you I had not seen the girls since Friday night. Well, on Sunday afternoon I went to Lillian Barton's, as has been my custom for several weeks now. The usual crowd was present and we had a very nice time, I assure you. I got home about ten, and saw the dining room lighted up. I let myself in quietly, and went up to my room to write a letter home. I had been busy some time when a voice spoke to me from the doorway, and I turned and saw Tommie smiling at me. I know even St. Peter is going to be glad to see Tommie. I jumped up and greeted her very warmly.

"Thank you very kindly for your cordial welcome," she said, "but I cannot stay. Genevieve wants you to come down. She has prepared the supper tonight, and wants you to sample it."

"I am afraid I won't be able to do justice to a supper," said I, "but I shall be happy to go down, if only for the honor of having such a charming escort."

"Now you are stepping out of your role, Godfather," said Tommie, as I followed her down the stairs.

But if only I had suspected what I was letting myself in for, I should not have followed so willingly. I expected, of course, the usual Sunday evening crowd, and was naturally surprised to see only Mrs. Rhodes, Genevieve and Caroline at the table. Caroline's face was flushed, and she looked, for her, strangely embarrassed. It was evident that Mrs. Rhodes had been crying, and Genevieve was even more serious than usual. I looked from one to the other, and felt ill at ease. But the suspense was not of long duration, for Genevieve spoke up very quickly, in that precise, matter-of-fact way she has.

"We have just learned from Caroline the whole story

of the affair in Baltimore Friday night. I need not say that we were shocked beyond words, nor shall I try now to express our gratitude to you, Mr. Carr. Tommie has made us understand very clearly what a service you have rendered us all, and to what pains you have gone on Caroline's account. If we do not say much you must not think us unthankful."

I was embarrassed, naturally, and stammered something about it being a privilege to have been of the slightest service, and that I was sorry that Caroline had told them, and thus had given them pain which they might have been spared.

"I think she did perfectly right to tell us," said Genevieve in her gentle, but prim, voice.

Caroline is surely a bundle of inconsistencies, but among her many and diverse qualities she seems not to number deceitfulness. She looked at me, blushing vividly, and without a trace of that bold manner she usually assumes toward me.

"I didn't know quite how to show you that I was grateful, except to make a clean breast of it. I asked Tommie, and she said it was the right thing to do. So I did it. Old Grouchy, I know a dozen girls who would give a small fortune to be able to blush as you do. Will you look at him, folks?"

There was a general laugh, which broke the tension, and, I think we all felt better for it, for Caroline seems so much more natural when she is bantering someone.

It is nice to be a hero, even in a small way and in a tiny domestic circle, and I should not be truthful were I to deny that these moments were very sweet. Caroline had me sit by her mother, who, though a woman of few words, made her appreciation felt none the less. Genevieve presided over the meal, Caroline insisted on waiting on me herself, and it was not long before the atmosphere had lost its tension completely and we were laughing and talking quite normally.

Caroline's confession, then, removed the necessity for any further secrecy, and when on Monday night a friend of Jeffreys came to say that the latter was remaining in Baltimore for several days, and had commissioned him to pack up his belongings, the last troublesome question was settled. My plan to give up my room was reconsidered, and Caroline and Tommie decided to take the room vacated by Jeffreys, for it was assumed that of course his friend, who was expected for Thursday and Friday, would not come.

Tuesday Mrs. Rhodes had the third floor front thoroughly cleaned, and in the evening we all pitched in and arranged it for the use of the two girls. At Caroline's solicitation, I even loaned them two pictures of you. I found that, while Jeffreys and his friend were to take Caroline and Tommie to the game, the gap left by their defection was quickly filled by other eager aspirants, so my invitation was too late. We had a jolly lark fixing up the room, and then I 'phoned the delicatessen not far away, and had some things brought in by a small boy, and I showed them how an old campaigner can fix up a light collation. Since Sunday last Mrs. Rhodes has been treating me more like a son than a mere lodger, and while it is nice in a way it is a trifle embarrassing, for it makes me feel as if I am being overpaid for the service I have been able to render. Even Genevieve treats me with distinguished consideration. Caroline and Tommie must certainly have laid it on! Trust them to see that a friend got all that was due him!

On Wednesday afternoon the three New York girls

arrived, and late Wednesday night, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Downs from Brooklyn. I wonder if you know the New York girls—two of the three are sisters, Sallie and Antoinette Cole, and Jessie Chester. The Cole girls are not half bad, and Miss Chester is a typical Manhattan girl as to clothes and general style. There has been a perfect cloudburst of young men hereabouts since early Wednesday evening. Genevieve, who is a quiet, but very effective person, has evidently been doing some planning, for the whole crowd went to the Benedicts' dance on Wednesday night under the escortage of personable young gentlemen. Tommie, having been invited by someone whom she did not deem desirable company, declined to go. As Verney had gotten me a bid, and as I had no company, I tried to get Tommie to go with me. Caroline, who had been depressed because Tommie was not going, helped me to persuade her, though I realize now that it was not the proper thing to do. Tommie has a very fine sense of what is right, and only the combined efforts of all of us succeeded in breaking down her resolution.

We had a wonderful time. In addition to the ladies of our own party, who in themselves would have been sufficient to ensure my having a delightful evening, I danced with Mary Hale *three times*, Lillian Barton *twice*, Mrs. Burt, the belle mentioned in a previous letter, and two or three others whose names are unknown to you. Under ordinary circumstances it was a time long to be remembered, but so much has happened in the few days that have elapsed since Wednesday that it has become a rather shadowy memory.

Thursday morning everybody went to the game, and it would take a letter in itself to tell you all the interesting things, but I can do no more than give you the sketchiest idea of it. The scene was the American League Ball Park on Georgia Avenue, situated a short block from the center of colored Washington, on the edge of its best residential district, and on the road from that district to the university. The park seats, I am told, twenty-two thousand people. While I lay no claim to proficiency in estimating crowds, I should say there were about twelve thousand people present. However, it was not the size, but the average quality of the crowd which was interesting and significant. Almost every one was well dressed, large numbers were richly dressed, and too many were over-dressed. All the great centers of colored population were represented, from Atlanta to Boston, and from Chicago to Atlantic City. Most of the women came to show their clothes, and, with the exception of the students, and those who had bets on the game, the major part of the crowd paid little attention to the contest itself, for the people and not the game were the real center of interest for most of them. From the viewpoint of the majority of the spectators, it was a social function, and not an athletic contest.

Hundreds of women, young women and mature women, were made up as if for a full dress ball, and somehow "make-up" does not look well at ten o'clock in the morning on a sunny day. Clarice and Aloysius McGinnis were there, I assure you, and Clarice was too busy watching "the Joneses" to pay any attention to such an unimportant thing as a college football game. The tickets to the game ran from two dollars to one dollar, and I judge that most of the people paid about a dollar and a half. I think the only mistake the management made was in not asking five dollars for the best seats, for, if I have sensed correctly the psychological reaction of that crowd, most of those in the two dollar seats would rather have paid five dollars, just to show the world how little it would mean to them.

Being a free lance, without attachments, I spent most of the time in the reserved box section, and saw there practically all of my friends. Then during the intermission I wandered about a bit, and looked them over. I saw signs of prosperity on every hand. Outside on Georgia Avenue and the streets adjoining there were hundreds of automobiles parked. Altogether the affair had its impressive features.

From the game I went home to freshen up a bit for a three o'clock dinner at the Hales. Our house was a busy

place, for there were to be twelve people at the table. While her mother, Genevieve and Tommie helped with preparations for dinner, Caroline did the honors in the parlor. I managed to get her aside for a minute, and inquire about plans for the evening, and asked if I could be of service as an escort for any of them. She thanked me, and said she was sure I could. So I agreed to be ready by nine o'clock to go to the Coliseum, where the official university dance was to take place.

The dinner at the Hales was most enjoyable. They have a thoroughly attractive home, not so extravagantly furnished as some I have seen, but in very excellent taste. There were four other guests, all from out of town, and people I am sure you never heard of, so I shan't waste any time over them. The dinner was fine, and beautifully served, and the good cheer was abundant. Mrs. Hale gave me the place at her right hand, and of course I liked that. After dinner we had some music, two of the ladies sang, Hale played, and I sang. I left at about seven, with the promise that I should see them all again at the Coliseum, where everyone was going, it seemed.

When I arrived at the Rhodeses the house was full, what with the six guests and all the young fellows who had dropped in. In the group were chaps from New York, Baltimore, and Pittsburgh, besides the local contingent. All the outsiders had come down especially for the game, and several were planning to stay over Saturday. They surely had all the outward signs of prosperity. Most of them were in evening dress, for they planned to take in the various dances, and I found out that there were to be three big ones, at the Coliseum, Convention Hall, and the Lincoln Colonnade respectively. The first was under the official auspices of the University, the second was a public dance, and the last given by the university alumni association. Several of the young folks present were planning to go to all three.

A little after nine we all set out for the Coliseum, a very large hall in the downtown district. It was full when we arrived, and the folks kept coming. Before we left it was estimated by someone that there were more than a thousand people present. It was practically impossible to dance, except in a most circumscribed area, and if you once lost your friends, you were likely not to find them again. I saw numbers of people I knew—just a flash, and then they had disappeared again. I had one dance with Mrs. Hale, and I tried to find Miss Barton, but finally gave it up. I danced with our New York visitors, Genevieve and Tommie. Caroline was not in sight most of the evening, being kept busy by both old and new admirers. Among her hangers-on were two very ardent wooers, both physicians, one a young fellow from New York, and the other a solid-looking middle-aged man from one of the North Carolina cities, Raleigh or Wilmington—I don't know just which. The latter was at the Benedicts' dance on Wednesday night, and seemed quite bowled over by the little lady's beauty. He came to the house Thursday right after dinner, Tommie tells me, and he just camped there until time for the dance, when he took most of the party in his Packard, a gorgeous car, which must have cost at least four or five thousand dollars. Like many mature men, he seems to know what he wants when he sees it, and he is rather direct in his methods. He has eyes for nobody but Caroline, and she is enjoying the fun immensely. He said on Wednesday, I recall, that he was on his way to New York, and had just stopped over for the game, but Thursday night he said he thought he would see the festivities out. When he said that I looked hard at Caroline, and she returned my look with an expression of the blindest and most demure innocence you ever saw.

From the Coliseum, which by eleven o'clock was so crowded as to be uncomfortable, most of us went to the Colonnade, where there was another crowd, and we finished the evening there, and went home thoroughly tired. I, for one, had a perfectly satisfactory day. As the pleasantest "night cap" possible, I had a hearty good-night handshake from Tommie, and a pat on the arm from Caroline, as they left me at my door to go to their temporary quarters in Jeffreys' old room.

"You have been very kind, Mr. Carr," said Tommie. "Thank you." And she gave me her hand.

"Nice old godfather," chimed in Caroline, patting me on the sleeve.

I said the things obviously demanded by the occasion, and bade them goodnight. They had reached their door when I called them again.

"By the way, Caroline," I said, "there is one problem in mathematics you won't find in the school arithmetic."

"What is that? What do you mean?" she asked, unsuspectingly.

"It is this: Does a young fellow plus a Mitchell touring car equal an old fellow plus a Packard limousine?"

Tommie shouted with laughter, and Caroline blushed, and then made a face at me!

Next morning the girls went to a so-called "breakfast dance" at the Casino, given by a crowd of college fellows, under the auspices of one of the college fraternities. To judge from all accounts they had a lively time at this affair. Personally, I decided that four evenings straight were enough punishment for me, without going to daylight dances also, but it seems that I am a "piker." As far as I can learn there were plenty of folks who have attended everything given thus far, and a lot of them are old enough to know better! Well, "there's no accounting for tastes," as the old woman said when she kissed the cow!

By the way, to change the subject a bit, I was at the Capitol Friday, watching the progress of the Dyer Bill. I say "progress," but, Bob, those scheming birds in Congress are planning in cold blood to do it up. I have been following it pretty steadily now for some days, and there is really no hope, as I see it. I firmly believe the word was passed around some time ago, that the Republicans were to let the Democrats do it to death, while some of the former went through the motions of mourning. I met James Weldon Johnson as I left the Capitol, and he looked pale and worn, completely done up, in fact. He agrees that the bill is done for.

Genevieve and Caroline had planned a house dance for Friday night, so when I got home the place was quite transformed. The furniture had been shifted about, some of it moved out, the rugs taken up, and the floors polished. I never before realized how big the house was. As there was to be another big "frat" dance Friday night, Genevieve asked her guests to come early so that those who had to go to the "frat" affair could take in both. The biggest crowd was about nine-thirty, but by ten-thirty a large part of the college crowd had gone, and we had a very good time, indeed. Some of the girls were a little listless, having been dancing pretty steadily since Wednesday, but Caroline is a living wonder. Where she gets her vitality from I don't know, but she is a regular fountain of energy.

The two rival physicians were present, and they came early and remained late, as if each was trying to outstay the other. It was like a play to watch them, and Tommie and I had a good time observing the fun. I have bet Tommie a five-pound box of Brownley's best against two neckties that the old fellow wins. You should see him! He knows what he wants, and he is a fighter, a ruthless two-fisted fighter, and though the youngster is good-looking and attractive he is going to lose out, for he will get discouraged first. I can see already that he is losing his nerve. The old chap evidently has an important engagement in New York, for they 'phoned him over long distance twice Friday night while he was at the house, but he is staying over until Sunday morning, I heard him say.

I never saw a man worship a girl more with his eyes than he does Caroline. It is amazing to see the grip she has gotten on him in these few hours. And she knows it, too, the minx! To my mind, she looks too young and dainty and sweet for a grizzled chap like Dr. Corey, but, as I judge him from these few hours of observation, he is a rather high-minded man of real character. He is a widower, I hear, and has two grown children. For some unexplained reason he seems to have taken a fancy to me, and to have the very mistaken notion that I have influence at court. At any rate, he has been cultivating

me steadily, and when he's not dancing attendance on Caroline, he hunts me up and talks about her. It's very funny! Tommie has caught on to the situation, and has had a great deal of fun out of it.

After the dance was over Friday night—and we had a hard time getting rid of the doctor men—the family party, and I was honored by being included in it, assembled in the dining room, where Tommie and Caroline served us some very refreshing cocoa, and those who wanted it had more salad, ice cream and cake.

"What is the program for tomorrow?" asked Antoinette Cole, looking at Caroline.

"A breakfast at ten tomorrow at the Whitelaw, as the guests of Dr. Corey, the Wellman's dance at three, and the fancy dress party at night. If you are bored in the meantime I am sure the doctor will take you sightseeing in his car."

"Bored!" said Sallie Cole. "If ever I get a chance to sit down again, I know my poor feet will appreciate it. I just know I have danced at least half way around the globe since Wednesday evening. If Mr. Carr will regulate his blushes, I'll tell you something. I have had my slippers off ever since we've been sitting here."

So they all turned in to try to get some much-needed sleep, for the next day bade fair to be the biggest day of all.

I went to my room, and got ready to turn in. After I snapped out the light, I went to the window, threw up the shade, and stood looking out over the city. Very, very faintly there came to my ear the sounds of dance music from some belated function. Then the loud guffaw of someone in the street broke the stillness, followed by the shriller laughter of a girl. By some curious shift, my mind went back to Johnson's haggard face, and the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill, being slowly strangled to death, strangled to death to the sound of jazz music played by a dozen orchestras, while hundreds and hundreds of educated, refined, prosperous colored people danced themselves haggard and lame between Wednesday night and Sunday morning! I felt a curious sense of dissatisfaction with myself and mine, a feeling as of impending misfortune. I went to bed, to sleep restlessly and to awake unrefreshed.

\* \* \* \* \*

As I write these words, Caroline is singing love songs and accompanying herself on the piano, to the infinite delight and unrest of Dr. Corey, who has been here since twelve o'clock. It is now two, and I have been writing since early morning. I guess I might better stop here, and mail this today, hoping to be able to finish my recital tomorrow. If I add any more to this epistle I won't have an envelope big enough to hold it.

\* \* \* \* \*

While I was writing the above lines Thomasine passed my door, and stopped long enough to say that Dr. Corey is going to stay over until tomorrow. Caroline is going to have him in for supper tonight, and wants me to be sure and come in early, as they are going to sit down about nine. So I have promised to be here.

I hope you do not feel as dissipated as I do. Tell me more about your new friend. I like her immensely. By the way, look up Antoinette and Sallie Cole. You will find them very nice girls. I told them about you, and they promise you a warm welcome. Until next time, Bob, I am, etc.

*More Thanksgiving. Dr. Corey again. Davy wears the bays. An old-fashioned proper lover. Conversational spending.*

Monday, December 4, 1922.

I have had an early dinner, and shall devote the rest of the evening to finishing up the narrative of the Thanksgiving festivities. I believe I left off with a description of Friday evening's party.

Caroline had told me that Dr. Corey wanted me to come to the breakfast at the Whitelaw Saturday morn-

ing, but I begged off. I promised to do some lobbying at the Capitol, and, as I said before, I felt that I did not care to compete with the college boys and the flappers in my devotion to the Goddess of Pleasure. Four riotous evenings and one whole day in one short week seemed quite enough. After all, every element of human life has its value, and the whole trouble comes in connection with the proportions of each. That's quoted from Don Verney. If you will think it over carefully, you will agree that it is hard to dispute successfully.

So I left the household to its unbroken round of gayety, to follow the harder path of virtue, and I saw none of the family again until six, when I stopped in at the Wellman's dancing party, which was given at one of the local halls. It was a very pretty party, and I saw most of my friends there. Some of them were a bit groggy by this time, and showed it, but they were determined to do or die. In the social game one must never show the white feather, and these folks surely play the game to the limit.

Dr. Corey's big car was the first thing I saw as I approached the theatre which shelters the Colonnade, and within the hall the doctor was certainly showing the proper zeal. He danced every dance, and spent every possible minute with Caroline. However, he had a hard time, for she was surrounded by the young fellows practically all the time she was not dancing. In the short while I was there, she seemed, to judge from the attentions she got, easily the most popular person present. If she had planned to show her older suitor how high a valuation is set on her by her own crowd, she could not have staged the exhibition better. Corey is quite evidently a person who thrives on discouragements. A man of his type rarely fails to get what he wants, and he has made up his mind that this world without Caroline Rhodes is a very empty place indeed!

I took the crowd to dinner at the Whitelaw. I had arranged for special service, and it was very nice. Dr. Corey was included, and he took us all in his car. We did not dally too long at the table, for the ladies wanted a few minutes to relax and rest before the evening function.

The final affair of the week was a fancy dress party at the Casino. As I had heard that most of the men would go in evening dress, and leave the fancy costume dressing to the ladies, I decided to follow the crowd, and, as it turned out, I was glad I did so. However, I have noticed that a fancy dress party loses somewhat in effectiveness when any large proportion of the guests are in ordinary conventional dress. Thus it was at this one, though many of the fancy costumes were very pretty.

Many of the guests, in spite of their make-up, and the fancy dress feature gave them unusual opportunities for that, looked jaded and haggard, and it was plain that some were just going through the motions of enjoyment. But, exhausted or not, they were game to the end. Dr. Corey had evidently inveigled Caroline into promising him several dances in advance, for she danced with him oftener than with anyone else, and she was surrounded, as usual, between dances. The young doctor from New York, I almost forgot to tell you, gave up in discouragement, and went home Saturday morning. Youth—which has so much more of time—is so much more impatient than maturity. Queer, is it not?

I had a very delightful evening, personally. I danced three times with Lillian Barton, and since Miss Chester, who was my special company for the evening, was very busy flirting with some chap from Philadelphia, and since Reese was so busy dancing attendance on his numerous out-of-town friends, I was able to have one or two little tête-à-têtes with that same lady.

By the way, Scott Green was present, and so was that chap Lacy, whom I mentioned in connection with the Baltimore adventure. I had not seen Lacy since the exciting moment when I actually threw Miss Hunt into his surprised arms. Under ordinary circumstances I suppose I should have gone back to the hall that night

to apologize to Miss Hunt, or, at any rate, have sent her an explanation through Scott Green, but, to tell the truth, I felt then, and still feel, that she and Lacy were helping out Jeffreys.

I discovered that Lacy was present in this wise. I saw a crowd of the men, among whom I recognized Verney, Reese and two or three other friends. They were listening with evident interest to a story told by a man in the center of the group, whose face was hidden from me. This is about what I heard as I came within earshot:

"This old chap used to follow pugilism, and had been in his day at times sparring partner, trainer, or rubber in the camps of some of the biggest fighters years ago. Bob Fitzsimmons, especially, is his particular hero. When I got there they had sent for the boss to look Jeff over. To tell the truth, we all thought he was dead. I never saw any man with life in him look quite as dead as he looked. The boss was frightened, for he did not want any police scandal, so he sent for a crooked doctor whose office is a few doors away, and who could be counted on to help him hush up the matter. While we were waiting for the doctor, this old geezer was telling us all about it. 'Wish day may strike me daid, ef I evah saw a man hit so quick and so ha'd. Ef he wuz a black man, I'd say it mus' be dis' here French nigger Seekee dey's all talkin' about.' Well, the doctor came, and he revived Jeff, but he was the sickest man you ever saw. I don't believe he knows yet just what happened."

You can imagine how I felt to have Lacy retailing that story to that crowd. Not that I am trying to work any false modesty on you, Bob, but I had hoped to have Caroline and her family spared this unnecessary publicity. I learned since that Lacy was considerate enough to withhold her name, but, from what I know of the folks in this burg, once they have gotten hold of one end of the string they won't rest until they find the other.

While Lacy was talking, I turned and slipped away, but of course it was not many minutes before all the men, and some of the women, too, were joking me about the matter. Tommie got wind of it, and talked to Lacy, and then I saw them both talking to Caroline. I could only imagine what they were talking about from the way Caroline looked at me the next time we passed each other dancing. One of her characteristics has some very good points in its favor. I refer to her directness. "The soonest said, the soonest mended," is her motto. The silences of repression are the most uncomfortable things in the world. I think we would all of us admit that. Well, Caroline never suffers in that way, nor permits anyone else to suffer so. The next time we met face to face, she said:

"Godfather, if you'll promise never to chastise me, I'll promise to be very good. They tell me you are a very rough old dear." And she smiled her most winning smile, as did all the other ladies whom I knew. And this is the tribute of the gentler sex to a brutal manifestation of mere animal strength!

I feel sorry for Dr. Corey. He is completely subjugated. He worships Caroline. It is touching to note how he follows her with his eyes. I firmly believe there is nothing in the world he would not do to please her. I have a new opinion of her from watching her since this new adorer appeared on the horizon. She does not tease him, nor make a show of him, nor try to make him ridiculous in any way. Indeed, it seems rather as if she realized how likely the discrepancy in their ages is to lay him open to ridicule and laughing comment, and she tries very hard to forestall the possibility of such a thing. Either she is really touched by his admiration, or she respects him very much. As I have watched her, I have wondered how many young girls would give up the opportunity of making such a spectacular sacrifice to their own vanity.

While I was writing to you Sunday morning, Corey took them all sightseeing, and they got back at noon, and then the others considerably gave him the field. When I left the house at three he had just gone, with the

expectation of returning in the evening for supper. The girls' room is full of evidences of his admiration, for he has sent flowers every day, and candy galore. It's a very bad case, indeed!

I had invited Scott Green to remain over night with me Saturday, so, while I was writing to you Sunday, he accompanied the folks on the sightseeing tour as the special company of Thomasine Dawson, with whom he is very much smitten. I asked Miss Barton if I might bring him to tea in the evening, and she said she would be delighted to have him. We spent a very pleasant evening, and Green, like everyone else, was charmed with Miss Barton, and pleased with my other friends. It was with regret that we left early, to keep our promise to be in time for supper at the Rhodeses. As the New York and Brooklyn folks were going on the midnight train, the house was full of callers, and the supper, in consequence, was a kind of informal stand-up, catch-as-catch-can affair, but we had a very jolly evening, for all that.

At eleven-thirty the visitors, including my friend Green, took their leave, and were taken to the station by the very useful Dr. Corey. His car holds seven very well, but he assured us that eight would be comfortable. Genevieve was, of course, thinking of going, but the good doctor looked so heart-broken at the thought of leaving Caroline behind, that Genevieve said she would let Caroline represent the family. Green, very properly, insisted on taking a cab, but the rest would not hear of that, so they crowded in, and were whirled away, leaving Mrs. Rhodes, Genevieve, Tommie and me to close up the house, which seemed so quiet and empty after the lively scenes of the past few days.

I went up to my room to smoke a quiet pipe before turning in, and, when Tommie came up to go to her room, I invited her in. So she sat down to wait for Caroline. Naturally, the talk turned on that young lady and her ardent new flame.

"What do you think of it," said I.

"I hardly know," said Tommie, "but she will have to face the question seriously, for he is crazy about her, and wants to marry her. He says he knew it five minutes after he laid eyes on her. You ought to hear him rave about her."

"Oh, I have," I said, and we both laughed.

Then I queried, "Has he asked Caroline yet?"

"I don't believe he has," said Tommie, "but he quite probably will tonight. He is going tomorrow noon, I believe."

Tommie thinks he is not only a real man, but also a gentleman, and I agree. He leaves one in little doubt as to his character. There is a very attractive directness about him. I liked him myself very much, and when Tommie said she liked him, that settled it. We both agreed, however, that he seemed too old for Caroline, and that was our one objection. To my mind Caroline is such a rare embodiment of the very spirit of youth, that such a match seems really incongruous.

We were still discussing the subject when Caroline came in. I looked at the clock. They had not taken many minutes from the station, and the Doctor did not linger at the door. These thoughts flashed through my mind when I heard her coming up the stairs: either he is a very *proper* lover, or he has asked and been rejected. When Caroline came in she threw herself on the couch, and heaved a deep sigh of relief.

"My, but won't it be nice to stretch out tonight!" she said.

Tommie, usually so calm and patient, could hold in no longer.

"Well," she asked, "did he pop the question?"

Caroline laughed, looked at me, blushed, then laughed again. For some occult reason, I felt embarrassed, and under the battery of the two pairs of black eyes, I could feel myself growing red. Tommie looked from one to the other of us, and then said:

"What are you two people trying to do. Run a race? Which one is the redder I can't, for the life of me, tell!"

Then we all three laughed, and Tommie returned to her original question.

"No," said Caroline, looking mischievous this time, "no, he didn't, but he says he is coming tomorrow morning to talk to mamma—whatever that means."

So the ardent doctor turned out to be an old-fashioned *proper* lover.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was really nice to get back to the grooves of regular normal life once more, after the strain of the past few days. I should not care to try to keep up such a pace indefinitely. After a really profitable day, I knocked off about four o'clock and went home. Mrs. Rhodes was on my floor straightening up the front room when I came in. On her way down stairs she stopped at my door for a few moments. She says she is going to keep the front room for her son, whenever he is home. He spends most of his time at the chapter house of his fraternity, where he has quarters, but now and then he spends a night at home. He has been using a second floor room up to this time.

Of course, I was interested in Dr. Corey's wooing, and I was hoping she would say something about it, though naturally I did not like to ask questions. Sure enough, she did bring up the subject herself, and asked me what I thought of it. Dr. Corey, in good old-fashioned style, made his declaration to the mother. It sounds curiously formal in these days, does it not, when most girls get married first and announce it afterward—even to their own parents? The doctor is a straightforward chap, it seems. He gave her a brief account of himself, his age, the facts about his family and his fortune. His two children are of age, and if he should marry again, he has planned to deed a share of his property to each of them at once, and a similar share to the new wife. He made the most explicit statements as to his resources, which are reasonably large, and he gave references to two or three of the largest banks and business houses in North Carolina. He is considerably over fifty, it seems. She asked me what I thought of it all? I told her that of course it was not for me to have an opinion, that I had been most favorably impressed by the doctor himself, that of course the discrepancy in age seemed very great, in spite of the vigor and apparently fine health of the suitor, but, after all, the one person to be pleased seemed to me to be Caroline. Further than this I would not go.

It is a fact that I think most mothers do not object to their daughters marrying men much older, and I think this is especially true of the mothers of girls who are very wilful or unusually lively. I suppose to the mother the older suitor does not look so old, after all, as he would to a younger person. If it were Genevieve, now, I should say, with her over-serious, mature nature, that it would not be such a bad match. To say more—the good doctor might go further and fare worse! Before she left, Mrs. Rhodes said that Corey was coming back this way before the end of the week. About five o'clock an enormous box arrived from one of the big florist stores downtown—the doctor's parting gift, one dozen American beauties!

\* \* \* \* \*

Tuesday, a. m.

I was feeling "dopey" last night, so I stopped writing about eight o'clock. The house was so quiet—by contrast, I suppose—that I got lonesome, so I thought I should take a walk. I went around to Verney's, and found him in. We talked awhile, and then we thought we might run over to You Street and take in a movie. We cut through Twelfth Street, and went into the Lincoln Theatre. This is one of the best houses in the city. Washington has two movie houses, the Lincoln and the Republic, which surpass any of those in Harlem for beauty and the quiet elegance of their appointments. They were built by white firms on the lines of the best downtown theatres of modern construction. Each is about

(Continued on page 242)



# Editorial

## Opinion of the leading

### Organizing the Negro Workers

We have been informed by Mr. William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor, that in the forthcoming nation-wide campaign to organize the workers that no distinction will be made with respect to race. Of course we have been told this before. Still Negro workers are unorganized and condemned for breaking strikes. Nothing systematic has been done to organize them, except among the needle trades unions, and even they, though liberal, have done too little. None of the unions seem to be inclined to employ Negro organizers to help carry the message of unionism to Negro labor. The commonest common sense ought to dictate to the white labor leaders that there will be no effective work done in organizing Negro labor except with the aid of intelligent Negro labor organizers.

### The New Negro Student

Whether the students at Fisk and Howard Universities were justified or not in the recent strikes they staged as protests against certain college regulations, it is evident that a new spirit is abroad amongst them. They are more independent, militant, aggressive and self assertive. This is undoubtedly a healthy spirit. Of course, the students' revolt, against the autocracy of President McKenzie of Fisk, was both timely and justified, and, certainly, we are opposed to the militarization of education at Howard or any other school for black or white students. It is not calculated to achieve the spirit of peace which the world now so sorely needs. Nor are we in sympathy with the policy of President Durkee of Howard holding two jobs at the same time, one of which is the president of a school for Negro students only, Howard University, and, the other, according to *The Nation*, as president of a school for white students only, the Currie School of Expression in Boston. A queer combination this. Even college presidents will have to learn that students have rights which they are bound to respect.

### Reports

We have scanned the reports of the National Association and the American Civil Liberties Union with interest and profit. Both cover a wide and vitally useful field of service in fighting for civil rights. Doubtless because of the absence of any great threat to property rights, the reports record a definite decrease in the violation of civil liberties. Still under the efficient and aggressive leadership of James Weldon Johnson and Roger N. Baldwin, these organizations are not only struggling to protect the civil rights of persons and groups but are also working on the big

and important task of securing a restoration of lost liberties such as occurred to the Negro after Reconstruction and to the American people in general during the war.

### Dr. Du Bois Weeps for the Worker

Now that it is perfectly safe, the war being over, and since it has become popular—and hence thrilling, to embrace the dear workers, Brother Du Bois condescends to emerge from his ivory tower and suddenly conceives a passion for the unwashed toilers. He is willing to give them three years and not a darn minute longer to learn the lessons of life which he deems they ought to know. If they don't learn during that time they can jolly well go to the bow-wows for he simply won't play any longer. So there now! Let us hope that the workers will not be so rude as to ask the sage of sixty-nine Fifth Avenue, any questions, lest his poetic soul become offended and he betake himself back to his dactyls and spondees and the delightful pastime of making the world safe for Africa via the Pan-African Conference.

### Panic or Prosperity

We have heard a great deal about the prosperity which was coming after the election. We fail to see it. Businesses continue to fail. Only a few weeks ago we read of the closing of the First National Bank of Carnegie and also the Carnegie Trust Company, due, according to the officials of those institutions, to the slump in the bituminous coal industry.

But we visit every industrial section of the country and find the same slump. We were inclined to suspect it is due to our pessimism produced by too much reading of Schopenhauer, Max Nordau and Clarence Darrow. Not so, however. As we turned to the morning paper we culled this optimistic morsel from that business expert, B. C. Forbes. Referring to last week he writes:

"However, there were again more declines than advances in prices. The copper industry is still on an unsatisfactory basis. Rubber, latterly weakened a little. The coal business is very bad, with idleness rather appalling in union territories. The textile industry is still rather lifeless, as is also the shoe industry."

It would seem that we have more nearly panic than prosperity. Which suggests retrenchment on the part of businesses and individuals—retrenchment which is voluntary rather than involuntary.

### Crime and the Double Standard

A few Sundays ago many pastors in Chicago discussed the crime situation, its causes and remedy. They ran the gamut in referring to gun toting, violation of the 18th Amendment, jazz, flappers, hard boiledness and the like.



# rials

## colored American thinkers



All seem to have missed a most basic cause—the having of two standards for different racial elements in the same nation. It was John Stuart Mill who said: “You can no more have two kinds of rights than you can have two kinds of straight lines.”

True. If this nation permits the flouting of the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution, it will have to tolerate disregard of the 18th.

Why should we have priority amendments to the Constitution, anyway? You know what we mean by priority? Well, during the war, hospitals, prisons, camps, railroads, munitions plants would get the preference in being supplied coal, sugar and certain necessities. It was held by the government that some enterprises were more important than others and, therefore, should come first. Some of our legislators and executives seem to feel the same way. With them one law is more important than another. All parts of the Constitution should not be enforced, as they view it.

No nation can perpetuate respect for law with a double standard of law enforcement. The cardinal principle of statesmen and philosophers is that the government should have one standard for rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, black and white, alike.

America's neglect of genuine law enforcement, based upon race, has gotten for her the unenviable record of the most lawless (civilized) nation in the world.

Here is a sample of what we mean. In the South there is a provision in most Southern states for educational qualifications. The voter is supposed to understand the Constitution, even though not one man in ten thousand has ever read his state constitution. In Alabama, for instance, a white man goes to the polls. The election official reads to him as follows: “The legislature of Alabama shall meet every two years for the transaction of business.” “Do you understand that?” “Yes,” comes the prompt reply from the white voter. Next a Negro voter comes up. The same official reads to him from the Constitution: “The legislature of Alabama shall pass no *ex post facto* law. Do you understand that?” “No, sir, boss,” comes the equally prompt reply from the confused colored voter.

Giving all the same examination at the same time is a recognized principle of fairness in tests.

Let the white ministers of Chicago study this cause of disrespect for law next time.

### Parental Duty

Recently Chicago had a city-wide celebration of Parents Day. “Honor your children that you may be honored,” was the slogan adopted by Dr. Herman N. Budesen, Chicago's Commissioner of Health.

This is the first time we've seen the emphasis placed where it ought to be. The Bible says, “Honor thy father and mother,” etc. Never mind so many reminders for children. If parents will train their chil-

dren properly, they'll be honored as a matter of course.

Too many parents think of their children as weeds. “They are planted by accident and gathered by chance.” Uncared for children will be human weeds.

Hereafter, let us stress parental duty. Children are brought into the world for the pleasure of parents. They are not parties to their coming in. They have much to be grateful for to good parents, but parents should be very grateful, too. The chatter of childhood, the enobling laughter of youth and the glistening eyes of infancy, have warmed the heart of many a mother or father.

### Food, Worry and Work

Nearly everybody in America (who can get it) eats too much. And in our great country studded with wealth, most people unfortunately, or fortunately, can get too much. An absolute necessity, food is at the same time a constant threat and a menace when over consumed. Most people dig their graves with their teeth. When too much food is eaten it enervates—lessens the bodily energy—makes it too weak to be expelled after it has turned to poison. The individual has what is known as toxemia—poisoning from retained excretions. Add to the menace of over eating, over work and constant worry (and constant worry is constant work), and we have two more extremely enervating influences which will undermine the strongest constitution in the universe.

To this treacherous trinity, Frank L. Gillespie, president of the Liberty Life Insurance Company, has fallen victim. The hard working, dynamic builder of the Liberty Life Insurance Company has been caught in the net of America's industrial and commercial nerve wrecking system—the same system which snatched away George W. Perkins, Booker T. Washington, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Warren G. Harding, Madam C. J. Walker, Philip A. Payton, John Merrick, and other builders of America's economic and financial fabric. He worked too hard, ate too much and worried too constantly. Frank Gillespie had not only a big body, but a big, generous heart.

*“If everyone to whom he did a loving service were to bring a blossom to his grave, tonight he would sleep beneath a wilderness of flowers.”*

### Crime News

Following an article on “Why the Press Prints Crime and Scandal News,” written by Chandler Owen, and published in the Chicago *Defender*, many publications have written articles along the same line. Most

*(Continued on page 240)*



# The Theater

## The Souls of Black Folks



By THEOPHILUS LEWIS

### Primer Lesson for Harlem Critics

The business of the artist is to make life and existence intelligible in terms of beauty. This is what distinguishes the artist from the scientist, whose business is to make life and existence intelligible regardless of beauty. The world the scientist discovers assembled in terms of mass, motion and sound, the artist refashions in terms of symmetry, rhythm and melody. That is to say he extracts the hidden essentials of familiar substances and refines them in an illusion which exalts the mind. In producing the illusion and the consequent exaltation the artist becomes a creator, the conscious peer of the inert authors of the sunset and the rainbow.

In his own age the artist is most appreciated when he works in familiar materials and creates conventional forms of beauty. His contemporaries, of course, will not forgive him if he merely imitates Tasso's or Tennyson's verse, or the Barbizon painters' landscapes, or Mendelssohn's melodies; but they will not fail to condemn him as an erratic notoriety seeker the moment he makes any considerable departure from the patterns the masters have canonized as delicate and lovely. For most men have no direct knowledge of the world. They understand life as generations of teachers have taught them to understand it and recognize beauty as it has been revealed by a succession of artists. Which means instead of looking at the world with their own eyes they see it through the eyes of dead men, imagining the skeletons which were living bodies when the masters saw them are still alive and flush with health, mistaking the tombstones of dead religions for the temples of God, and demanding of the present artist not originality but novelty.

The minor artist, that is, the artist of the calibre of Keats or Conrad, the limits of whose powers is the creation of new designs for staple goods, is not disadvantaged this sempiternal conservatism; but when the man of genius appears, say a Byron or a Dreiser, with his large talents for pioneering and discovery, he soon finds himself the object of violent persecution. This is not because he lacks proper reverence for the crystallized beauty everybody else reverences, but because he reaches in the vortices of life still in the process of evolution and hauls out strange forms of beauty nobody else has ever before seen or heard tell of and insists on placing them in the Parthenon. Now evolution, except during its periodical crises, does not proceed with the sound of brass and the crash of trap drums. It moves inconspicuously and its apprehension requires an acuteness of vision the common man does not possess. When the genius points to a condition which appears to be static and ugly and tells the world it is in the heat of changing to something wonderful and lovely, his con-

temporaries, lacking his gift of penetration and hence able to observe only inertia where he discerns pulse and rhythm, reply that he is either lying or mentally unbalanced and seeing things and forthwith proceed to invent precepts for crucifying him or clapping him in Central Islip or vilifying his character, according to the method of persecution in vogue.

This is an inevitable situation. When the artist seeks his material in unexplored sources and works it up in strange shapes and colors he is producing new forms of loveliness to be admired and enjoyed. This is what makes him the dynamic factor in art. But his creations will at first appear unintelligible to men at large in proportion as they are original. Since what is unintelligible cannot be appreciated the repudiation of the artist by the crowd is both honest and sensible. The artist must wait until the more clear sighted of his contemporaries perceive the liaison between his creations and the trend of events and communicate the discovery to their fellows. This requires time and it usually happens that the original artist is not adequately appreciated until he is decaying in old age or eternity. Which is not at all important, for the function of the artist is not to win applause for himself but to search the unknown for reality and interpret it in terms of beauty.

This primary function of the artist should be fully understood by those appointed or who take it on themselves publicly to appraise his creations. In other words the critic should possess something of the artist's insight into the nature of things. For instance, the critic who attempts to appraise the current poetry, fiction, painting or sculpture of American Negroes ought to have a clear understanding of the spiritual and sociological conditions those arts seek to interpret. That is, he must understand what is called the Negro Problem.

Now the Negro Problem is this: It is the question whether a youthful people living in the midst of an old and moribund civilization shall die with it or find themselves able to shake loose from its complexities and build their own culture on its ruins. This is a condition of extreme uncertainty and cannot be faithfully interpreted by the definite art forms which adequately enough express the life-spirit during its periods of stability and order. Rather, this condition of doubt will find its esthetic expression in dissonances of sound and color, and such explosive comedy and tragedy as results from the struggles of a passionate people to escape the restraints of the Calvinist version of the Ten Commandments.

The task for the Negro artist, then, is to observe the confusion of rusting flivvers, vanishing forests, migratory populations and expiring faiths which confronts him and reveal its meaning in a

felicitous manner. He will show us, perhaps, the convulsions of a world breaking down in chaos. Perhaps the nuclei of a new world forming in incandescence.

### Six Bits Gone to Hell

This is the 20th day of May, year of Our Lord 1925, and up to this point in the record the firm of Miller & Lyles, showsmen extraordinary to the American Cloak Merchant, have not turned out a single product of racial significance or flavor except the grocery store scene of "Shuffle Along." In the remainder of "Shuffle Along," and in "Runnin' Wild," they showed consummate skill in designing and building first class music shows, but neither of those productions contained any racial element Miller & Lyles can be given credit for except their own acting.

Considerable time ago Mr. Miller presented at the Lafayette a drama called "Going White." It was trash. More recently, a fortnight ago, to be exact, he presented at the same theatre a monstrosity which was billed as the "first race farce," called "Pudden Jones." This "Pudden Jones" is neither racial nor a farce. It is a burlesque show minus the smutty jokes, alley songs and can-can dancing. Which means it is a burlesque show wanting everything which makes burlesque shows interesting and lively.

Bad as the piece is written its production and acting make it appear even worse. A piece in which the playwright writes "implying" when he means "implying," rather, when a man with any respect for the dictionary would mean "implying," certainly is not improved by such cock-eyed business as an actor looking for the "News" in a telephone directory and finding it way over toward the left of the book where the C's are located. Nor has it ever entered Mr. Miller's head that a yellow nigger can be funny. He still associates comedy with lamp black, a jail record and minstrel show clothes. The ineptitude of the whole thing, perhaps, reaches its limit in the author's employment of asides and the actors' practice of bellowing them at an average distance of six inches from the ears of the characters not supposed to hear them.

Miss Edna Thomas, who is capable of a competent and poetic performance when she has a mind to, was not in a mood for acting the evening I saw the play. Perhaps she did not consider the play or the talents of the other actors worthy of her serious cooperation. If she felt that way about it she was right.

P. S.—As I left the theatre about the time Marie Young came on to do her famous St. Vitus' dance act, the above testimony is based on what occurred during one and one-half acts. It does not apply to the actors who did not appear in the earlier part of the piece.

(Continued on page 238)



# Shafts & Darts

## A Page of Calumny and Satire

By GEORGE S. SCUHYLER and THEOPHILUS LEWIS

*A Tribute to Judas:* As good thoughtful Christians, believing fervently in the doctrine of divine plan and guidance, we want to take this occasion to pay a tribute to a very much-maligned biblical character; a man upon whose head the most horrendous maledictions and calumnies have been heaped. We refer to Judas Iscariot. If what Judas did was planned by the Deity—as everything is—then Christians should give him his due amount of credit for fulfilling his part in the divine scheme of things, just as the other great biblical characters are given credit. We have always failed to understand why the eminent theologians have always panned fellows like Judas, Herod, Thomas, Cain, and others. It has always seemed to us like criticism of God's work. They all were given certain parts to play in the divine scheme and plan, and they performed the task assigned them. It ill behooves the reverend clergy to damn the instruments of God's work. Such criticism is therefore illogical as well as heretical. It is this ignorance and heresy on the part of the clergy that we intend to call attention to—a wrong we believe should be righted. Judas has never received his just due for the great part he played in laying a basis for Christianity.

Think what the world would have missed had he not betrayed his Master. The wonderful blessing of Methodism, Baptism, Catholicism, the Inquisition, Christian Science, the Crusades, Spiritualism, the Reformation and other civilizing influences would have been lost to the world. The Master would have undoubtedly escaped by the fastest means of locomotion available to some such civilized center as Alexandria, Carthage or Athens, and God's plan would have been defeated. As it was Judas sold Him out for, what was in those days (before the rise of real estate sharks), a month's rent. So Christianity gained a *raison de etre*. Surely all those who have benefited from Christianity—i. e., clergymen, bible publishers, imperialists, investment bankers, undertakers, organists, etc., should join us in our agitation for a great international holiday to be set aside for the commemoration of the noble work of this great disciple. This day should be known as Judas Day, and great parades and pageants should be held in every town and hamlet subscribing to the only true faith. His modern disciples—the politicians, grain gamblers and rent sharks—should erect shrines all over the world in his memory, and burn candles and incense therein. The international bankers and investors will, we feel sure, also join the campaign with much gusto providing the matter is properly laid before them by sound advertising methods. With this view in mind, we suggest that it be part of the sales talk of the campaign managers, executive secretaries and sales force to explain to "prospects" in the foreign investment field how Chris-

tianity has always so admirably served as the foundation upon which all the justification mechanisms and rationalizations for hoisting imperial banners over "backward" countries with rich natural resources and cheap labor, has rested; that, since Judas played the principal part in establishing a basis for Christianity—and hence for "self-determination" and "mandates"—he deserves the praise, and even the worship, of the financial overlords of modern civil (syphil) ization. We are satisfied that the overwhelming majority of the leading international financiers will gladly give some of their millions, gained in patriotic services as dollar-a-year men during "the war to end war," toward the erection of a great cathedral or some other fitting memorial to this great character. And of course we count upon the toy manufacturers, poultry fanciers, Christmas tree vendors and other tradesmen who profit so much by the Yuletide season, to do their share.

The mere proposal of such an international holiday, we feel confident, will be quite sufficient to arouse a wave of world-wide enthusiasm, especially among the Jews, Amerindians, Africans, Hindus, Polynesians, Asiatics and other fortunate peoples who have experienced the blessings of programs, "spheres of influence," "economic penetration," slavery, peonage, lynching, "punitive expeditions," bombings from the air with gas and nitroglycerine, massacres, rape and other little favors so characteristic of Christian nations in their zeal to shoulder the "white man's burden." Surely they will leap at the opportunity to celebrate the work of one who played a dominant role in establishing the world's first great humane religion. While we expect a shrill chorus of dissent from a few heathen Modernists and infidels, we are confident of the moral and financial support of all right thinking people everywhere—especially our fellow Fundamentalists, whom we know share our belief in Divine responsibility for everything that ever happened. Since it has been the custom among misinformed clergy and laity to curse the name of Judas whenever mentioned, we were somewhat hesitant in making this revolutionary suggestion. When we considered, however, that love and forgiveness is the corner stone of the Christian faith, we felt that all Christians could be brought to see the justice of our proposal. Even though most Christians have felt that the betrayal of the Master was almost as dastardly a deed as the betrayal of Haiti, the seizure of San Domingo, the double-crossing of Aguinaldo, the Ku Kluxing of Colombia or the rape of the Congo, we felt that Judas should be forgiven by all of the faithful, in accordance with Christian tenets, because of the undoubted benefits the religion has conferred upon the world by spreading such doctrine as infant damnation, a vindictive deity and eternal broiling for all sinners. No more

respectable Heaven has ever been pictured by any other of the world's great religions—a sort of celestial Rotary Club or Y. M. C. A. Hence we feel that for once Christians should practice the Golden Rule and give Judas his due credit and praise. We have paved the way. Who will send in the first campaign contribution?—we both need new suits . . . and Lewis is almost bare-footed!

*Richard is Himself Again:* Last month in commenting on things that had passed out of the Negro's life, we mentioned a certain revolutionary organization whose six members formerly assembled in weekly conclaves in some friendly telephone booth or barber shop and hurled dire threats at the capitalist system between readings of the Communist Manifesto, *The Daily Worker* and theses from Comrade Zinoviev. Led by the eloquent Paramount Chief and the crafty Merchant of Harlem (when he wasn't selling sweet potatoes); whipped into religious (Communistic, of course) frenzy by the fiery oratory of Richard, the Lyin' Hearted, sometime itinerant book seller; supported by the well-known female probation officer and reported convert to Christian Science; and encouraged by the Wild Boy from Dutch Guinea who had only recently returned from Moscow and its atmosphere of fervid oratory, plots and "putschs," this most "Left" organization of new Negroes plotted Red Revolution right in the midst of Africa with only the Department of Justice aware of their courageous efforts. One of the brave comrades, the bookseller it is said, was once surrounded by a mob of hated patriots one evening while soap-boxing in the Bronx, and he bettered the record of Charlie Paddock in getting back to the confines of Harlem. The time, he explained, was not ripe for "direct action." After a long period of fighting capitalism by attacking Garvey, the Socialists and the N. A. A. C. P., the organization suddenly became as dead as Kelly Miller's Sanhedrin. "Boring from within" had evidently not proven profitable. The fruit cellars and sand dunes were deserted. Money was scarce.

But all seems to be well again. A dark comrade from the Windy City has returned from sacred Moscow with ample instructions and the life-giving shekels. Light again dances in the eyes of the comrades. Richard the Lyin' Hearted gesticulates and snaps out fiery phrases as of yore; the Merchant of Harlem perks an attentive ear; the Christian Scientist again sees visions of the triumphant black proletariat shooting fat tradesmen; Zinoviev, from Dutch Guiana, harangues the curious multitude of forty or more in pidgin English, while the Windy City brother (now chancellor of the exchequer) graces the platform clad in Russian peasant's smock and calculates on collection.

(Continued on page 238)



# The Critic

## Do they tell the truth



By J. A. ROGERS

### Syphilis: Where Did It Originate?

The United States Public Health Service is broadcasting a series of articles on venereal diseases.

Speaking of the origin of syphilis the first article says: "Although the absolute knowledge of syphilis as a distinct disease dates back to only 1494—when the sailors of Columbus brought the disease to Spain from Haiti. . . ."

\* \* \*

Syphilis came from Haiti! That story has been so thoroughly exploded by white writers of the first rank, like Sudhoff, Bassereau, Milton and Buret, that I thought it was as dead as the story of Balaam's ass or Jonah's whale.

Had that been uttered by Lothrop Stoddard, the Emperor Simmons, or Profs. Hayes and Moon of Columbia University, it would have been just what I expected, but in a United States publication I could hardly believe my senses.

\* \* \*

### Has Syphilis Always Existed?

Syphilis first came into notice in 1494 during the siege of Naples. Tons of literature, with citations from the Bible, from ancient Chinese, Egyptian, Assyrian, Hindu, Maya, and other writings, have been produced, in an attempt to prove that it has always existed in cities, and as early as 4500 years ago in China. This, however, has failed to convince fully the critical thinkers, for the fact is that syphilis has no pathological status prior to the above-mentioned date. A study of the laws and regulations governing prostitution find no prior mention of the disease. After that it is very common. In its sweep over the world it seemed suddenly to have sprung into existence, like the Spanish flu or Addison's disease.

There was no end of reasons given for this disease which burst with such sudden violence at the end of the fifteenth century—all but the right one. In those days soap was a luxury and bathing was regarded much more of a vice than a virtue. Some said it was a scourge sent by God, others that it was a fire from the stars, that it was due to union with an ape, or had been evolved from a combination of the pox and leprosy. While tens of thousands died from it the most fantastic reasons were being offered for its origin, one of which was that the sailors of Columbus had brought it from the New World. This, however, was not until nearly thirty years later. And what led to that? The best known cure for the disease was the guaiacum, a Haitian plant. Hence by that process of reasoning peculiar to the theological mind

it was decided that the disease must have come from there also, since God, in His goodness, had always placed the disease and the remedy side by side. Columbus, dead many years, had said not a word of it.

\* \* \*

The disease, itself, had no fixed name. Each country blamed it on the one it liked least. The French, then at war with the Neapolitans, called it the Neapolitan disease, while the latter called it the French disease. The Spaniards, with a strong enmity for the Turks, called it the Turkish disease, while they in turn called it the Spanish disease. Christians called it the Mohammedan disease, and Mohammedans the Christian disease. And so on with the Polish, Arabian, Portuguese, African, and German disease. Anti-Catholic agitation was then strong and it was said to have incubated in the convents, being known as the St. Senerhius, St. Roch, or St. Merius disease. Today, in California, where the feeling against the Chinese is strong, it is called Chinese Pox. All of these names finally crystallized into *Morbus Gallicus*, or French disease. Still later came its present name from Syphilus (supposed to be a Greek combination, meaning hog-love), a poem of that name by Hieronymus Frascator (1483-1553).

"I will sing," began Frascator, "of that terrible disease unknown to past centuries which attacked all Europe in a day and spread itself over a part of Africa and Asia."

\* \* \*

With reference to its alleged origin in the West Indies Buret says:

"The best proof of the falsity of this assertion is the multitude of names given to syphilis at the time of the great epidemic of the 15th century. If the disease, supposed to have been unknown up to that time, had really been brought from America, would it not immediately have received the name of *the American evil*?"

Bassereau says similarly: "Now let us review the long list of different names which the pox finally received before finding in Frascator its final godfather, or, rather, before the term 'syphilis' was finally adopted. It would be too easy to find in the incredible number of these names the obvious proof that the disease did not come from San Domingo. Is it admissible that at any time physicians and historians should put their brains on the rack—and that for a period of twenty-five years—to discover the origin of the virus, when it is publicly notorious that the said virus came from an island recently discovered? We leave it to the reader to assume the care of answering this question."

He further advances conclusive argu-

ment in the fact of the havoc that the disease wrought among the Indians in Haiti after 1492. "At this epoch," he says, "the inhabitants of Haiti and the neighboring isles, that they accuse of having communicated syphilis to the sailors of Christopher Columbus, had not been exterminated by the disease."

J. L. Milton, after a thorough examination of all the arguments *pro* and *con*, says:

"Human credulity was rather severely taxed when it was asked to accept a tale which is as improbable as it is untrue. . . . The evidence against the story is as old as the story."

Even so reactionary a source of information as the encyclopedias deny it. The International Encyclopedia says:

"This theory has been disproved by Sudhoff, whose researches and conclusions on the history of syphilis are now generally accepted as conclusive."

\* \* \*

Syphilis is a white man's disease. The best proof of it is that he is more immune to it than the darker races, just as natives of the tropics are more immune to yellow fever than he. When syphilis struck the Indians in North and South America and the natives of the South Seas, where it was taken by the sailors of Capt. Cook, it wiped them out like flies.

\* \* \*

I account for the sudden spread of syphilis in this manner. The Spirochete, or syphilis microbe, had been slowly evolving through the years and came to its full evolution in 1494 because of the peculiarly favorable conditions of filth then prevailing. The discovery of the New World at this time was merely a coincidence.

\* \* \*

As was said, syphilis was used as propaganda by one country against another. Might not the Haitians link up the revival of this falsehood with the occupation of their country?

I hate to conclude on a pessimistic note but the fact is that falsehood never dies, no matter how much it is attacked. Truth crushed to earth shall rise again, sang Bryant. Yes, it rises only to be knocked down again.

And the irony of it all is that the Negro press was used to circulate the falsehood.

### Garland Anderson Invades the East

Readers of this column have in all probability heard of Garland Anderson, *protégé* of Al Jolson, and author of the play, "Judge Not According to Appearance," who, coming fresh from his bell-

hopping in San Francisco, has wormed his way into the personal notice of thousands of leading Easterners, including President Coolidge, and who has received more publicity than Shaw, Galsworthy, Gordon, Dunsany, Sholom Asch, or any living playwright with the possible exception of Eugene O'Neill, of "All God's Chillun."

\* \* \*

Anderson in his stride across public notice is one of those phenomena made possible by color prejudice in America. Before I enlarge on that let me say a word about his creed. Anderson's creed is that given the desire to accomplish and the air of sincerity to convince, one can accomplish anything he sets out to do. In other words, great poets are made, not born. To be a pugilist like Willis or Dempsey, a poet like Shakespeare or Dunbar, a singer like Hayes or Galli Curci, an actor like Skinner or Robeson, a pianist like Paderewski or Lawrence Brown, an inventor like Edison, a chemist like Carver, all that one needs is the above-mentioned qualities. To quote from Anderson: "The desire to accomplish is proof that you can accomplish." Good. I have always had a burning desire to be the world's champion runner. From now on Nurmi had better look out.

Still in these days of hokum triumphant Anderson's creed is sound. What other stock in trade, for instance, has the average successful politician ever had than the desire to get into office, and the glibness of tongue necessary to convince the suckers that he was ordained by God for the job?

Acting on this creed Anderson wrote his play and came East to market it. In his circulars and public utterances he proudly stresses the fact that he has had only "four years' schooling," is "uneducated" and "doesn't know anything of the technique or the trickery of playwriting but depends on sincerity."

\* \* \*

#### Tell the Truth, Advises Anderson

In his play Anderson makes his bell-boy hero advise a business man who is in trouble with his stockholders "to tell the truth without reservations." After hearing his play read at the Manhattan Opera House a few nights ago I am mad enough to follow that advice myself. With all respect to Heywood Brown, Al Jolson, Richard Bennett, Marjorie Rambeau and some nine other endorsers of it, Anderson's alleged play is the most long-winded, monotonous sprawl of words that has ever tormented my ear. It was entirely a waste of time when he said he knew nothing about play-writing.

\* \* \*

Consider the cumbersome title which is a piece from the whole cloth. "Judge Not According to Appearance." Why not: "Judge Not," or "Appearances?" Besides, if one is not to judge by appearances, by what one sees, what then? Judge by what one believes, that is, his prejudices? Judging Anderson's work "not according to appearance," I'll say it is marvelous, eclipsing Shakespeare, Shaw and O'Neill.

\* \* \*

For the life of me I could not give a coherent synopsis of it. I doubt if any one can. Almost the entire script is one long monotony of Christian Science hokum and moralizing *a la* Frank Crane, relieved here and there by jokes so stale

that they are new again like the waistcoat of Sir Roger de Coverley that had been in and out of style ten times.

A play calls for action, but in this one there are only two occasions when the boresome sermonizing is relieved by action: once when a white woman accuses the bell-hop hero of rape, and there is a near lynching; again when Carlson, the white owner of the hotel, chokes him because of suspected clandestine correspondence with his wife. Before listening to Anderson's "play" I never thought it possible that I could ever take a lynching scene with such equanimity. That bell-boy certainly deserved to be in heaven, and by the quickest method.

\* \* \*

#### Sets Pace for Gougers

Our great playwright does nothing by halves. There is another incident that makes those colored cafe owners who boost prices in order to show "class," look like pikers. This most astonishing bell-boy opens a cafe—a colored one, mark you, in San Francisco—and in the course of a year makes enough money to buy the swell white hotel in which he worked. He then sells it back to his bankrupted boss, for how much do you think? One hundred dollars!

But it is not only the colored cafe owners who have lost their scalps. Mary Baker Eddy has, too. Carlson, wife of his employer, is laid up with a sprained ankle which is "swollen to twice its size." She was to go to a ball that evening. This marvelous bell-boy, however, by some queer juggling of words, persuades her that her inflamed ankle is all a state of mind, and presto, it is healed and she is able to go to the dance.

There is also a court scene which for sheer asininity made me laugh until I had to wipe away the tears. Anderson has evidently never been inside a courtroom. Still what is such a mere thing as knowing what you are talking about when you have such a splendid substitute as *sincerity*. Anderson firmly believes that he has a great message to give the world, which, after all, is easier than hopping bells. As he puts it: "The play is an outward expression of an inner burning desire to serve humanity."

\* \* \*

#### A Hound for Publicity

This Lochinvar bell-boy is about the nerviest human being that has ever come out of the West. He walked into the White House without an appointment and presented President Coolidge with a beautifully beribboned copy of the script. He also called on Governor Smith, Mayor Hylan, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and others in a similar informal manner. Some time ago he gave a reading of the "play" to 600 leading New Yorkers in the ball-room of the Waldorf-Astoria. In addition he has got fully half a million dollars of publicity in the white press.

One would fancy that after all this the producers would be hounding him to death. On the contrary, they are steering as clear of him as the plague. Is this because any of the four colored characters are of the new Negro type? Far otherwise. All are of that happy-go-lucky, trusting, innocuous kind that delights the Southern Ku-Klux heart.

Anderson has all the valor of ignorance. The manner in which he cuts loose in the field of playwriting, that most difficult of all the literary arts, reminds

one of the little child that went up to the escaped tiger, patted it on the head, and called it, "Nice kitty." If either had a little less ignorance or innocence, call it what you will, they would have been a little less venturesome. Still Anderson is a go-getter and one must admire him for that. He has that initiative which, if it could suddenly be shot into every Negro, would put the "race" fifty years ahead in a week.

\* \* \*

Anderson says that he is going to raise the \$30,000 necessary to produce the play himself. I, for one, most heartily hope he does. To me it will be an experiment worth watching, particularly as Negroes are not being called upon to foot the bill.

At the reading there was nothing but space in the great opera house. Afterwards I questioned more than a dozen Negroes of intelligence and all agreed that it was the worst mess they had ever heard.

\* \* \*

I hope I have said enough by this time to make it clear that my quarrel is not with Anderson but with certain friends of the Negro. A *Negro* bell-boy has written a play! Wonderful! One can understand how that makes good copy for a white press who has evidently never heard that Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, George Carver, Isaiah Montgomery and other great Negroes were born slaves. But how explain the attitude of Messrs. Brown, Bennett, Jolson and others? Tens of thousands of white writers produce annually just such inferior work and these gentlemen would, in their case, have unhesitatingly chucked it in the waste-paper basket. A member of a "down-trodden race" does it, however, and they boost it into pseudo-fame through indiscriminate sympathy. Jolson, by the way, I heard footed Anderson's fare from the Coast as a good publicity stunt for himself.

The publicity given Anderson is at bottom the same as that given John Daniel, the gorilla, eating with a knife and fork and smoking a cigarette. How almost human!

At this day, when some of the leading literary lights of the nation are Negroes, so-called, when will our good white friends cease regarding us as objects of pity and judge us by the standards of men? Mr. Brown, for instance, spoke in very high terms of the work of McKay and Walter F. White. He has also given his O.K. to Anderson. Now in which case is he right?

\* \* \*

Judging by appearances Anderson has a winning personality. But while sincerity is one thing, to be able to deliver the goods is quite another.

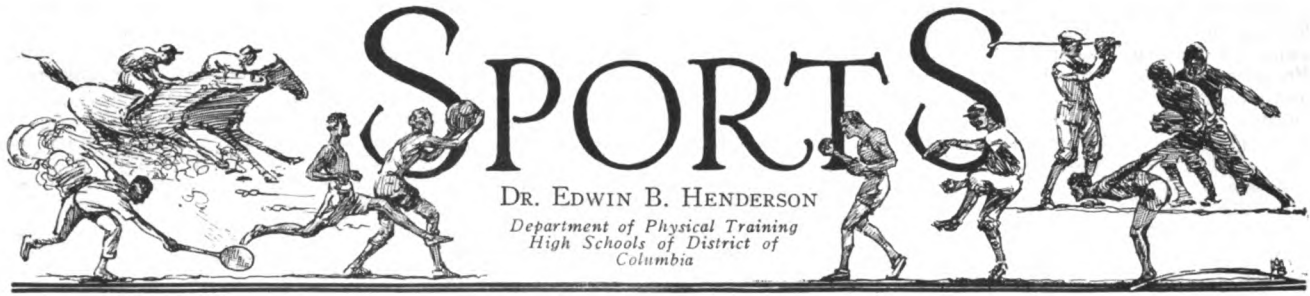
As Shakespeare would put it: "The play's the thing."

#### Friendship

Last night you lost the rarest thing  
Life ever gave to you.  
It was a friendship that was deep,  
Unvarying and true.

I'm sorry that you have it not  
Because you need it so;  
When one has killed the flower's root  
How can it ever grow?

GEORGIA DOUGLAS JOHNSON.



The Pennsylvania University Relay Games brought together many Race athletes in competition with boys and men of many races and of other countries. DeHart Hubbard, pronouncedly colored, running under colors of the University of Michigan led the way to the tape in the 100 yard dash in 9 4/5 seconds, which equalled the record of the games. In the race were entered A. E. Porritt, English and Australian sprint champion; George Hill, intercollegiate sprint champion; Chester Bowman, 70 yards world's record holder; leading sprinters from Princeton, Virginia, Georgetown, Naval Academy, West Point, and other notorious colleges.

Later, Hubbard brought 30,000 people to their feet with cheers when he outsprinted Porritt, McCreday of Princeton, Duell of U. S. Military Academy, Cummings of Virginia, and Schoonmaker of N. Y. University and won by 2 yards. Hubbard after showing the way in the broad jump to the world's best in the Olympics and winning nearly every broad jump entered, begins to prove his versatility by equaling world records in the short sprints and threatening to equal or break the century dash mark. What is best, Hubbard can stand the gaff when up against race prejudice. He is a gentleman, a clean optimistic sport, and commands respect of the mob.

\* \* \*

As in other fields of endeavor, defeating or equalling the ability of an adversary makes for self respect and respect of others. To see so many of our boys as creditable performers in the Penn Games and at other meets, north, east, and west is encouraging. At Philadelphia, Dunbar High School of Washington, won its relay race in the fast time of 3:32 and 1/10 seconds, the second best high school time of the meet, winning by 30 yards from Flushing High, last year's winner in this class. Bordentown won handily its event. Lincoln University and Cheyney Normal drew second places. Colored boys on many elementary, high and college teams gained the plaudits of the crowd by plucky running.

Porritt from Australia, a country that effectively bars Negroes and Japanese; Cummings from Virginia, and McCreday of Princeton must have an interesting feeling being beaten in a fair race by a colored man.

\* \* \*

Howard University games were managed well. Hubbard, Gourdin, Carter of Howard and a galaxy of performers made an attractive meet. Hubbard ran his 100 in 9 4/5 seconds, and took the broad jump in 25 feet, 6 1/2 inches. The C.I.A.A. controversy kept out many former teams and was responsible for some lack of pep. Open events do not quite take the place of spirited school competition.

Howard's team won from the field in the open games and Dunbar's aggregation easily captured secondary school honors.

\* \* \*

In keeping with the best press methods, Negro newspapers are doing great work on their sport pages. The majority are printing the stuff the people like to read. The writers can do a lot of good by remaining independent and keeping in mind the ideals of high class sport. Once Negro newspapers specialized in the money making games of politics and church, some little news of the day and much scandal. Sport writings are proving a tonic to

dead print matter. Many men and boys to whom our newspapers were unknown now read the sport sheets, and take interest in various local, national and international affairs. The athletic page is good advertising method for news of more serious import. It is not such a big stretch from pure sport to the adulterated forms in: Congress vs. Cal. Coolidge; Capital vs. Labor, Negroes vs. Whites, Catholics vs. Protestants, and the people versus God. Let the sport editors keep reeling off sport films. We will be a healthier, happier, better, and more virile race. It may yet be said of us as Wellington said of Waterloo, that, "Waterloo was won on the playfields of England."

\* \* \*

We want to encourage track and field athletics. In the big white schools, any man who can clip a second from a race consistently or leap an inch farther or higher is sought out by the coach whether he be Negro, Chinaman, or Indian chief. In the team games, especially the personal contact games like football or basket ball it takes a very good Negro athlete to make prejudiced Frats and college directors see him. For baseball, crew, tennis, golf and a host of minor sports traditions are in most places yet against him. It is expensive to run track meets but they pay high in returns as developers of occasional high class performers that get the eye of the populace.

\* \* \*

Good salaries are to be paid to trained coaches in athletics and physical directors. Many of the best athletes of the nation take a fling at coaching and while doing so get set for future endeavors. While at college if there is intention to do this, advice is given to find out the requirements for these jobs in educational institutions and prepare while at college. Only one male candidate has taken examination for a physical directorship in the Washington High Schools in the past two years, a position that pays up to \$3,200 for less than ten month's work.

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# LESSONS FROM EGYPT

By RUTH ANNA FISHER

Egypt has been quiet now for two months, and there seems every likelihood that she will remain so; numbers still go a long way towards constituting power, for, as Mr. MacDonald once tersely remarked, "Two and two make four, even if they are asses."

There are political lessons which the world must learn if permanent peace is ever to be established, and the newspaper comments on the Egyptian crisis point out one which colored races in particular would do well to heed.

This crisis was precipitated by the demands made upon the Egyptian Government by Great Britain following the murder of Major-General Sir Lee Stack, the Sirdar of the Egyptian Army and Governor-General of the Sudan. These demands required, among other things, an apology, the payment of a fine of £500,000, and the increase in the area to be irrigated at Gezira from 300,000 feddans to an unlimited figure.

French comment both approved and disapproved of this action.

The Gaulois thought the display of a firm hand the only possible policy open to the British Government, and that the Mohammedan Powers of Europe should show a united front in the face of a common danger.

The Journ e Industrielle explains that the route to India is the axis of the British Empire and its security the foundation of all British policy in Egypt. The liberalism displayed by England in regard to her oversea possessions cannot exist on this purely military route. In the person of Sir Lee Stack, the guardian of the crossroads has been stricken down. The French Government should hasten to send its sympathy to the British Government.

The Echo de Paris, asserting that the British Government is resolved at all costs to maintain one of the keystones of the Empire, adds, "We hope that it will succeed."

The Journal des Debats and the Oeuvre, on the other hand, while recognizing the need of control of the Suez Canal to British supremacy, suggest that coercion is an unsatisfactory policy, and a permanent centre of discontent in Egypt dangerous.

The Temps held that there can be no excuse for the murder of the Sirdar, and that the Egyptian Government is responsible for order and safety in its territory; that England is within her rights to protect her political interests in Egypt and the Sudan, as long as they do not interfere with the independence of Egypt. Then it wonders whether England has gone about this matter in the right way. The Notes seem to suggest that she contemplates an indirect or disguised return to the status existing before the abolition of the Protectorate. Later in the week, however, the Temps thinks that possibly Great Britain may not have been influenced by imperialistic aims, after all. "We have suffered too much from the injustice of the charges of imperialism brought against France not to be on our guard against the injustice which there may be in taking seriously such an accusation against other people." The Temps further admits that Egyptian sovereignty is neither full nor complete. It then "is important to avoid every misunderstanding and uncertainty with regard to external affairs. The peace of Europe depends on the Entente Cordiale between Great Britain and France, and on their sincere co-operation in one and the same spirit of harmony."

To the Italian papers, the action of Great Britain constitutes a tardy but complete vindication of the Italian ultimatum to Greece, after the murder of the Albanian boundary commissioners which led to the Corfu incidents. "Italy," says the Tribuna, "cannot fail to find the energetic steps taken by the British Government to be perfectly just."

The German newspapers likened the assassination of the Sirdar to that of Serajevo, and contrasted the Austro-

Hungarian ultimatum with the British one as a model of decent clemency. The Deutsche Tageszeitung said that Egypt is the corner-stone of the British Empire, and any weakening of this position would endanger in one degree or another the whole Imperial structure. From the purely imperialist point of view, there can be no doubt at all that the motives underlying the British action are very weighty. But the all too familiar attempt to conceal these very real objectives under the cloak of idealism has an unpleasant ring to German ears.

The Australian papers were emphatic in their approval of the action of the home government.

English comment itself falls under three heads: Conservative, Liberal and Labor. The Conservative papers heartily approve of the action of the government; the Liberal papers regret it, and trust that the matter may be referred to the League of Nations; the Labor papers are outspoken in their condemnation of what they term "exploiting murder."

The situation was discouraging enough, with practically the whole of European comment proceeding from an imperialistic outlook, until this manifesto of the Independent Labor Party came to light:

"The Independent Labor Party views with deep humiliation the actions of the present British Government in Egypt. It draws urgent attention to the fact that this policy of renewed suppression is due to a false belief that Great Britain has a moral right to occupy Egypt, though she has pledged herself on over 50 separate occasions to terminate the occupation, and formally recognized its independent sovereignty in 1922. The occupation of Egypt was originally due to strategic and financial reasons. It has no greater moral sanction than the German occupation of Belgium for strategic and military purposes. The Egyptian people have as much right to govern themselves as any other nation. The occupation of Egypt by an alien Power is the basic fact in the present situation, which no subsequent reason or strategy or financial interest should obscure.

The I. L. P., therefore, while unreservedly condemning the method of political assassination, deploras the fact that the British Government should have made this crime the occasion for asserting new imperialistic claims, which may virtually amount to the annexation of the Sudan and the appropriation of water supplies from the Nile, to the detriment of Egypt and to the advantage of British cotton companies.

The I. L. P. urges that the issue of the control of the Sudan should be submitted to the League of Nations, with a view to developing that country as a self-governing nation, at the earliest possible moment. It calls for an immediate Anglo-Egyptian Conference, to complete the evacuation of Egypt, and to arrange for the submission of the question of the Suez Canal to the League of Nations, not as an issue in respect to which the British claim legal or moral authority, but as a problem concerned with one of the international waterways of the world."

Here are presented the political problems of imperialism and the rights of the stronger over the weaker nations and groups. Here, too, is suggested a solution. I recommend it to the attention of the American Negro, before the world serves its ultimatum on him.

*Miss Fisher is a young Negro woman formerly of New York, now a resident in London, a member of the British Labor Party.—Ed.*

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# AT THE COFFEE HOUSE

By GEORGE S. SCHUYLER

Scene—A cellar in Greenwich Village. A few chairs and tables, weird and grotesque paintings and sketches on the walls, a battered upright piano in one corner and windows curtained with batik, complete the picture. A shabbily dressed man and woman are chatting at one of the tables. In the corner a waitress in Russian village costume sits reading a copy of the Dial.

The Man—Yes, I'm up against it. Looks like the publishers are in a conspiracy against me for some reason or other. I am certainly getting sick of the whole writing game.

The Woman—What have you been writing?

The Man—Oh, poetry, short stories, fantasies, criticism—about everything. I guess I've got a trunk crammed with manuscripts. I can't seem to write anything that will satisfy the publishers. I must get some money from somewhere or I don't know what I'll do. My landlady is getting mighty nasty—I'm three weeks behind, you know.

The Woman—Why don't you try to think of something very unusual to write about. Something about Indians, the South Seas or life in the jungle?

The Man—But my dear girl! I don't know anything about those subjects.

The Woman—Why you silly boy! Where did you ever get the idea that you have to know anything much about anything to be a literary success nowadays? A day or two at the public library will furnish you with all the information you need. You have the same false idea that hampers all the other unsuccessful writers. You imagine one has to know a subject from first hand in order to make a living writing about it.

The Man—Well, I guess you're right.

The Woman—I know I am! Look at Octavus Cohen, Hugh Wiley, Irvin Cobb, and a whole lot of others. Do you imagine there are any darkies in existence like those in their stories?

The Man—If there are, I've never met them. By the way, that gives me an idea! I could write something about the Negroes! Of course, I don't know anything about them except what I've read in the newspapers and magazines, but, as you say, that doesn't matter.

The Woman—Not at all. The average person who reads your stuff—even the publishers—know as little about it as you do. As long as it is funny or very grotesque and creepy, it will make a hit.

The Man—But somehow, I rather hate to write on a subject on which I am so ignorant. Besides the poor shines have such a hard time that I hate to do them an injustice.

The Woman—Humph! No wonder you haven't made anything at the writing game! If all the writers waited until they were familiar with their subjects, American literary output would dwindle to almost nothing.

The Man—Yes, I suppose so—judging by the stuff that gets into print. By the way, you used to be a reporter. You ought to be able to give me some tips on this matter. You've written news reports on Negroes, haven't you?

The Woman—Lots of them—I used to be court reporter. Its the easiest kind of writing. If you

want to write something funny do it in dialect and throw in plenty of references to chicken, watermelon, razors, gin, singing mammies, and all that sort of thing. As for the weird stuff; that's even easier yet.

The Man—How so?

The Woman—Well, you've read the Russians, haven't you?

The Man—Of course. Who hasn't read the Russians?

The Woman—And you've read Freud?

The Man—Yes. I'm a regular Greenwich Villager.

The Woman—Well, write something about the shines in the stark Russian manner. Sketch in an African background with the throb of tom-toms, the medley of jungle noises, the muttering and incantations of the witch doctor, the swish of javelins and the last lunge of a wounded rhinoceros. You've been in the Village long enough to know how to do this. It's a part of racial memory foundation, you know. Then show the thin veneer of white civilization crumbling off the educated darky and revealing the savage underneath.

The Man—Capital! You're a genius. I might even bring in a white woman—all the popular writers on the Negro do, you know. I could have the educated shine groveling at her feet begging for forgiveness and then going insane with rage when she scorns him and calls him "Nigger."

The Woman—Fine! Right there would be a good place to strip off the thin veneer of culture and education, and reveal the Negro underneath.

The Man—That would give me an excellent opportunity to philosophize to the extent of several pages on the inability of the Negro to adapt himself to our civilization. Suppose we collaboraet on this—you need money, too.

The Woman—You bet I need money. I'll take you up on that. You outline the story tonight and I'll go over it with you at my house.

The Man—Alright then! I'll go right to work on it (rising). Which way are you going; up or down?

The Woman—(Also rising)—I'm going down. . . . Wish I was going your way. (They walk toward the door.)

The Waitress—Fifty cents, please! (Speaking to the man.)

The Woman—That's alright, I'll pay it! Here! (Handing her the money.)

The Waitress—Thanks! (She resumes her reading.)

The Man—Well, good night!

The Woman—Good night! (Exit both.)

The Waitress (contemptuously): Tramps!

(Three months later)

Scene—The same Coffee House. The place is now disguised as a native hut in the South Sea Islands. Papier mache spears and war clubs adorn the straw-covered walls. There is a new grand piano, new chairs and new tables, but the batik curtains have disappeared. Just outside each win-



dow is a futurist painting supposed to represent Polynesian scenes. Each painting is indirectly lighted so as to give the effect of looking out into a tropical world. The same waitress is there dressed as a hula-hula dancer. She is reading a copy of the New Republic. The same man and woman, now faultlessly dressed, are enjoying a bottle of post-Volstead beverage at one of the tables.

The Man—So I told him I would give him three thousand dollars for the place; but not a cent more. After a little haggling he gave in.

The Woman—Well, it certainly looks fine in here. You've fixed things up wonderfully. You know I'm living on Long Island now! Cozy little place, too. Only paid fifteen thousand for it. We can look right out on the Sound.

The Man—That's fine! Who looks out for the place while you're away?

The Woman—Oh, I've got a swell butler—a colored fellow. He appears to be unusually intelligent. He tells me he used to write about Negroes, too, but the publishers wouldn't give him a look in. Too serious, I suppose.

The Man—Yes, I guess so—Have you heard the latest from our publisher?

The Woman—No, what's up?

The Man—Oh, nothing much. He's just bringing out the twenty-fifth edition of our book, that's all. We'll get another big check soon.

The Woman—Can you beat it? After all, literature does pay.

The Man—Yes, especially stuff about Negroes.

## NEW BOOKS

"THE QUIANT COMPANIONS. By Leonard Merrick. With an introduction by H. G. Wells. Published by Dutton, New York. Price, \$1.90.

Being an uncouth fellow I am not afraid to thumb my nose at the great and the celebrated. That an author is of international repute does not prevent me from approaching his work with a severely critical attitude. Whether the writer be a Shaw, Chesterton, Lawrence or DuBois does not deter me from placing his output "on the pan" if I believe such treatment is merited. Now Mr. Leonard Merrick is one of the leading English writers and a man with over a dozen works to his credit. Hence, I suppose I should have approached this book with the proper reverence. But the jacket blurb informed me that the story dealt "with the delicate subject of marriage between a white person and a colored," and also read that "the story presents living personalities—not types—which are drawn justly, yet sympathetically." Further, Mr. H. G. Wells—he of the prolific pen—assures the reader in his introduction that the people are "real"; mentions the "tragedy of racial miscegenation," and advises us not to leave the subject here but to read such trashy propaganda as Archer's "Through Afro-America" and Prichard's "Where Black Rules White." Naturally my curiosity was whetted, and, knowing the limitations and weaknesses of the average white author in handling such a subject, I was alert for the usual delicious touches of unconscious (and sometimes conscious) race prejudice found in such works: whether Stripling's "Birthright," Shand's "Black and White," or the grotesqueries of Octavus Cohen and Hugh Wiley. Suffice to say that I was not disappointed: The book reeks with it, although a well told and gripping novel withal.

The story is divided into two parts. Mr. Wells tells us the earliest is the best: and it is in some ways, but to a Negro it is the most offensive, especially when the author leaves the field of literature and enters that of anthropology—as our Caucasian literary friends are wont to do. A famous Negro singer, Elisha Lee, has risen to the top of his profession; he thrills vast audiences and receives fabulous sums. He even sings for the royal

family. Originally from Savannah, Ga., he has lived in England since he was fifteen when his parents—two banjoists—brought him there. At the opening of the story he is at the height of his career and giving a series of concerts in Brighton—thirty-one and famous. Fifteen years previously in this very city he had been boarded with a Mrs. Tremlett with whose beautiful daughter he fell in love. Now he seeks her, and finding her widowed from a shiftless tradesman and with a babe in arms, pays ardent suit to her. He lavishes all sorts of presents on her: jewelry, flowers, candy—everything. He is repulsive to her, but, being money hungry and seeing nothing but a future of drudgery and poverty, she marries him. He is insanely jealous and she fans the jealousy. Violent quarrels are followed by reconciliations on the occasion of which he grovels at her feet like a whipped cur and showers her afterwards with costly presents. A boy David is born—she hates it. All her love is lavished on the son of her former marriage, Vivian—a selfish cad. Elisha gives both his son and stepson a good education. When he and his wife drift farther apart he lavishes all his affection on his son David, a shy, retiring, poetic youth. Elisha's extravagances runs him into debt and he takes to drink. His voice is failing him. At last, in the midst of a tour, he dies of pneumonia. David is then seventeen; Vivian is a couple of years older. "Ownie," the mother, sells her jewelry and furnishings and sets up a boarding house in a London suburb, following in the path of her mother. The boys shift for themselves—the white boy to be assistant manager of a show, the mulatto boy to a clerkship in a musical house. The colored boy has talent. He writes and writes and writes. Finally a book of his poems is published and his future is assured. Vivian Harris, his white step-brother remains stationary.

Then a crippled girl painter, Hebe Sorrenford, reads his book and is intensely moved by it. They correspond. It develops into a love affair, though they haven't met. Finally he asks for her portrait, and, panic stricken, because of her deformity, she sends that of her beautiful sister. This causes all kinds of complications which are finally ironed out when the two meet. There is forgiveness all around for the deception of both (she did not

know he was colored), and they resolve to continue their friendship. So the story ends.

The characters are all well drawn. But how a talented and successful singer, with all the training that implies, could be such a character as Merrick has made Elisha Lee is beyond me—although it is possible. The author's observations on "Negro character" are worthy only of the most rabid anti-Negro propagandist, but just what one would expect from the average white man. When he deals with the reactions of whites toward Negroes, he is on solid ground; when he begins to generalize and moralize about Negroes he is lost.

Here are some examples: "his failings were the failings of the average Negro" (whatever they are); "he paused, agape, presenting a rather comic appearance, as the Negro so often does when he is in earnest" (a *new* Negro characteristic); "he found the difference saddening—just as if he were a white man" (don't you love that?); "Having less refinement than when she was a girl, too, she made him a more intimate appeal" (isn't that intriguing?); "Like most of his people, he told a good story well" (Hurrah! now we're a race of raconteurs). Eccentricities peculiar to people of certain professions in all races become Negro traits. Those of us who have been gambling around on this planet for a long time will smile at this: "Her physical impulse was to repel him"! Again we are transported with mirth over this delicious tidbit reminiscent of hundreds of essays on the Negro: "The besetting tendency of the Negro in his intercourse with Europeans is to take affront"! Nothing is intimated of the besetting tendency of the Europeans (and Americans) in this intercourse to *give* continual insult by speech and manner. Here we are again: "The conventional costume in which his native predilections found no scope, became him well." (Negroes are best in overalls, you know); "Only his black features and frizzy hair marred the dignity of the man." Thus dignity, pink skin and stringy hair are identified. Sometimes Mr. Merrick descends to the language of the streets, i.e., "a great timidity was on the nigger (sic) who had just swaggered before a multitude." And lastly, let me quote this gem which proves how avidly Mr. Merrick has

(Continued on page 238)

**Theatre**

(Continued from page 230)

**About Cape Smoke**

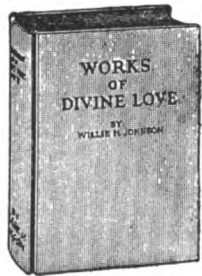
I do not like Cape Smoke. It is a tricky and dishonest piece that starts off like one of the Wessex Tales, suddenly switches into the mood of a faery story by Andrew Lang and winds up like a Hurtig & Seamon's olio. Its only connection with sense and reality is via F. Eugene Corbie's and Nathaniel Sack's eloquent acting.

I comprehend Mr. Corbie's performance mainly in terms of emotion, as I would comprehend a passionate strain of Wagner's music. Mr. Sack's performance was something more tangible and durable, a thing of beauty and joy throughout. In the midst of the general shoddiness of Cape Smoke, these two performances affected me in about the same way I should be affected, if I suddenly came upon Swineburne's Rococo in a book of nursery rhymes and smoking car limericks.

**Acts, 26, 28**

Like all first class thinkers, Jesus of Nazareth liked to frequent places where people were spreading joy. He was not ashamed of the flesh. His mission was to teach people to enjoy life, to "live more abundantly," as he phrased it. If he happened to be at a party when the liquor ran low, as at Cana, he used his scientific knowledge to make more liquor so that the conviviality and fun could go on. For nothing pleased him more than to see men happy. Indeed, the essence of his life's work was to make men happy as God; in other words, to put the kingdom of heaven in men's

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It also explains many biblical truths that contain the very fundamental principal, essence, of the true Christian religion, truths which are shunned, evaded and neglected now-a-days.

Very few Christians either teach, preach or write the truth as written in this book; it was prophesied that such would be,—2 Tim. 4, 3. It courageously, rightly and clearly explains the Bible, and a most helpful surprise awaits the reader; because this book is based upon Jesus who surprised multitudes.

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souls. And if the kingdom of heaven is not a place or condition of happiness it is nothing at all.

Recently something of the Christ spirit visited the 135th Street Branch of the Y. M. C. A. The occasion was a song service conducted by the Rev. Dr. Clarence Williams, assisted by Deaconess Eva Taylor and a deacon whose name I have forgot. I think it was Todd.

The services began with that sweetly solemn hymn "Cake Walking Babies From Home" which instantly fired the congregation with the spirit. "Cast Away" and "Everybody Loves My Baby" followed in order, and before each hymn Rev. Williams gave a brief and edifying talk on its spiritual meaning. The concluding hymn was "Papa De Dada." This is one of Rev. Williams' own hymns and it's a wow. Rev. Williams took up no collection and left the congregation filled with The Holy Ghost. Almost he persuaded me to become a Christian.

**Shafts and Darts**

(Continued from page 231)

True, there are no revolutionary phrases, no sneering at political action, no baiting the bourgeoisie, no quips at the entombed Marcus, no bandying of "comrade" back and forth (its "Brother," now), no more talk of "no collaboration with the bourgeoisie," no mention of Moscow and the Red Guards, no allusion to dictatorship of the proletariat. The soft pedal is on all references to the soviet form of government and attacks on religion as "the opium of the people." All that has been changed. "The International" has made way for "The Star-Spangled Banner." Subtler tactics are the order of the day. The Negro proletariat is first to be organized into strong labor unions, mixed or unmixed (just ordinary trade unions of the erstwhile "yellow" kind), and a plea is to be made for shorter hours, more wages and better working conditions. The revolution must be postponed, gentlemen and ladies, until the workers of sable hue are organized on a basis of "petty" demands. Then the organizations are to be

"bored from within," "captured" and taken into the Communist camp. A great conference is to be held, and church, fraternal and uplift leaders invited with carfare paid. This is a plan that would delight the heart of old Nickolai Lenin himself. One wonders if these people are trying to head off the Urban League and the N. A. A. C. P. programs on the economic field. Well, every cloud has a silver lining, and undoubtedly the activities of these Neo-Communists will do the Negro workers good, and incidentally bring the A. F. of L. to its senses. Rightward the course of revolution takes its way!

**New Books**


(Continued from page 237)

gulped down the contents of the various scientific works on the Negro: "She was naturally ignorant of the negro temperament, or she would have known that there is nothing from which it is quite so averse as providing for emergencies, and that she might almost have hopefully have begged him to acquire a cream-and-roses complexion." Isn't that delicious? Just think of all the insurance carried by Negroes; the property they own; the bank accounts they have, and what they sacrifice to educate their children! And then read the nonsense above. These quotations are all from the part of the book Mr. Wells says is best. And, of course, Mr. Wells must be right—being a white man!

Well, as I've always said, fiction is the most fruitful field for anti-Negro propaganda, especially against miscegenation. You will not want to drop this book until you have finished it, but, if you are unthinking—whether white or black—you will leave it with the feeling that intimate relations between races are not to be desired.

For every ounce of race prejudice in pseudo-scientific "serious" works, you will find a pound of it in fiction.

GEORGE S. SCHUYLER.



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# Open Forum

*A Voice for Supporter and Opponent*



THE LITERARY CONTEST: Countee Cullen vs. Jazz: Dumas vs. Dunbar  
To the Editors:

Countee Cullen's poem, "To One Who Said Me Nay," awarded second place in the poetry contest is a greater lyric than "The Weary Blues," if we may judge them by universally established standards. Cullen's poem is embroidered with intensive and expansive imagery. One finds some difficulty deciding which of his glowing figures are most suitable for exhibition. Take for example:

"Oh, wear my heart today; tomorrow  
Who knows where the winds will blow  
it?"

Such lyrical shots are not easily matched, but this one reminds me of a couplet from Dunbar:

"That path from the meadow that leads  
to the bars  
Are more to me now than the path to  
the stars."

Now the story called "The Weary Blues" is not poetry; it is a little story of action and life, intricate in detail. It is the kind of stuff that Alexander Pope called prose run mad. It lacks the metaphor and poetic imagery so much in evidence in great poetry. It is jazz. When Shakespeare says:

"That I may tell pale hearted fear it,  
lies,  
And sleep in spite of thunder."

It is very unlike:  
"Thump, thump, thump, went his foot  
on the floor,  
He played a few chords than sang  
some—"

Perhaps it is not bad to call such stuff doggerel. It is a product of the inferiority complex. Here in America it has acquired the nice name, "New Poetry." We hope that Countee Cullen will not dissipate his splendid gifts to gratify this eerie-minded group. Perhaps those critics are right who say that poetry contests are bad. In spite of vexation, however, I might be in good humor, commend the foresight and hindsight that led Mr. Hughes to send his ragtime yarn to the type of judges selected.

It shows to what a pretty pass things have really come when the editors stamp the likeness of a Dumas on their contest number rather than that of their own Paul Lawrence Dunbar. Outdoing even that they have failed to mention Dunbar's name at all, but named Mr. Clement Wood and other white literary fry as pioneers on the soil of Negro literature. On this score we must conclude that the minds which controlled the literary contest are ignorant of Dunbar's splendid works in fiction. In answer to that shameless editorial, "Out of the Shadow," by the satellites we need not allege "Folks from Dixie," or "The Uncalled," when we read Messrs. Funk & Wagnall's New Lexicon where it defines the word, "negro," or if we have perused the swashbucklers' eloquence printed during the last ten years in the *Crisis*

magazine, we ought to be prepared for the clouds that now bedim the day.

On the other hand there is nothing wrong about those Dumas men, but they were Frenchmen. Dunbar is not only an American writer, he is a world-poet. His name is nectar to people who know what poetry is in all lands. His fine metaphor, imagery, allegory, are the earmarks of the immortals. The epithet, myriad-minded can be more appropriately applied to him than to any other singer America has produced. The dialect verse that Dunbar wrote was not melodramatic and eerie, but sincere without diminishing in wit and humor. Moreover, his writings show that art to be great need not obsess the wits with dirt and mire. Besides, he was too magnanimous to be shackled incessantly because of a racial pinch of the shoe. Young Negro writers will do well to take the fine spirit of Dunbar into account; for it is a sacred legacy for us with our present outlook in literature. Again, were white people not Godly enough to paint a few Negroes in the beauteous ideal sense, that should not limit us to painting merely white characters of the baser sought even in a Dixie setting. Dunbar, in spite of many bitter experiences had a great conception of friendship. His poem, "Whittier," also his poem, "Anchored" attest this verdict of him. Like his white predecessor he had a marvelous faith in the ransoming qualities of human nature. I cannot resist quoting this two-stanza lyric, "Anchored," here.

If through the sea of night which here  
surrounds me,

I could swim out beyond the farthest  
star,

Break every barrier of circumstance that  
bounds me,

And greet the Sun of sweeter life afar,  
Tho' near you there is passion, grief,  
and sorrow,

And out there rest and joy and peace and  
all,

I should renounce that beckoning for to-  
morrow,

I could not choose to go beyond your  
call.

I will not deny that Messrs. DuBois, Wood, Johnson, Braithwaite and Company are honorable men, but if these men altogether would make a Julius Cæsar, Dunbar, as far as American Negroes are concerned, is Rome. If none but us of THE MESSENGER magazine are riled over this significant and gross design hatched in the library of Dr. DuBois, but threatening to undermine the rare spirit of our folklore, so ably exploited by the genius of Paul Dunbar in song and story, where are the souls that used to come out of the woods for social groups, to sound the alarm in behalf of great causes since men and seers first learned social valuations.

Henry Van Dyck has formed a definition of jazz that will live even after this great white plague in the realm of art has gutted the civilization of the effete nations who now boss the world. He is

quoted in some places as saying that "Jazz" is a species of music invented by demons for the torture of imbeciles. I object to jazz being called the Negroes' contribution to civilization. It is rather the product of blackened-faced, white minstrels. Negroes were lured into the field because of lucrative aspects. The editors of *Opportunity* are hovering under the wings of the *Crisis* magazine. How can an organization support Countee Cullen and jazz at the same time? How can Mr. Clement Wood outdo Paul Lawrence Dunbar in real Negro fiction? How can the two Dumas' men of France set a better example for Negro writers than Dunbar has set? White and colored in America and elsewhere concede to Dunbar one of the highest places in American literature. Even handed justice will soon end such monstrosities and unholy alliances.

THOMAS MILLARD HENRY.

New York City.

Washington, D. C., May 14, 1925.

The Messenger Publishing Co., Inc.,  
2311 Seventh Avenue,  
New York City, N. Y.

To the Editors of THE MESSENGER:

I am a constant reader of THE MESSENGER, and the article of Mr. George S. Schuyler, "The Negro and Nordic Civilization," struck me so forcibly I had to write and really praise him for making such frank and truthful remarks. If more writers of our race would come forward and express their opinion so freely as to what they really think, it would make all of us sit up and take notice.

Though only eighteen years old, I have had the opportunity to live and work as white, and can readily appreciate some of the statements written by Mr. Schuyler.

I think it is time for the negro race, on a whole, to wake up and show the Caucasians that we are not their inferior, but their equal in every respect. With such able men and women that our race holds, why can't we?

Yours truly,

A. J.

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## Editorials

*(Continued from page 229)*

of the articles are very well reasoned, and show a grasp of real philosophy. A few articles have appeared on the other side, sentimental and superficial on the whole, and showing opinions based upon desire. One of the best reasoned articles was published in the *Nashville Banner*, an excerpt from which we wish to present here:

"Horrible and revolting as the barest details of crime ordinarily are, it is a species of dangerous self-deception to presume that benefits would be gained by a general agreement to over-look the fact that it had taken place. It is a well authenticated medical principle that light has healing properties, and the same theory may be correctly invoked in behalf of sane, accurate handling of crime news. It lets the public know where it stands, advises it of the danger to the body politic and opens the way for remedial action. It is folly to suppose that what we do not know will never hurt us. When there is less crime, there will be less crime news. When there is no crime, there will be no crime news. That is worth thinking about."

White people are bringing considerable pressure to bear just now to influence Negro publishers to desist from publishing crime news. They come in the guise of well wishers, trying to raise the Negro press above the moral tone of the white press. There is a certain subtlety about these Greeks bearing gifts. The white people are committing so many heinous crimes today they can no longer pose as ethical and moral superiors of the Negro. They have long made an effort to show how much more criminal the Negro was than they. We, of keener sight, have known all along that the oppressed group is proceeded against more vigorously, convicted more readily and apprehended more frequently. The paucity of Negro judges, jurors, and prosecutors contributes mightily to the heavy Negro convictions. A white boy steals an automobile and is reprimanded for playing a youthful prank; a hungry Negro boy takes a loaf of bread and is given five years in the penitentiary.

But to neglect small crimes—suppressing both their publication and their punishment—causes them to grow to larger ones, publication and punishment of which cannot be avoided. So much more daring and salacious have been our more recent white crimes and scandals the Negro crimes and scandals pale into insignificance. The tendency is to publish what is most fascinating, which means the whites will get a better but less desired play at crime publicity. In other words, Negro publishers will be publishing the vice, wrongs, scandal, crime not so much of their own, but of the whites. To get them committed to publishing no crime news would play directly into the hands of the white people who seek to hide their hideous and horrid deviltry.

Next, we are told the Negro publishers should be original and establish a new journalism, higher in ethics than the white publishers. Whenever white people desire to put over something they come in the guise of appealing to originality. There is no merit in mere originality. A man may be an original fool, criminal, scandal monger, fire bug, safe blower, panderer, or anything that is bad. Everything has had an origin. Not only that; very few people can be original. The great discoveries, inventions, constructive programs and social agencies have been the product of just a few minds. They originate and the people eventually consume what is disseminated. The white man has always tried to stop the Negro from imitating by charging imitation as being like a monkey. Monkeys breathe. Would human beings stop inhaling? Mon-

keys eat. Shall human beings therefore cease to consume food? Monkeys walk. Would human beings stop using their pedal extremities? Why this urging, anyhow, about imitation? This: To imitate one who is in the best position is to secure equality. In fact, imitation of the best is the essence of social equality.

Let us illustrate a moment from slavery. If the Negro had imitated the master, instead of living in a hut he would have lived in a mansion. Instead of toiling from sun to sun with unrequited labor, he would have had requited leisure. Instead of having his children growing up in ignorance he would have sent them to school, where they might have secured education like the master's children. The master had wealth, land, property. The Negro had poverty. To have imitated the master would have given him the title to something instead of the title to nothing. The master wore fine clothes; the Negro dressed in rags and tatters. Imitation would have changed all this, so there was method in this madness of the masters.

The school system is based on the principle that *acquiring knowledge is easier than originating it*. There is no special merit in refraining from imitation. If each individual had to originate all laws, all discoveries and inventions for himself, one generation would not get beyond its predecessor. In fact, imitation is the real key to origination. One has to imitate—to read and study extensively—in order to know what has already been originated; and, having done that, he is prepared to try out after the new. Otherwise, he is like the man who was writing a thesis. When asked what books he had read he answered, "I am not reading any books at all, because I want to be original." Originality does not imply superiority. In the very nature of things the original is usually very inferior. It is the primitive, the primordial, the Devonian, the Silurian—those dim periods when everything wriggled and crawled. The upright, erect walking position was unknown. Then came the steamboat, steam railroad, aeroplane, cable and radio, and the various derivatives and improved forms of transportation which originally were crude and of slight utility.

About the greatest crime which could be committed against the public would be the suppression of news of crime. It would be equivalent to putting out the arc lights of the city at night, laying off all the policemen, closing down the fire department, blind-folding all good citizens, preparing an abode where crooks and gunmen and thieves and robbers might lurk and hide and slink away after the evil and foul deed will have been done.

It cannot be said too emphatically that the paper to be feared is not the one which publishes but suppresses crime news.

### Congratulations to the Negro Women

The following explanation is made of the incident which caused the withdrawal of 200 Negro singers from the program Monday night of the International Council of Women, whose convention was in session at Washington, D. C.

"The president of the American Council, and the chairman of the local hospitality Committee admit that the question of segregation had been thoroughly discussed and that a definite stand had been taken against it. *The ticket manager*, however, followed the usual Washington custom in dealing with mixed audiences."

Here is a typical American method of passing the buck. If a stand against segregation were so definite (which we doubt), the logical thing would be to have placed at the ticket window someone sympathetic with



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H. E. Young



the decision not to segregate and, therefore, calculated not to defeat in administration what had been decided in conference. It is an old bogey of the South to adopt rules and regulations, fair on their face, but foul in their administration. To have a ticket seller, or manager with Mississippi ideas in the carrying out of a non-segregation policy would be just exactly like appointing Vardaman, Jim Carraway and Tom Heflin to enforce the Sumner Civil Rights Law. Every student of government understands the policy. This is the explanation for the defeat of Mr. Warren, proposed by President Coolidge for Attorney General. Warren was a member of the big sugar company (in fact the moving spirit). His sugar company was already under indictment and would have been one of the first concerns detailed for prosecution. The Senate quite properly thought that a man should not be selected to prosecute himself.

The Negro women need to be commended. Their action was a surprise to us. If this statement sounds strange, all we need to do to bring it clearly to your understanding it to recall that Hallie Q. Brown was among the protesting women—the same Hallie Q. Brown who as President of the National Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, in convention at Chicago last summer, got the women to refrain from condemning the Ku Klux Klan on the grounds that this was a white man's fight. Even now it may be safely wagered that she was merely swept along with the surging protest and objections of the other stalwart Negro women, who consider their function at a convention as something more than entertaining white women. Too long the old crowd of whites have expected that Negroes would be sort of court jesters, congenial clowns, and furious fun makers for their white overlords. A few more upstanding acts like this will save further clashes, for the white women will know in advance that the new type of Negro woman will not stand for such indignities and insults. All hail the real Negro women!

#### Germany and Hindenburg

While on the subject of gratitude, we are reminded of the recent election of Hindenburg, field marshal of the German Army during the World War. This moral and lawless nation pretended to be shocked that the Germans should show such so-called love for militarism after their terrible suffering in the World War. The *Vorwärts*, a leading German daily of the Social Democrats, who vigorously opposed Hindenburg's election, says: "A personality and not an idea was elected."

Do you understand what this means? Just this. That the German people feel a strong sense of appreciation for their great military leader during the war. They would have regarded it as a severe slight to have defeated him. To the Germans this would have been a repudiation of him and what they and he fought for.

Without entering a discussion of the merits or demerits of the war, there is something to be said for a grateful people. It was good old Colonel Ingersoll, one of the best friends Negroes ever had, who said: "Gratitude is the fairest flower which sheds its fragrance in the human heart. Ingratitude is the mark of a very low character."

We are inclined to think how quickly Negroes become ungrateful. Between Foraker and Roosevelt, they slapped Foraker in the face. In 1912, when it

(Continued on page 243)

### Letters of Davy Carr

(Continued from page 227)

as large as the Renaissance in New York, but far more perfectly appointed and more tastefully decorated.

As the house seemed to be crowded, we took box seats, and found ourselves seated just behind a very gay crowd of young women, two or three of whom I recognized as members of one of the clubs whose affairs I have attended. They were very well dressed, and very lively. This is a sample of the conversation we overheard during a lull in the music.

"Yes, I was terribly disappointed. You know I have been looking for a nice piece to go in that odd corner in the library, and I just found it—the most wonderful bargain you ever saw. It was originally priced at \$1,275, and marked down to only \$840—a *ridiculously* low figure. But what do you think! When I went back to get it, it was gone! I almost cried!"

"You don't say so—that *was* aggravating. But I had the identical experience last Tuesday. You know I've been crazy for a four-poster, but I have never seen one which suited me, and last week at Henderson's I ran across a perfect dream. It could not have pleased me better if it had been made to order for me. Henderson's are selling out, you know, and it was marked down to \$1,230. Why I did not take it on the spot, I cannot for the life of me determine, but you know how one dallies sometimes. Next day I hurried down to get it, and as soon as the man saw me he said, 'Oh, Mrs. Manley, I am so sorry, but your bed is gone!'"

Then there was a chorus of sympathetic exclamations from the listeners, one of whom proceeded, when she could be heard, to tell how her husband had a perfectly wonderful chance to buy a certain house on Sixteenth Street for only \$24,000 cash. Whether he had bought the house, or not, I could not hear, for the orchestra started up a jazz piece, and drowned out the conversation.

I need not say I was impressed—very much impressed. I had recognized none of these ladies as being anybody in particular, but the careless way in which they disposed of these trivial sums of money convinced me that prosperity in Washington was more general and widespread than I had thought. So I looked at Verney, and he met my eye with a smile.

"Did you catch that?" he asked.

"Yes, indeed," I said. "Are we in a nest of bootleggers?" I asked, laughingly.

"No," he said, leaning over to me, and speaking in a low tone, so as not to be overheard. "The first speaker is the wife of a school teacher, the second is a school teacher herself, and the last is a school teacher and the wife of a government clerk."

I looked my astonishment.

"That, my dear Carr, is what I call conversational spending. These women can keep that up all night and never turn a hair. You will notice, however, that their experiences did not cost them a single dime between them. It's the cheapest form of amusement I know. All it requires is nerve and a little practice. The first time you essayed it you would feel self-conscious, but after a few minutes' effort you would find yourself enjoying it. Some day when you are particularly 'broke,' try it!" He laughed heartily, and I pondered over the artificiality of some phases of our modern life.

We enjoyed the show, and I enjoyed Verney's company, and when the lights went up for a moment we spied Dr. and Mrs. Morrow and Miss Barton in a box ahead of us. After a bit two seats in the same box were vacated, and we went forward and took them. I talked to Miss Barton, and Verney to the Morrrows, who invited us all to go home with them, which we did. Mrs. Morrow is a wonderful housekeeper, and she fixed us up one of the finest suppers I ever ate, and this, seasoned with such good company, made a perfect evening. I don't recall whether I have ever told you about the Morrrows' house. It is very handsome, beautifully furnished on the

older lines, and has every modern convenience. It is very satisfying indeed. Some day I hope I may be able to show it to you.

I took Lillian Barton home, and, though it was very late, she insisted on my coming in, so I sat for a while in front of the grate, and had a delightful chat. It was a most unholy hour when I left, but I did not having lost one or two hours of sleep, for the feeling was all gone. When I crept upstairs the was still as a tomb. I turned in quickly, and slept sleep of the just.

I shall try to get a picture of Tommie. I know line will help me. Three weeks from yesterday is Christmas, Bob, and I am certainly looking forward to you then. If you should run into Dr. Corey up treat him nicely, won't you? And don't forget the girls and Miss Chester. I must stop, so that I can get this on my way out.

Sincerely, etc.

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Of THE MESSENGER, published monthly, at New York, N. Y.  
 for April, 1925.

State of New York, County of New York, ss.

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared A. Philip Randolph, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of THE MESSENGER and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912 embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Name of—	Post office address—
Publisher, The Messenger Pub. Co.,	2311 7th Ave., New York.
Editor, A. Philip Randolph,	148 W. 142nd St., New York.
Managing Editor, Chandler Owen,	215 W. 139th St., New York.
Business Managers, none.	

2. That the owner is: (If the publication is owned by an individual his name and address, or if owned by more than one individual the name and address of each, should be given below; if the publication is owned by a corporation the name of the corporation and the names and addresses of the stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of the total amount of stock should be given.)

The Messenger Pub. Co.,	2311 7th Ave., New York.
A. Philip Randolph,	148 W. 142nd St., New York.
Chandler Owen,	215 W. 139th St., New York.
Robert Godet,	32 W. 136th St., New York.
Victor R. Daly,	261 W. 134th St., New York.

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4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the six months preceding the date shown above is ———. (This information is required from daily publications only.)

A. PHILIP RANDOLPH.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 1st day of April, 1925.

(Seal.) JOSEPH L. PRITCHARD,  
 Notary Public, New York County.

My commission expires March 30, 1927.

**Editorials**

(Concluded from page 241)

came to a choice between Roosevelt and Taft, they went to Taft.

Of course, ingratitude is not peculiarly true of the colored man. It is simply too true. Among all peoples there has been too great a tendency to worship their heroes. The hero of today is the victim of tomorrow's fury. Today he receives the popular applause; tomorrow the abuse of an ungrateful people. Today they cry, "Hosannah in the highest"; tomorrow they cry: "Crucify him!"

It is, therefore, refreshing to note the survival of this splendid trait in people even when threatened by reprisals from the enemy which has its feet on their necks just now.

**Massachusetts**

(Continued from page 222)

Incidentally, Mr. Butler R. Wilson is Mrs. Wilson's husband.

Just as actively engaged in welfare work is Mrs. Florida Ridley, daughter of the late Judge Ruffin, and one of the few persons hereabouts, of any consequence, who was born in Massachusetts. She is imbued with this State's holy traditions—and with more. She is the friendly rival of Mrs. Wilson's in performing for sweet charity's sake those benevolences which were begun during the war and which were continued afterwards as being wholly essential to the welfare of the community life.

Georgia has rendered one good service to the Negro and to the world of art. She gave to Massachusetts Roland Hayes, and Massachusetts polished him off and sent him to Europe. Everybody knows the rest. A similar

statement might be made with respect to Maud Cuney Hare, who has given the big, blustering, countrified, ignorant State of Texas about the only just claim she has ever had to aesthetic culture.

Now to sum up: Massachusetts is the land of the free and the home of the brave colored man by virtue of her humanitarianism and justice wherever and whenever he has been concerned. The colored man of Massachusetts has more freedom than material possessions, more rights than initiative, more mouth than a desire to work. He is ever ready to damn his State to his friend, but he is immediately on the defensive when an outsider presumes to damn.

And perhaps the first part of this last sentence will make clear to the reader why the recorder of these facts removed his kid gloves before he began the task of handling his home State.

**Toy**

You deck my doby lavishly,  
I'm sleek and overfed;  
And yet my soul is perishing,  
Denied of daily bread.

You make a plaything of my life,  
My every trust betray,  
And when I would be penitent,  
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GEORGIA DOUGLAS JOHNSON.

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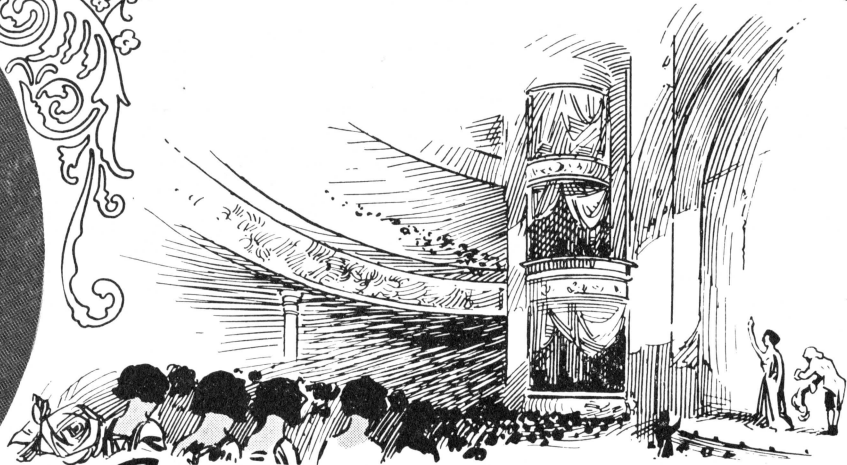
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